



The Eagle/Jill Mallory

Members of Boy Scout Troop 898 were on hand to help keep the trains running on time during the first Great Eastern Oregon Train Festival. "I crash too many trains, though," said Bill Sevey, 13, who attends Mt. Vernon Middle School. "I just like going fast." The festival attracted 300 people to the Grant County Fairgrounds.



All aboard!

Model train show puts visitors on track to fun.

By Scott Mallory
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The first stop was Seneca, as it was circa 1930. The model train was on the floor, rolling along track that wound its way around a replica of the Eastern Oregon city made of cardboard, construction paper and wood and held together with glue.

The engine sputtered and was having a bit of trouble on one section of the track.

Clayton Hughet, chief engineer at that moment for the Seneca School history project, walked around the display of the miniature city, careful not to knock over a building or a tree.

Hughet, a fifth-grader at Seneca, knelt down and fiddled with the engine, then put it back on the track and away it went, past the train station to the lumber mill.

"The station is where they would pull the trains in and work on them," said Hughet, who shrugged when a visitor asked him if he liked studying history.

"It's fun to run trains, build an old town," he said. "I just think they're really cool."

He wasn't the only person who felt that way inside the pavilion at the county fairgrounds, where Sept. 4 engineers of all ages stepped aboard the first Great Eastern Oregon Train Festival.

The six-hour event was a showcase for model railroads and the people who lay the track, build the cities, the mountains and the wilderness scenes that the little engines that can roll through.

The majority of the show highlighted N-scale model trains, which at 1/160 the size of the real thing is just about as small as it gets.

On display were all things trains, including books, caps, See *TRAINS*, Page A2



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TRAINS: Chugging through the pavilion

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insulators, antique lanterns, special types of track and miniature cars priced at \$239.

"That's about right," a collector said. "The smaller they get, the more expensive they are."

Final attendance hadn't been figured that afternoon, but organizers from the Canyon Mt. N-gineers in Canyon City were all smiles.

"We hoped to get 200 people, and I think we're close to 300," Everett King said. King is the acknowledged train master of the club. King and club members Patrick Bentz and Pete Teague were the primary motivational force behind the event.

Model-train enthusiasts and friends they brought along came from Portland; Elko, Nev.; and parts between.

Bruce Blanford, a graying mustache and goatee below an engineer's cap on which a pin with the words, "Eastern Oregon Railroad," was affixed, arrived at the affair from Bend.

"I was given a traditional American Flyer train set when I was a kid, and that's when I started collecting," Blanford said.

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Everett King of the Canyon City Canyon Mt. N-gineers model train club.

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Speeding along by train, even in miniature, where the only ticket is the imagination, can make a person hungry. Hamburgers, hot dogs and other treats were served by a group raising money for construction of the skateboard park to be built near the baseball complex on 7th Street.



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A lantern and model trains on display at the Great Eastern Oregon Train Festival

RoseAnn Palmer and Alan Hickerson were behind the counter late in the day.

"We're doing all right," Palmer said.

The N-gineers want to stage the festival again next year. For information on the club, call King, 575-0714, or Bentz, 575-4247.