

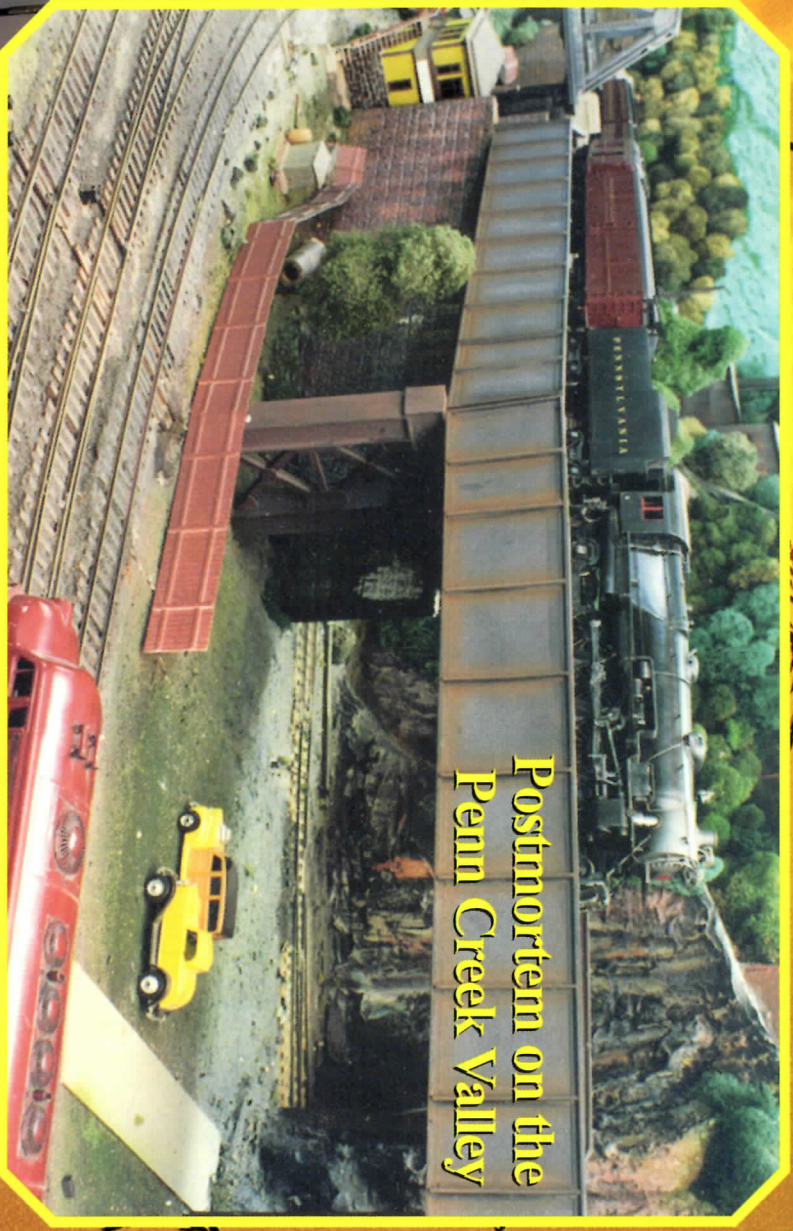
October 2003

Volume XXVI Number 5

\$4.95 U.S.



DISPATCH



Postnorthern on the
Penn Creek Valley



NASG
Switching Layout

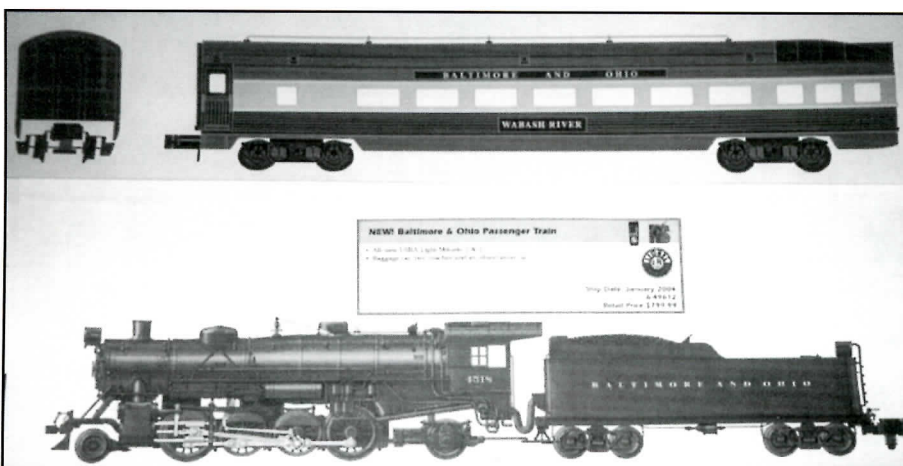
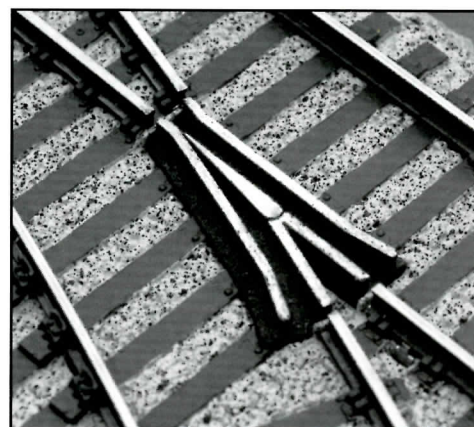
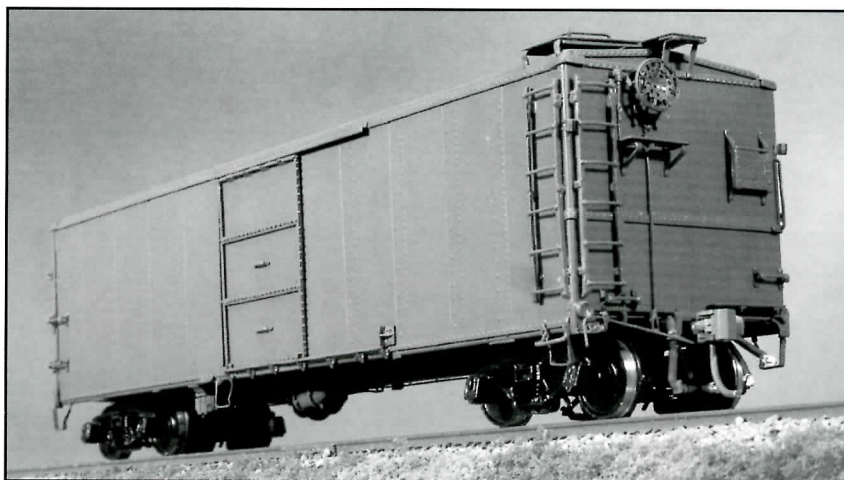


2003 Convention Report

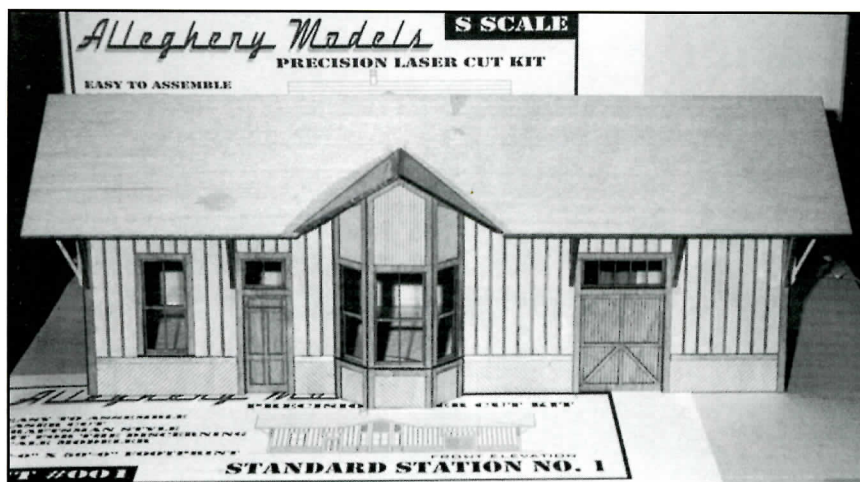
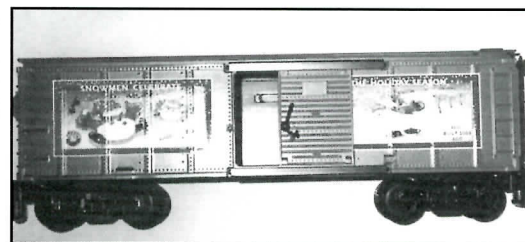
All Aspects of S: Scale • Narrow Gauge • American Flyer • Hi-rail

What 'S' New

Right - is a pre-production model of the brass X-29 boxcar coming from Pennsy S Models. *Below* is the CNJ version of SHS's 2-bay hopper, an offset version. *Far right* - A moveable frog is an improvement in the SHS turnouts.



Left - Artists drawings of the new USRA Mikado coming from Lionel and a view of one of the passenger cars in the matching set. Loco will also be available lettered for NYC. Other roads will come over time. *Below* is the 2003 Christmas box-car. It's a blue car with red, white and blue artwork.



Left - Bert Cutler of Allegheny Models had this sample of the smaller C&O standard depot at the convention.

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.

Jeff Madden
438 Bron Derw Ct.
Wales, WI 53183
262-968-3729
nasgdispatch@hotmail.com

NASG membership runs from July through June, including all **Dispatch** issues for the membership year, irrespective of enrollment date. All applications, renewals and membership questions should be directed to:

Michael Paschall
PMB 410
2300 Bethelview Rd., Suite 110
Cumming, GA 30040-9475
770-205-4880
michael@bakerstreet.com

Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without permission of the NASG, Inc.

The **Dispatch** - ISSN 10457178 is published bimonthly by MI Printing, 100A Church St., Millersburg, PA 17061.
Email: T .Chuck Garman, t c g m i p @ e p i x . n e t
SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 1 year, \$20.00 which includes membership in the NASG. All subscriptions payable in U.S. funds. Postage is paid at Millersburg, PA. Printed in the USA. All rights reserved. Postmaster: Send address change to Michael Paschall at address above.

COVER: Top - Sam Powell's 2nd Penn Creek Valley Layout. Photo by Sam. The bottom photo features the nearly completed 12 foot NASG modular switching layout. Group photo shows four of several who helped build her - Left to right: Dave Heine, Fred Rouse, Jamie Bothwell and John Foley.

ORDER BOARD

Volume XXVII Number 5

October, 2003



What 'S' New	2
President's Message, NASG News,	4
Jeff's Junction	5
New Products Report	6
Convention Contest Winners	8
2003 Convention Report	Jeff Madden 9-17
Last Run, Gene Fletcher	18
Color convention photos	19
Penn Creek Valley Post Mortem Sam Powell	22-27
Pugent Sound 2004	Gil Hulin 28
President's Message continued	29
Club Sandwich	Dave Pool 30-33
Extra Board	34
Extra Board, S Calendar	35
2003 BOT Minutes	36-38
Railmail continued	39

NASG Website: <http://www.nasg.org>

NASG Website Director Michael Greene: mgreene@cedarlane.com

STAFF

Jeff Madden	-Editor
Terry Madden	-Graphics Editor
Kent Singer	-Contributing Editor
Jeff Madden	-New Products Editor
David Pool	-Club Editor
Ted Larson	-Module Corner
David Heine	-Narrow Gauge Editor
Bob Werre	-Staff Photographer
Jeff Madden	-Advertising Manager
Bob Jackson	-Editor Emeritus
David Dewey	-Amer. Flyer Editor
Bill Fraley	-Contributing Editor..

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

NOTICE TO READERS: All warranties and claims made by advertisers in the **DISPATCH** are the sole responsibility of the advertiser. The NASG reserves the right to refuse any advertising material which it feels is not reputable. The selection and/or use of the products or services and the application or results obtained from these advertisers is the sole responsibility of the reader.

ADVERTISING RATES: Inquire regarding B&W or color rates. For additional information, contact the NASG DISPATCH Advertising Manager.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE....

Some time ago, I proposed that the NASG consider having Special Interest Groups or SIGs within the organization. I didn't get much feedback at that time, but I really don't want to give up on the idea. When I first became President, the late Russ Mobley and I exchanged emails for about a month before I got the email notifying everyone of his passing. I have kept them all and will always treasure them. He imparted a lot of wisdom and it made me hope we can take advantage of the "old timers" we have remaining with us.

SIG's or "Circuits" as they were called in the early days of the NASG, were very important to Russ. When I wondered if the NASG could have SIG's, he told me: "I would say there is a great possibility they would indeed work well and to the benefit of those involved. In this respect, I would be willing to do what I can to further the efforts (coincidentally this is exactly the way that I got started in the original building of NASG - how about that). I have been able to keep the old 172-S-1 going all these years, although it is now called the "Old Timers" circuit." This circuit is rather dormant now, possibly because Russ's driving force is missing now.

However, another circuit grew out of the 172-S-1 called the S-10-81. The 81 probably stands for the year it was born (1981). Dick Wholf, who is a member of that circuit sent me the following description of their purpose: "Through the years our Circuit has focused on building and operating in S, especially in the areas of scale and hi-rail rather than train collecting. We've shared various ideas and suggestions (including drawings, diagrams and photos) on construction and rebuilding of locomotives, rolling stock, and buildings; converting AF to scale or hi-rail, electrical things, layout design and construction; and of course, scratchbuilding. (In addition, there have been a few heated debates over S topics thru the years.)"

One of the charter members and a guiding light for the S-10-81 circuit was the late Bill Krause. Creating new SIGs would honor Bill and Russ and their visions. Incidentally, Russ Mobley also suggested that the NASG have a library much like the NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library. He offered to give us his extensive collection of magazines and books. You all know how that suggestion worked out as we now have the Russ Mobley Memorial Library and Mae Mobley graciously donated those materials to it. I share Russ's vision. I do believe that SIG's would be a new way to enjoy our hobby. I spent some time looking at the NMRA "Special

Continued on page 29

NASG NEWS

NASG 2003 AF Car: Everyone who ordered the UP chrome tank car should have one. The car has drawn some great comments, and we have less than 100 left. The no-limit rule is now in effect since pre-orders have been filled. As to the 2004 AF car, I would like to do something different for next year. We now know Lionel has the tooling for the depressed center flat car. Perhaps we can do that one. Lionel has the reel load, but I'm open to other ideas for the dc flat load.

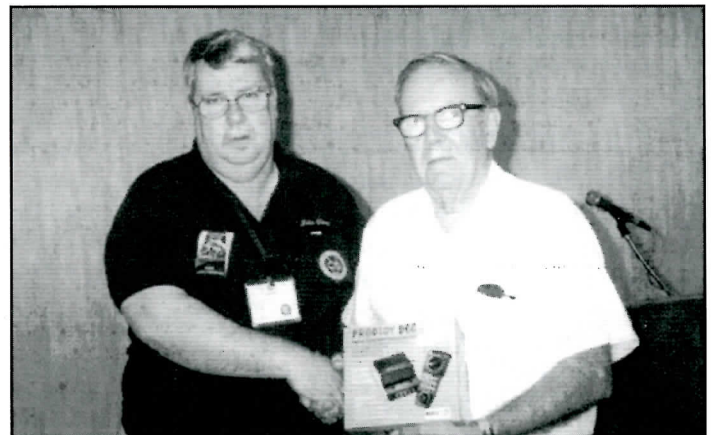
- Doug Peck, Lionel Car Project Chairman

Foley's (Promotion) Follies: We are going to run a two-page color spread in a magazine called *Model Retailer*. This publication goes to over 4,000 hobby shops around North America. This is an effort to inform the shop owners that S is alive and growing and which new products are coming out. We hope to be in the Nov. '03 issue; if not, the December one. I am requesting that all S gaugers - scale, hi-rail, AF and S narrow gauge - contact hobby shops in your area and ask them if they stock S gauge. The *Model Retailer* ad participants are: NASG, SHS, Train Stuff LLC, S/Sn3 Modeling Guide (new owner), PHM, Kaslo, Tomalco, Lionel.

