

December 2001

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DISPATCH



Lookout Junction

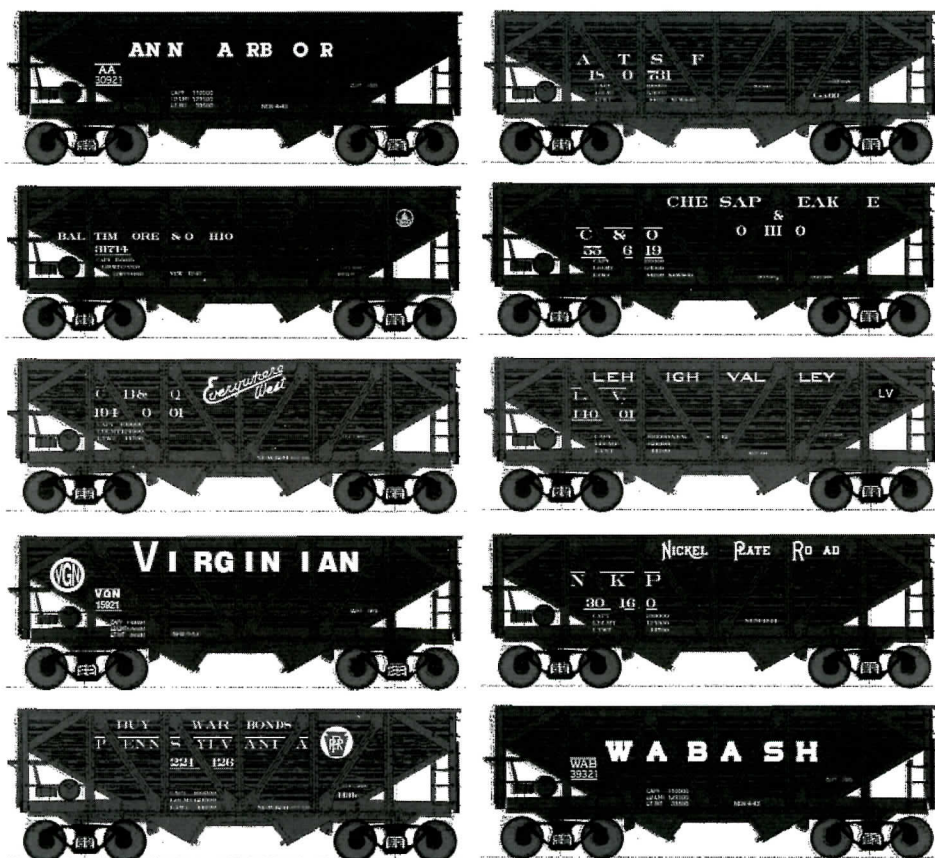
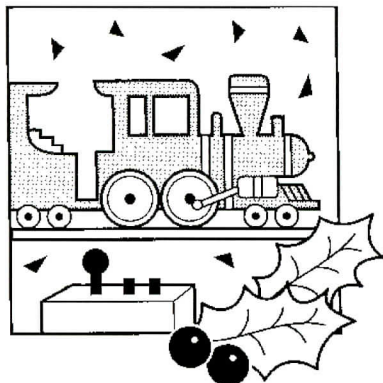
Chasm Hi-Rail Layout



All Aspects of S: Scale • Narrow Gauge • American Flyer • Hi-rail

WHAT'S NEW?

Right is an excerpt photo of the S-Helper Service new 55-ton composite hoppers as shown in their new 2002 catalog. Also in the catalog are the F7s (below), the B&O 2-8-0 and some new loads for the flat cars. Promised are ore cars. Right center is the 2001 AF Christmas boxcar from Lionel.



American Models premiered the painted SD60s at the Fall S Fest in November. Both regular cab and wide cab versions will be available in several road names and 2 #s each.



NASG DISPATCH
Official Publication of the
National Association of S Gaugers

The NASG DISPATCH welcomes art, photographs, letters, articles and other S gauge/scale related materials contributed by the membership. Send all such materials to the editor.

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COVER: Multi levels on the Lookout Junction portable display layout is the handiwork of the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers of the Boise, Idaho area. Bottom is American Hi-Rail Aerotrains on the CHASM hi-rail layout at the Fall S Fest. Bottom photo Jeff Madden

ORDER BOARD

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The DEADLINES for articles are the 1st of February, April, June, August, October, December, for issues dated April, June, August, October, December, February, respectively.

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President's Message ...

Special Interest Groups within the NASG

Most people would agree that the NASG's main purpose is to promote S gauge. However, I feel that we have a responsibility that's equally important, and that is to serve our membership well. Over the years the NASG has provided its members with many benefits including the convention, special cars, clearing house and the *Dispatch*. Lately, we've added a library and a website. I'm constantly looking for ways to expand the NASG's commitment to serving the membership. One good way would be the establishment of Special Interest Groups or SIG's under the umbrella of the NASG. The idea of SIG's is not new. The NMRA has had them for a long time and they existed in the early days of the NASG as "circuits". Russ Mobley once told me that one of them "The Old-Timers Circuit" has survived to this day. There is an interesting section of the NASG history that Bob Jackson compiled for the *Dispatch* a while back devoted to the circuits. This history is now part of the NASG website and makes for interesting reading. The circuits were held together mostly by the U.S. Mail. It was a cumbersome way to maintain the communications that were so necessary for the circuits' well-being. I liked the account of the fellow who went in the Navy and didn't open his circuit letter for 10 years. Talk about snail mail.

The basic idea of the circuits was to put together S gaugers of like interests. They could share pertinent information and ideas among themselves. These circuits existed before there was an NASG and then became prominent parts of an NASG that was loosely organized. At first, they were actually stronger than the new national organization. However, today's NASG is a strong organization and can support sub-structures such as SIGs without any harm to its superstructure or basic mission. We share a common scale, but within that we all have specific modeling interests. Like the circuits of old, SIGs would put S Gaugers of like interests together. Now we have the computer and with it comes email, chat groups and the internet. The NASG also has our magazine: the *Dispatch*. All these things would make the directors of the old circuits envious.

Many people come into S with lots of questions. Depending on their interests, the SIGs could provide answers and help for these newcomers. SIGs can make reports for the *Dispatch* if they desire. That would provide a way to share news and information.

continued on page 31

NASG Portable Layout: Thanks to a very generous NASG member we have an excellent start for the NASG to build a scale portable layout. It will be shipped (or taken) around the country to be displayed and operated at various trains shows. It will start out as a switching layout loosely based on the classic John Allen Timesaver. Jamie Bothwell, Dave Heine, other LVSG members and myself will build it. We plan on using the most modern products complete with details, signals, scenery, structures, etc. A digital power and sound system will also be used. We would appreciate any cash donations members would wish to contribute. We are also accepting product donations from various S manufacturers. Many are already on board. We will have our S manufacturer's Guide on hand with the layout to give interested folds so they will know where to purchase the items displayed. Of course, we will also have NASG applications and other literature on hand. Donations can be forwarded to: NASG c/o Mike Shea, 488 Stonewood Ave., Rochester, NY 14616-3623.

- Mike Shea, NASG Treasurer

Recent BOT Highlights: The NASG BOT, at the July, 2001 convention, starting a chat room/website for keeping in touch and resolving critical issues. Some of the issues discussed by October 17, 2001 are:

1. We now have a formal, posted job description for each Board member.
2. We approved the new NASG Convention Handbook as a guide for future conventions.
3. We voted to retain a skilled photographer within the NASG to photo promotional pieces as well as covering the NASG conventions. Bob Werre had wanted to step down, but he may continue.
4. We researched and confirmed that the NASG is still incorporated.
5. We voted to establish the Russ Mobley Memorial Library under the direction of Richard Karnes.
6. We are moving ahead with a promotional page in *Railroad Model Craftsman* magazine and are investigating costs to advertise in *Classic Toy Trains*. Gregory Miller and Tom Robinson have been joined by Terry Harrison to form the Promotions Committee.
7. Discussions are continuing about an NASG sponsored portable layout to represent S scale at national and regional train shows.
8. Discussions are continuing about an S gauge car to commemorate 9/11/01 and to be promoted in *Model Railroader* magazine along with an HO and O gauge car. Doug Peck will continue as American Flyer Car Project chairman.
9. We are investigating carrying NASG insurance for clubs hosting or participating in National conventions and National Train Shows.
10. We are discussing NASG/NMA standards including more inclusion of Sn3.
11. We are reviewing the first videotape from our most recent convention prepared by *Train Time*. Note in #6 that Tom Robinson is still on the Promotions Committee. He was inadvertently left out of the Directory as still co-chairing the position.

- Glenn Ritter, NASG Secretary

NASG Standards: It may appear that some brand new NASG Standards information was being presented in the latest Directory as inserts. The S3 and S4 Standards in the 1999-2000 Directory continue to be the only Standards for the NASG. Manufacturers adhere to these standards. The NMRA is about to give final approval to these so we will all be on the same page. The Sn3 standards already coincide with the NMRA. Now, the new Proto-64 Standards we received as inserts are in addition to these.

I proposed two minor changes to the dimensions that were adopted by the NASG BOT in September, 1997.

These changes did not affect modelers. Since that time, I have worked to develop a uniform approach to Proto Scale track and wheels, so both the S Standards and Proto:Scale Standards could be put before the NMRA in one effort. So from the NASG's Point of view we are making no changes at all. We are simply bringing the NMRA Standard in line with our standard. The only addition for us is Proto:64 Recommended Practices, which was introduced in 1995 and requires no approval under NASG By-Laws, since it is not an NASG Standard.

- Randy Wilson - NASG Engineering Group - Standards, NMRA Proto:Scale Comm. Chairman.

Jeff's Junction



Promoting the World's Greatest Hobby!

This is an official 5-year big money promotion to be shepherded by the Model Railroad Industry Association and primarily funded by Kalmbach, Walthers, Kato, Micro Trains, Marklin, Atlas and probably others. It's basically a big PR campaign involving promotional literature, videos, commercials, etc., aimed at pushing model railroading. One reason is that the giants of the industry have been noticing a slip in demand, and so they are ratcheting up promotions. And guess what demographic they are aiming at? Not the kids, not generation XYZ (20s - 30s), but rather the retiring baby boomers and empty nesters like me, and most of you, ages 45-64.

Yes, many of us in this target group are already modelers, but the sponsors rightly see that this is the bulge in population that has money and will soon have more time on its hands. They are following the money in the short term, which they have to do to survive. The long term of appealing to youth and 20 to 30-somethings is more of a thorny problem.

The reasons: There is much more competition of interests and activities being thrown at these age groups. It all started with slot cars and RC airplanes and then along came video games, computers, non-traditional sports, Walmart jobs, concerts, etc. 2. Many in this active age group, including my own kids, are just not wholly attracted by slow-paced hands-on craft hobbies. 3. Careers today are much less structured and more demanding, leaving less time for slow-paced hobbies. Remember, that in the industrial age mechanics and engineers spawned model railroading initially in the 1920s and 1930s when railroading was held in great esteem, but today

in the information age most consider railroading as being about as glamorous as trucking.

The true long term salvation is that our kids and grandkids will eventually gravitate to model railroading and other non-instant gratification activities as they themselves reach their 40s and 50s. Hopefully, our model railroading genes will automatically kick in as we boomers and pre-boomers pass on our interests and our trains. Unfortunately, there will probably be an overall decline following the baby boomer bulge before that happens.

With folks living longer, the 45-64 age group seems to be the correct target market for the WGH promotion - so how can S benefit from this? Well, heck, that is our demographic anyway. Our advantage, being in a larger scale, is that we can promote detail, size, reliable operation, and easier handling. We can promote the World's Greatest Hobby by taking advantage of free promotional items from the WGH folks, but at the same time trying to pull this very age group over to our side.

Of course, we should continue to focus on youth and younger modelers, but reality dictates that our success at recruitment will mostly come from the over 45 crowd. The proposed NASG portable scale layout is just the ticket to drag around the country to show off the size of S, demonstrate available product and allow some hands on operation. Hats off to Roy Hoffman, John Foley, Mike Shea, the Lehigh Valley club and various contributors for kicking off the "Timesaver" idea, which will hopefully accomplish some of the promotional goals of the NASG. This scale layout, in addition to the hi-rail and tinplate portable layouts already out there, can't help but increase interest in S!

- Happy Holidays and God Bless Our Country in these trying times. Ah, but if our enemies only had such a constructive hobby as model railroading instead of being bent on destruction.

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

AMERICAN MODELS (10087 Colonial Industrial Dr., South Lyon, MI 48178). The SD60s in full dress were seen at the recent Fall S-Fest in S. Beloit, Illinois. There are six painted versions available in 2 numbers each: EMD Demo, CSX, Conrail, C&NW, BN and SOO. Details were reported in June.

AMERICAN HI-RAIL (37695 Jeanette Ct., Spring Grove, IL 60081) Tom Hodgson usually attends the Fall S-Fest. He was there this year with a painted GM 4-unit Aerotrain. He has a few painted ones left for \$300 plus some undecs. A new item reported to be coming out will be a PCC trolley - scale size.

BANTA MODELWORKS (411 Hopkins Rd., Dummerston, VT 05301 - www.bantamodelworks.com). Bill has sold the Tomalco Sn3 track and switch line to PBL. He is keeping the standard gauge track line for now. Bill wants to concentrate on structures, and a new 100 watt laser will help. Oh yeah, Bill will build you an ore boat - inquire.

BAR MILLS MODELS (www.barmillsmodels.com) has a new product on their website. Click on the "1-kit" icon. After the HO and N versions are finished, this outfit will do versions in O and S. It will contain 4 laser etched walls, almost 40 windows, passenger and freight doors, window glass and signs. Just remove the areas to be used for window and door openings and leave the rest! There is no measuring for doors and windows. You just have to follow outlines on the wall backs.

DSL SHOPS (23W008 Tamarack Dr., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137) According

to Dave Lull, it seems the old structure kits are to be phased out with some new kits taking their place. Only two fronts (not complete buildings) will remain in production, the Dime Store and the Savings and Loan. The first new resin cast structure will be the Sear's House, limited to 40 kits.

JOHN HUSTER (P.O. Box 3043, Erie, PA 16508 - www.boysrailroadclub.com) has some more new exclusive paint schemes on SHS rebuilt 40' boxcars. They include: B&M blue with black door (2#s), ATSF red with black door (2#s), D&RGW Cookie Box (2#s each of silver and white bodies), Central of Georgia (2#s black & silver). Cars are \$39.95 each plus \$5.00 shipping for 1st item, \$2 for each additional item.

JOE'S TRAIN REPAIR (404 Shetland Rd., Rougemont, NC 27572 - joetrainrepair@yahoo.com) is announcing the first in a series of 5 limited production add-on cars for the AF Circus Train. The first car is a World's Greatest Circus flatcar with vans. The red flatcar is numbered 24584 and has a built date of '98. It contains two red vans each with a high quality self-adhesive wrapper. Each car is available with either original AF link coupler trucks (24584LC) or reproduction S gauge knuckle couple trucks (24584KC). \$49.95 each plus S&H.

