



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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All Aboard! Grant Sets Wheels in Motion for New Train Exhibit at Children's Museum

April 23, 2009, Salem, OR—Operated by a red push button, the S-gauge American Flyer train, centerpiece of the *Imagination Station* exhibit at A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village, receives such consistent use that at one point its wheels melted to the track.

Thankfully, A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village has recently received a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from Marion Cultural Development Corporation to fund in part the renovation of the train room, expected to open in July at the interactive children's museum.

Added to grants from the Collins Foundation, Ann and Bill Swindells Charitable Trust and Meyer Memorial Trust, the museum is \$25,000 from meeting its \$150,000 goal to fund a total of seven new exhibits over a two-year period.

The renovation will take place over the next two months and will include an expanded layout, more features to allow young children to interact with the train and a 300-piece wooden toy train set to complete the hands-on experience.

"The great thing about trains is that it's a connection between the really young and the really old. It's a way to bring the whole family together," explains Assistant Director Kim Baldwin. "What child doesn't come in and want to push the button and see the train go?"

Featured in the new exhibit:

- An expanded layout modeled on downtown Salem's Riverfront Park, including a working carousel, a ceramic model of the Eco Earth and scale replicas of the historic houses and Outdoor Discovery Center at A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village.
- A viewing bubble where children can pop up in the train display and view the train going around their head.
- All new track, road bed, and two new engines.

While visitors will have to wait until later this summer for the grand opening, some new components are already viewable, including knee-high diorama cases with an assortment of antique trains and Erector Sets. The exhibit will remain open during renovation, with the exception of one week in June for wiring.

A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village

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Imagination Station is a permanent exhibit at A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village that details the life and times of A.C. Gilbert, inventor of the Erector Set and Salem native. A.C. Gilbert acquired the rights to the American Flyer toy train in 1938 and is credited with redesigning the model to look more realistic.

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For more information or images, contact Stephanie Lenox, Promotions Director, at 503-371-3631 or by email at promotions@acgilbert.org.

A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village is a private nonprofit children's museum located in downtown Salem's Riverfront Park. Founded in 1989, A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village provides innovative and stimulating educational experiences that spark children's natural curiosity. The Village's mission is to provoke curiosity, inspire awe, awaken interest, foster enjoyment, encourage learning and enable understanding in all youth.

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