As you probably know we have a Contributing membership category at \$30. This reflects a \$10 premium. From now on contributing membership monies above the regular \$20 will go straight to our promotions fund. Everyone is welcome to do this and you don't have to stop at \$10. extra. Any and all will be appreciated. we are running ads in *Model Railroad News*, *S/Sn3*, *CTT*, *RMC* and NMRA's new *Scale Rails Magazine*.

John Foley, Promotions Chairman

Jerry Rivet Recovering: As many of you know, Jerry Rivet of RSSVP Models, the friendly guy with the colonial tri-corner hat, had a mild stroke following the convention. We wish him a speedy recovery.



John Foley, left, congratulates the winner of the Prodigy DCC system at the NASG Convention. Now, can anybody identify our lucky winner?

RAIL MAIL

Scale Guys Eye New Lionel Loco: Well guys, I just got a phone call from Bob Ryder (head of sales) at Lionel. I inquired about buying parts to make a scale version of their engine using our chassis. He said it was contrary to their policy, but he would check with the "brass" to see if they would be willing to modify their policy. The answer was no. I asked if they would make a scale version and was told "not at this time." I will continue work on my USRA chassis as before.

A possible solution would be to take their engine and use our chassis and sell the mechanism and electronics to the hi-rail guys to use under AF shells. My long-range plan is to make all or most of the USRA chassis, cabs and tenders and fill in the boilers as we can. We have almost all of the castings available now. I also plan on redesigning and bringing back the various passenger, freight, tender and trailing trucks that were in the "old" SSL&S line. Valve gear with cast and etched parts will be coming also.

- Fred Rouse, SSL&S

Continued on page 39

Jeff's Junction



Ten Years and a Convention

Ten years ago I wasn't an S scaler, and I hadn't attended an NASG convention. This month marks the 10-year anniversary of being your *Dispatch* editor, becoming an S scaler and attending that many NASG conventions. This past summer I even co-chaired the 10th one - here in my own backyard.

The editorship was, and still is, a challenge, but I've enjoyed every minute. As many of you recall, back in 1993 there was an opening and Alan Evans, then president, thought I'd fit the bill. This was a clever way of creating an S scaler, wasn't it? The timing was perfect since I had moved about 5 years previously and had a basement full of HO equipment stored in boxes. I had been procrastinating since 1988 on what type of HO layout to build. I had worked in O scale before and had eyed S back in the '70s, but O was too large and expensive and S didn't offer much then. But when I was offered the editorship in 1993 and at the same time was encouraged by a couple of S friends, I took the bait. I'd like to thank these friends and also the members who contribute to the *Dispatch*, and that makes my job a little easier. And yes, there is a scale layout underway.

Now to the recent convention in Oconomowoc: I was co-chair along with our BSG club president Dave (Smokey) Smukowski. Yes, it's a lot of work and, yes, it helps to have club members around to share the workload. The fact that our BSG club had experience hosting S Fests didn't hurt either. I learned first hand what is needed to sponsor a convention. It's not really as hard as you think, and I'd like to encourage other groups and clubs to go ahead

and sponsor a convention. I'll list a few dos and don'ts.

DOs

1. Commit about 2 to 3 years out and submit proposal and budget.
2. Pick a hotel with convention facilities and negotiate rates for rooms, hall, etc.
3. Begin publicity 1-1/2 years out.
4. Choose a convention car and manufacturer. The cars are usually good moneymakers.
5. Plan for layout tours and at least one prototype tour.
6. Have a steering committee of 7 to 10 who meet frequently to keep things going.
7. Read the NASG Convention Guide - this really helps. Thanks Lee Johnson and Dick Karnes.
8. Several key members should plan on attending the convention the previous year to promote yours.

PITFALLS:

There will always be some snags in your plans, but good planning will overcome most.

Since we had good planning experience with a Fall S Fest in 2000, the convention was just a step up. Even so, looking back, we could have done some things better. Maybe we could have gotten lower room rates. We might not have chosen to deal with a major corporation for paint scheme permission (it slowed things down). We might have done a mass mailing to enhance awareness in the spring prior. We didn't plan on a down economy that probably resulted in some attendance loss.

But all in all there were no big surprises. Folks had a good time, we shared our area layouts with others; we made a little money, the NASG made a little money.

See you next year in Chicago or Tacoma or both.

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

AMERICAN MODELS (www.americanmodels.com) has two crossings available in their code .148 track system. A 30 degree and 75 degree crossing are each \$19.95 each. According to their ad, some older engines with partial electrical pickup may experience a small dead spot when running at low speeds. Rumor has it that a 3-bay offset hopper is coming.

ALLEGHENY MODELS (www.mpp-models.com, 1410 Pembridge, Anderson, OH 45255). Bert Cutler was at the convention with some C&O Standard Depot No. 2 laser craftsman kits. He says towers are coming. Available now are the 20' x 50' for \$96.00 and 20' x 72'9" ones for \$112.00.

BAR MILLS (www.barmillsmodels.com) has some new S structure kits. Swanson's Lunch Stand at \$37.95 also includes a billboard. Saulena's Tavern will be \$99.95. Two larger structures are the Idaho Hotel and the Majestic Hardware and Feed Store at \$149.95 each. These are craftsman type kits.

BTS (P.O. Box 561, Seffner, FL 33583 - www.btsrr.com) has an Sn3 EBT tank car coming. The tank body is photoetched brass which will be attached to the Urethane flat car. It will be available fully assembled, painted and lettered. Also coming are some houses in the 2nd Street Series. These will be 5 common U.S. houses. First is 110 2nd Street which was shown at the convention.

DES PLAINES HOBBIES (1468 Lee St., Des Plaines, IL 60018 - www.desplainseshobbies.com) has some new tank car paint schemes for their 10,000 gallon single dome cars: Fruit Industries Ltd.,

Ambrose wine and Roma Wine; RTR these are \$39.98 each. There are new #s for the Texaco and UTLX tanks, same price. To help convert AM GP9s to GP20s Des Plaines has a low nose kit plus (new) long hood parts. They will also have different hood parts to make a true GP7. Additional details will be needed, of course.

FUNARO & CAMERLAENGO (RR 5 box 5290, Honesdale, PA 18431) has a few S freight cars. Off and on folks ask for their address. Email: fandc@ezaccess.net.

HAWTHORNE VILLAGE (9210 N. Maryland St., Niles, IL 60714-1322 - www.collectiblestoday.com). I ripped a page of a recent *USA Weekend* magazine that promoted a "cruising" highway type series of cast structures with die-cast vehicle. The first up structure is the Stingray Drive In (restaurant) with a 1963 die-cast Corvette. If my detective work is correct these are the same Racing Champion 1/64 (or close to it) vehicles we have been collecting for years. Why - because they are listed as Ertl vehicles, which is owned by Racing Champions. The buildings are fully assembled with some kind of neon illumination. Don't know whether they are porcelain or resin cast. Not sure of structure size, but the Stingray Drive-in (the first offering) is listed as 5" high which includes a sign tower in the photo. The price is \$23.32 times 3 (payments) plus \$7.99 S&H. It's a series of 4 buildings with 4 different vehicles. If you order the first, then you get the others later. The other structures are a Drive-in Theater, a Roadside Grill and a Phillips 66 Gas Station. If the buildings are really 1/64, they might be nice.

K-LINE (www.k-linetrains.com) was at the convention gauging reaction to their S cars and the possibility of the Big Boy being done in S. In the meantime Doug Peck discovered that there will be some new road names for the freight cars: Pure Oil and MoPac for the 3-dome tank cars, UP and Reading for the boxcars. Also two new cars: Depressed Center Flats will be offered in Milwaukee Road with a frontend loader load and C&O with a steam roller. Four new illuminated bay window schemes will be coming: Reading, PRR, Milwaukee Road and SP. All at same \$19.95 retail price.

LIONEL LLC (www.lionel.com) dropped the bomb at the convention with the display of a new AF USRA 2-8-2. The die-cast parts were actually there unlike the SD40-2 a few years ago. Bob Bubeck had a nice description on the internet: All die-cast construction with the only pieces of plastic being the cab figures and the handrail supports. Features will include: TMCC or conventional operation, Railsounds with two chuffs/per rev and synchronized with puffing smoke, all die-cast construction, Pittman motor with flywheel, prototypical road names.

The Mikado will be initially offered in two roadnames: B&O and NYC. Each will have its headlight correctly positioned. The B&O will be offered as part of a four car streamlined passenger set with an MSRP of \$799.95. The NYC version will be offered separately with an MSRP of \$599.95. The B&O passenger cars consist of streamlined combine, 2 coaches and an obs. An add-on set consists of a diner and a (new) baggage car. The diner and baggage will also be offered in NYC. Other new Lionel items include a NYC (Reading

style) caboose, blue and red 2003 Christmas boxcar and a pair of Disney boxcars - Goofy and Donald.

OVERLAND MODELS (See River Raisin) announced last June that they will be re-entering the S brass market with 3 versions of very modern diesels. If demand warrants, OMI will build the following painted and lettered diesels in S scale brass for delivery in 2004: AC4400CW in BNSF, CPR and CSX (2 numbers each). AC44CTE in UP paint with 3 numbers; C60AC in CSX with 4 different numbers. Thanks to Jim Kindraka of River Raisin for this update.

PAPER CREEK MODELS WORKS (www.papercreek.com). George Taylor offers laser cut structures and scratchbuilding supplies. He has S shingles now. Check out the website.

JERRY PONIATOWSKI (He's in the Directory) is reproducing the #715 Auto Unloading Car loads (the Manoil cars) in urethane. He has them now in red or blue. They are cast in resin and have new axles and new tires. \$20 plus \$3 S&H.

RAIL GRAPHICS (www.railgraphicsdecals.com) has several data sets available in S scale. These can be ordered in any quantity in stock colors. Custom colors require a minimum of 5 sets. These are not the road names, just the data and terms like insulated car, automobile, mechanical refrigerator, etc. Most freight car sets will letter 2 each of various types of cars. There are freight car sets 101, '40s-'50s; 102, '60s-'70s; 107, 1900-1920; 108, '20-'40. Number 103 is a caboose and work equipment set. Number 104 is a passenger car set with miscellaneous wording such as diner, parlor, warning labels. Number 105 is a steam loco set and number 106 is a diesel set.

RIVER RAISIN (6160 Upper Straits Blvd., West Bloomfield, Michigan 48324 - www.reverraisinmodels.com) hawked the upcoming Budd shovelnose diesel trainsets and even handed out Zephyr magnets at the NASG convention. There will be 3 versions with scheduled delivery of summer 2004. They will be built in Korea by Ajin Precision. They will come with working full width diaphragms, accurate interior detail, nickel plated bodies, directional headlight and backup light on the engine unit, ceiling lights in passenger cars, window glass. Following are the sets: Burlington Pioneer Zephyr or B&M Flying Yankee 3-car sets, \$1899 pre-production and \$2099 later. CB&Q 4 unit train operated after June 1938, \$2149 pre and \$2399 later. \$300 deposit required.

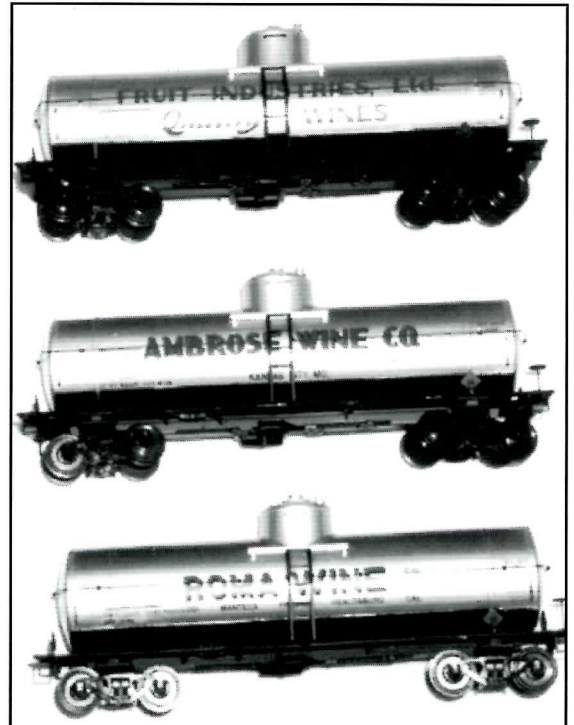
Also RR will be retailing the Overland diesels mentioned earlier. The AC44 units will be \$1195 and the C60s will be \$1255 each. \$500 deposits are required to RR to reserve these. *Note: These prices were in RRs catalog. An ad in the S Gaugian lists higher prices, which may mean those not pre-ordered??*

S/Sn3 MODELING GUIDE (P.O. Box 56, Somerville, NJ 08876 - www.modelingguide.com) is coming back. Richard Bendever is the new publisher/editor taking over Bill Wade's former magazine. The basic subscription for six issues is \$39.50 U.S. Issues are supposed to begin this fall.

SHS (77 Cliffwood Ave., Suite 7C, Cliffwood, NJ 07721 - www.showcase-line.com) showed up at the convention with a 3rd version of their 55 ton hoppers. The new versions have metal offset sides and come in NYC, CNJ, Detroit & Mackinac, D&LW, GB&W,

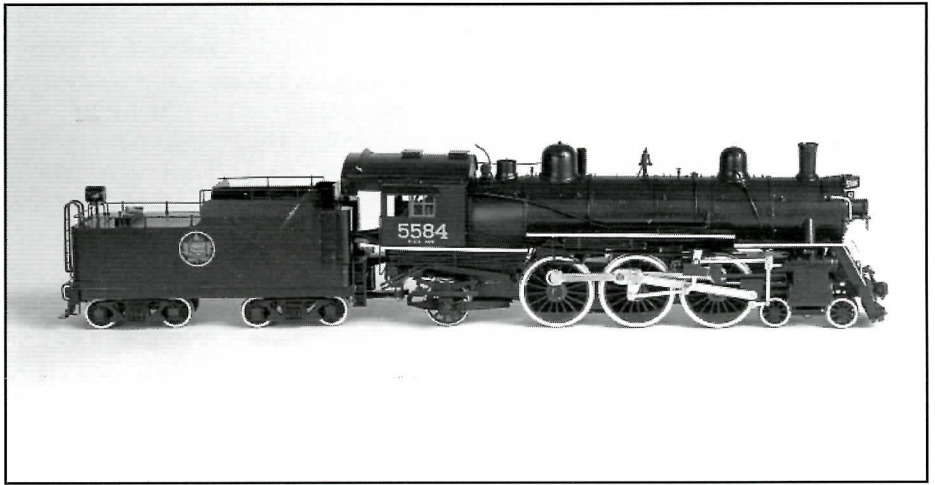
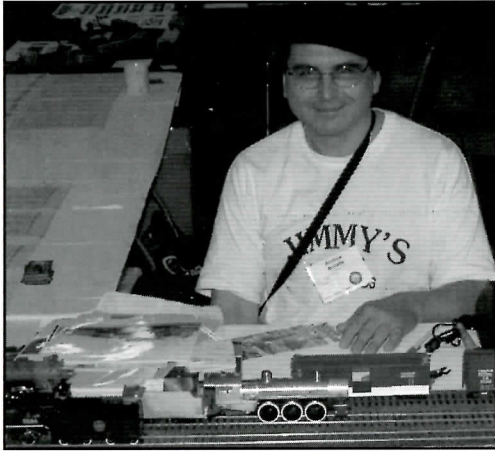
IC, L&NE, TP&W and Peabody. Three-car sets list at \$99.95 and single cars are \$39.95. And some new SW-1 paint schemes appeared, including CB&Q, CNJ, EL and GN. Coming are several versions of the SW9 including an SW8, NW2 and SW7. Minor tooling changes will bring us SW8s in the following schemes: B&M, BN and CNW. NW2s will come lettered as Chessie (C&O), Seaboard, UP and undec. SW9s in new paint will be Conrail Quality, FEC, Frisco and LV. SW 7s are down the road.