KALMBACH PUBLISHING CO. (21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukesha, WI 53187 - www.trains.com) has two new soft cover books of interest to S gaugers. One is the new 202 Greenberg Pocket Price Guide which includes AF, AM and SHS - \$10.95. The other is a standard size book called Layout Plans for toy

Trains. It includes 40 B&W photos and 45 illustrations, many in color. In the beginning is an overview of basic benchwork and 6 pages on types of tinsplate and hi-rail track systems. In S the track overviews and comparison table includes GarGraves, K-Line, American Models and S Helper Service. As usual, though S gets the short end, and only two of the track plans are S. I would have liked to see at least a third being S, or at least some plans could have had both O and S versions. Regardless, AF fans might get some valuable ideas - \$14.95.

LIONEL LLC (Mt. Clemens, MI). The rumor mill is working again. This time Lionel is promising a Korean brass steam engine for the American Flyer line due out in mid 2002. We'll believe it when we see it. The 2001 AF Christmas car is available. It's a silver, red and green boxcar with some wintry artwork. Price is \$54.95.

RIVER RAISIN (6160 Upper Straits Blvd., West Bloomfield, MI 48324) says the C&O/PRR 2-10-4s are a go. Painted and lettered versions with lights will be \$2,299 pre-production and \$2,499 after. Unpainted will be \$2099 pre-production and \$2,299 after. The UP turbines should be out by now. NKP wood caboose in two paints schemes is available now at \$259 each plus \$6.00 S&H.

And River Raisin's next monster will be the UP/SP U50 B+B+B+B "Whirlybirds" if sufficient demand warrents.

RSSVP (P.O. Box 345, Tyngsboro, MA 01879) has been advertising several SHS reefers over the past several months, most with colorful New England beer or other product names. The latest is

Knickerbocker beer. This is the 4th car in a series and has 5 colors on it. The cars are \$42.95 each plus \$7.00 S&H. Previous cars (if available) are Carling Black Label Beer, and the IGA Food Stores. RSSVP also does some MMT tank cars from time to time. Last one was Canadian Starch.

SCENERY UNLIMITED (7236 West Madison St., Forest Park, IL 60130) has two steel type bridges aimed at the Flyer market. One is #106, Reversible Deck or Thru Trestle bridge. This bridge is single track and can be used as a deck or flipped over to become an arched through truss bridge. The #109 is a flat top through truss bridge. Both are painted in Powercoat black and are all metal. The #106 is \$92.95 and the #109 is \$102.95. Add \$8.95 S&H. Illinois residents add 7.75 per cent sales tax.

Would you like a metal replica of the 1920s Erector Square Radio Tower on your layout? Maybe you could place next to some factory flats to represent the A.C. Gilbert Plant in New Haven? The footprint is 5" square and the height is 14-1/2". This is a limited item for \$79.95 plus S&H.

S HELPER SERVICE (77 Cliffwood Ave., Suites 7C & 7D, Cliffwood, NJ 0772). The ore cars are coming. Don and Mike picked the DM&IR U-27 ore car. It will come in 5 car sets with 5 different numbers, plus a single car to allow a sixth number. Future runs will add more numbers. Tentative roadnames include: undec black, undec red, DM&IR, B&LE, BN, CN, CP, C&NW, GN, Milw. Rd., Soo Line, UP. Prices TBA.

The 2002 catalog mockup was at the SHS booth at the Fall S Fest in S. Beloit, Illinois, as were test shots of the F7 A and B units. Roadnames for the F7s shown in the catalog include SF freight, SF passenger, B&M, GN, D&RGW, MP and PRR green (single stripe).

Pricing will be the same as the F3s. The E-27 B&O 2-8-0 was officially listed in the catalog with drawings and is expected late 2002. Some details are: die-cast boiler and cab, plastic tender, full cab interior, tender all-wheel pickup, illuminated front and rear headlight, smoke unit with separate motor, sound system, optional DCC sound, etc.

A new freight car was also listed in the catalog - a 34' composite hopper. Roadnames include: Ann Arbor, NKP, Wabash, C&O, B&O in black, SF, LV, Virginian, PRR and CB&Q in red. There are also many flat cars shown with new loads available, especially construction and farm equipment. Several new 3, 4 and 5 car freight sets are in the new catalog. These include a C&NW F3 with 5 cars and a caboose, and NP SW9 with 3 cars and caboose, a Milw. Rd. SW1 with 4 cars and caboose, a Maine Central F3 with 4 cars and caboose, a CB&Q F3 with 5 cars and caboose and a Chessie SW1 with 5 cars and caboose.

STANDARD RAILWAY CASTINGS CO. (253 1st NH Turnpike #2, Northwood, NH 03261) has two boxcar kits for sale. Each is based on a PRS AAR boxcar, with resin parts to convert it to a more accurate specific prototype. Expanded instructions, car history and CDS lettering are included in each kit.

The first kit is a CP 10' boxcar with 5/5 welded dreadnaught ends as built by CC&F between 1941 and 1946. Some 3,850 such cars were acquired with this atypical end, and there is a choice of 4 different lettering schemes available, covering as-built until the cars were fully retired in 1997. The second car is a CN 10' boxcar with a flat panel roof as built by ECC and C&CF from 1938-40. CN purchased 4,700 cars with this early style roof before adopting the more familiar rectangular panel roof included in most PRS kits. A

choice of five lettering schemes and two kinds of trucks allow this car to be modeled at any point up until full retirement in 1991. Each kit costs \$45. The resin parts are also available separately, as are Apex/Blaw-Knox 50' etched brass running boards.

WINROSS (www.winross.com or 800-227-2060). The new owners of Winross, as reported before, are again offering trucks with new paint schemes. There are always several modern TTs with Ford, Freightliner or International cabs, but most of us modelers prefer the vintage stuff. Their first old style truck is the White 9000 stake body truck carrying pumpkins and painted orange - \$37.00. A couple of the modern tractor trailers come with a new load - long Air Product cannisters.



How about a replica of the Erector Square Radio Tower on your layout? This stood by the Gilbert plant in New Haven until a 1970s storm blew it down. A limited number of these is available from Scenery Unlimited.

Module Corner

By Ted Larson and others.

N E E D L I G H T - W E I G H T S:

A while back there was a note expressing concern about the "clunky" S-MOD Standards. I had an off-list discussion with the author to find out the basis of his concerns. It turns out that he was responding to the old DeWitt/Thompson article about construction of an S-MOD module which is posted on Paul Yorke's website. He said that "S-MOD appears heavy and awkward" in those articles. His specific concerns were the lack of hinges on the legs, and the use of plywood rather than hard-shell in the scenery portions of the module.

I informed him that S-MOD is only an interface spec; it does not specify construction methods, and that recent and alternate construction methods have been published in the NASG *Dispatch*. He thought that we ought to have some examples on the web showing S-MOD modules constructed using "modern" lightweight methods so that other people do not misunderstand. I invite anybody that has built modules using lightweight methods to submit photos to Paul Yorke for his website.

- Ted Larson

CANADIAN SCALE MODULES: I felt it was time to give a little update on what we are doing here in Alberta (Canada). Bob Hadlow, Tom Parker and I are actually building a portable layout in S scale. We want to have something that will be presentable for the next big Calgary Train show held next February. Last year there were over 15,000 people who came to the 2-day event. The layout will consist of 12 modules constructed to FreeMO standard interface. The layout shape is triangu-

lar. Each of us have 4 consecutive modules that includes 2 60 degree corners and 2 straight 5' sections.

Some characteristics: The overall footprint is approximately 20' x 25'. There is a single mainline with one passing siding. Track is code 100 flex with hand-laid #8 turnouts on the mainline. There are grades (1.8% maximum) and different track elevations. Radius is 50" minimum. There is a 2-track staging yard on a separate set of modules located inside the layout. DCC will be the controlling method. Scenery consists of city and suburban (me), rural Alberta (Bob Hadlow) and waterfront and mountain (Tom).

To date all modules except the staging are built, and the mainline is laid for the most part. Some people mentioned having an S scale layout at the Toronto NMRA convention in 2003. Bob and I have talked about it, and so far we are willing to do the 4-hour drive in a rental truck. Hopefully there will be 2 other Ontario based scale layouts there also.

- Simon Parent

MICHIGAN MODULAR LAYOUT: This is in response to the *Jeff's Junction* column in the August 2001 *Dispatch*. Jeff was asking if there were other S portable scale layouts besides the ones mentioned. The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers have displayed a scale modular layout since 1982. We were actively involved in shaping the S-MOD standards for modular layouts and adopted those standards for everything we built. In our interactions with the public we have consistently promoted the use of standards as providing the maximum interchangeability.

SMSG has participated in numerous national and regional conventions, starting with the 1983 NASG national in Woburn and the 1984 national in Kansas City. It was at the Kansas City convention

that we were first able to demonstrate the ability to interchange successfully with another club's modules as a result of building our units to the same standards. We were also part of the very impressive, operations-oriented, multi-club layout displayed at the 1990 NMRA national in Pittsburgh.

Our club's inventory includes eight corner modules and at least 14 straight modules in 4, 6 and 8 foot lengths. The typical SMSG setup for shows is a 14' x 34' oval. The trackwork features mostly code 100 rail, some of it hand-laid, plus some custom-built curved turnouts. Most of the modules are nicely scenicked.

In recent years we have been a presence at local railroad shows and flea markets, including the 1996 NASG convention we hosted in Dearborn. We have been featured several times at the annual Durand, Michigan, Railroad Days, and also at a similar event in Greenfield Village. The motive power and rolling stock that we display are the scale offerings of all the major manufacturers.

In the 19 years SMSG has been operating modular layouts, we have seen a couple of shifts in interests among our members. The original modules were designed to accommodate both scale and hi-rail. Our club standard at the time was to use code 125 on the outside track (which handled hi-rail, but not all Flyer equipment) and code 100 on the inside track. In the mid-'80s we saw a number of the AF-oriented members leave us, to be replaced with scale guys. Consequently, when maintenance was required on the corner modules, we chose to relay code 100 on both tracks.

Club membership has continued to grow (we now have 50 members), and it has shifted back to a larger population of hi-rail and Flyer. At the same time, some of us have drifted away from the modular

scene in favor of building home layouts. The club is currently discussing a proposal, however, that features adding a third track, using code 148 rail that will accommodate hi-rail and Flyer.

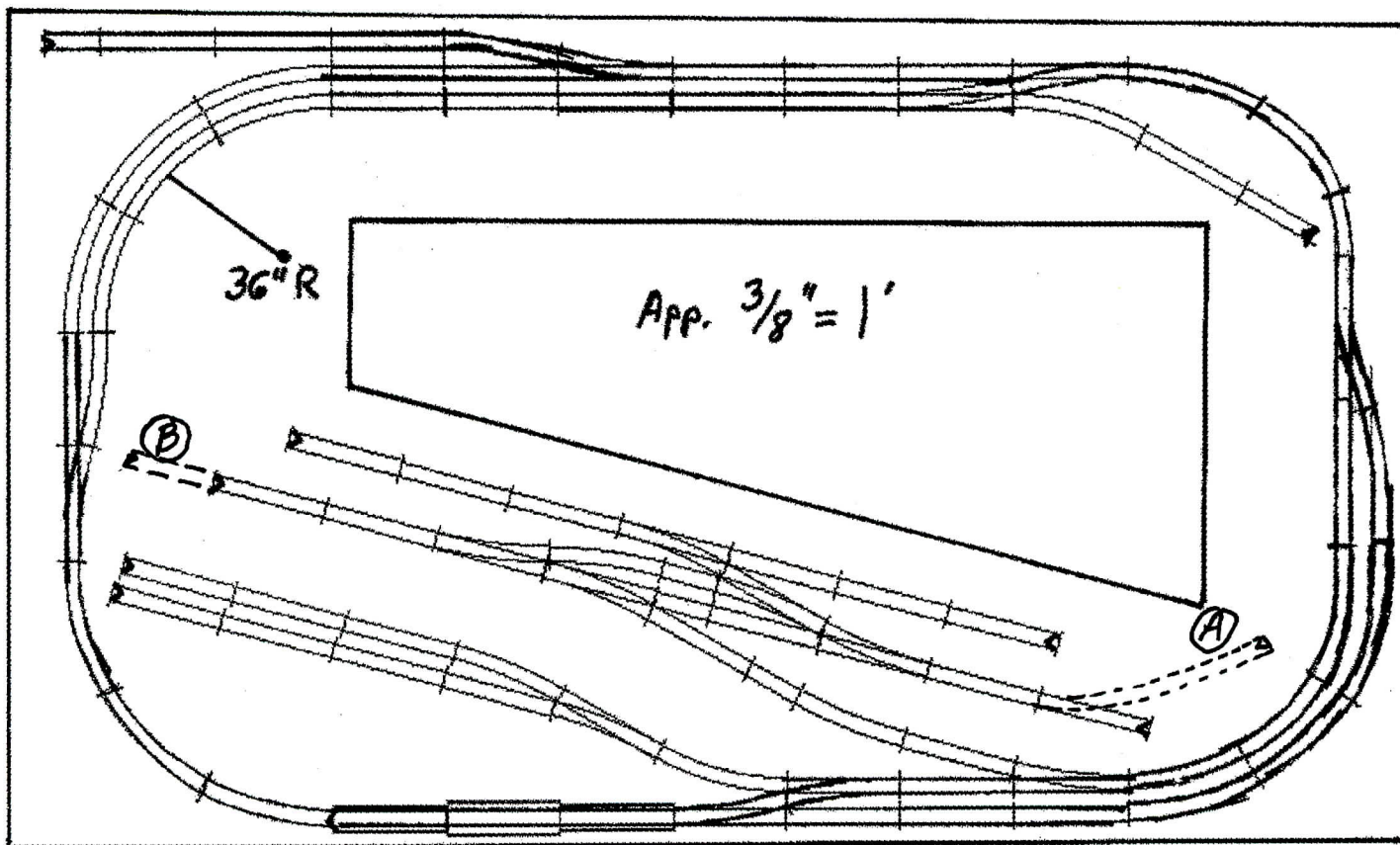
While it may seem ideal to maintain a layout that accepts all type of equipment, it may not be the most practical. Besides the long-standing problem of having to build custom, closing-frog turnouts, the operating mode of a scaler is often

different from that of a Flyer guy. These are obviously generalizations, but the person running scale trains tends to be more interested in holding to prototypical speeds and performing switching operations, while the person running American Flyer tends to want to run round and round at high speeds with lots of chug and smoke.

Depending on the type of show we're at, both displays have their audiences. The Greenberg Shows,

for example, appeal more to the toy train population, including families who are just getting exposed to the hobby. We have in fact attracted many people who are familiar with early AF and are amazed to see it still in use. On the other hand, the NMRA national and regional conventions appeal more to the scalers, and over the years we have brought into our membership several people who converted over from other scales.

- Gaylord Gill, President, SMSG



Roy Hoffman sent in this diagram for a Timesaver type switching layout. The NASG one mentioned in this issue will not be like this, but here is an idea for a home switching layout using the Timesaver principles. This type of layout could be built in portable fashion or as a permanent home layout. It would work in hi-rail or scale. The idea is to build a switching layout which can also be run continuously. In S, most likely an operator pit would be needed in the middle necessitating a crawl under. But once inside, the operator could switch for hours. There are actually six stub sidings on this layout which could all be a spotting point for a car or two. The longer sidings could house two industries each. you could simplify the switchback by taking out the track nearest the pit and eliminating the short runaround since you already have two mainline passing sidings to run around on. If left as is, A and B show how the first tracks on the switchback can be lengthened to make it easier to saw back and forth. The approximate overall size of this layout based on 3/8" to the foot scale is about 12' x 20'. With tighter radii, this could be made much smaller. You could even get away with eliminating the top passing siding. With this type of layout, you can start to have fun without any scenery by using boxes or index cards labeled for industries. As time permits, real structures can be worked in along with some scenery.

