

Sharissa Smith
IVN Contributing Writer

Lowell and Valina Ford have a unique hobby: In the front, back and all-around their house, they have a mini railroad.

Lowell Ford explained, “Well I just wanted a hobby to start with and I started with little Ho trains, which is a little train inside the house.” It just grew from there. They now have “about 2,500 feet, close to half a mile” of track running around their property. However, Ford hasn’t always been working on his hobby: “I was fireman here volunteering and paid for four years in the ‘70s. My wife was part of the women’s auxiliary. We came in 1972 and started this in 1984.”

Like other railroads, the Fords’ railroad also has a name - the PS&G Railroad. “PS&G” stands for three names: Push, Shove and Grunt; that’s before we had an engine. The second one was Pudgetville, Summit and Glendon roads. Those are the roads you came to get up here. The railroads used to name their railroad a lot by the cities or towns or some geographical location to identify the area they covered. Now the third one, it is Proclaiming, Salvation and Gospel Railroad.”

The Fords have more than just a mini railroad; they have possible record-setting longest trees on a rail car. Ford elaborates, “My hope is that I can get proof, particularly pictures in a publication. Both [the trees] are 34 feet long and the bigger one is 20 inches in diameter, the big end, 15 on the

small. Multiply that by about 4 and a half, that’s equal to pretty close to 153 feet long if it was on a full size railroad, if I did it right. Which is a pretty long log and you multiply the 20 inches by 4 and a half, it’s 7 foot in diameter. If we were to multiply the dimensions of that log proportionately, for a full-sized railroad that log would be almost 8 feet in diameter and 150 feet long. My track is 1 foot in-between, 12 inches; full-sized railroad is 4 foot 8 and a half inches.”

Besides trying to break records, Ford has also taken his train around to evangelize. “We, for about 10 or 11 years went to Pottsville. Every Father’s Day they have a big thing, they have tractor pulls and all kinds of things like that you know. We give the kids a tract and some puzzles for them to fill in. For the adults we have gospel tracts.”

They also have what they call a salvation engine. “On that train it says salvation and Jesus, the smoke says proclaiming. We’re passive witnessing, we don’t have to talk directly to people. We’ve been in the parade a couple of times here. We had a real neat display one year of a crane. I got a couple of teenage boys to help me. One would hook up to this page of the Bible the other boy would lift it up with the crane and then put it back in the Bible, I think we had two pages and they alternated them. It had a salvation message on it.”

Ford has a unique way of doing the Lord’s work and if anyone wants to “talk railroad” they can reach him at 541-592-3292.



(Photos by Sharissa Smith, *Illinois Valley News*)

Lowell Ford (top left) with a little helper and his record-setting trees on rail cars located on the Fords’ property in Kerby.

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a big thank you to all of the volunteers!

IV lions, Howard Hill, Lynn Neilson, Marty Haynie, Gary Bell, Abner and John, Redwood Lions, Linda Tedder, Grants Pass Lions, Ron and DeeDee Smith, Brookings Harbor Lions, Wes and Carol King, Dan Shinerock, Randy, Kenny, Gloria, Bob and Jackie Boocke, DJ Jammer Dave, River Stars Performers, Mason's and Eastern Star. All the vendors.

Our newest Cave Junction Lions club members, Tim and Linda Terry. Especially Ruth Overholser and Dana Hunt for having their family come and help out during their family reunion campout. If it wasn't for the volunteers that helped to make this days event such a wonderful success and all of the businesses and individuals who provided gifts for raffle prizes and sponsoring the trophies, none of this would of happened.

So I personally need to say thank you to my beautiful community for all you do and give to make this valley a great place to live!

Thank you, I am forever grateful.

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