And the 70-ton U-27 ore cars are listed in the latest newsletter. These cars were built for the DM&IR in 1949 by Pressed Steel Car Co. In reality, many were eventually sold to the C&NW, RI, LIRR and ACL for use as MOW cars. The RTR cas will be in 5-car sets for \$179.95 or \$39.95 for a single car. Schemes are: DM&IR, B&LE, BN, CN, CP, GN (red), GN (Glacial Green), Milw. Rd., SP, UP and undec.



Des Plaines Hobbies now has RTR 10,000 gallon wine tank cars.

BEST OF SHOW



Andy Malette is the proud builder of this CN K-3 Pacific, soon to be a kit.

NASG CONTEST AWARDS - 2003

Chairmen: Roy Meissner

AMATEUR

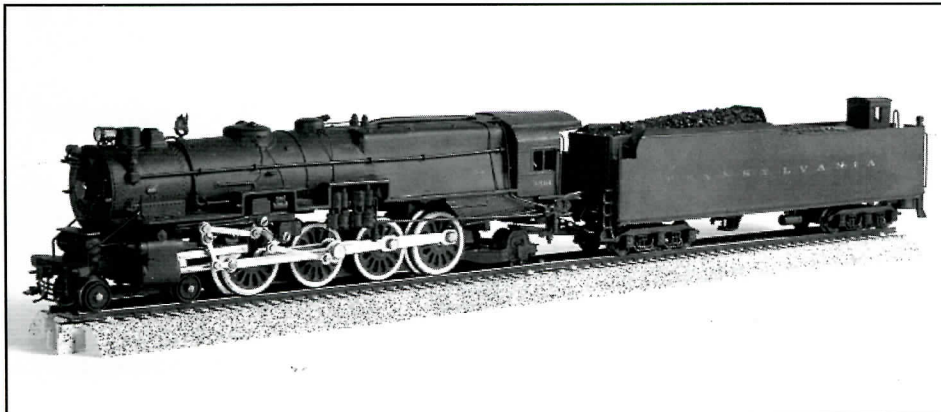
Kenny Palmer	Steam	PRR M1A 4-8-2	hi-rail K&C	1st
Brian Jackson	Diesel-Elec.	IC SW1	K&C	1st
Dave Blum	Freight	NP Plow	hi-rail K&C	1st
David Hamilton	Structure	Auto Dealer	scratch	1st
Marcia Harrison	Structure	Bakery	K&C	1st
Marcia Harrison	Structure	Post Office	K&C	2nd

CRAFTSMAN

Andrew Malette	Steam and Best of Show.	CN K-3 4-6-2	Scratch	1st
Ken Zieska	Structure	1 stall enginehouse	K&C	1st
Ken Zieska	Structure	Depot	K&C	2nd

MASTER CRAFTSMAN

Richard Karnes	Steam	NYW&B T-2 4-6-0	?	1st
Hiram Graves	Freight	GN 40' box	K&C	1st
Richard Bendever	Diorama	Billboard	K&C	1st
Richard Bendever	Structure	Water Tower	Scratch	1st



Kenny Palmer did a nice job in the amateur category, hi-rail, kit and converted, with this Pennsy M1A 4-8-2 created out of a Flyer K5. He earned a first place.

NASG 2003 CONVENTION REPORT

Overview: The 2003 NASG Annual Convention continued the "family style" trend of recent years. Registration did not match Cleveland's 360, but people numbers passed the 300 mark. Actual registrants were 230. States represented were WI, IL, MN, MO, PA, RI, NH, MA, NY, OH, CT, IN, MI, CO, LA, TX, FL, WA, CA, OR, NJ, MD, UT, SC, TN, VA and NV. Canada was also represented. Yes, we had air-conditioned buses, but we actually ended up with moderate temperatures. This was the second time that the NASG convention was held in the Milwaukee area.

The hosts this year were the Badgerland S Gaugers, of which your editor is a member. Club President Dave "Smokey" Smukowski and myself co-chaired the event. One thing we strived for at this convention, and I believe the goal was met, was to allow time for dealers and attendees to attend some tours without having the trade hall open at the same time.

NASG Layout Tours: Other than the HO layout at Kalmbach, which was an early-bird self-drive tour, all the layouts on tour were S. Air-conditioned buses hauled conventioners to 6 layouts on Thursday, and 4 additional ones were open for the self-drive Sunday tours. I don't think too many folks went west to Madison to see the Sn3 layout or the Toy Train Barn as that was getaway day and several were going to Milwaukee to see the Circus Parade.

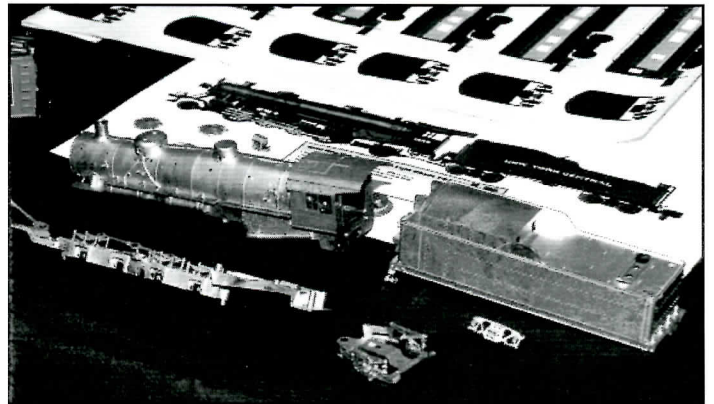
Accommodations: The folks at Olympia did a nice job getting us set up, and feedback I have heard has been mostly positive. There was something about some towels, but I think that got straightened out. Feedback was extremely positive on the overall layout of the facility. Yes, the price at \$105 per room (which we actually negotiated down from a higher price) was a little stiff, but nothing else was available for the space needed except at an even higher price. A nearby railroad theme restaurant has received a lot of comments, and I'm sure the shake and burger crowd will fondly remember Culvers. We hope the non-Wisconsinites now know the difference between "custard" and ice cream.

NASG Trade Show: The trade hall was filled almost to capacity. We had 4 operating layouts, a fantastic S scale ore boat and a circus display besides all the sale tables. The NASG had their 12' modular scale switching layout up and running - complete with scenery and structures thanks to Dave Heine, John Foley, Jamie Bothwell, Fred Rouse, Frank Titman, Bert Mahr and a few others.

Stan Koci from Hutchinson, Minnesota, had a nice 12 foot square traditional flyer layout on display in the lobby. The BSG and Chicago area CHASM group



"Now, the first thing you do is sell all your HO," says President Roy Hoffman as he begins his "newcomers" clinic on Thursday. It's a real icebreaker for many.



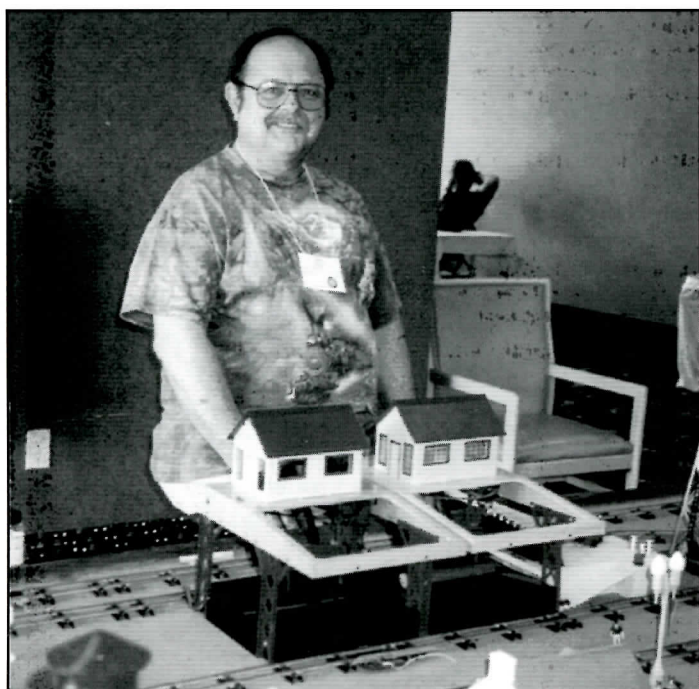
Real live die-cast pieces of Lionel's new USRA 2-8-2 to be the next American Flyer steamer.



Sinclair was kind of the official theme since the convention car was a Sinclair tank car. Coincidentally, Pine Canyon released a gas station kit. The Dinosaur is a blow up of which several were banquet door prizes. *Photos Jeff Madden*



John Nugent's attractive Circus Parade display.



Stan Koci brought his 12 x 12 Flyer layout down from Minnesota.



Circus Train engine was a natural on the BSG layout.

had substantial modular hi-rail layouts up and running. A Flyer circus Train was featured often on the BSG layout. Scale trains ran on both layouts as well. Kent Conklin's static display of an S scale 6- foot long ore boat drew a lot of attention and praises. BSG member John Nugent, AKA Robert E Lee, provided a nice large scale circus wagon model and various Circus Parade photos for a nice lobby display.

Most of the regular S manufacturers were there except for AM, Banta, PHM, American Hi-Rail, the new LVM and a few others. Bob McCarthy (the new Tomalco Std. Gauge owner) was absent due to illness. SHS did have a 3-loop layout by their booth.

New Products: There were lots of "new" items making their debut at the convention with Lionel's introduction of the new die-cast USRA Mikado leading the way. There was a constant parade by this display by both hi-railers and scalers who eagerly scrutinized the nicely detailed castings. As of now, the loco will only come in hi-rail with Railsounds (see New Products Report). Scalers, especially Fred Rouse of SSL&S, were eyeing up the frame and drivers which appear at first glance to be easily convertible to scale. Lionel also had their 2003 Christmas boxcar and a NYC (Reading style) caboose on display. Diagrams also showed the new B&O and NYC passenger cars and the Goofy and Donald Duck Disney boxcars which will be coming out later this year or early next. Some kind of water tower also looks like a future S product. Todd Wagner and Dana Kawala were there in person representing Lionel with the S displays - they even had a couple of O cars to gauge reaction for future S cars.

The other drool items that captured most of the attention were S Helper's pieces of their new 2-8-0, the new offset hoppers and the drawings of the new ore cars. Right up there too were Des Plaines' boxcars, new wine tank cars and sample of the 40' composite gondola. More drool material was provided by Bill Swathout of K-Line with a display of their new freight cars and their undersized O Big Boy. Andrew Malette from Canada had his "Best of Show" K-3 Pacific on display. The contest-winning model will actually be available in kit form for about \$725.00 U.S.

Barrand and Sandra Pazan drew lots of attention and buyers to their table where they sold modified die-cast highway trucks. Bill and Diane Wade of BTS diverted from Toronto to Oconomowoc, and we were glad they did so we could see the many items they have and will have in the future. The Pine Canyon gas station (resin kit) proved popular. I built one for display (on the BSG layout) and several dealers sold kits. Jim and Dan of River Raisin were actively promoting the reincarnated Budd Shovelnose diesel sets scheduled for next summer. Jettie of SouthWind had samples of the

B&O caboose. Kalmbach Publishing, publishers of *CTT*, *MR*, *Trains* and *Classic Trains* had tables to promote their line of books and magazines. Another reincarnation is the *S/Sn3 Modeling Guide* that Richard Bendever of New Jersey has taken over from Bill Wade. I signed up and wish him success.

Miscellany: Our BSG group hope folks took advantage of many of the self-drive tours, but that is hard to gauge. See Feedback for some reactions on this.

BOT and Annual Business Meetings: The main news here was the installation of new officers and the retiring of a couple at the General Business Meeting on Saturday. Retiring were long-time officers Exec VP John Foley, Central VP Tom Nimelli and Secretary Glenn Ritter. Re-elected to another term were Gil Hulin as Western VP and Bill Fuhrman and Eastern VP. Newly elected were Dick Karnes as Executive VP, Walt Jopke as Central VP and Michael Greene as Secretary. Not to fear, Michael will remain our Webmaster. The NASG didn't let "workhorse" John Foley off the hook either. He was quickly appointed to head the "new" Promotions Department which has been given some funding and a greater status by the BOT.

Two upcoming conventions were approved for 2004 and 2005. For 2004 a last minute surprise bid was approved by the BOT prior to the convention. The Des Plaines Valley S Scalpers group out of Chicago was awarded next year's event for July 28 - Aug 1, 2004. Many previously thought that the Seattle area had it locked, but the BOT felt Chicago seemed to have things coordinated better. Seattle (Tacoma), however, was established as the first NASG regional - probably because it was already partially organized and could also tie in with the Seattle NMRA convention. As to other "future" NASG Regionals, since this is a precedent setting decision, the matter is open for discussion, they will probably be encouraged to be farther away from the NASG Annual Convention. For 2005, the BOT has approved a proposal to go back to Altoona, PA, for a 10th anniversary event. Beyond that, serious convention vibes are being heard from Michigan, Texas, Maryland, Philadelphia, Minnesota, Massachusetts and New York.

Clinics: From what I've heard, and the ones I attended, clinics were top-notch and numerous. Chuck Porter gave an opening "icebreaker night" clinic on the Circus train and parade, and Gary Children also did one that evening on modeling the Wisconsin Southern. The DCC clinics from Ken Zieska and John Foley were popular. We held clinics while the trade hall was open, and this seemed to work well. One surprise was a last minute hands-on "ladies" bead jewelry clinic put on by Dody Stevens. It was held twice and many ladies attended. Future convention clinic

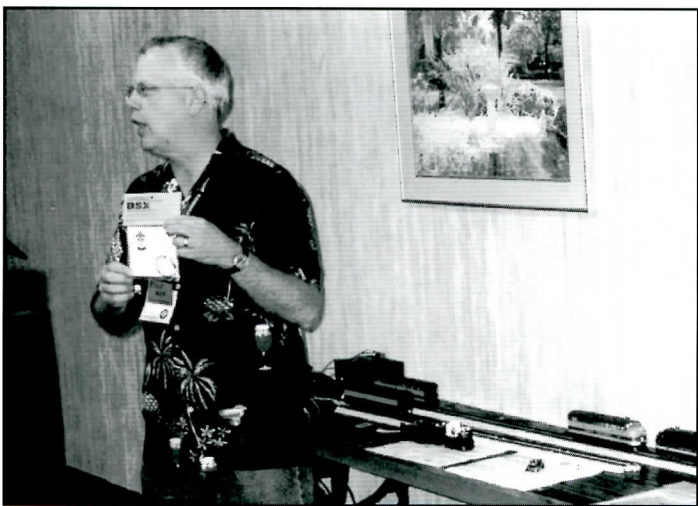


Three new officers and a new Promotions Chairman. Left to right - Michael Greene, new secretary; Dick Karnes, new Executive VP; Walt Jopke, new Central VP and John Foley, new Promotions Chair.