Some Real Christmas Spirit A PIKE MASTER LAYOUT FOR A HOSPITAL ROOM

By Wayne Beachy of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers

Running trains for children in the hospital is possibly one of the best benefits of this hobby I have found. The Virginia Central Division (VCD) of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers (ACSG) based many of our ideas from those used by the Baltimore Area American Flyer Club (BAAFC). For several years the BAAFC has run trains for the children at Baltimore's Children's Hospital. All of the members of the VCD love running trains for children, so in 1999 we thought we would check with the Children's Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, and offer to run our layout for the children there. You can imagine our initial shock when the hospital said they were not interested in our offer. Excuses were liability for equipment and space. We also contacted the Children's Medical Center at the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) and were given the same excuses.

Fortunately, when doing business with MCV in 2000 I ran into an old friend who helped me get my foot in the door. Finally, in December 2000 we did our first show for the Children at MCV. We did a second show in June of 2001 and have scheduled another showing for December. The staff says this is one of the activities the children now most look forward to. I think the staff is just as excited.

The room we have at MCV is not very large so we normally set up a 10' x 14' modular layout in the Children's Center's training and conference room. Children arrive on crutches, in wheel chairs and pulling IV stands. At the first show we discovered our table height of 42" was too high for children in wheelchairs and small children to see the trains. We also had this problem at other shows. The solu-

tion was to lower the table height to 36".

Another change we made was to bring along an additional small portable 3' x 4' Marx Tinplate layout with O-27 track to take to the rooms of children who couldn't travel to the room with the larger layout. This was also a huge success.

During the first show I went into the room of a little fellow about 10 years old. He passively watched as I ran the train, blew the Marx Girard whistle and operated a tin Flyer water tank. No matter how the nurse and I coaxed him he never spoke. About half an hour later I had finished my rounds and returned to the room where the modular layout was - and right behind me was the same 10 year old in a wheelchair pushed by his parents. His mother told me with tears in her eyes that he was in a coma the day before, and when they had arrived that day for his first trip out of his room, he had demanded to be taken to see the big layout. We've even had some "Make a Wish" children ask to run the trains - we allow this sometimes if they are responsible.

Even with all my good intentions with the smaller Marx layout, some other S gaugers chided me about running O-27. With this in mind I decided to build a 3' x 4' portable Pike Master layout. In hindsight, I'm glad I didn't use the foam All-Aboard Panels as this layout gets plenty of abuse.

I built the Pike Master board the same as the O-27 layout with framework of 2 pieces of 1x2s 48" long with 3 crosspieces. Luan plywood covers the framework. I cut a hole in one corner with a jig saw so a Flyer transformer can be

recessed in and held by a base screwed to the bottom of the framework. The whole assembly was painted a dark green with gray or black roads painted on. I stained some 2" window trim to spruce up the outside of the framework.

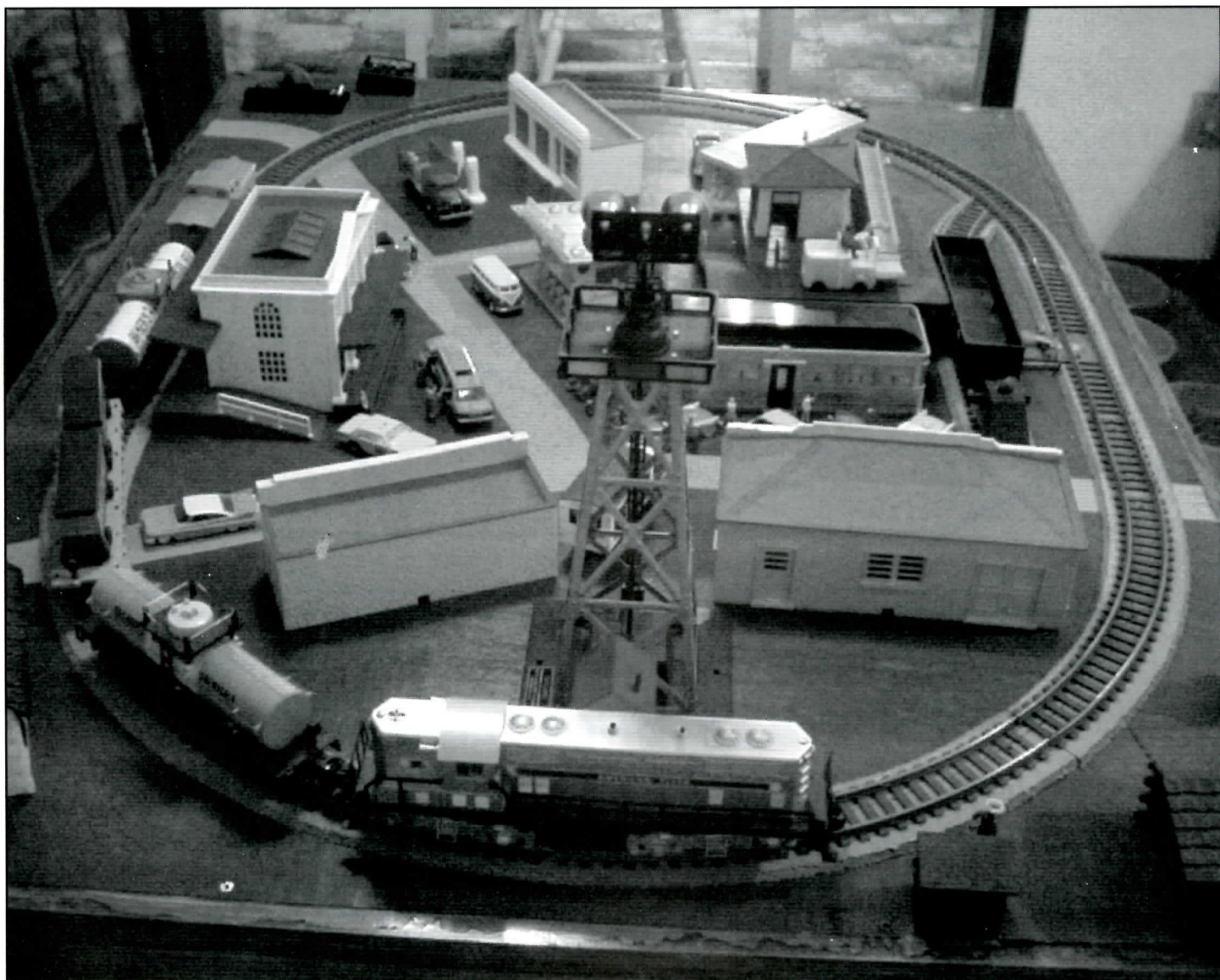
Nick Colleran, one of our Division members, had some Pike Master track he donated. I used the half O, half HO, cork roadbed for a track base which was tacked and glued to the plywood. I did use two Flyer terminal strips because of the poor conductivity of the Pike Master rail. Besides a basic loop, I added a fake siding in order to have an excuse to fit an industry.

Wiring from the transformer goes to both terminal strips. Accessory power goes to a terminal strip with power divided between two buttons. I can vary the accessories each showing, but I plan to start with a reproduction barrel loader and an MTH reproduction Gabe.

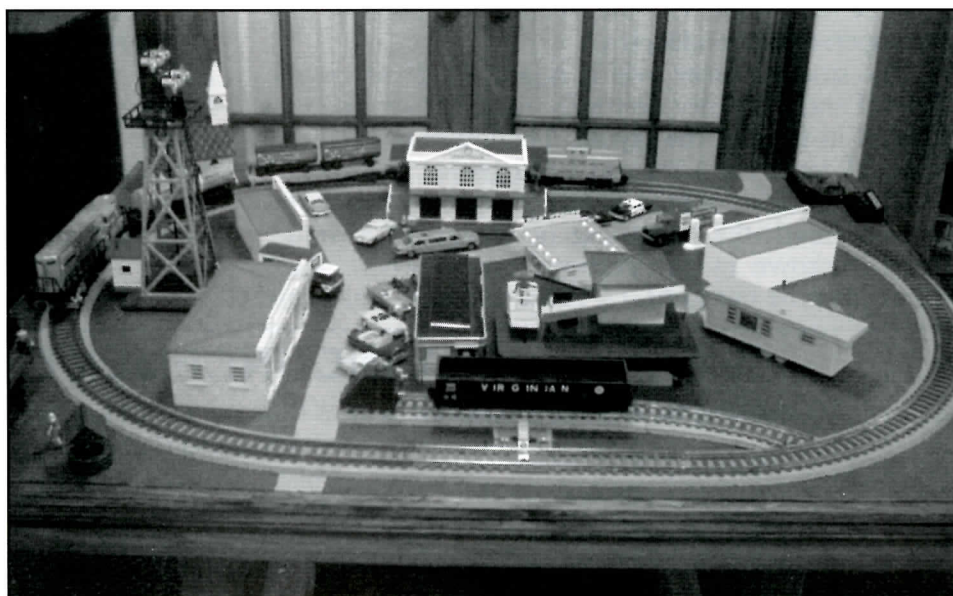
I got a local radio station with a 78 rpm turntable to record the message from a Gilbert Talking Station onto a cassette tape. I have a wire from a portable walk-man which can connect to a speaker in a Plasticville Union Station on the layout. It works just fine. Other Plasticville structures decorate the rest of the table top. Kids like the layout and the talking station feature.

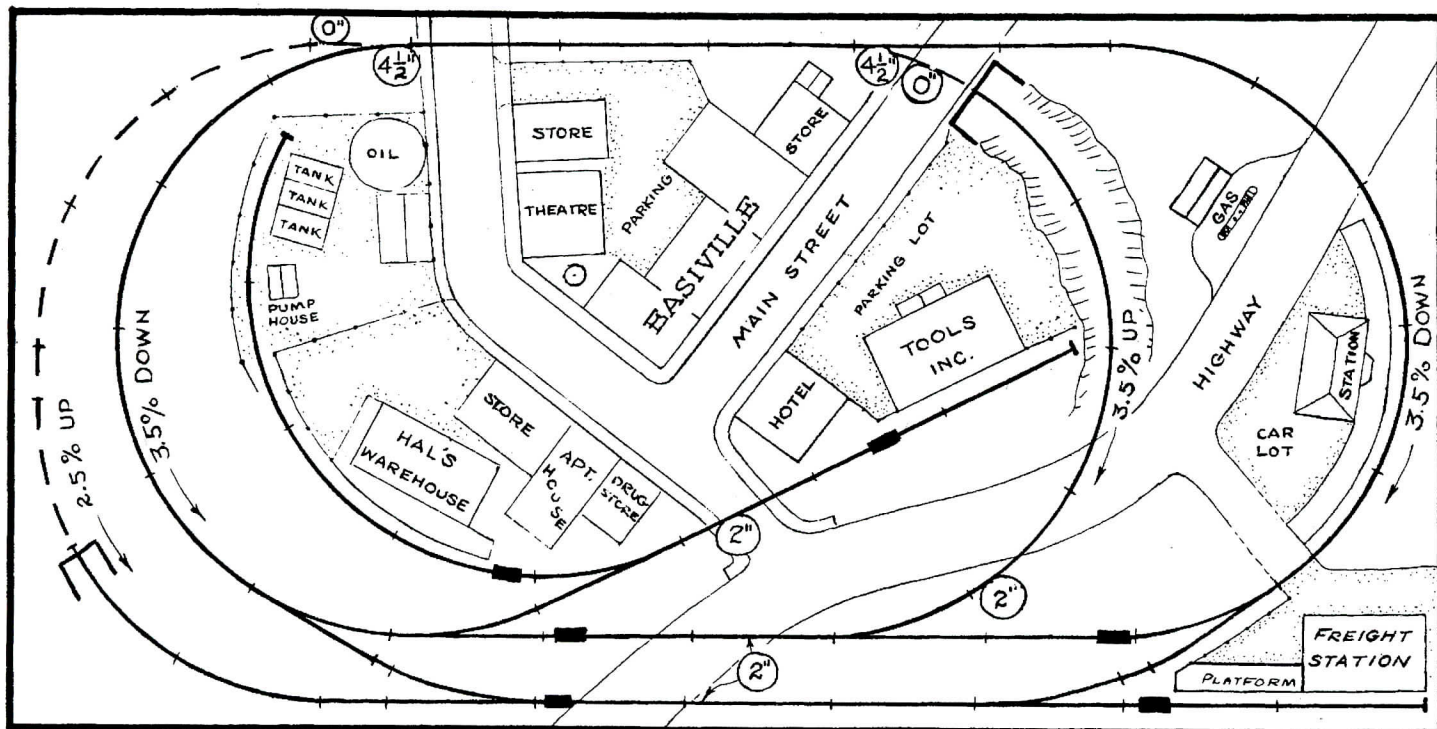
I vary the rolling stock S gauge rolling stock and motive power is usually a Lionel AF GP9, an SHS SW1 or a smoking Atlantic. Occasionally I run a fire train. This includes a pumper car with deck gun that revolves, water tank mounted on a flat car and white caboose lettered for first aid with a blinking light on top.

This sounds like the real Spirit of Christmas in America. Jeff



This portable 3' x 4' S gauge layout was built by Atlantic Coast S Gauger Wayne Beachy for the specific purpose of being able to take it right into a hospital room of a children's hospital. The Virginia Central Division of the ACSG, of which Wayne is a member, takes a larger layout to the children's hospital, but Wayne built this one to take to those children who are bedridden. Pike Master track on cork roadbed, some Plasticville and two operating accessories do the trick. *Photos by Wayne Beachy*





SCALE 0 1 2

EASIVILLE SHORTLINE RR

PAUL RAHAM

A 4' x 8' layout, complete with scenery, for our A.F fans at last! If you want more, let's hear from you.

Let's get out that American Flyer sectional track and try this plan out on the floor just to see how it suits you. This one is simply two ovals, one above the other, connected by two crossovers which form a passing or run-around track. A few industrial spurs complete the layout.

If you wish to get started, and haven't the switches, they could be left out for the present. The main line with its grades could be set up first, and as you acquire the necessary switches, they could be added to suit your operational tendencies.

The smaller, inner oval is raised 4 1/2" above the 0" level and promptly descends via a 3.5% grade to a 2" level in front of the layout. The lower oval climbs to this 2" level via 2.5% and 3.5% grades as shown.

The circled numbers give elevation at that point and also mark the beginning or ending of a grade. Track is shown in 10" sections except where short pieces must be cut to fit. (A Zona saw will make this

an easy job). A.F. uncouplers are represented with rectangular blocks and these have been placed for best utilization. Switching should be interesting due to the back to back spur arrangements and will necessitate the use of the passing track.

I have attempted to dress this layout up with my own version of a small lazy town called "Easiville". The underpass beneath Main Street should provide some fine scenic possibilities with the cut following that ascending grade around the curve.