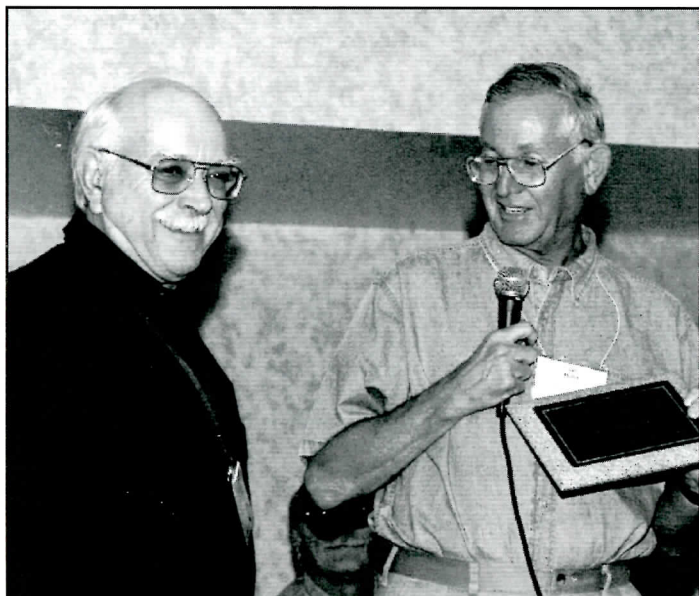


NASG Contest Chairman Jim Whipple and son admire the CHASM (Chicago area) hi-rail layout.

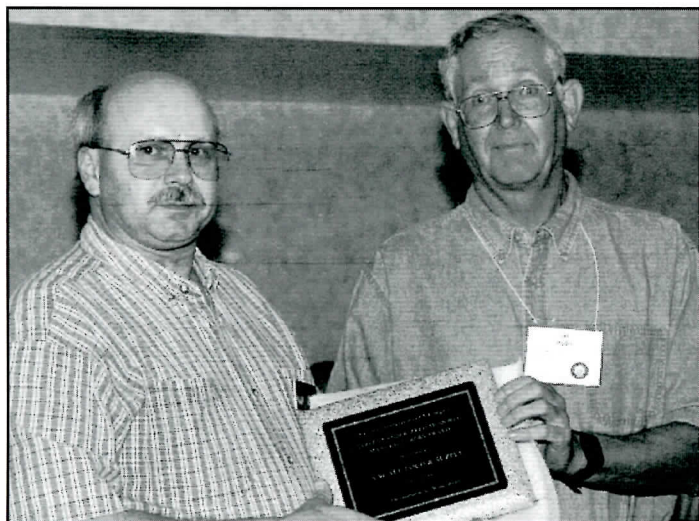
Photos by Jeff Madden



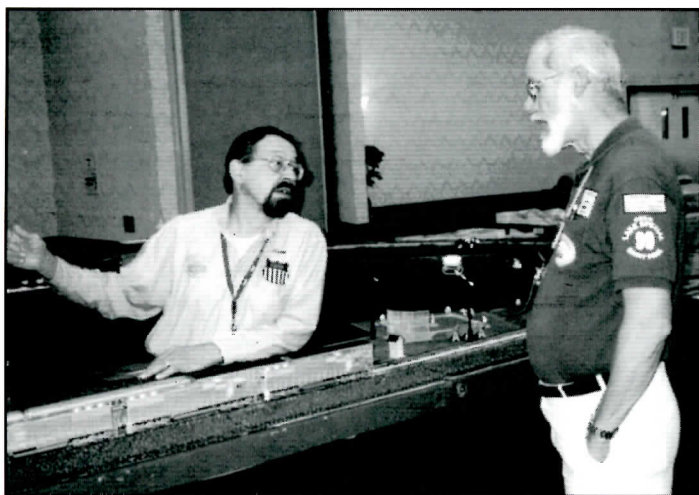
Ken Zieska explains the basics of DCC to eager conventioners. His clinic, held twice, was popular.



Bill Furman of the Connecticut S Gaugers with Gil Hulin announce the winner of the Bill Krause Award.



Fred Rouse of SSL&S accepts the Charles Sandersfeld award at the annual NASG banquet.



Norm Schreiner runs the CHASM layout and converses with Glenn Ritter. *Photos by Jeff Madden*

chairmen should take note of this as Dody often accompanies Paul to conventions.

Banquet: Our banquet was very well attended by 125 folks - about half of the total folks coming to the convention. The buffet food was acknowledged as better than average by most. Inflatable green dinosaur centerpieces were taken home by 1 person at each table plus a couple that went in the auction. You figure the connection? A small, but lively, auction followed where John Wickland peddled special convention circus items, and Jamie Bothwell humorously milked the crowd for a limited number of items. He even got the crowd going on some Steamtown patches for quite some time. Again, future convention chairmen should make sure and invite Jamie to be the auctioneer. We could have done a better job of soliciting items. Regardless, our two auctioneers left us in stitches.

Awards: As usual, the annual special awards were announced at the banquet. The 3rd Annual Bill Krause Memorial Award for best layout display was presented by Bill Fuhrman on behalf of the Connecticut S Gaugers to the Carolinas Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers. The Perles Publication Award for best S article in a non-S publication was presented to Ken Ehlers for his article in MR on his San Juan Mountain Sn3 layout. Photos were by Bob Werre. The S manufacturer honored with the Sandersfeld Award this year was SS&LS, under the tutelage of Fred and Dolores Rouse. The Bernie Thomas Memorial Award for overall achievement in promoting S went to Craig O'Connell.

Model Contest: Not too many entries - seems some contest regulars were missing in action. Again, the idea of a discount on registration for entering a contest model surfaces in my mind. What we had though was very nice. Roy Meissner coordinated local events with the help of Jim Whipple, our NASG Contest Chairman. Thanks to judges Gary Children and Dick Cecil and to those monitoring the room. Too bad Kent Conklin didn't enter his ore boat. Best in Show and 1st place craftsman winner was the K-3 CN Pacific by Andy Malette.

Also a special thanks to all the guys and in particular two ladies, Barb Belland and Ann Marino, who spent lots of hours manning the registration desk.

Feedback and Convention Tales: My family of 4 went to Little A-Merrick-A, the circus display and the circus parade. The train at Little A-Merrick-A was great. Passengers ride in gondolas, and it went way out into the farm fields and past lots of roaming farm and zoo animals. The engineer had to keep tooting the whistle to chase the sheep off the tracks. We saw llamas, sheep, steers, cows, zebras. We also went to the zoo and rode their train. Because of rain, the train

needed some zoo crew to push it up a hill. In West Allis, on the way to circus parade, we stopped at Johnny V's Diner where an O gauge train ran around up near the ceiling.

- Scott Holm

Lee Johnson and I went to see Craig Wright's excellent Sn3 layout in Madison. We arrived at about 2 pm and stayed about an hour and a half. Craig models the D&RG from Chama to Cumbres, and his layout is scenically spectacular.

- Dick Karnes

The convention went well, although attendance was down some. Six layout on Thursday tours included both scale and hi-rail operations, and included were two layouts that have been featured in CTT. John Heck's 12 tables had the AF market just about to himself. The main tour on Friday was to the East Troy Interurban Ry where the two car shops revealed many trolleys and interurbans of various vintages and in various states of repair. The ride was probably about 5-7 miles each way on the last remaining active section of the former Milwaukee area interurban trackage. While I did that tour, my wife checked out the Pabst Mansion and the Miller Brewery in downtown Milwaukee. Saturday night's banquet was excellent and capped the convention activities nicely.

- Doug Peck

Steve Doyle, Dave Hamilton and I left Minnesota Wednesday afternoon and arrived at the convention just before the pizza ran out. Taking my wife's van instead of Steve Doyle's Range Rover was a lucky choice as Steve and Dave filled it almost to top for the trip home. Thursday morning, we jumped out of bed for a big day. We opened the trading floor and Dave Hamilton joined NASG president Roy Hoffman for a welcome orientation. Dave said it was great. He enjoyed meeting Roy and met another newbie who wanted to discuss layout design which Dave is very experienced at. The convention was very well organized and a joy to attend. Good clinics, well organized tours. Saturday, we dragged our sorry butts out of bed and made it the trading floor for a final tour before saying good bye.

- Ken Zieska

Jeff, it was good to see you at the convention. I appreciate the efforts of you and others who made it happen. I enjoyed the clinics, tours and being able to go one on one with the manufacturers. I also made some new friends, and that is one of the most satisfying aspects of our hobby. The only thing that I missed out on was operating the neat NASG switching layout. It is nicely done. Since Chicago is almost in my back yard, I'll try it next year.

- Frank Criswell



Auctioneer Jamie Bothwell and "the shirt."



Dody Stevens' bead bracelet clinic was a hit with the ladies.



Dayna Williamson shows off her city structures.
Photos by Jeff Madden



I wonder if Don and Mike are thinking about a future flatcar load? This showed up in Oconomowoc.



Kent Conklin and his magnificent ore boat.

LAST RUN

John Kromhout (Minneapolis/St. Paul area)

Tom Lennon of the P&PSS Workshop reported that John Kromhout passed away recently. Here's his report and a few lines from Billy Click as well. Tom reported, "Many of you will remember him as one of the most prolific builders of SSL&S engine kits. A photo of his Soo Line Northern once graced the pages of the old *S Gauge Herald*, and it is a gorgeous locomotive. John once told me that he had built over 60 S scale locomotives, mostly from Claud Wade's kits. If I remember the numbers right, that means that John built about half of the kits that Claud manufactured. Most of us in the Workshop own at least one of John's locos, and we will treasure the memories of the man who built them."

For a Midwest show I would have thought there would have been more people there. Optional lodging was only 15 minutes away at best for lesser rates. Sad, as this was a good location, I thought. The highlight of dining there was the Depot Restaurant in Oconomowoc. It is right on the main line with freights going by at about 50 and Amcrash going by at about 60. They made your plate rattle and roll and great food too. A comment was made that my Operations clinic went long. It was intended to as explaining operations is a lengthy deal. I hope everybody got something out of it. Hats off to Dave Heine, Jamie Bothwell, Fred Rouse, Bert Mahr and others for work on the NASG scale switching layout. It was a fun time in Wisconsin. Sorry more of you couldn't make it.

- Terry Harrison

Plusses: (*Keep in mind I was one of the chairmen so I'll try to be objective*)

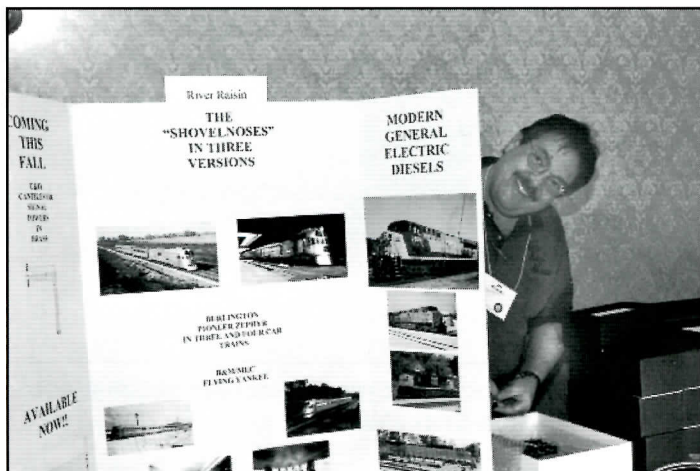
1. Family style hominess.
2. Trade area was spacious and easy to navigate.
3. Plenty of S layout to see.
4. Air-conditioned busses.
5. East Troy Trolley trip got praises.
6. Positive response to trade hall hours.
7. Green inflatable dinosaurs.
8. Sinclair tank car almost sold out.
9. Our Ice-Breaker event which included free pizza and soda plus two clinics.

Minuses:

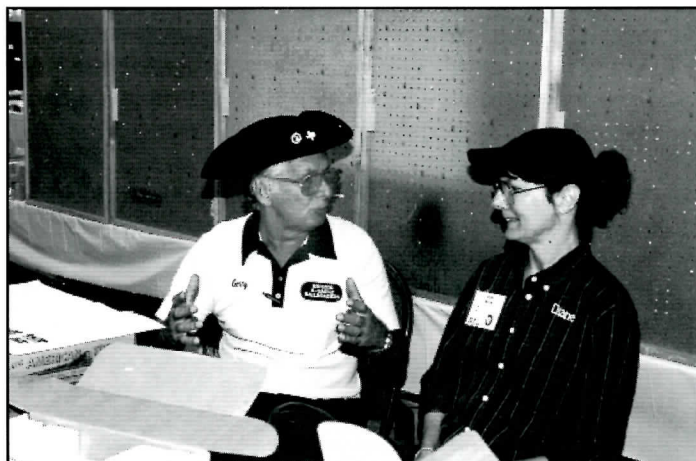
1. Not quite the expected attendance.
2. Hotel room cost a bit high.
3. Low number of contest entries.
4. Auction items a little sparse. Maybe we just didn't beg enough, or those with tables took off early.
5. Trying to pronounce Oconomowoc.

Billy added, "John was an extremely nice person. How he found time to build all those locomotives, I'll never know. He did have one strange quirk about building them - he would paint everything but the running gear - that he always left natural brass. I have four locos that John built. Two I bought from him at a convention - a C&NW Atlantic and a RI Mike. He built the NKP Berkshire kit. I then coerced him into building me an MKT Pacific which I sent him the kit and plans. It came back in a couple of months built up. In between, he sent me at least one letter telling of progress. He told me he had built at least one locomotive for each of his grandchildren. He was a very intelligent and gentle man, and truly one of the S scale pioneers. I believe he was an engineer for 3M. He'll be missed by all of us who knew him."

CONVENTION FACES...



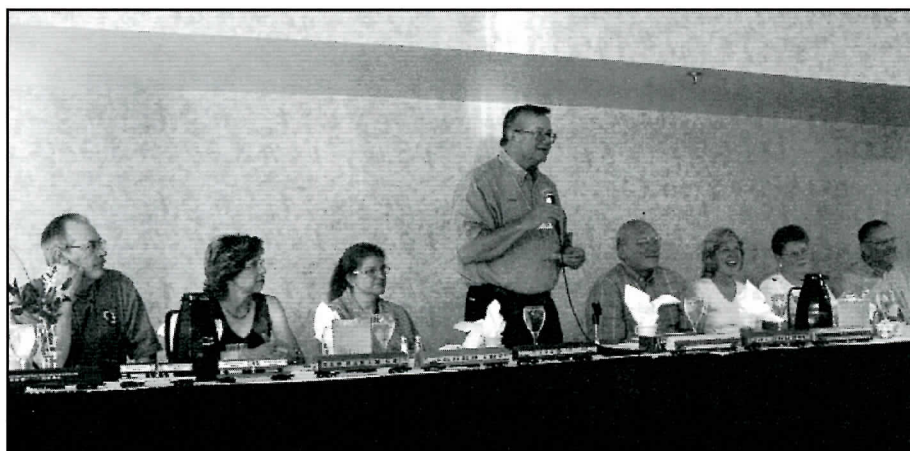
Mr. Zephyr Kindraka



North meets South in the midwest - Jerry Rivet from New England chats with Diane Wade of Florida.



Above - Badgerlander Ron Schlicht explains the details on his Flyer layout. Center right - Richard and Debbie Bendever of the reborn Sn3 Modeling Guide

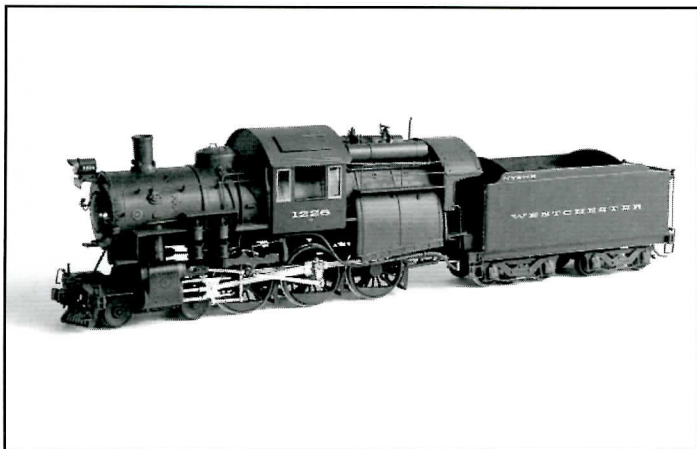


Above is the head table at the banquet with club president Dave Smukowski at the mike. Bottom right - Mike Ferraro explains the pieces of the new 2-8-0. Fortunately mine's coming built. Ed.

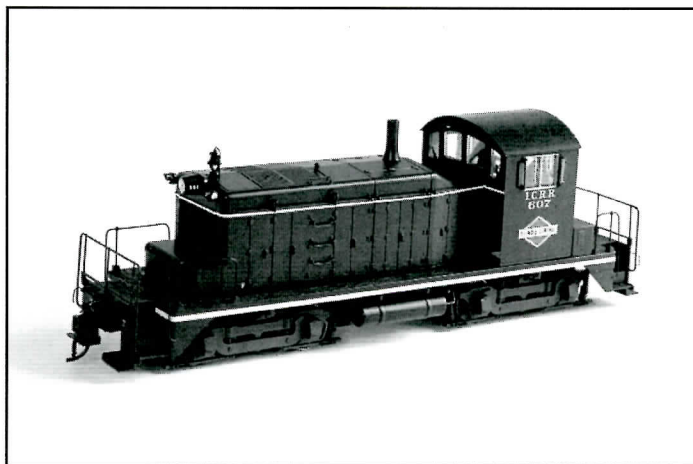


Photos by Bob Werre

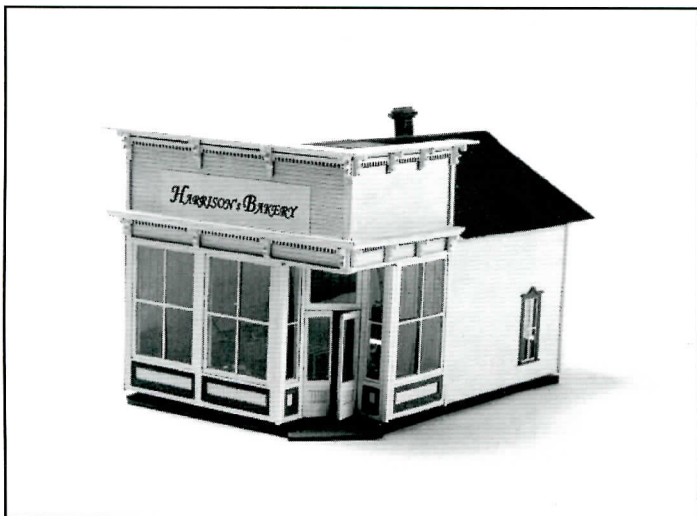
CONTEST WINNERS 2003



Dick Karnes' 1st place Master Craftsman winner. It's a T-2 camelback ten wheeler.



Brian Jackson took first place amateur diesel-electric with this detailed SHS SW-1.



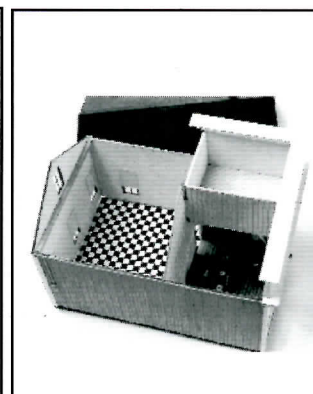
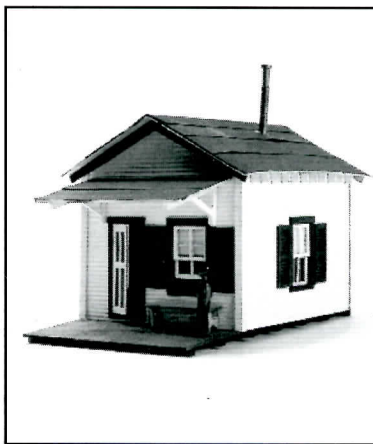
Marcia Harrison took a first place kit and converted in the amateur class for this bakery.



Dave Blum garnered a first place amateur hi-rail with this kit and converted snow plow.



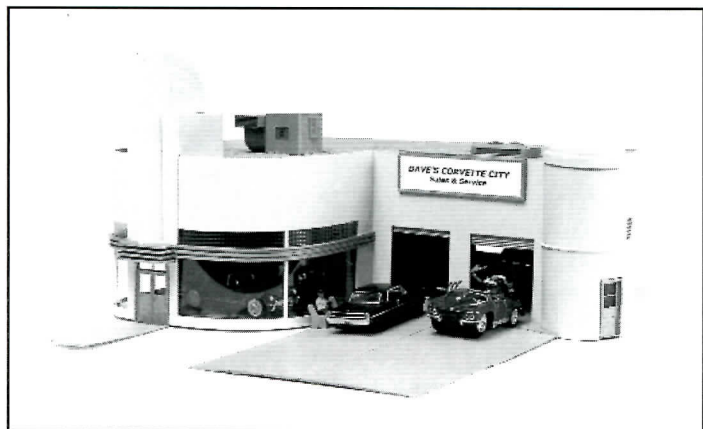
Hiram Graves gets a 1st place kit and converted in the master craftsman freight car category with this highly detailed GN boxcar.



Marcia Harrison's 2nd place kit and converted structure in the amateur class is this post office.



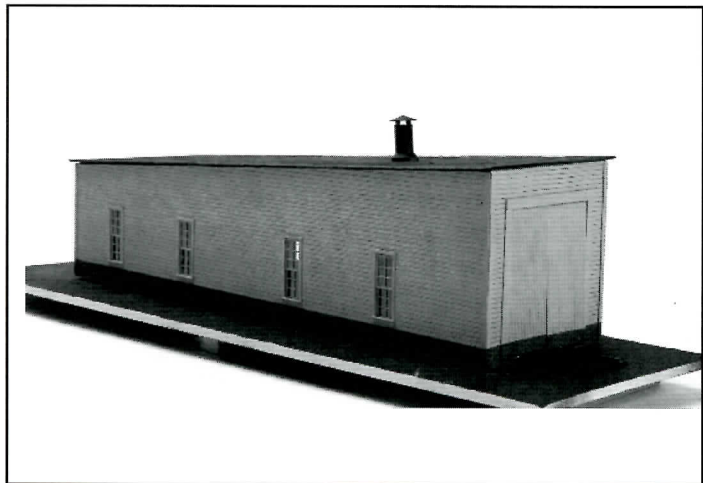
Richard Bendever took first place diorama, master craftsman, for this hot dog stand creation.



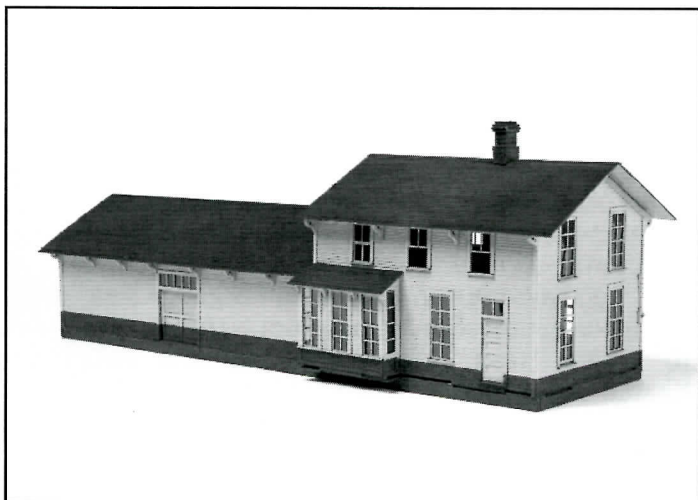
Another amateur 1st place was this scratchbuilt auto dealership by David Hamilton



Richard Bendever again gets a 1st for this scratchbuilt water tank structure in the master craftsman category.



Ken Zieska received 1st place structure, craftsman kit and converted, for this Minnesota Heartland single stall enginehouse.



Ken also received 2nd place for this craftsman depot entry. This kit and converted structure will find a home on the Minnesota Heartland line.

LAST RUN

EUGENE C. FLETCHER

Eugene C. ("Gene") Fletcher, one of the elder statesmen of S scale, passed away in August 2003 as a result of a short series of strokes. Back in the 1960s when I was a Cornell student, I knew Gene quite well. I got around to the Boston area a few times, and of course I went to all the Northeast S Gauge Association meets, as did he. Gene was instrumental in the founding of Midgauge Models by his friend Bill Stewart in the late 1940s. Midgauge produced a variety of products exclusively for S scale, including boxcar and refrigerator car kits, several styles of freight car trucks, kits to convert American Flyer cars to scale, and a scale kit for a PRR K-5 Pacific.

Per a note to me from his close friend Rollie Mercier, "Gene Fletcher entered into Eternal Peace at or near nine o'clock the evening of August 14, 2003. Losing such a friend is devastating. But I believe that when God put us here on this Earth, he left several paths for us to follow to find our way back. For some, the path is short, for others, it is long and arduous and for some, choosing the wrong path leads them to eternal darkness.

"I think Gene chose the correct path and as he neared its end, he gathered the love and affection of his children and his wife and friends to take with him as he crossed the platform and boarded the 'Little Train'. I'm sure his last thoughts were of all of us.

"Surviving Gene are his widow, Mrs. Beverly Fletcher, his son Mr. Paul Fletcher, and daughter Mrs. Roxanne Robert at 263 New Boston Road, Goffstown, New Hampshire 03045. Letters of friendship or condolence may be sent to Mrs. Robert."

- Dick Karnes

I was privileged to have known Gene as a fellow writer in the "Old Timers Circuit", which was sort a precursor to the e-mail list. We shared information about S gauging with round-robin letters, from Georgia to Idaho, from Maine to Alabama. Shared, hah, I just listened to these masters: Jess Bennett, Gene Fletcher, Russ Mobley, Ed Filer, Al Sonnenberg and John Beck. Sadly, Ed, Russ and now Gene are gone. These fellows and those like them are the ones who kept the S flame burning during the darkest days, and we all owe them so much.

Gene and Beverly were the perfect hosts when we visited their home in Brunswick, ME, after the '98 convention. Gene was 82 at the time and just starting another layout. He sold me several hundred pieces of Flyer track, much of which is on our Lookout Junction club layout.

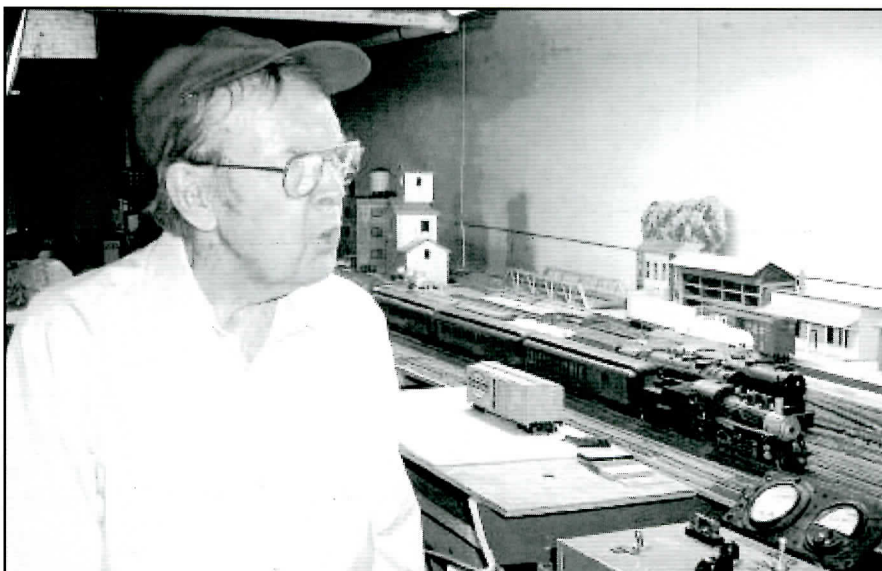
Although Gene served in another armed service, he was indirectly related to the Fletchers of the "Fletcher Class Destroyers of the U.S. Navy (one of which I served aboard). Farewell Gene.

- John Eichmann

Gene was a charter member of the Bristol Club (oldest S club). His home road was called the Great Eastern. Originally from Hudson, NH, he retired as Budget Officer at the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, NH. He got interested in S after doing some accounting work for Mid-Gauge in 1946. Gene was a long-time editor of the Club Car for the *S Gauge Herald*.



Recent photos of Gene by Tom Stoltz





Two convention scenes shot by Bob Werre. *Top* is a spectacular trestle and gorge scene on Dick Kloes' hi-rail layout. *Below* is Kent Conklin's S scale ore boat. Note the size of the diesel in comparison.



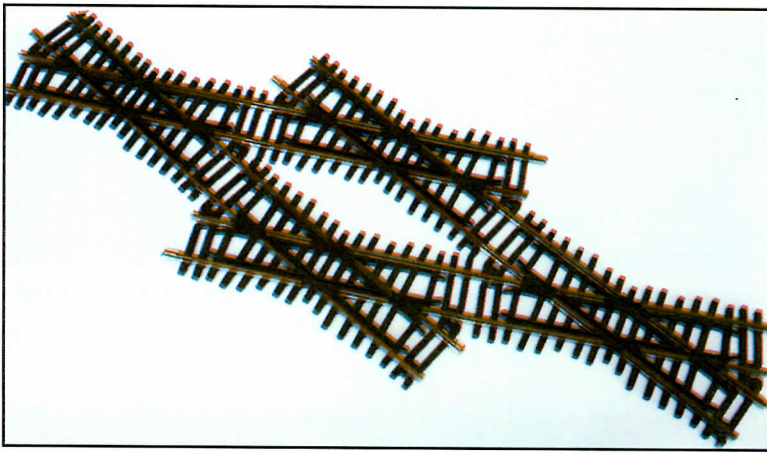
New additions to our Universal Track System !

Since 1993 the leading track system in S gauge railroading. Packaged in our train sets and sold separately. We and our customers believe this is the most realistic track system ever made in any scale. The reason is as follows.

1. **Weathered .148 rail.** On the real railroads the rail is rusted in various shades even when new.
2. **Tie height, width, length** and spacing between the ties are modeled from real main lines.
3. **Skewing of the ties**, which means the ties are not parallel with one another in fact real track ties are sometimes 10° skewed from one another.
4. **Spike plates, spikes**, wood graining and color are represented in a realistic fashion.
5. **Quiet**, not like hollow rails or noisy hollow plastic roadbed.
6. **Solid** non-corrosive brass rail and tough ABS solid plastic ties withstands drilling & soldering.

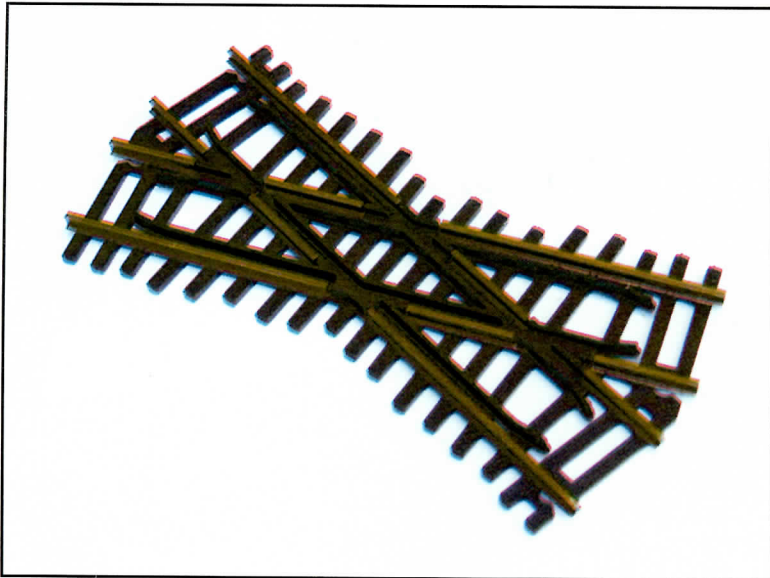
This rail has twice the electrical conductivity of nickel silver. Easy to bend and work with.