Plasticville buildings should fill the bill and still leave enough scratch building to get experience. Stewart street details; Stewart, NASG, and Herald plastic figures; Winross trucks, and many items now available should give the Brass Hat of the E.S. railroad many an hour of detailing after he has completed his trackwork and small town. It's fun to use your imagination --- try it!

• ANNOUNCEMENT •

Looking for anyone interested in an S Club for the Oklahoma City area. Please contact:

Oklahoma Railroad Club c/o

Milton Obuch

1515 NW 32nd

Oklahoma City, OK 73118-3403

Ph: (405) 528-5646 / Email: wiz83053@swbell.net

That's Entertainment

Lookout Junction

by John Eichmann
Coordinator, Rocky Mountain
Hi-Railers

"Look Out!" That cry, which can strike fear into the hearts of model railroad layout operators, usually immediately precedes a front-page rail disaster, evoking the image of locomotives plowing into each other with cars derailling and circuit breakers popping.

While the very thought of such a disaster can make a toy-train collector break out in a cold sweat, it seems to have the opposite effect on audiences fortunate enough to witness the carnage.

"Way cool! Awesome! Do it again!," shout some of the younger set.

This is the story of one such layout and an S-gauge club located in Idaho's Treasure Valley, below the foothills to the northern Rocky Mountains, is Lookout Junction, a 21' x 25' portable hi-rail layout. Entrusted to the care of the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers, based in Boise, this relatively young S-gauge display has been entertaining folks at train shows and special events in Idaho since its debut in 1996.

The unique signature of Lookout Junction is a custom-made double crossing, where two pair of mainlines join to present the possibility of two trains trying to occupy the same space at the same time. Operators must remain alert at the

throttle, pacing their trains through this junction to avoid a collision. Usually, there's plenty of room; occasionally, there's a thrilling near-miss; and rarely, there's a wreck, especially if the operators have been distracted for some reason. That's when the cry of "Look out!" can make older men leap like high-school athletes to kill the power on three transformers. No questions asked. Just shut everything down.



Operating Lookout Junction at a train show are (left to right) Shane Jibben, John Eichmann, Steve Blackburn and Boise Mayor Brent Coles.

But when Lookout Junction is powered up, it is full of action, and both the public and other modelers enjoy the experience of constant movement, noise, color, and excitement. In voting by the public, it has received the People's Choice Award at the NMRA-sponsored Treasure Valley Train Show (TVTS) each of the four years it has been entered in the competition. One of the largest shows of its kind in the West, the TVTS draws train exhibits and model railroad layouts in six scales from through-

out Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Utah. In voting by model railroaders, it was also awarded the Best of Show in 1999, and, during "Northwest 2000," the NMRA Pacific Northwest Region Convention, it repeated as Best of Show, arguably making it the Best in the Northwest for 2000. Incidentally, it has been the only S-gauge layout displayed at these shows.

The brainchild of Dr. Greg Lewer, who, with John Eichmann, co-founded the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers in 1995, Lookout Junction is unlike most other model railroad layouts displayed at shows.

Originally designed as a simple oval with two American Flyer mainlines surrounding an operating pit, it was altered into a figure-8 when Greg made the double junction out of four American Flyer 725 crossings. He had seen a photograph of an actual prototype double crossing in a train magazine, so he got out his hacksaw and began to tinker. The club was easily sold on the idea of more excitement, and Greg then proposed the addition of a second level with a

single loop, whose tabletops would be mounted over the two empty spaces created by the figure-8. The gap over the junction would be spanned by bridges, making this upper loop a dogbone.

In an effort to keep the layout fresh and interesting from year to year, the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers embarked on a radical expansion in 1998. The layout tables were stripped down to their frames and rebuilt, extensive wiring harnesses were installed, and the layout's size

was increased by 75 percent with the addition of a third major section, making a total table surface of 331 square feet plus an operating pit. The trademark double crossing was retained, and two more bridges were constructed to connect the second and third upper tables. Over 324 feet of track has been laid in the three loops and their sidings and spurs. Last year saw the completion of a 36-foot, 1.75-percent passing grade connecting the upper level to the lower. Remote 720A switches at the outer ends of the upper loop afford the option of taking a train down a ramp, crossing a drop-down bridge over the access aisle to the operating pit (complete with automatic kill switch when open), and climbing back to join the upper loop on the opposite side of the layout. These ramps are constructed with clear Lexan "guardrails" to afford some measure of security from the long drop to the floor.

The design of Lookout Junction does not match any prototype railroad, nor is it super-detailed; it relies instead on general groupings of structures and accessories such as Plasticville, Olde Towne, farm country, and industrial areas. The intent has always been simple: to present an entertaining layout to the public, similar to what might have been seen in a 1950s department store toy-train display. While most of the motive power and rolling stock is vintage American Flyer, it is being joined in increasing numbers by S Helper Service, American Models, Crown Models, and other S-gauge hi-rail trains. Track is nearly 100 percent Flyer, with a few short sections of GarGraves.

The public has responded overwhelmingly to the entertainment provided on Lookout Junction, as evidenced by its People's Choice Awards. Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers prefer to run a variety of American Flyer steam locomotives with smoke, choo-choo, and, in the

case of American Models' Pacifics, steam whistles. But there's always room for a long LTI Pony Express ABBA passenger train with its diesel sounds, and occasionally a couple of S Helper SW-9s will double-head a freight consist.

Operating accessories, though, are the real crowd pleasers. Perhaps the simplest and the most popular is the AF 918 Mail Car and Mailbag Pickup Stand. The public never seems to tire of watching the exchange of bags, and audience members are often recruited to catch the bags as they come flying off the upper loop. The 779 Oil Drum Loader, the 787 Log Loader, and as many as three 771 Stockyards also provide animation difficult to find in smaller-scale layouts. On order are the new AF accessories from Lionel - the Sawmill, the Coal Loader, and Gabe the Lamplighter-which will join a 775 Baggage Loader, Bubbling Water Towers, Revolving Aircraft Beacons, Whistling Billboards, a Diesel Horn Billboard, Highway Flashers, and Semaphore Sams for lights, sound, and action. Lookout Junction is not boring.

Another unusual feature of Lookout Junction is the absence of barricades or ropes to restrict the public's access to the layout. Audiences are welcome to crowd directly up to the tables and smell the smoke of a passing steamer or to push one of the three whistle buttons. The public has responded with respect for the layout, and they seem to enjoy being right on top of the action. Tiny fingers wrapped over the protective lip on the tables is a common sight as youngsters stand on tiptoe to stare directly into the headlight of an oncoming locomotive, passing inches from their wondering faces.

An audience member once commented that the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers really understand showmanship, and the action on Lookout Junction has even

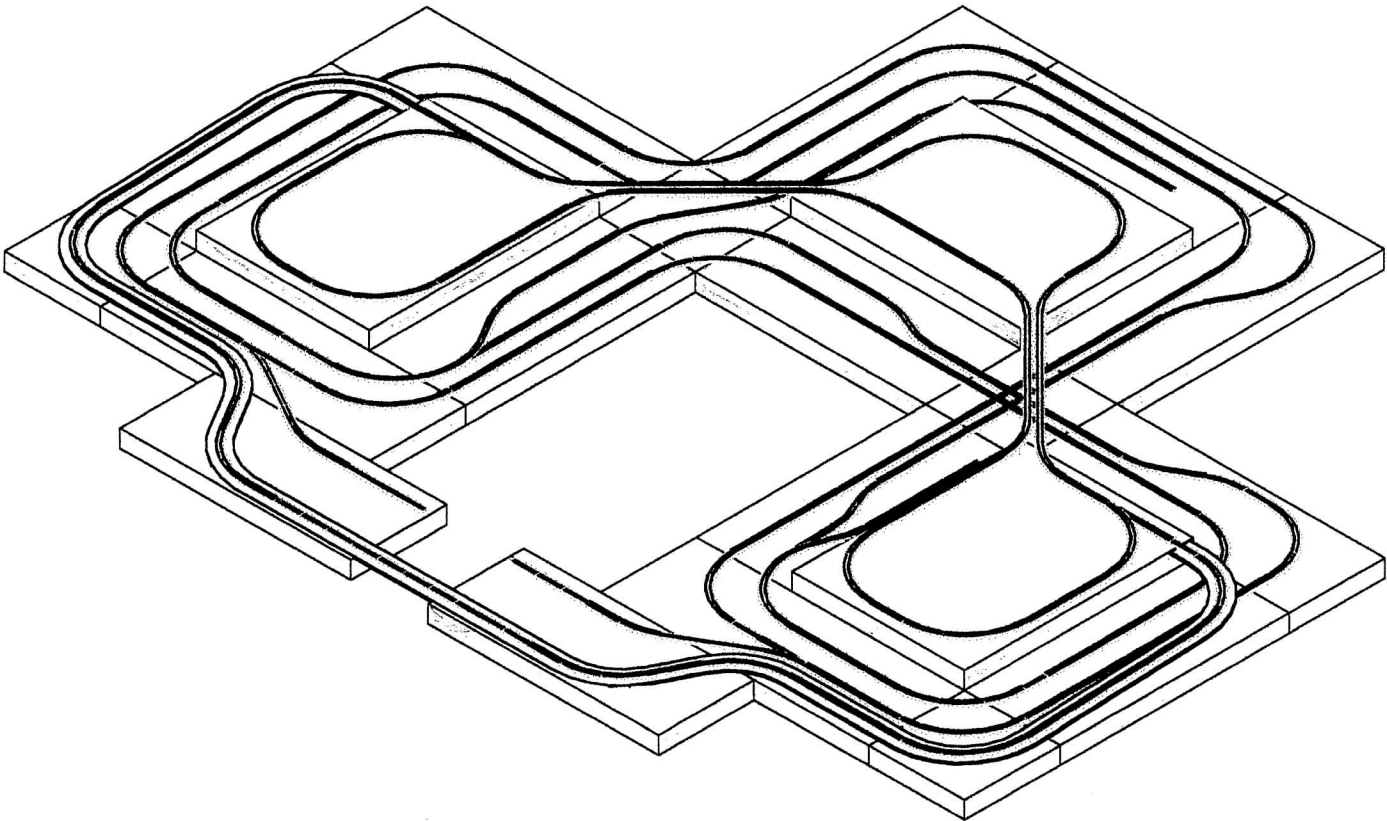
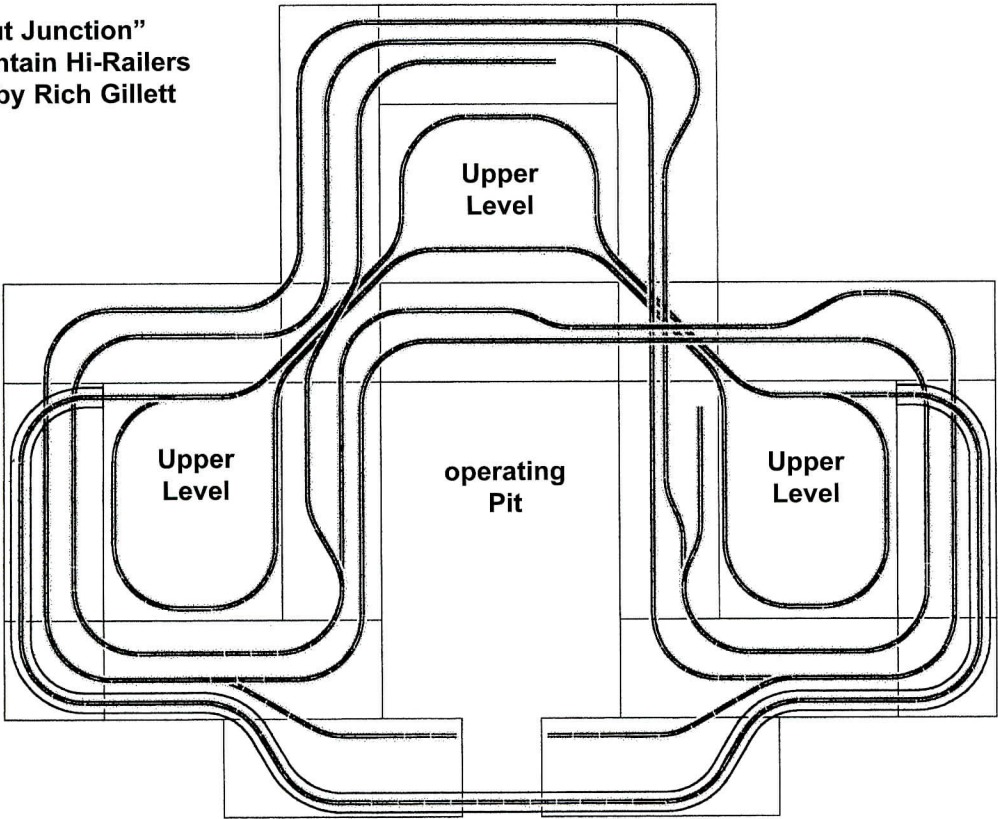
prompted spontaneous applause as groups of people are moved from one accessory demonstration to another. "Make something happen" is the operational credo of the club.

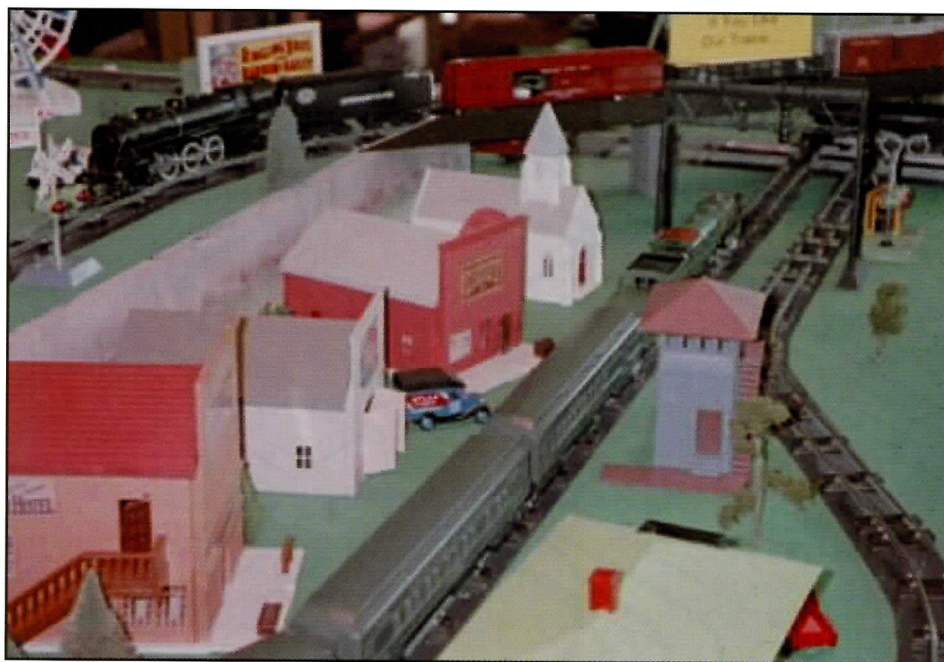
Lookout Junction was the featured attraction in 2001 at the Boise Depot 76th Anniversary Celebration, and drew such crowds that the City of Boise extended a permanent invitation to display it every year in the beautiful old facility.