(All our rail is .148" in height do not confuse with #155 (pound) rail which is about 20% smaller)



30° Crossings

This is an example of what 4 of our new 30° crossings would look like. All snap to 3" inch track centers when installed together.

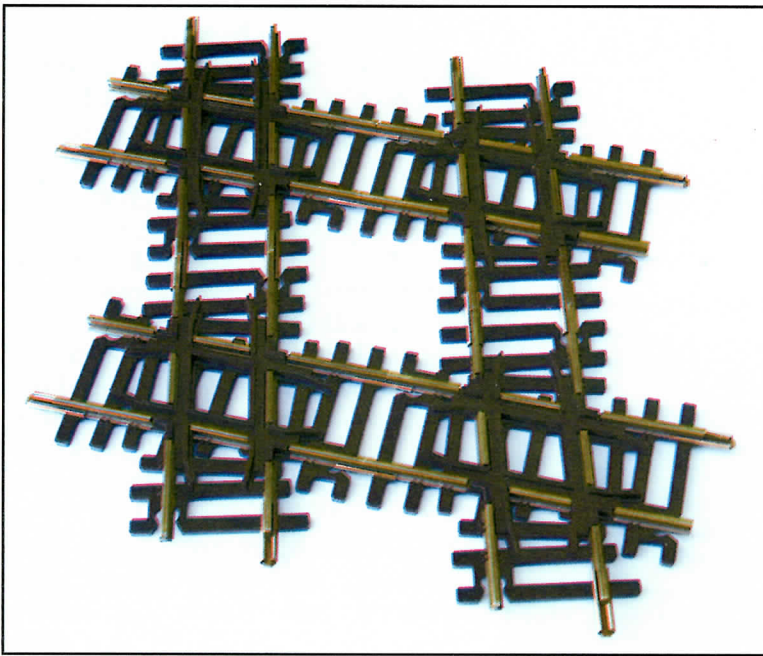


These crossings feature continuous electrical power throw its own rail, both lines are insulated from one another. Some older engines with partial electrical pick up may experience a small dead spot when running at slow speed.

Sold separately with rail joiners T148C30 \$19.95



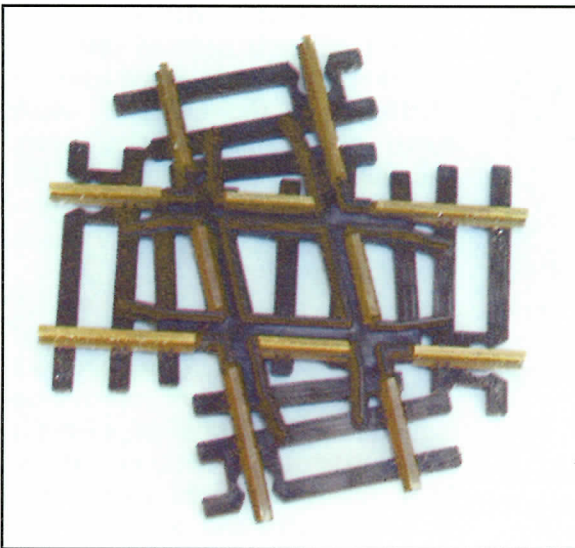
American Models 10087 Colonial Industrial Dr. South Lyon, MI 48178
Phone 248-437-6800 Fax 248-437-9454 Purchase through our web site.
www.americanmodels.com



75° Crossings

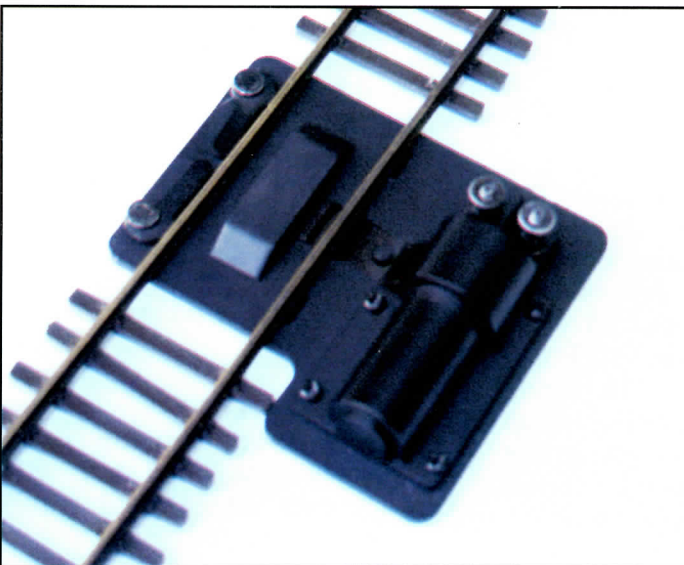
This is an example of what 4 of our new 75° crossings would look like. All snap to 3" inch track centers when installed together.

We chose this angle instead of the 90° because no wheel axle will fall into the gap going over the frog area resulting in quieter and longer lasting operation. Figure 8 track plans are smoother looking with these 75s.



These crossings feature continuous electrical power through its own rail, both lines are insulated from one another. Some older engines with partial electrical pick up may experience a small dead spot when running at slow speed.

Sold separately with rail joiners T148C75 \$19.95



Electric Uncoupler

Easily installs onto existing American Models straight track. This device requires a power interrupt switch of any kind, so use your AF switch or our Atlas control box (\$3.15 ea.) which can be gang connected for multiple uncouplers. Can be used with 3 inch track centers. T148UNC \$15.95 (wires included)



POSTMORTEM ON THE PENN CREEK VALLEY - Or - Layout Design Criteria For Long-Term Satisfaction By Sam Powell

Penn Creek Valley: This fictitious miniature railroad had been so much a part of my life and the life of other S scale modelers in the country that it seemed almost to be a real railroad located on the real

and being split up among the competing local S gauge railroads. The one big question still haunts them: WHY?

There is no simple answer, but all



Sam was very effective at creating scenery and structures that really captured the eastern steel mill scene. This pre-Walthers steel mill was kit-bashed from various sources. This is the Sharon Steel plant at Fellsburg. Photo by Sam Powell

estate of southwestern Pennsylvania.. It's routing , station stops and shippers had been so carefully worked out over the years, and its livery so thoughtfully planned that the thought of the shipping world without the Penn Creek Valley almost left you wondering who was going to make the many connections that would be left unserved if the Penn Creek Valley were to disappear. And yet, here I was, crow bar in hand, saber saw, and cross cut saw ready to bring this venerable old railroad's life at least to a temporary halt. Friends I had known for years stood around in disbelief. They were absolutely convinced I was either insane or joking when the word got out that the Penn Creek Valley was going into receivership

phases of the complicated answer fall into one large general category: "TO DO SOMETHING BETTER". The fact is the Penn Creek Valley was planned in the year 1976. That is now 25 years ago. With the passage of time every single element of the railroad had become seriously dated. The track plan had serious design problems. The scenery, although attractive created operational problems. The roster had problems: the equipment I had accumulated out of a sincere admiration for specific prototypes over the last 25 years no longer fit the layout I had designed years earlier. The wiring which had been originally set up for block control was not up the power loads placed on it by carrier control, and the complexity of the

track plan made rewiring seem overwhelming. Operating sessions had routinely come unglued because one section of the layout or another would develop a bug that would shut down the dynatrol power module for that sector. To make matters even worse, there was the thought in the back of my wife's and my mind that we might move within the next five or so years. This layout was absolutely un- portable, and the thought of the time put in on serious renovation that would then be lost in a move was depressing at the very least.

So a final operating session was planned, an open house was planned, and friends and family came by to bid the PCV a fond farewell as the last passenger train trundled its way across the rail separating West Mifflin from Connellsville. It seemed only fitting that as the train eased into the Mifflin yard the Dynatrol went down in one final, colossal gasp, and the train refused to move the final few feet. It was as if the layout was saying, "yep, you made the right decision".

So where do we go from here? If life is about learning, then this is a golden opportunity to improve on a good thing. The challenge here is to identify those elements of the PCV that were indeed good, vow to keep those, and to figure out what elements were bad, and think up something better. This required a considerable amount of honest retrospective insight and evaluation of the endeavor over the entire life span of the Penn Creek Valley.

So here is some hard earned advice. Will it be right for all parties? Absolutely not. But it will all be food for thought that will allow you to clarify your objectives as you design your next model railroad.

THE GOOD STUFF

One problem with defining "good stuff" is that some "good stuff" will conflict with other "good stuff"

and thereby become "bad stuff". This list of "good stuff" is going to assume no such conflicts but will view the traits as abstracts ideals that may get very relative later on in the real world of compromises that arise in the face of a track plan that must be squeezed into a room with four (or more) hard, confining walls. Another problem with this exercise is that of modesty. For it to be useful to you, I must throw modesty out the window as clearly as I have humbly invited criticism to the table with my own self criticism. Where I think things were truly good, I will say so.

Without a doubt the best quality the PCV possessed was artistic in nature. The scenes were designed and executed in a way that pulled the viewer into them, and made them want to look around the corner to see what was next. The thing that was around the corner had the same quality, and a chain reaction of continuing search and discovery was always at play. This quality was not as evident in photos as it was when viewed live. During the many open houses hosted here over the years, a common comment from visitors was "This layout looks better in person than in published photos". While I didn't



This is a scene at Connellsville (Pa.) on the Penn Creek Valley. Connellsville is the curving yard on the lower level of the peninsula. I believe this is an Omnicon K4. Photo by Sam Powell

set out to design un-photogenic scenes I did purposely plan those of visual surprise and discovery, so it was a joy to hear these comments from visitors. Here are a few of the ideas that went into producing this quality:

VISUAL APPEAL

1. Divide the layout into many small scenes. (Nothing new here)
2. Try to make the view block that separates the scenes as natural as

possible. These could be buildings, trees, bridges, billboards, mountains, or well painted back drops.

3. Force the eye to move vertically as well as horizontally as it moves through the scene. This creates a rhythm of movement in the eye that becomes "music for the eye" as it travels from spot to spot. This can be done in scenes where the trains are all at the same level. Only specific points of interest need have varied levels. This can be created by tall buildings, smokestacks, trees, power lines, or even clouds painted on the back-drop.

4. Don't model "too much" of any one item in your scene. I was trying to create the impression left of a scene when one has traveled through it on a slow moving train. This is very different from the impression you get from standing in a scene and walking around. When travelling on a train you see considerably less than when studying a site. You see only one or two sides of a building, and only a quick glimpse of the surrounding support details. You almost never can tell how traffic flows in from the other side, but experience tells you it does and that is enough for the mind to accept it. This concept is much easier to model than that



This scene at Clairton just has that Pittsburghy look to it with background hills, embankments, bridges, overhead cranes, etc. Photo - Sam Powell

of studying the scene and painstakingly reproducing every facet of the operation. You need only one full side of a building and maybe two other for-shortened sides. You need not model the world on the other side of the building. In fact if you don't the suspense of the scene is heightened and the viewers interest strengthened.

5. Use color to create visual rhythm. Reds and yellows draw the eye, so reserve these for specific well placed spots at comfortable intervals, both vertically and horizontally.

6. Curves in roads and track create additional rhythm of the eye.

INTELLECTUAL APPEAL

I was very happy with the idea of fitting the model railroad into the real world geography of SW Pennsylvania. The Penn Creek Valley was actually modeled along the towns served by the old Pittsburgh and West Virginia. This game got to be more and more fun as it went on. It was a treat to hear visitors look at the layout and say things like "I grew up in that region, and this is just what it looks like" It was also great fun to have all of the towns along the line out there in the real world. It made operating sessions more tangible, and gave research trips more purpose with a sense of guided adventure. It made imaginary connections with the rest of the real world transportation system seem perfectly plausible. Even non-model rails couldn't keep the little smile off of their face as they got the concept of the PCV. The concrete nature of this device elicited no end of advice and suggestions from visitors who knew the region. This advice was always warmly accepted and gratefully received. The signs around the layout were chosen to make this clear without any words being spoken. The railroad hotel in West Mifflin was the Dusque House. The highway bridge over the yard had a sign on it that said, "Duquesne University 5 miles". Businesses were named after local town

names so visiting operators could tell at a glance what town they were in. I.E. Webster Fuel Oil had to be in Webster, PA.

FIXING THE "BAD STUFF"

I will list these in order of decreasing displeasure. The annoyances listed first will be those that caused the most grief over the years.

1. No Duck-Unders

This is certainly not new advice, but the advice was around when I designed the PCV and I wish I had followed it. The fact is, a room of 22x24 will not accommodate full length passenger car curves in S gauge without a stairway down into the center of the room or duck unders. Since I had no stairway into the center of the layout room, I made a compromise I hated later on. I got tremendously tired of going under the layout to get into the room, and so did my parents as they aged. What seemed acceptable at age 30 was an enormous burden at age 50. If this one design feature had been otherwise I might have had the energy to fix the layout later. Although it seems radical, It would have been possible to design the layout with a set of stairs up over the layout by going into the attic and coming down from there into the center of the room. A taller benchwork that could be walked under without stooping would have been possible as the ceilings are 9 feet high in that room. This would require a raised platform for viewing and operating as part the construction of the benchwork....a lot of work, but probably worthwhile in retrospect.

2. No Inaccessible Tracks

The PCV had too much track that could not be accessed for maintenance. It had running tracks and hidden storage tracks that could not be gotten to for cleaning and re-gauging. As the layout aged this became a serious problem. Hidden storage tracks should be hidden only from the operators and viewers of the layout, not from the

owner. There must be a room with adequate access to the rails and cars on them. Hidden storage tracks must also be situated so that cars can be easily identified and put on and off the tracks. If raising your head while working the hidden storage tracks results in bumping your head, this design will get seriously old in time. In the case of the PCV subsequent redesigns and "upgrades" always made these problems worse not better, as the impulse was always to add new stuff over old, or add staging under old tracks.

3.No Plaster Anywhere Near The Rails

Gypsum based plaster was a fun, inexpensive medium to work. I took great delight in creating my miniature world from it, but plaster is a serious corrosive to nickel rail (probably worse on brass) and really raised havoc later with the running of the trains. I made one highway bridge from plaster that was so corrosive to the rails that trains would slow down under the bridge, and eventually stop there if I did not clean the rails regularly. The same was true of several grade crossings made from plaster, and the tall mountain cuts the PCV ran through seemed to rain down corrosive on the rails over time. I will not use it again. By contrast, styrene spackle is a very friendly medium that seemed to cause no problems. It is expensive, and cracks if applied too thick. The solution this time around, will be to make the scenery from styro-foam, blended in with styrene spackle. My plan is to make the major scenic features off the layout and place them on the layout, like structures, to be removed for maintenance later.

4.Track Plan Was Too Complex

I did not say too big. I said too complex. I read John Armstrong's book Track Planning For Realistic Operation years ago, and his adage was "the more turnouts, the more fun."

This may be true if someone else is

taking care of the maintenance, but folks, things go wrong or "stuff happens" as the bumper sticker says, and as all devotees of Murphy's law know it happens where it will do the most damage. My experience is that the more turnouts you have the more the coefficient of work to fun will tilt in favor of work. Of course, you have to have them, but think long and hard about where they are, and don't install a single one you don't need. As an aside to this, try to pick a good reliable turnout as a standard and make them all the same so that when something goes wrong, the same tools will be required for the fix. Also, don't put a turnout on a curve if at all possible. Banked curves look good, and work pretty well, but banked curves, and turnouts create serious engineering problems. I know what I am talking about because I have done this, and these were usually the first turnouts to derail a train. Above all, do not hide a turnout motor so you cannot get to it. It sounds so logical, but one of my layout upgrades covered a turnout motor. I eventually spiked the turnout shut and killed the siding. It looked prototypical, but for the wrong reason.

Keep the schematic simple. You can make a simple schematic look good with good scenery. My schematic had the same track serving several different purposes depending on how many times around the room you had gone. I eventually eliminated this for the better, but I never eliminated the "secret run-through" that served to create round-and-round for tours and shows. This made some track still supporting operation from both ends of the layout and created no end of confusion for dispatchers and operators alike. If they went too far, they were in another world to-to-speak. I am convinced to this day, that my problems with my Dynatrol were created by this track that could get into two different worlds. If a rail gap was spanned by a metal car wheel, then

my separate divisions of the dynatrol were no longer separate, and in some cases these tracks were reverse loops. Because so much of the storage track was hidden, trouble shooting this problem was very frustrating.

5. No Track More Than An Arm's Length From the Aisle

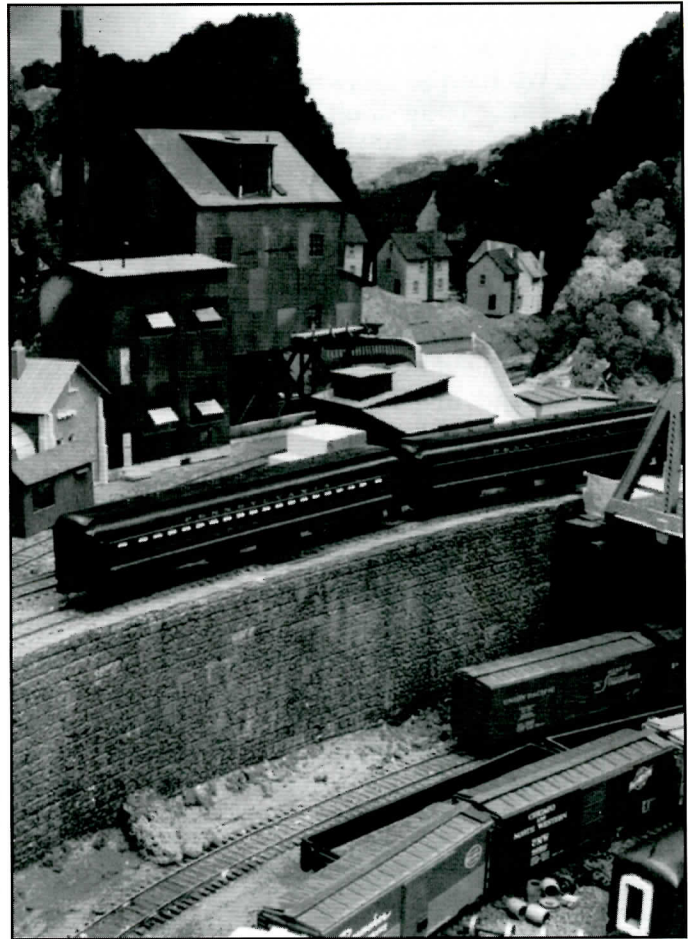
If you break this rule you will regret it. I did, and I did. The lower your benchwork, the further you can reach out over the layout. Higher benchwork looks better, but limits the distance trains can be gotten to from the aisle. Creative use of step ups, and an operating platform could help here.

6. No Aisles Less Than 30" Wide

There were several seriously squeezed aisle ways on the Penn Creek Valley that created great congestion on operating night and during open houses as well. These aisles were as narrow as 18" which were barely acceptable for one person, but two operators could not pass and follow their train.

6A. No Major Switching Points Across The Aisle From Each Other

To make matters even worse, one of these bottlenecks placed the yard throat for Connellsville yard right across the aisle from sidings for Fayette City. This put a switching crew and a yard crew elbow to elbow in the tightest aisle on the railroad, which became a real zoo if a train wanted to enter or leave the Connellsville yard. Operators of through trains could just forget



Southwestern Pennsylvania or Western Maryland just jumps out at you. Photo - Sam Powell

actually following their train around the layout at that point.

7. No Benchwork Too High For Kids

One of my deepest regrets about the Penn Creek Valley was that it was too high for my children to enjoy. I followed the prevailing wisdom at the time which called for layouts to be up high enough for adults to view the trains as if from ground level. As a result, my children could never see the trains without standing on a chair. This did not induce participation on their part, and, I think, was partly to blame for their failure to join me in the hobby. When the PCV was designed, my oldest child was only 1 year old. This height seemed like a good idea at the time as it would keep daddy's trains out of the reach of little fingers. Well it did, pretty much for good. In retrospect, I wish they had been able to see and touch them. The next time around

there will be grand children, and I want them to be able to join me. I know we try hard to convince the world that this is an adult hobby, but if we don't get kids involved the hobby is going to become more and more senior each year.

8. Better Climate Control

The PCV was in a two car garage which was only air conditioned or heated as the need called for. This created no end of problems with track alignment. Changes in temperature and humidity make wood, homasote, and rail change dimensions. These changes would make rails move enough to throw track out of gauge, and thus derail trains. The next layout will be in the house proper, and receive the same climate control the people get.

9. Better Wildlife Control

I am not joking. We live in the country where barns have been recently torn down for residential development. This resulted in an enormous quantity of mice that made their way into the layout room. I certainly did not put up a welcome mat for them but , I was not nearly aggressive enough in trapping these critters, and over the years, their urine was highly corrosive. Next time I will "take no prisoners". It's either them or my model railroad, and I intend to win the battle.

10. More Stable Sub-Roadbed

My layout was built of homasote roadbed on either plywood or splined subroad bed. I am now of the opinion that this material moves too much with changes of humidity for rails to stay in good gauge. As the roadbed shrinks, the rails do not, and the result is a kink in the rail. I am not making this up. I have seen it on the Penn Creek Valley. In my piano shop, we can measure a 60" soundboard grow fi inch from corner to corner in the time span of one day when we take it out of a hot box with 11% humidity into a room with 50% humidity. The soundboard is made of pine and behaves very much the

way pine sub-roadbed would. I am going to find a substitute for wood before I build my next layout. I am looking for a light material, that is not hydrosopic, that is not too expensive, strong enough to hold up model trains with reasonable support, and that can be cut and shaped easily. One idea I have had, is to cut extruded styrene insulation into strips, and then laminate it vertically into splined sub-roadbed. All I need is a roadbed to go on top of this which is also stable and will hold a spike. Are there any ideas out there?

11. Good Flow-over Space

Although not a fatal flaw, visitations to the PCV by groups worked best during warm, sunny weather, as there was no flowover room adjacent to the layout itself. When people got tired of the press inside the layout room, the only avenue of escape was the outdoors. If it was raining or cold, then this was problematic. The next layout room will have space for visitors to relax outside the confines of the layout itself.

BUILDING A BETTER PENN CREEK VALLEY

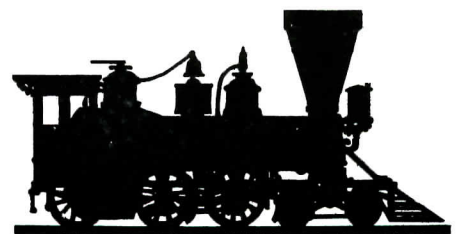
Establishing Goals Helps Resolve Design Goal Conflicts...

As I said before, good ideas become bad when they conflict with other good ideas. Achieving long-term satisfaction in a layout design is made easier with a good long list of personal priorities in the hobby. Often it is hard to know ahead of time how these priorities will wear with time, but a good attempt is bound to be better than none at all. In the case of the PCV, my priorities changed with time, and this was partly to blame for its perceived failures. For instance: when I was young I did not mind ducking under the layout to get into the room; when my kids were little, it seemed desirable to have the trains out of their reach, when I designed the layout, I did not know I would become obsessed with the building of detailed full length passenger cars; dynatrol was not

available when the PCV was built; staging tracks became "hot stuff" after the PCV was built, and so I unwisely added it under an existing layout. In spite of this dilemma **I WILL PROCEED, BUT WITH CAUTION!**

By now I have a new design in mind which avoids most of the problems of the old PCV without losing too much of the visual art of the old. The design was influenced by the following: 1. Minimum radius of 48" for full length passenger cars.. 2. Style of operation preferred: out and back operation with a turn around at each end requiring crews to man the terminals and this switching operation. 3; size of active roster envisioned for the railroad: 200 freight cars, 30 passenger cars, 20 locos. 4; Type of equipment and or train length desired (multiple unit diesel lashups, steam, and single unit diesel switchers. 5; social structure of operating groups: must accommodate from 5 to 10 operators ; 6..And of course my list of taboos and good stuff.

My scenic ideas of visual intrigue and surprise were in conflict with the edict to make all tracks visible and reachable for maintenance. Having all tracks within reach of the aisle limits the depth of scenes, and thus limits the range of eye motion available to the viewer. This makes the view less "interesting" as the entire scene can be taken in more easily in a single sweep of the eyes. Wide aisles also open the scenes to easier summary glances and diminish the suspense that can be built into the scene. I'm counting on scenic inspiration to take over when the time comes that will allow me to make this layout at least interesting, if not a superb



NASG TO SUPPORT REGIONAL CONVENTIONS; **Inaugural Event is Puget Sound 2004** **by Gil Hulin, NASG Western Vice President**

Although the National Association of S Gaugers has held annual national conventions for more than four decades, it has not directly sponsored regional conventions. Not until 2004, that is.

Next July the NASG will sponsor its first regional convention, Puget Sound 2004. It will be four plus days held in the Tacoma/Seattle, Washington, area - which may signal a series of smaller meets in other "fringe" areas of North America. The NASG won't intrude on established, club-sponsored regional shows, but where anticipated attendance or the local manpower to stage an event might not be sufficient without outside assistance, the NASG is ready to help at the regional level. Future regionals might be long weekend events in areas such as Georgia/Florida, Maine, northern Minnesota/Wisconsin, Louisiana, Arizona and Canadian cities. Future regionals probably will be distanced further from the NASG national, unlike next year's situation where they are only two weeks apart. West coast S gaugers are the primary market, but all are welcome to attend.

I am chairman of this event and have promoted it as "not just a convention, but a vacation." At this year's convention banquet in Wisconsin, I advised the audience that "if you judge the success of a convention by the number of trains you buy, then Chicago is the place to be next summer. But if you have already acquired most of the S gauge you will ever need, then consider a vacation trip to Tacoma/Seattle in 2004."

The Puget Sound 2004 HQ hotel in Tacoma is a full two blocks from a pair of bridges over the busy Seattle-Portland double track mainline shared by BNSF and UP freight trains and 14 weekday Amtrak and Sounder passenger trains.

Puget Sound 2004's list of activities include two steam-powered charter excursions on the Mount Rainier Scenic Railway (we've asked for Shay or Climax power) and Chehalis-Centralia Railroad (Baldwin 2-8-2 power), a dinner cruise on

Puget Sound paralleling BNSF's shoreline mainline, a visit to Coast Engine and Equipment Co. (CEECO) - a diesel locomotive and freight car rebuilder - and an opening picnic at the Kitsap Live Steamers' park in Port Orchard. Two evenings will offer home layout tours of Flyer/hi-rail, scale standard and scale narrow gauge. Every event will include bus transportation; there are no "self-guided" tours nor need to rent a car just to participate in the convention.

The National Train Show, at the tail end of the NMRA Convention on July 9-11, is the main reason the regional was kept at



Chehalis-Centralia steam.

its original time frame. The Seattle NMRA convention runs from July 4-11. Puget Sound 2004 officially starts in the afternoon of July 10 in Tacoma and includes a choice of half-day or full-day attendance at the Train Show on Sunday the 11th. There are no other joint activities with the NMRA.

Idaho's Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers will have its Lookout Junction layout as the center of S gauge activity at the NTS. Those not interested in the Train Show will have an option of a half-day or full-day of sightseeing in Seattle.

For those who prefer AF or hi-rail items, Puget Sound 2004 will include a day's all-S swap meet on Tuesday, open to the public in the evening and advertised during

the NMRA events. Since this is a regional convention, no juried model contest will be held, but a one-day model display with popular vote awards will take its place. As the only day devoted to hotel-based activity, most clinics will be Tuesday. Any *Dispatch* readers interested in giving a clinic, contact me at ghulin@guardnet.com or 3895 Colony Oaks Dr., Eugene, OR 97405.

Operating layouts at the hotel will include the Oregon-based Northwest S Scaler's scale oval and the recently enlarged hi-rail layout of the Inland Empire S Gauge Association of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN) from Spokane. The NASG switching layout may be shown at both the NMRA site and the Tacoma hotel.

On the final day, July 14, the regional will close with a Mount Rainier Scenic Railroad trip, an informal "business meeting", and a closing banquet. Registration forms will be in the December *Dispatch*. We are planning to offer a \$195 all-inclusive package that will include savings over the ala carte menu. The LaQuinta Inn and Suites includes a deluxe continental breakfast along with its \$85 room rate (800-351-5900) - mention "S gaugers convention."

Those with ideas for other regional meets should contact Convention Chairman Lee Johnson, 2472 Lariat Lane, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. Regionals are eligible for NASG "seed money" but also have to share in the profits.



Ride park size 7-1/2" gauge railroad across the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.
Photos by Gil Hulin

Pres. Message from p. 4

Interest Group Program, Policies and Guidelines at:
<http://www.getnet.com/~dickg/nmra/sigs/sig.html>

My proposal is based on these guidelines. The NMRA has a SIG Coordinator to look after all the SIG's (the NMRA currently has 34 SIG's at my last count). Each SIG has its own coordinator. I will be the initial SIG Coordinator for the NASG to get us started. Here is the NMRA's definition of a SIG: "An NMRA Special Interest Group (SIG) is an independent, non-profit, membership group organized to provide a forum for the exchange of prototype or model railroad information." It's that simple. Some folks think that the internet has replaced the need for SIG's. I beg to differ. The internet enhances the SIG process. The NMRA has large SIG's devoted to operations and two of them have Yahoo Groups. And of course there's email to keep the SIG members in touch with each other. The LDSIG (Layout Design) has it's own activities at the NMRA convention. It's the chance for modelers who share a specific prototype or modeling interest to get together and share information and fellowship. As I develop our own NASG Policies and Guidelines, they will be based on the NMRA's but be somewhat simpler than theirs.

Now what I'd like to do is propose the very first new SIG. I've just finished expanding the SN3 East Broad Top section of my layout. I've developed quite an interest in the EBT, and I'm certain that there are others within our membership that share the same interest in modeling the EBT and/or following the history of the prototype. It will serve as a pilot for the program and we'll see what develops from there on. Please get in touch if you are interested. Also, if you would like to start up a SIG, let me know.

S Friendly Hobby Shop Campaign

We took a significant step forward by placing a 4-color 2-page ad in the *Model Retailer Magazine*. This is a joint ad with several S manufacturers who expressed interest in getting their products into more hobby shops. In the past it's been tough getting hobby shops to stock S. With the large and growing range of products, we felt that it was time to try to aggressively promote the idea of placing more S items in hobby shops. This of course includes dealers who take their wares to train shows since that is now an important part of a hobby dealers income.