This year will see the inclusion of a scratch-built eight-stall roundhouse and turntable as the latest addition to the layout, and the club is busily working towards its design and installation in time for the annual Boise Toy Show in November.

The impact of the layout on local model railroading has been very rewarding, and "S" has finally been accepted as a legitimate option to the more common scales. The layout setup always includes a table with plenty of "S" literature, NASG publications, and a sign-up sheet for new members. Prominently displayed above the layout is a large "S Gauge" sign, from which are suspended the club's many award ribbons. Promotion and recognition of our scale at shows are almost as important as the trains themselves. We are convinced that the key is to display at every opportunity, and believe that any club or group of S gaugers without a portable layout should get to work to put one together to share with the public, and then vigorously search out venues to display. A beginning layout doesn't have to be huge; a simple oval is a great starting place, and it will grow, along with the interest. Trust in the ability of the scale to sell itself, but give it some help. Always keep in mind the cardinal principle that, like any form of theatre, the layout must be exciting.

“Lookout Junction”
Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers
Drawings by Rich Gillett





Two scenes on the Lookout Junction layout. Top is an overall view of the layout showing the two levels. Bottom is a scene showing the double crossing under the bridge. Note how Ertl and Plasticville buildings fit in with the Flyer station in the bottom photo.

The Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers have grown along with their layout, and now have members in all corners of Idaho. It's a large state, but our more distantly located members are still able to make the occasional day-long journey to Boise to be with us at shows. Like all Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers, they're committed to the goals of our club: to promote S-gauge model railroading; to form a network of support with fellow S gaugers; and to have fun!

And what could be more fun than entertaining the public with S-gauge trains?

[For information about the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers and Lookout Junction, contact John Eichmann, Coordinator, 2963 Ithaca Ave., Boise, ID 83709, e-mail: number22.id@netzero.net.]

A COLORFUL FALL S FEST



Tom Boldt of Lapeer, MI, took 1st place in the master craftsman kit and converted category at the recent Fall S-Fest in South Beloit, Illinois, with this AB D&RGW passenger F3 set. The A unit is a detailed Wabash Valley unit, and the B unit is an American Models B unit. Tom custom painted the units and added Overland fuel tanks and side tank plus many SouthWind detail parts. The AM Baldwin S-12 took 2nd place kit and converted for Tom as well. SHS safety handrails and correct marker light brackets are among some of the added details. Decals are from River Raisin.

photos by Jeff Madden

Below is an actual operating GM Aerotrain running on the CHASM hi-rail layout (Chicago area) which was displayed at the Fall S-Fest. The Aerotrain is available from American Hi-rail. There are only a few painted versions available. See the cover for another photo and the S station available from the TCA.



FIXIN' FLYER

By David Dewey

Christmas Gift List

This issue's article is a bit different--leave it around for your gift buyers and maybe you'll find something neat under your tree! Recently some new products have come out to help us repair our Flyer, and some that can inspire us to do more stuff with them.

A. C. Gilbert's Postwar American Flyer S-Gauge Reference Manual by Robert A. Hannon isn't your usual listing of parts, etc. It is a nearly complete breakdown of all the electrical components containing coils that ACG used. The information is very complete, including full-sized color photos of each piece. These pictures help in identifying the part you have lying in the bottom of your project box. I find this book to be handy for both the casual repairer and the hardcore "rewind it myself" enthusiast. The casual repairer can use it to confirm the correctness of parts found in his/her equipment. It will also allow one to test each piece with an ohmmeter and compare the readings to the factory specifications.

If you like to really get involved with your trains, there is enough information to allow you to rewind pieces with confidence that you are using and applying the right size and quantity of wire.

The book is available through some suppliers or directly from Mr. Hannon via the website <http://www.trainrefs.com> or mail via: Robert Hannon, 11513 Crows Nest Road, Clarksville, MD 21029. List price \$24.95.

Now for those who are tired of "reading all about it," there are a number of new products. For the computerized hobbyist, there are two CDs on American Flyer. One

is mostly a copy of ACG repair sheets, the other has both catalog pages, photos, and the repair sheets.

The American Flyer Service Manual CD, from studeolet@aol.com, is a series of scans in the Adobe Acrobat format. Besides the repair sheets and exploded drawings, there are photographs of some pieces. A few of the pages are illegible, and the scans (on my copy at least) were not cleaned up, so some detail is lost. However, it is handy for printing out a "fact sheet" to use in the shop that you don't have to worry about getting dirty! Price on this CD varies; retail approximately \$19.95.

The American Flyer Interactive CD is very similar, but has more photos and some sounds. The repair guide scans are very similar to the previously reviewed CD: useable, but difficult to read. Mr. Henshaw has just released an updated version of this CD, containing (according to his ads) "an original American Flyer Catalog from the late 1950's which contains American Flyer's complete line of toys," and a "1955 Catalog (also offered on Volume one but rescanned for better clarity)." The new release also contains "A wonderful 1952 64-page instruction book with searchable text, including a whole bunch of individual vintage instruction guides." This CD is available at \$14.95 plus shipping from: <http://www.frontier-trading.com/> or by mail: Dave Henshaw - 13459 108th Ave NE - Kirkland, WA 98033.

Just out for Christmas is a 3-pack videotape of S gauge trains by Steve Blackburn. Steve did the first tape because of complaints on the S-Trains group site that there were no new S gauge videos. The first one proved so popular that a second quickly followed, with a third already in production. These tapes record the complete range of S railroading, from "on the floor"

to "scale." There are some shots of now-gone historical S layouts as well. Great ideas abound on these tapes as well as inspiration. The Christmas-time three tape set is \$36 (I don't know how great tape 3 is as it isn't out yet, but 1 and 2 are great!). E-mail: Boss31@aol.com or Phone 6-10 PM Mountain Time (208) 376-1159. Snail Mail: SnS Trains, 10504 Fairview Ave. Boise, Idaho 83704.

SnS is also the manufacturer of the can motor drop-in replacement for AF steamers. We will cover these in a future column as an option to rebuilding a burnt-out motor.

We here at the Dewey household wish you and yours Happy Holidays!

Flyer Tip-o-the-Month

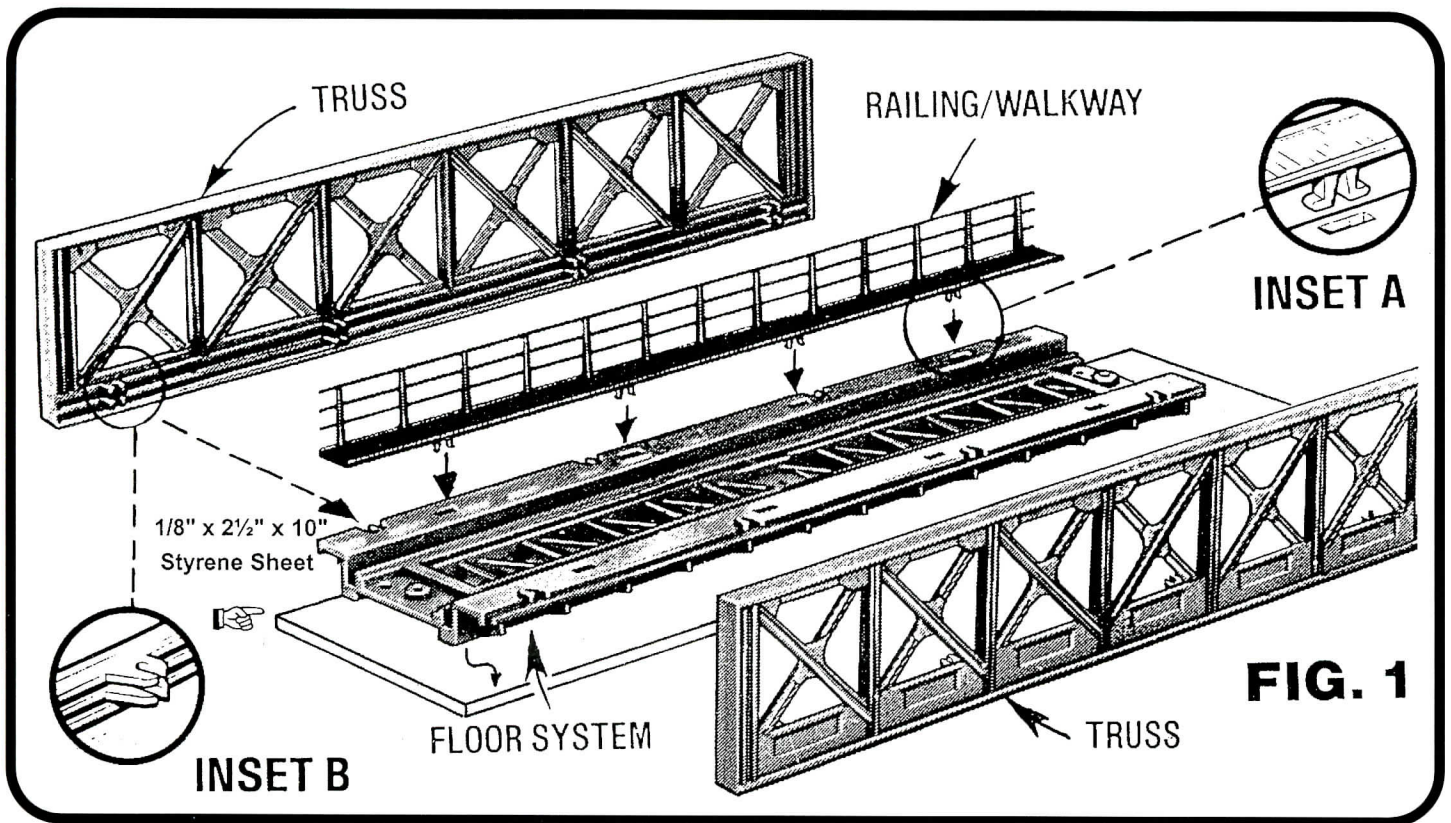
When repairing three-axle steam locos, remember to replace the side rods with the small bump near their center hole to the rear of the engine. This bump represents a pinned joint on the prototype and is an easy way of noting the correct way to assemble them to the locomotive. While they will fit the other way, the end holes are different--the rear holes are round, the front ones oblong (No, that isn't wear, although wear will make them even more oblong!).

As always, your thoughts, suggestions, or questions are always welcomed. You can contact me at djdewey@cncnet.com or at 3435 Myers St. Oroville, CA 95966. Have fun with your trains!



Modifying an *ATLAS* HO Pony Truss Bridge for S-Gauge

A relatively quick and easy project



- Step 1. Buy an *ATLAS* HO Pony Truss Bridge. This bridge will span a 9" opening. I bought one for \$8.50 at a train show.
- Step 2. Using your trusty razor saw, carefully remove the center section (cross bracing XXXXXX) of the floor system. Sand flat the remaining side pieces.
- Step 3. Take a piece of 1/8" thick styrene plastic sheet, cut to 2½" x 10", and glue the bottom of the side pieces to it as indicated above. The 2½" width provides an opening that will fit GarGraves track. The 10" length gives you an extra half inch of sheet at both ends of the bridge for mounting.
- Step 4. Paint the styrene sheet, and the bridge parts if you want to, and then install the truss sides and railing/walkway.
- Step 5. Install the bridge on your layout and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Dan De Santis - South Jersey S-Gaugers - April, 1998

A Little More on: Russell Morris Mobley (1932-2001)

In 1938, Russ Mobley promised his mother that he'd stop sucking his thumb if she would buy him a train set. Since that time, Russ has done many things. He started as an A&P bag boy, spent 21 years in the United States Air Force, and drove an 18-wheeler semi, among other things. He has lived in Texas, Ohio, Alaska, and Georgia.

In 1965, when the NASG was only five years old, Russ was designated by General Director Bernie Thomas to manage the round-robin letter "circuits." Upon Bernie's sudden death a month later, Russ became the third General Director of the NASG. Russ served until 1970, when Ed Schumacher took over. Since then, Russ had been a tireless NASG booster, introducing S gauge to kids, developing and marketing "Amity Star" kits, and promoting S through many different venues.

Russ was profiled in the *Augusta Chronicle/Augusta Herald* (Georgia), Sunday, Nov. 7, 1982; in the Nov. 1982 issue of *Rural Georgia*, the official publication of Georgia Electric Membership Corp.; and in the Oct. 1994 issue of *S/Sn3 Buyers' Guide*.

After Russ died this past summer, the NASG decided to honor his contributions to S by naming the newly-created NASG Library after him.

For more information on Russell M. Mobley, the Russell M. Mobley Memorial Library can furnish copies of the profiles cited above. The NASG Library site also contains a five-part history of the NASG, where you can read about Russ's years as head of the NASG in Part 2.

RUSSELL M. MOBLEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Russ Mobley, ex-General Director of the NASG, died in August 2001. In his honor, the Russell M. Mobley Memorial Library was established in September 2001, with NASG life member Dick Karnes as its first Librarian.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Russell M. Mobley Memorial Library and Archive is to create and maintain the physical artifacts of S gauge history (models, photographs, references, publications, electronic media, etc.), to provide NASG members with time-limited access to these artifacts, and to disseminate copies of paper and electronic artifacts as requested. The term "S Gauge" refers to railroad and railroad-related models, including toy/tinplate, hirail, and scale models in all gauges modeled in 1:64 ratio.

Current Offerings

Currently, the Library is able to offer the following services:

Index and key-word searches in the following periodicals:

- NASG *Dispatch*, Summer 1985 through Dec. 2000
- *S Gaugian*, 1980-99
- *S/Sn3 Buyers' Guide/Modeling Guide*, 1993 to cessation of publication
- *Sn3 Modeler*, 1984 to present
- *3/16 "S"cale Railroading*, all issues (1989-1992)

Printed or e-mail extracts from the following:

- NASG *Dispatch*, Summer 1985 through Dec. 2000
- *3/16 "S"cale Railroading*, all issues (1989-1992)
- *A.C. Gilbert's Postwar American Flyer S-Gauge Reference Manual*, first edition (devoted to motors, and actuators in locomotives, rolling stock, and accessories), Robert A. Hannon, CrowsNest Publishing, Clarksville, MD, 2001.

· Article on Russ Mobley in the *Augusta Chronicle/Augusta Herald* (Georgia), Sunday, Nov. 7, 1982

· Article on Russ Mobley in the Nov. 1982 issue of *Rural Georgia*, the official publication of Georgia Electric Membership Corp.

In addition, complete indexes for the following are available:

- *3/16 "S"cale Railroading*, all issues 1989-1992, \$1.60 including postage; free on e-mail
- NASG *Dispatch*, Summer 1985 through Dec. 2000, 19 pages, \$3 including postage; free on e-mail

Notices will appear here as additional resources become deliverable.

When you request service, please include the following information:

- Your full name
- Your address (e-mail or USPS)
- Your NASG membership number
- As precise a description as possible of what you are seeking
- If requesting via e-mail, please place your NASG membership number in the "subject" field. This will distinguish your e-mail from viruses and spam.

You will be charged 10 cents a page (plus postage, minimum of 50 cents, if ordered via USPS). A bill will be enclosed with your fulfilled request.

Please send requests to:

Dick Karnes
4323 86th Ave. SE
Mercer Island, WA 98040-4124
karnesrn@earthlink.net

As far as *Dispatches* go, Dick needs most of the early ones, Vol 1, No. 1 thru Vol. 8, No. 2. Let Dick know if you can contribute these or anything else such as early *S Gaugians*, *Heralds*, catalogs, etc.. - Jeff

The Straight & Narrow

By David L. Heine

News and Reviews on the Narrow Gauge Front

Curves, Grades, Clearance, and Rail

This time I will try to answer some of the questions that repeatedly are asked on curves, grades, clearance, and rail.

Curves

Curves are always a compromise on a model railroad. The larger the radius, the better things look and the better they operate; the shorter the curve radius, the more track that will fit in an area. Since sharper curves are one of the inherent advantages of narrow gauge railroads, we are generally better off than the standard gauge modelers.

Prototype railroads measure curve in degrees, which is based on the angle of the curve section that a 100' chord subtends within the curve. Model railroaders talk about radius so the geometry must be done to convert between the two. The formula for S scale is:

$$R = 75 / (8 * \sin (A/2))$$

Where R = radius in inches for S scale; A = degrees of curvature for the prototype

A typical minimum design curvature for an early narrow gauge railroad was 24 degrees. The sharpest curve on the D&RGW narrow gauge was a 25 degree 30" curve between Marshall Pass and Gunnison. This corresponds to a 42" radius in S. However, the Uintah, also in Colorado, had a 66 degree curve over Baxter Pass, and this was after it was straightened when they purchased their articulated locomotives. Previously they had used Shays for the portion of the mainline over the pass. This

corresponds to 17" in S, which most modelers would consider very sharp. Of course, different equipment was operated on these two lines.

The general consensus among Sn3 modelers has been that a minimum radius of 30" - 32" will allow anything to be operated and will still look good. My own personal layout has a minimum mainline radius of 30", and I have not had any problems with using this radius. However, if you only plan on operating smaller or geared motive power, you could easily use a smaller minimum radius, such as 24" or even smaller if needed.

Grades

An early maximum grade design standard for narrow gauge railroads was 4%; so typical model railroad grades can easily be justified. The Uintah actually had a grade of 7.5% on its mainline over Baxter Pass, but this was an exception to the norm. Logging railroads could have grades in excess of 10%. 25% is the maximum grade for steel wheels on steel rails, and that is with all wheels driven under ideal conditions.

As grades become steeper, the loss of pulling power increases greatly. On my personal layout, my maximum mainline grade is in the range 3.5%. This has worked fine for myself.

Clearance

Narrow gauge model railroads may need more clearance along the right-of-way than one might first believe. There are several reasons for this. The first reason is that narrow gauge locomotives and rolling stock tends to be wider in relation to the track gauge than

standard gauge equipment. This is one of the reason narrow gauge yards have a more "spread-out" look than standard gauge yards.

Motive power creates most of the clearance problems. Outside frame steam locomotives, like the popular D&RGW 2-8-2's, cause problems because their cylinders are so wide. The D&RGW K-37 2-8-2's require significant clearance. The D&RGW shops built them by taking a boiler from a standard gauge 2-8-0 and placing it on a new 2-8-2 outside frame. This means that the width is the same as the former standard gauge locomotive. On the tenders, they kept the same trucks and just installed new wheelsets with the wheels gauged to 3' on axles of standard gauge length. Essentially, this was the standard gauge tender with the wheels pushed in to 3' gauge. If you ever want to run one of these, you essentially will need to plan for standard gauge clearances.

Some narrow gauge railroads also ran some standard gauge equipment on narrow gauge trucks. The East Broad Top is famous for this from 1933 to the end of its life, but this practice was actually more common in the early days of narrow gauge railroads. A standard gauge car on 3' gauge trucks had an overhang of about three feet on either side of the rails.

In conclusion, if you ever want to run any of the wider equipment, check your clearances to confirm that they are sufficient.

Rail Size

On the prototype, rail is rated in pounds per yard. In the early days of narrow gauge, smaller rail was used, such as 30 lbs/yd or less. In some cases, this was upgraded to heavier rail, such as 60 lbs/yd.

In S common rail sizes works out to the following approximate rail weights:

Rail Size	Weight (lbs/yd)
-----------	-----------------

Code 40 25
 Code 55 40
 Code 70 65
 Code 83 85
 Code 100 110

Code 70 and Code 55 are the most commonly used rail sizes in Sn3 and commercial flextrack is available in both rail sizes. The choice is yours, but some modelers use Code 70 for the mainline and Code 55 for sidings. It is possible to spike Code 55 to wooden ties, but the only spikes I have found that will work are the "Small" spikes from Railcraft. Some modern narrow gauges will need the heavier sized rail.

As always, please write if the mood strikes.

Contributions or comments:

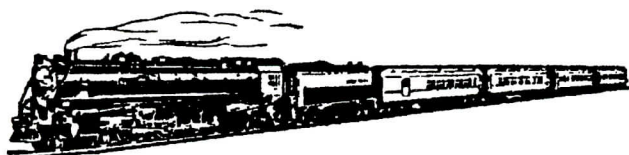
David L. Heine
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 Coopersburg, PA 18036
 dheine@epix.net



This actually is an Ohio River & Western depot for a location known as Hutchison, just west of Beallsville, Ohio. The narrow gauge railroad which ran from Bellaire, Ohio, on the Ohio River to Zanesville, Ohio, was abandoned in 1931. It was supposed to have been restored. Don't know if it ever was. 1965 photo by Jeff Madden.

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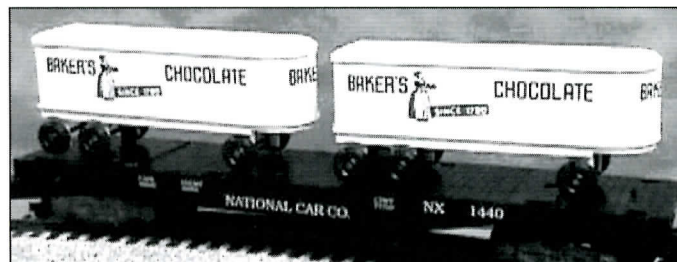
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THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The **Bristol S Gauge Railroaders (BSG)** met at the home of member/president Tom Robichaud, in Fitchburg, MA. in September. The club brought their layout to the Greenberg Train & Dollhouse Show in December, in Wilmington, MA. The show was a two day event, held at the Shriner's Auditorium. The club is the oldest S-Gauge club in America, having started in 1948.

In the interest of expediting the publishing the newsletter, Doug Peck editor has shortened the publication to two to three pages. It is hoped that the newsletter can be published on a more frequent schedule, with a shortened format. The goal is for 8 to 10 issues per year. Time sensitive material will be distributed via e-mail. This will include meeting announcements, and other event notices.

The **Conn. S Gaugers (CSG)** were invited in October to the home of Bill Mark, Jr. and his son, Bill III, who have built a tremendous scale layout with the New York Central as the favored prototype. There were no less than 27 members and friends in attendance, including celebrities Don Thompson and NASG exec. VP. John Foley who attended with his wife Mary, daughter Stephanie, and grandson Colin. The **CSG** brought their modular layout to the Ram Band Cheshire High School Train Show on November 18. Steve Kutash coordinates the modular set up and those members with modules bring them to create a layout. This show is the first one at which the club set up and operated their portable modules some years ago under the direction of the club founder, Bill Krause.

The club welcomed new member

Larry Morton of Hurley, N.Y. Larry is currently building an S layout representing the Reading area in the 1950's and 1960's. The club members that own modules bring them to the club layout set-ups. The plan of club-founder, Bill Krause, was to have each member (or those members that wanted to) have a module, build their own. Each member would own his module. There would be a minimum of club-owned property and the dues would be held to a low level as a result. Over past years time there have been only a small number of the overall club membership who have built or purchased a module from someone who no longer wanted to maintain the module.

Some S gauge clubs have a layout that is owned by the club as joint property. Some clubs have trailers to transport and store the layouts. There are advantages to the several methods of having an S gauge layout. One advantage of having the club own the layout is that all members feel most free to operate and bring trains to display on the layout. No small group of members feels that they control the operations and design of the modules often times to the exclusion of other members. As with many clubs, S gauge included, often times only a few of the overall membership actively participate with the club activity, i.e., building and setting-up the club layout.

The **Canadian S Scale Quarterly (CSSQ)** includes letters and articles from members that are collected by Guy Davis and edited into the newsletter by the editor of the issue. Members take turn editing the newsletter. The club president, Denis Fortier, was featured on the cover of *Plein Jour sur Charlevoix*, a local news-

paper. An 8 x 8 picture of Denis and his S trains was a way that the newspaper featured a local reader's hobby interest. Denis wrote an interesting editorial on the *Model Railroader Magazine's* August issue which featured a description of S scale, as written by editor Andy Sperandio. Denis suggested that a good way to expand the interest in S gauge would be to show off our trains to young kids, and even give them a chance to operate the trains. The **CSSQ** at one time had a portable throttle that would be used to provide the opportunity of operation of their modular layout to young(children) visitors at a show. This was a popular event, and would be announced over the loud speaker by the show management.

Member Joe Pereira coordinates the activities of the **CSSQ**, and Charlie Hicks prints and distributes the newsletter issues. A recent issue included a description of a hi-rail elephant RR car using an old AF caboose and sections of a plastic fruit box as cage lattice. Drawings of the design of Bob Bond, were made by Stephen Sansome. Bob Bond describes himself as an AF operator. He has a layout in a 15 ft. x 17 ft. room with duck-under for access. Originally an AF train operator as a youth, Bob explained how he sold all his trains to an uncle for \$ 50.00 when he went to work in the Artic, in 1952. Bob turned to HO gauge, and built and operated these trains for over forty years. In 1992, Bob realized that he spent more time looking for his glasses than working on the train modules that he was building. He went back to S gauge and now has a layout upon which he operates his trains. Club member Ron Aboussafy is a skilled model craftsman who has built many S scale locos. Some described in the recent club newsletter include a PRR L-1 2-8-2 steam loco using SSL & S 63" drivers and chassis under an AF K-5 boiler. Jim Smith of Eganville, Ont. described the

use of bark from hardwood logs for model rock cliffs. The bark is glued in place and can be painted with almost any kind of paint or left natural. Jim suggested doing an annual review of gauge, scale, AF track, high rail, and scale track. This would be useful to new and prospective members and those considering using S gauge as their modeling scale.

The club mourns the death of member Al Meacham, of Winnipeg. He was an S gauger from the beginning of S and had a layout in his home. Al was described by Ted Turczak in the newsletter as having an easy going personality and fun loving attitude. He supported many non-profit RR organizations, and had a love of railroads.

The Western N.Y. S Scale Assoc. (WNYSSA) met at the home of Harold Morath in September. Gregg Mummert coordinates the group. They were requested by NASG Exec. VP. John Foley to consider building or assembling a layout that could be brought to the Toronto, Canada NMRA convention to be held in the year 2003. Member Bud Rindfliesch held the October meeting of the group at his home in Hamburg, N.Y. Bud is a scale modeler. The WNYSSA members attending the meeting could attend the TTOS Train Show at the McKinley Park Inn and meet at Bud's house for the meeting in the afternoon. Ron Kemp will tentatively hold the December club meeting at his home. The club is considering a display of S gauge at the Summit Park Mall with the Niagara-Orleans Model RR Club. The Niagara-Orleans club has open houses to operate their layout in October, November, and December.

The Rochester Area S Gaugers (RASG) met at the home of Mike Shea in October. The club brought their layout to the train show at the Batavia Downs Race

Track on Nov. 11, and another show at the Finger Lakes Race Track on Nov. 18, 2001. The latter show was on Sunday but the club was allowed to set up their layout on Saturday. The RASG has an S scale MTH sawmill on order, which can be used on the club layout displays. Member Chuck Smith is checking out the possibility of purchasing a used trailer to carry and store the club layout modules in. There might be a good used trailer available from Nyle's Haulmark Trailer Sales in Fairport, N.Y., a local trailer sales and rental company.

The North Penn S Gaugers (NPSG) modular layout has grown to 14 straight and four corner modules. Using all these modular units, a space of 28 ft. x 32 ft. or 20 ft. x 40 ft. would be required for display and operation. The club will set up their layout at the Greenberg show at the Fort Washington Expo Center on Dec. 8, 9, 2001. NPSG member Mike Berus has 5 modules, including 2 cross over units, 2 siding units, and one stone arch bridge unit. Joe Bolsar has one module, which has a freight/passenger station. Norm Lepping has three modules consisting of a wood truss bridge, bridge approach, and siding unit. Ray Nase has a module depicting a small town with the Branford Diner and a siding with a lumber loader. Mike Pragheimer has made a circus display on his module unit. Glenn Ritter has a module depicting the North Penn Transfer trucking company. Batty Simpson has a unit which can be set up as a Christmas village scene or a lumber company. John Sinn is developing a module with a bridge over a marshland.

Straight modules are built to a plan which appeared in the Feb., 1998 NASG *Dispatch*, as made by the Rochester Area S Gaugers (RASG). The NPSG was invited to the Family Heritage Train Show, to be held on Jan. 25, 26, 2002. They are also planning to bring

their modular layout to the next Greenberg Show in Fort Washington at the Expo Center, which would be in early February.

The Potomac Valley S Gauge Assoc. (PVSGA): Members Bill Oertly and Tom Riddle brought, set up and operated a smaller modular layout at the Great American Train Show in Richmond, VA. on August 18, 19. Sam Powell held sessions at his home in October and November to further improve the club modules and prepare for the next display of a layout. Sam was the brass hat of probably one of the finest S scale layouts in the eastern part of the country, the Penn Creek Valley. Dan Vandermause is planning to have a meeting of the club at his house in December to further plan the showing and preparation of the PVSGA modular layout for future showings. Member Dick Cataldi will have the club at his house for the January meeting. Plans are to display the club layout at the Great Scale Model Train Show to be held in Timonium, MD. on Jan. 26, 27, 2002. The club has been considering having a place where S gaugers could meet and socialize between the two days of the show. The club uses e-mail to discuss various subjects and arrange activities. Bill Oertly submitted information on the club activities and planned program.

The Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC) met at the home of Bob Davison in October in Jarrettsville, MD. The club displayed their layout at the TTOS Show in Earleigh Heights, MD. in October. The club met at the home of member David Avedesian in November in Rockville, MD. Two club displays of their layout were made in November, at the Hartly, DE, Train & Toy Meet; and the Greater York All Train Show, in York, PA. Four members of the BAAFC brought modules to the All Toy Train Show in Richmond, VA, on Nov. 17. The show was sponsored by the Atlantic Coast S

Gaugers (ACSG) and plans included assembling what was proposed to be the largest S gauge hi-rail layout ever assembled. The ACSG show was to benefit the Children's Medical Center at the Medical College of Virginia.

The **BAAFC** has received delivery of their club car, the Saval Reefer. The cars are being distributed to those who ordered them. The aquarium cars have been mostly all distributed. Member Whitey Neiderer is coordinating the ordering of club hats, which can be ordered in three possible color schemes. The club set up their layout at the Timonium, MD, Greenberg Train Show in early December. The club brought their layout to the Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital on Dec. 8, in Baltimore, MD. This is a popular event at the hospital for the children patients, their parents, and staff. The club holiday party is scheduled for Dec. 13, and the layout will be displayed at the TTOS Train Show in Earleigh Heights, MD three days later. Ron Kolb edits the club newsletter and coordinates the activities of the group.

The Suncoast AF Enthusiasts (SAFE) met at the home of Lynn and Marcia Keiter, in September. The hosts have a smooth operating layout and also are hot rod (1 inch = 1 foot) enthusiasts. The S gauge operating layout was enjoyed by club members attending the meeting. The club attended and displayed their layout at the H & R Train Show, held on October 5-7. John Phipps coordinated the display of the modules at the show. A layout was also displayed at the Sarasota Model RR Club Show, held on October 27/28 in the Manatee Civic Center, Palmetto, FL. Mr. Robert Barker of Darby, KS. and sometime resident of Pinellas County, FL. gave a gift of an AF train set to the club. Mr. Barker met **SAFE** club member Barry Laderer at a train show in the Spring and was impressed with the modular layout that the

club had displayed. The club sponsored their own show in early December. Anna Spinella is the club secretary and edits the newsletters. Bob Brown is the Treasurer, and Louis Blithe is President.

The Chicagoland Assoc. of S Gaugers (CASG) are planning for the 2002 S Fest which they will host and organize in the Chicago suburbs. This includes organizing clinics, film room, prizes, a meet S gauge car, patches, and activities for the raiettes. Art Doty reported on his trip this Fall to the two-foot gauge convention, held in Maine. He took the cog railway to the top of Mt. Washington, New Hampshire, where the record for the lowest temperature in the U.S. was recorded. The highest wind speed was also recorded there. The officers of the **CASG** include: Norm Schreiner, Pres.; Joe Taylor, V.P.; Dave Wise, Treasurer; and Rich Gajnak, Officer-at-Large.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (SMSG) met at the home of Jim DeWitt, in Troy, MI, in November. Nominations for club secretary and treasurer were taken. Jim has an operating S scale layout which was enjoyed by the club members attending. Member Dale Baker of Owosso, MI, held the monthly meeting at his home on October 20. The club set up their modular layout at the Lansing Model RR Club's annual Swap Meet and show on Nov. 11, at the Michigan State Univ. Pavilion, E. Lansing, MI. Dale Baker and Gaylord Gill coordinated the display and set-up. The club also displayed their layout at the Southeast Mich. Model RR Flea Market & Show, Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, Ann Arbor, MI on Nov. 25. The **SMSG** held their Dec. meeting at the home of Jerry Poniatowski, in Wayne, MI. on Dec. 16. Brooks Stover plans to have the January meeting at his house where the new layout is being completed. This layout is being described in

the *S Gaugian Magazine*, in a series of articles over a period of several issues.

The **SMSG** club members have been reviewing their activities and meetings over past months and year's time. They have found that the membership has grown to the point where attendance at meetings in members homes is beginning to exceed the capacity practical for home meetings. Alternatives have been discussed, including meeting at a local library, or other meeting facility. Such meetings would mean that meals could not be served, as well as certain other refreshments. The serving of meals at the meetings has evolved over past years time, as the early meetings included only coffee and doughnuts. It was decided by the officers to advise the members that host a meeting that they are not expected to serve a meal. There will be a reduced amount collected from those members attending the meetings so as to offset the cost of the minor refreshments. The host can serve a meal as they might desire, but they are not expected to do so.

The Northern Ohio S Scalers (NOSS) welcomed new member Terry Putt. Terry is a machinist by trade, and he purchased the Rex line of S gauge locomotives and products. He is also re-building a 3-foot gauge (full size) Rogers Brothers steam loco to two foot gauge, so he can operate it on his outdoor layout. Terry held the September meeting of the club at his home, in Orwell, OH. The meeting was an opportunity for the club members to lay real full size two-foot gauge track. Member Bill Hanslick was declared the official spike holder for the operations. The two foot track consists of 30 foot sections of 25 lb. rail laid on standard RR ties cut in half. The October meeting was held at the Lafayette Church, Medina, OH and organized by member John Lanzer. The club held a "clean out the closet" sale-a thon where mem-

bers could sell and purchase items from each other. The meeting also featured a slide show presentation by Ed Manning. Ed is a senior structural engineer for a large engineering company, and he will present slides showing bridges, railroads, tugs, and large ships that work the flats area of Cleveland. Maps were used to support the presentation and locations of the scenes. Gary Ippolito edits the club newsletters and coordinates the activities of the club.

Chuck and Gale Fonda of the **Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers (CVSG)** held the November meeting of the club at Chuck's family home in Cleveland Heights, OH, the house where the early club meetings were held and the club became formulated. The home has been sold and Chuck wanted to have one more meeting for old times sake. An AF layout was set up and there were grab bags for all that attended to help clear out the house. The club displayed all of their layouts at the NMRA Div. 4 Train Show, at the Berea Fairgrounds on October 6, 7 th. The club filled all of the 90 feet of space allotted to them to set up and operate their Hi-rail, AF, and Scale/Sn3 layouts at the show. After the show the layouts were each stored in one of the three trailers that the club has to transport and store the modules. On Sunday, Oct. 14, th the club members took a full size train ride on the W&LE RR, leaving from Bedford, OH, and traveling to near Kent, OH. The club newsletter, the *Lakeshore Special*, is edited by Josh Seltzer, and a recent issue included copies of photos showing the club layout set-up at the Berea Train Show. Lee McCarty is President and writes a column published in the newsletter outlining the club activities and events. The **CASG** Christmas party will be held on Dec. 16 on a train ride on the Cuyahoga Valley Line. The St. Lucie Sound passenger car has been reserved, and buffet type food will be served.

The **Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG)** held their October meeting at the home of John and Sandy Frazier, in Delaware, OH. John has a layout that can run AC or DC power with scale or hi-rail trains. The layout has undergone an upgrading of the trackwork with most AF being replaced by Code .148. On Nov. 17, 18, the club displayed their layout at the NMRA All-Gauge Train Show at the Franklyn County Fairgrounds. Jeff Link coordinated the members working at the show. The November club meeting was held at the home of Art and Janet Lofton, in New Albany, OH. Art sold AF parts to those attending and is in need of same. His extensive AF collection was on display along with his collection of 1/64 scale truck vehicles.

The **COSG** had a rather hectic schedule for display of their modular layout in the month of December. On Dec. 1 the layout was set up at the Marion County Fairgrounds. On Dec. 2, the layout was set up and displayed at the Clark County Fairgrounds for the Springfield Model Train Show. On Sunday, Dec. 9, the modular layout was set up and operated at the TTOS TRain Show, at the Franklyn County Fairgrounds, Hilliard, OH. On Saturday, Dec. 15, the club displayed their layout at the Buckeye RR & Model Train Show, in Columbus, OH. The Jan., 2002 meeting will be held at the home of Rob and Lynn Berridge, in Hilliard, OH. Alan Evans edits the club newsletter, which has recently been distributed on the e-mail circuit, as an attachment.

A newly formed division of the **COSG** is the **Northern Ohio Division**. Monty Kaufman is the co-ordinator of the new division. The group met at the home of Kenny Herman, in Fostoria, OH, in November, and at the Marion County Fairgrounds on Dec. 1. Roger Jensen plans to have the

group at his home for a meeting in January.

The **AF S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area (AFSGSLA)** held work sessions coordinated by Steve LaFata, to prepare their display layout at the Famous-Barr Department Store warehouse. The layout is displayed in the window of the store for the holiday season, and offers the shoppers a good display of our favorite gauge trains. The October meeting of the club was held at the home of Fred Vortmeier, in St. Charles County, MO. Fred has recently moved and his layout has been set up and running after the move. Steve LaFata held the November club meeting at his home, in Fenton, MO. The club brought and set up their two layouts at the GATS Train Show, held on Nov. 24/25 in the Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, IL. Member Barry Dolan coordinated this event, as well as the layout display at the TCA Christmas Train Show, held on Dec. 1 at the Lutheran South High School. Jim Anderson held the December meeting of the club at his home in St Charles, MO, on Dec. 7. Norm and Ione Pilarski are scheduled to have the club holiday party at their home when spouses are invited, on Jan 4, 2002.

Gary Mueller edits the **AFSGSLA** news letter which recently had an article describing the Lionel factory when he visited there in July, after the big auction. Club member Larry Strassburger was at the auction and described the event. Train tooling has been shipped to China, where the manufacturing will take place in the future. The original Gilbert tooling will be used as any S gauge trains are made, but will carry the "Made in China" label. Moe Berk co-ordinates the club activities, and the club dues are paid by participating in and supporting the activities of the club. Its all "Just for the fun of it".

The Badgerland S Gaugers (BSG) held their Sept. meeting at the home of Dave Smukowski, in West Bend, WI. Dave is setting up a small display layout at local swap meets and RR shows. The layout includes three loops of track including two of S-Helper Service (S-Trax) and one AF. The club is searching for rubber roadbed to put under the AF track on the layout. Dick Kloes is coordinating the **BSG** swap meets that are held at the Waukesha Country Fair Grounds. Some of the meets will be in different halls, all at the fair grounds. Arrangements have been made to have a caterer supply food and refreshments at the swap meets. This will relieve the club of the duty to bring and serve food, and the menu will be expanded, so lunch will be available at the meet. Future swap meets will be on Dec. 23, 2001, and in 2002 on Jan. 27, march 17 and April 28.

Gary Children has agreed to serve as the Public Relations Director for the **BSG**. Kim Young has offered to assist Gary with the various responsibilities of the PR position. The October meeting of the club was held at Little A-Merrick-A., a small amusement park with a live steam loop of track. The amusement portion of the park was closed, but a pumpkin train ride was available for the members to ride. Member Steve Lunde is scheduled to have the club meeting at his house in Jan., 2002. Roy Meissner suggested that the club revise their election schedule to have the length of office lengthened to two years instead of the present one year and to eliminate term limits. An updated club patch is now available to members.

The Golden Spike AF Club (GSAFC) held its Summer party at the home of Fred Alles. Members brought something to share for dinner, and good fellowship was enjoyed. The guests operated Fred's layout and enjoyed his AF collection. Members

attending had an opportunity of receiving a prize from the drawings that were held. Prizes included train videos donated by Warren's Train Shop, SHS/AM cars donated at dealer cost by Chad Milne's Boomer Trains, and special kits for repairing couplers and smoke units as assembled by member Eddie Strong. Members made a small donation to participate in the prize drawings. Wayne Broadhead had the October meeting of the club at his home. The club set up and displayed a portable layout at the Utah Train Collector's Assoc. Train-Doll-Toy show in early October. Member Jim Lindsay had the November club meeting at his home. The club was planning a December holiday party, but the details were not available at press time. A recent issue of the newsletter included photos of the club outing to Thanksgiving Point, home of the largest U.S.A. garden RR. Members of the **GSAFC** volunteered to repair sections of track at the outdoor G gauge layout and display. The hosts provided lunch, and the club members contributed their expertise in track repair work.

The Pines & Prairies S Scale Workshop (PPSSW) members visited Dave Jasper's layout in November. Back in 1999 when they hosted the NASG convention in St. Paul, the club convention cars were Pacific Rail Shop S kits and RTR covered hoppers. Amazingly, the kits were in greatest demand. Ken Zieska co-ordinates the club activities. Ken also gives updates on the internet on progress of the **PPSSW** and his own layout. One of the latest tales about his own Minnesota Heartland layout was that he ripped out some wiring trying to get Christmas decorations out from under the layout and had to improvise to get trains running for a meeting.

The Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers (RMHR) met at Sam

Rapp's shop in Boise, ID. to work on their portable layout, named the Lookout Junction. The club is considering the establishment of a web page to advertise their activities, and hopefully obtain new members. In November the club members met at the home of Sam and Debbie Rapp, in Boise, ID. Sam's layout is the Carissa Short Line RR, located in a 22 ft. x 26 ft. building. The layout plan includes walk-in peninsulas, and about 240 ft. of track. Sam runs Digital Command Control (DCC) on the layout.

The club recently took delivery of a Lionel AF sawmill accessory. The unit is to be used on the layout when it is on display. The club plans to have another work session on the layout in January at Sam's shop.

The State-Line S Gaugers sponsored the 26th annual Fall S-Fest in S. Beloit, Illinois in November. The event was packed as usual, and the banquet Saturday night was one of the largest with a great buffet and the traditional Joe McDoak's film. The patch made to resemble a Chicago Great Western logo was exceptional as were the 4 different CGW SHS rebuilt box-cars. The two display layouts were the CHASM hi-rail layout and the CLANG Sn3 one. A highlight was seeing an American Hi-rail GM Aerotrains running on the CHASM layout.

Your column editor wishes to thank those individuals and clubs that send information on their activities as used in this column. Please send your club information or newsletter to: Dave Pool, 11 Bittersweet Trail, Wilton, CT., 06897-3902

EXTRA BOARD

RE-DOING FLYER DISPLAY

Crossroads of America is closed for the season. I am making a major change in my layout. I am tearing it down. Don't fret, I am going to make a new one, bigger and better. The new one will be based on the Mountain division of the White Mountains of New Hampshire. It will be about 100' long and 3' to 4' wide. It will wrap around 3 walls. I am working on Frankenstein Trestle - a big job. - the owner.

NEW LIONEL CHIEF

As of Oct. 15, 2001, Lionel LLC will have another new CEO. He is William L. Bracy previously of Bell Sports. Besides Mattel and Lenox Brands, early on Mr. Bracy was on the financial staff of General Mills and was involved with Lionel. Bracy said, "I'm excited to return to Lionel after 20 plus years..."

DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS:

Steve Blackburn's Volume II video (Oct. New Products) is not \$133, it's only \$13.00. Volume III, which covers the Scranton convention, layout tours and some more Jess Bennett, should be out by now.

John Bell's master craftsman steam loco entry in the NASG convention model contest was incorrectly labeled in the Oct. issue in the chart as an AM Pacific. It was really a scratchbuilt 2-8-2 using an Omnicon 2-8-2 mechanism.

THEFT OF S ITEMS

Many S articles were stolen from the Inland Terminal Model Railroad Club in Lawndale, California sometime between August 8 and August 15. All locomotives and rolling stock are S scale kits, RTR, or converted American Flyer with scale wheels and couplers. Some items you might recognize easily include a 45th Anniversary wall clock with Inland Terminal Model RR on it,

AF Santa Fe PA diesels converted to scale, a heavily weighted converted AF 0-8-0, a 2-6-0 Bullet nose AF engine converted from a Pacific, some HO freight cars re-gauged to Sn3, plus other scale and AF converted freight cars.

The police report is filed with the Los Angeles county Sheriff - No. 401-10085-0334-077. contact Reggie Cunningham at 310-515-6355 or Gale Irwin at 310-326-7040 if you run across any of these.

IDEA #258

The local O scale group just organized a neat way to promote their chosen scale. All the O scale conventions all over the country agreed on a joint advertisement in the major magazines. It is a quarter page in size, lists all known O scale conventions, will run several times and the cost is shared among several (4 or 5) local clubs and organizers. Why not the same thing for S scale? Will somebody actually do something with this idea? Only time will tell.

- Ed Loizeaux

NEW SUNRISE WEBSITE

Sunrise Enterprises has changed their website to include one with both O and S parts. It is: www.sunrisenterprises.com/sreos.html.

- Michael Greene

OTHER CODE FLEX TRACK

Do we need other code flex track? As a historical note, brass code 115 rail was produced by Cleveland Model Products in the late 1930s. We used it on our second CVSGA layout back in 1980 as one of our members had a large stash of it. When looking at well ballasted track with painted rails, I could not say if there is any real visible difference. Our current CVSGA scale layout is code 100 on the standard gauge and code 70 on the Sn3.

On my own home layout I use code 125 on the main lines and code 100 on branch lines, yards, etc. With all of the turnouts, track

etc., available in code 100 and 125 I question if a viable market exists for any other rail size and flex track.

- Josh Seltzer - *Josh is supposedly referring to a request for code 83 products. We also have code 148 in hi-rail. ed.*

LAST CALL TANK CAR

There are less than 50 2001 NASG Gulf tank cars left in inventory according to Lionel/AF Car Project Chairman Doug Peck. Cars are \$49.00 each.

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

- Dec. CTT: 6 page color feature on Mark Edwards fantastic hi-rail christmas layout which operates on fully scenedecked floor modules. Also 1 page article on AF 1959-'60 Christmas flatcar.

Sn2 LIVE STEAMER

An Sn2 live steamer was reportedly seen in a live steam suppliers list. Ed Kompast, Jr., from the UK sells a 1:67.7 scale Welsh 2 foot saddle tanker which runs on N scale track. Reportedly, this is the smallest live steamer sold today. It will pull 2 carriages and a brake van for 7 minutes using alcohol as fuel. Approximate U.S. price is \$1,450.00. Write him at Erlengasse 37, Kottlingbrunn, NO A-5242 Austria.

Email: edkom@utanet.at.

- Dave Heine

DELETE FROM DIRECTORY

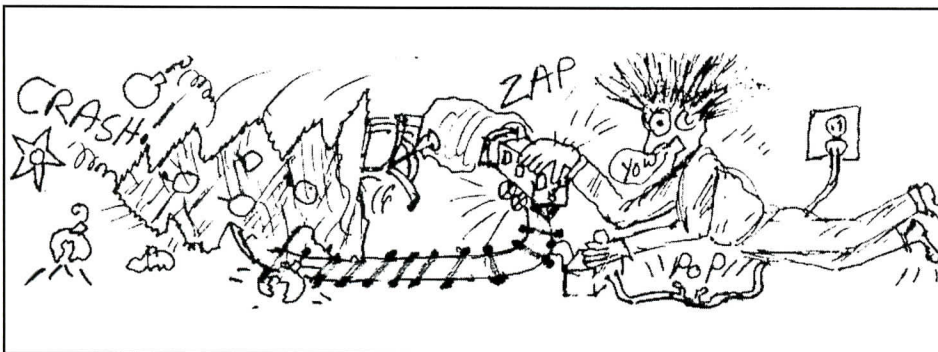
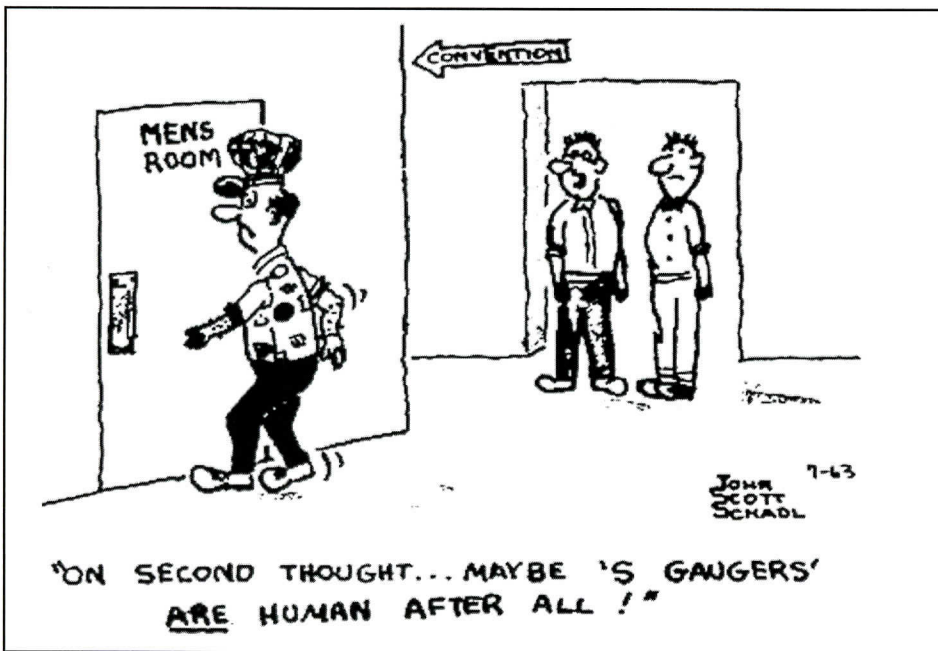
I need to let you know that you should delete the Central Florida S Fellowship from your club list (p.54 of Directory). Bill London left Florida a few years ago to return to New York. I do not think he is still an NASG member - his interests have changed to railroadiana.

- Paul Hartman

SWITCH LIST

Flyer collection for sale as one lot - 350 cars, 7 locos, track, switches, etc. H. M. Richert at 262-789-7334.

S-CALENDAR



I walked into a local ACE Hardware in Waukesha, Wisconsin, near where I work and was surprised beyond belief to see this American Flyer Christmas layout in the front store window. A nearby resident provides the setup.

Photo by Jeff Madden

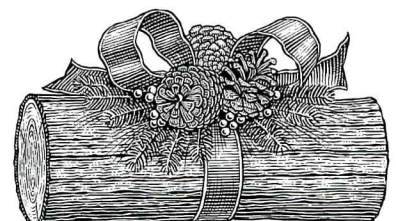
Jan. 26-27, 2002: Great Scale Model Train Show plus the All-American Hi-Rail & Collectors Train Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, Md. There will be S displays and dealers there. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sat., 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Adm. \$6. Howard Zane 410-730-1036, www.gsmts.com.

Feb. 15-16, 2002: 17th Annual Sn3 Symposium, Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, Scottsdale, AZ. Dan Pyzel, 4305 Wellsley Dr., NE, Albuquerque, NM 87107. 505-883-0291.

May 10-11, 2002: Spring S Spree, Historic Manchester Inn, Middletown, OH. Hosted by the Miami Valley S Gaugers. Tour of Cincinnati Union Terminal and S layout planned. Info: John Clifford - 937-836-0286 or e-mail: jclif4@aol.com. Website: www.mvsg.freehomepage.com. Hotel phone: 513-422-5481.

July 31-Aug. 4, 2002: NASG Annual Convention - Holiday Inn Select, Strongsville, OH (Cleveland area) sponsored by the Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers. Registration: Josh Seltzer, 3567 Antisdale Rd., Cleveland Hts, OH 44118. Fax: 216-371-0498 or e-mail: jmssgauger@earthlink.net. www.cvsga.org. Hotel phone: 440-238-8800.

Bids Open for NASG Annual Conventions -- 2003 and beyond. Contact Lee Johnson, 2472 Lariat Ln., Walnut Creek, CA 94596-6635 - 925-943-1590 - e-mail: leemax@jps.net



RAIL MAIL

S Spree 2002: The Miami Valley S Gaugers are sponsoring the Spree this coming year in beautiful downtown Middletown, Ohio, at the historic Manchester Hotel. The club is putting together a field trip to the old Cincinnati Union Terminal station to see the "City in Motion." This is the largest S gauge layout (so we believe) in the USA. The theme of this layout is old Cincinnati and should be a hit with modelers. Estimated cost for the entire layout is around \$1.7 million.

The Middletown historic society will also have a train display at the show and at its location, walking distance from the hotel. The curator will be giving a talk during the show on the historic elements of Middletown transportation, such as canals, trolleys and trains. The show car is a Kahn's reefer (SHS); Kahn's was a meatpacking industry in the Cincinnati area. The old slaughterhouse and stockyards still stand.

- Sam Pellegrino

Any S Gaugers in Northern Jersey? There must be lots of guys interested in S gauge in Bergen, Passaic and Sussex counties in New Jersey, as well as Rockland and Orange Counties in New York. The Central Jersey club is still a hike from up here. I can't believe one never formed in this area. If interested contact me: Jack Bartman, 95 Bergen Ave., Walden, NY 12586 - 845-778-0145.

- Jack Bartman

BC&G Fan: I enjoyed meeting you (Jeff) and some of the other "S" guys at the NMRA convention in St. Louis last summer. The Cuyahoga Valley modular railroad was very nice. I also spent some time with Bill Wade and the SHS people. The highlights of the convention for me were my Operating SIG activities and scouting out the possibility of building my railroad in S. As a fan of the BC&G and the B&O I was thrilled to hear that an E-27 as well as a Q4B are in the works. Also BTS's MA&PA #41 can be made into a good representation of BC&G #4 and #26 looks a lot like BC&G #2. Bill also said that a 2 truck Climax may be in the future. Voila, everything I need for a mid-1920s BC&G railroad. I have been reading the 4 issues of the *Dispatch* that I received at the convention and am favorably impressed with it. I have to say that the 2 article BC&G series that you and Brooks Stover collaborated on a few years back remains one of my favorite articles, so I already had a positive outlook on the *Dispatch*.

- Frank Criswell - *It was nice to meet Frank in St. Louis. We shared our common interest in the BC&G. Gee it almost sounds as if I wrote this myself.* - ed.

Check out the competition: I'm probably being blasphemous, but I get as many good ideas for layouts, tips, scenery, etc., from G, O, HO, N publications as I do from S pubs. Ideas are ideas! I subscribe to *CTT*, *O Gauge Railroad*, *MR*, *Dispatch* and the *NMRA Bulletin*. They're all helpful, and more importantly, fun reading to see what others are doing, no matter what the scale. So what if they're slanted away from S. Can't we all just have fun?

- Dick Kuepper - *I agree, but of course, most of us can't afford to get them all, but I pick and choose among many of those you listed and many more. I look for S articles or ones that relate to prototype modeling I like, track plans, etc.* - ed.

Recent Convert speaks out: Having been a recent convert to "S" scale - 3 years ago, I have been watching people comment about bringing other modelers into S. I just thought I would pass along my comments and observations about the subject. I have been a professional model builder and custom painter for 30 years, and therefore, have had the pleasure of working in just about every scale out there. The reason I made the transition was very simple. I wanted a scale where I did not have to spend countless hours building and superdetailing at least 200 cars and countless locomotives.

At the Kansas City NMRA show I made a bathroom trip from my trade stand, and on the way back passed the SHS booth. A casual glimpse turned into a serious look, and that turned caused my wife to make a birthday purchase of two SHS cars. I have never looked back. What I needed and what S scale has to offer in this modern day and age when time is at a premium are: 1. A wide variety of RTR superdetailed locos and cars. 2. A good selection of kit locomotives, and a fair supply of brass. 3. I don't have to buy as much to fill the same space. 4. Sectional track is available if needed. 5. Easy to install DCC and sound.

What we do need in S is a good professional promotional video with such layouts as the "Columbia Valley", the "Kaw Valley" and Stan Stokrocki's layout. We need RTR locos such as GP38-2, SD40-2, GP50/60, SD7/9 - plastic quality. We need more modern freight cars. These are my feelings overall, even though I model the 50s.

- David Cooke, Classic Trains Plus (over 30 years).

Christmas Train Project: I was reminded a week or so of Pete Hildenbrand's Christmas Train Project. If you are not familiar, Pete takes AF trains and puts together sets for children that might not otherwise have the opportunity to own one, and gives the trains to them at Christmas. Let's make a train Christmas for more children this year - or next. You can contact Pete directly at : djandpete@mindspring.com, or contact me: sbrown56@earthlink.net. - Scott Brown

President's Message cont. from page 4

It would be a great source of material for the *Dispatch*, too. Also, there are lots of moments at the conventions when the SIGs could get together. It would be sort of a "convention within a convention" where those of similar S interests can get together. This is a common occurrence at NMRA conventions. SIGs can also develop and present clinics for everyone and share their specific knowledge with the rest of the members.

Here are some ideas for SIG's:

Operations (OPSIG):

Many of us are interested in prototype operations for their freelanced or prototype layouts. The NMRA has an OPSIG for all scales, but of course HO dominates it.

Layout design and construction (LDSIG):

Similar to the NMRA LDSIG, but for S modelers who are interested in good layout design techniques including modules.

American Flyer Collectors (AFSIG):

AF members complain about minority status in the TCA, etc. Here's our chance to organize.

Narrow Gauge (NGSIG):

We might be able to get more narrow gaugers to join the NASG this way.

DCC/Computers (DCCSIG):

There are many DCC groups out there, but how about things like putting a decoder in an AM Pacific?

There are many other possibilities like SIGs geared to teens, scouting, etc. I hope we can give this serious thought because the potential benefits are great.

HI-RAIL

I'd like to concentrate on a part of S gauge from time to time and discuss some of the specific issues facing it. When Glenn Ritter published the survey results in the Directory issue, one statistic impressed me a lot. In that survey, nearly one third of the NASG members responding said that they were basically hi-railers. In prior polls, S gaugers identified themselves as either AF or scale and few considered hi-rail as a separate category of S. There are many reasons for it, but now a lot of folks say they are hi-railers. This got me to thinking about hi-rail and its place in S.

The growth in hi-rail has given all of S a tremendous boost in the number of products. When S Helper Service cars are purchased, how do they come out of the box - as hi-rail that can be converted to scale and not vice versa. If SHS or American Models is asked, they usually say that the biggest volume of sales is hi-rail versus scale. The same would be true of other manufacturer's cars. Most of the portable layouts set up by our clubs at train shows and other affairs are hi-rail. A good example of this is Tom Robinson's layout.

Incidentally, Tom has replaced Gregg Miller as co-chair of the promotions committee.

If most of the public is interested in hi-rail, it makes it the logical choice in most circumstances. If S ever makes it into the discount stores as cheap sets for young model railroaders; guaranteed it will be hi-rail.

Up until now, I've always lumped hi-rail in with AF. There's nothing wrong with it, but let's really think about that. Hi-rail trucks are the same as the scale trucks, but the wheelsets have slightly larger flanges. This is in complete contrast with the AF trucks and wheelsets. It takes a trained eye to notice the extra flange size. Not so with the coupler. These good looking trucks are anchored to a coupler the same size as the old AF couplers. The couplers are fine with those who want AF trucks and couplers, but look a bit out of place connected to hi-rail trucks. The original ACG design had its place. AF trains were toy trains and aimed at the toy market. Foolproof operation for trains that would be handled by kids was important. However, that huge coupler unfortunately turns off potential converts to S who mistakenly think that all S has to offer is the AF segment.

What is the answer? How about a coupler for hi-rail? Kadee O scale couplers are larger than Kadee S-scale couplers and far smaller than AF couplers. I'm told that they are compatible with both. The NMRA "horn hook" HO coupler solved a serious incompatibility problem back in the 50's and helped pave the way for HO growth. An NASG coupler designed for hi-rail could do the same for S. The difference between scale trucks and couplers and hi-rail would be much slighter.

Hi-rail is not the only way to bring new people into S, but I think that it's the best way overall. It's time to give hi-rail it's due by giving it it's own coupler.

If you like any of these ideas, please let me know so I can discuss them further with the BOT.

- NASG President, Roy Hoffman

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