Why try so hard to get more dealers to stock S? A few years ago, we were advised by a well known modeler to become involved with the World's Greatest Hobby campaign. He said that our best chance for growth as a

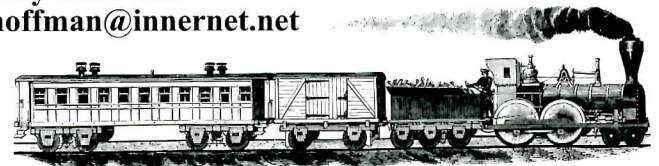
scale would be to "cherry-pick" converts from the other major scales. While this is one approach to growth, there is another way to grow our scale. How about going head-to-head with the likes of HO and N and compete for the first time model railroader as well. The only real way to do this is to present the prospective modeler with a choice by having our products stocked side by side with the other scales. And don't forget that a large group of first-timers is kids. When they are ready to graduate from "Thomas", their parents end up in the hobby shops looking for the next step for their kids. We have lots of train sets now and need to have them available to prospective buyers by having them on hobby shop shelves. Incidentally, I feel that we have not taken advantage of the WGH idea, but that's the subject of another column.

But, here's an example of what we are facing. I had the opportunity to visit the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC. Across the street was a very large hobby shop. They had a large room full of O scale items and a larger room full of HO and N scale items. There was no S in sight. I asked about that and they said that they did place orders for S scalers from time to time, but had no room for stocking it. They were aware of AM and SHS so they were not ignorant of them. However, you had to gauge the enormous overall size of the shop to realize that they could stock S if they really wanted to. This is precisely the kind of dealer that we have to appeal to if we want to be competitive with the other scales.

The coop ad is a sort of forward thinking that's risky monetarily, but I believe that is a worthwhile endeavor. You can all do your part by stopping by dealers and asking for S products and of course patronizing that dealer. If you do this in concert with the ad, it just might jar some of these proprietors into thinking about stocking S products. Then you can stand back and watch us grow.

- Roy Hoffman

rhoffman@innernet.net



NASG COPY SERVICE

Note that the Copy Service is now in the hands of Dick Karnes who is in charge of the Russell M. Mobley Memorial Library. Copies of articles from back issues of the *NASG Dispatch* and other publications we have permission to copy are available from Dick per his instructions in the Library ad. We want to thank Kent Singer for handling the Copy Service for many years.

Kent still is available to work up any Short & Easy articles you want to send his way.

Kent can be reached at 6516 Georgian Way, Columbus, GA 31909. email: k_singer@knology.net

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The **Bristol S Gauge Railroaders (BSG)** set up their portable modular layout at the All Gauge Train Show held August 17 at the Yale University Payne Whitney Gymnasium in New Haven, CT. The layout was operated for visitors to the show, which attracted a very large crowd. The South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSG) and the Connecticut S Gaugers (CSG) both also operated layouts at the show, so there was a good display of S gauge trains at the event. The show was organized by John and Robin Vanacore who operate an AF S gauge business in North Haven, CT. Long time BSG member Paul Riley is in the process of building a new layout. With Paul's skills the layout should be a good one. Tom Robichaud is President of the club.

The July meeting of the club was held at the home of Roland Perkins. Roland has an L-shaped layout in his family room with detailed scenery. There is a gorge 5 ft. long x 2 feet deep over which trains operate on a scratch built wooden trestle. Crumbled ceiling tiles and plaster are mixed with water to make the hard shell for the scenery. Members attending the meeting brought trains to operate on the host layout. In mid-July the club met at the home of Gene Fletcher, in Brunswick, ME. Gene is a long time S gauger and operates his Great Eastern RR in the basement. The layout has code 100 rail and hand laid turnouts. Gene operates various rolling stock built from Kinsman, Mid-gage, Permabilt, and Ambroid along with some converted AF for the scale track. Gene at one time worked part time for Bill Stewart, owner of Mid-Gage, and was paid with boxcar kits. The BSG was founded in Bristol R.I. in 1948 when the Mid-gage factory con-

sisted of two old real life box cars, one of which housed an early layout of that club. *Gene unfortunately passed away recently - see Last Run this issue.*

The **Connecticut S Gaugers (CSG)** met at the home of Stan Stockrocki in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. in June. Stan has an incredibly detailed point to point S scale layout which was operated for those attending the meeting. The CSG set up and operated their layout at the Yale University show in August. Steve Kutash, V.P. is in charge of the module coordination. Modules are owned by the individual club members and meet the NASG standards so all can be connected together. Track work is code .125 with small spikes so AF and high rail trains can be operated along with scale trains. The club was scheduled to meet at the home of the Bill Mark family in Pleasant Valley, N.Y. on Sept. 20. Art Ferguson is scheduled to host the club in October, in Ivoryton, CT. The CSG are planning to bring and set up their layout at the Cheshire H.S. Train Show, in November.

The **Canadian S Scale Quarterly (CSSQ)** is the publication of the **Canadian S Modelers**. Some of their members and activities were described in the last edition of the *Dispatch* magazine. Manfred Lesser edits the publication with help from Alex Binkley, in Ottawa, Ont. A recent issue included an article on the Plumcreek RR, as operated by Clayton Peter. After a recent move to a new house, an HO layout was found too big to fit the new basement. A change of scale was the result, with the new layout in a room 12 ft. x 36 ft. The track is hand laid code .100 and approx. 300 feet have been put down so far. Clayton also has an interest in

antique cars, and operates a 1947 Oldsmobile 78 Series Club Sedan with straight eight motor and Hydromatic. Clayton also has a 1937 Olds opera coupe which is being restored. In the same issue of the newsletter, Jim Martin described the portable S scale display layout called the Ridgehill Central.

The **Southern Tier S Gaugers (STSG)** activities are coordinated by Doug Miller, and the group has operated yard modules from their various home layouts at local train shows. Displays were made at the Susquehanna Valley NRHS Show, Endicott, N.Y., in Oct., '02; the Roberson Museum, Binghamton, N.Y. in Dec., '02, and at the Cornell RR Historical Society's Ithaca, N.Y. show, in April, '03. Member John Marcham reported on the group's activities.

Gregg Mummert coordinates the activities of the **Western N.Y. S Scale Assoc. (WNYSSA)**. Gregg hosted the club members for a picnic on August 24. Member Frank Schenk brought several AF pieces for repair assistance. This is a very good way to have ideas and help with AF repairs, as often various members have experience with repairs on various S equipment. The Sept. meeting of the club was held at the home of Dave Blaufuss, in West Seneca, N.Y. Future club activities are being planned including a possible fall foliage ride on the A & A RR.

The **South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSG)** hold their club meetings at the Stratford, N.J. Senior Center. The club has a display layout with wonderful scenery. The layout with scenery was set up at the Shriner's Hospital, in Philadelphia, PA. on Aug. 10, and the New Haven Train show, on August 17. Mike McConnell edit's the club newsletter, *The Waybill*. Joe Sullivan requested a leave of absence from responsibilities as Secretary and Club Newsletter Editor due to a family illness.

Club members wish Joe all the best during his time of trial. The club is encouraging members to write a brief article describing "where, when, & what" did you buy or receive for your first new AF item or set? Member Dave Pierce demonstrated DCC installations in several locomotives, including original AF pieces at a recent meeting as a clinic. The **SJSG** have club shirts available to their members. Each shirt features an embroidered club logo and members name.

The North Penn S Gaugers (NPSG) planned to attend the Frederick Mennonite Home show in mid-Sept. and operate their layout with newly-made wiring harnesses. There was a business meeting on Sept. 8, at the home of Glenn Ritter. The club newsletter included a form to send in for attendance at the upcoming Central Jersey S Scalpers (CJSS) 22nd Annual Fall Get-together.

The Neshaminy Valley AF Club (NVAFC) held a get together at the Jersey shore hosted by member Mike Hudek on Sept. 13. There were plenty of activities of interest including excursions on the Cape May Seashore Line RR, Cold Spring Village, Flyertown Toy Train Museum and train shop in Clermont, N.J., and other shore related activities. The club held a meeting at the home of Jerry and Theresa Hillier's home in Churchville, PA. on July 11. The hosts served a barbecue dinner before the meeting. Mike Ramsey coordinates the activities of the club.

The Lehigh Valley S Gaugers (LVSG) met at the home of Barry Mertz, in Allentown, PA. for their meeting in late April. The topic of the meeting was their secret project contest, where members entries were presented, viewed, and judged by those attending. First place winner was Barry Mertz and his new Sandy Creek Div. of the Pennsy. RR. It is

an S scale layout (normal gauge) with operating trackage and scenery begun. Second place was garnered by Jerry Perkins' freight car set of three cars, including two Pacific Rail Shops box cars and a Lehigh Valley Models tank car. The latter was Jerry's first attempt at a craftsman kit, and it turned out very well, according to photos in the *Roundtable*, newsletter of the club. Third place in the contest went to Dave Heine and his plans for a new Lehigh & Western Sn3 RR. Dave recently moved and is in the process of planning and building a new layout. All other entrants in the contest were awarded honorable mention awards for their entries.

The club members met at the home of Frank and Laura Titman and then went to visit the Black Diamond Society of Model Engrs., in Bethlehem, PA. The Society occupies a two story building with train layouts in several gauges, including S. The club members lost a long time friend and RR modeler, John E. Kennedy in June. The **LVSG** members visited John to enjoy his large HO layout on many past occasions. A recent club newsletter issue featured the Midland & Pacific RR as built and operated by Wally Collins. The layout has been 40 years in the making, and has a variety of S gauge rolling stock and equipment. Wally (like Frank Titman) prefers steam locomotives for operation on his layout.

The Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC) plans to display at the Hartly, DE, Train Show on Nov. 16, and the Westminster Train Show at the Agriculture Center on Nov. 23. Barry Berson explained changes in the York, PA. Train show meet. A new Orange hall will be completed and dealers will be moved to that hall for the fall show. There will be room for train layouts in another hall, and the club was asked to set up a layout at one of the upcoming shows, probably spring, 2004.

The **BAAFC** displayed their layout at the Middletown, PA, Festival on Sept. 27. Paul Love coordinated the event and hosted the club members for a cook-out after the festival display. The club is considering another club car which would be a wine car. A local winery, Basignani Winery has agreed to help sponsor the car, and would like the club to operate a layout at one of their open houses and purchase some of the cars. This sounds like a very good opportunity for the club, and also would be advertising for S gauge with their display layout at the winery. The club is planning to operate their layout at the TTOS Train Show, on Oct. 12 in Earleigh Heights, MD. A field trip to the Cass Scenic RR in West Virginia is planned for Oct. 25-26. Ron Kolb coordinates the club activities, and edit's the newsletter.

The Atlantic Coast S Gaugers (ACSG) has six divisions in various areas of the southeast U.S. Joseph Haenn reported that the **Georgia Division** met in early June at the home of Bob Strong. The Georgia Div. will use the portable layout standards used by other divisions so set ups can be easily made at displays of the layout. There are four corner modules which will belong to the club, and be available for displays, and individual members can build and maintain their own straight modules which can be used to make different sized layouts. The club meetings were planned to be at members' homes, until the numbers attending require meeting at a larger facility. Tom Robinson brought his layout to a train show at the Smoke Rise, GA. Baptist Church in Late July for display and operation, with the division members helping. The Georgia Div. is open to members from Florida, South Carolina or Alabama.

The Suncoast AF Enthusiasts (SAFE): A surprise visitor, Mark Briggs, has been a long time member and good supporter of the

club, but dropped out of active membership for a year or so. He was welcomed back at the June meeting, and he can offer the club some fine expertise with the S gauge railroading activity that they undertake. Member Don Rodgers brought pictures of his recent wedding, and Wayne King from Ft. Myers was recently married. Joe Spinella received a plaque from the TCA recognizing his "outstanding and dedicated service, unselfishly given". Joe's wife, Anna ably edits and distributes the club newsletters.

Fred and Nancy Rhyne held the Aug. meeting of the club at their home. The club is planning for their own train show to be held on Dec. 6, and to display their layout at the GATS show on Dec. 21-22. New member Dwight Cox was welcomed to the club fellowship at the Lutz Depot event. Joe and Carol Flora hosted the Sept. meeting at their home in Tampa, FL.

The Crescent City S Gaugers (CCSG) operate in the New Orleans, LA. Area. The club set up and operated their display layout at two shows in November, 2002. The shows included the local TCA Train Show where DCC operations were used for the first time, and the GATS show held in Mandeville, LA. Lee Sykes was welcomed as a new member to the group at the latter show. The club members are building new modules and Larry Janeski is the module coordinator for the club. Norman Maunz. Constructed a turntable module with hand laid track. The twelfth anniversary of the club was commemorated with a dinner held for members and their spouses/significant others in May. Member Allen Evans coordinated a club tour of the New Orleans Public Belt RR in June. Jay Mellon coordinates the activities of the CCSG in New Orleans, LA.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (SMSG) were hosted

by Gaylord and Susan Gill in late June for their regular meeting. On August 9-10 the club set up their modular layout at the Crossroads Village for Railfan Weekend in Flint, MI. Sig Fleischmann held the Sept. meeting of the club at his home. The SMSG lost an important and active member last spring when Dave Belanger suddenly passed away from a heart attack. Members of the club including Gaylord Gill, Jim DeWitt, Gordy Michael, Bob Stelmach, and others have cataloged and priced model and RR items belonging to Dave Belanger. A sale was held this summer to liquidate the model and RR items that Dave had accumulated, with the proceeds going to his widow Lois.

The Northern Ohio S Scalpers (NOSS) held a meeting at the Berea Depot restaurant. There was a good turn out of members, who shared good food, good fellowship, and lots of trains. Joe and Irene Webb held the June meeting of the club at their home in Strongsville, OH. George Ricketts edits the club newsletter.

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG) held their annual picnic at Apple Valley Lake, Mt. Vernon, OH. On June 22. Lowell and Carlene Henthorn hosted the event for at least the second year. The event featured boat rides, swimming, fishing and operating the host's AC S gauge layout. The fall schedule of the club began with a meeting on Sept. 21, at which time ballots with a slate of officers were provided with the election to be at the Oct. 19th meeting of the club. Alan Evans edits the club newsletter.

The Lakeshore Special is the official newsletter of the **Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers (CVSG)** had their July meeting at the home of Dave McCamey, in West Salem, OH. The meeting was started early because neighbors of the host have operating two foot gauge and 7.5 inch gauge rail-

roads that were operated for the club members to enjoy. A picnic cookout was served to those attending the meeting. The host had completed track work on his S gauge layout and the club members held a golden spike ceremony to celebrate the completion of the track work.

President Lee McCarty explained about his vacation to Colorado where he rode the Royal Gorge RR, Cumbres & Toltec RR, and the Durango & Silverton RR. Lee and his wife Cindy also went to the Colorado RR Museum, and attended a family reunion in Steamboat Springs, CO. Lee talked his family (four brothers and sisters and family) into riding the California Zephyr from Denver to Chicago and then the Lakeshore Limited to Cleveland. Unfortunately, the Denver-Chicago portion was delayed thus missing the connection in Chicago. Ironically, the family ended up taking an air flight from Chicago to Cleveland.

The Chicagoland Assoc. of S Gaugers (CASG): Member Andy Juggle suggested that the club look into arranging to visit the Toy Train Barn with the S gauge layout and museum operated by Buck Guthrie in Wisconsin. Don Heimbarger edits the newsletter issues and recently completed a history report on the club, which is on the club's website. The August meeting of the club included discussion and announcement that the 2004 NASG convention will be at the Chicago Sheraton Northwest, and Sam McCoy, a Chicago area S scale modeler will head up the event. The Des Plaines Valley S Scalpers will host the convention with the NASG. The attractions in the Chicago area include the Illinois Railway Museum, Museum of Science & Industry, Chicago Skyline Cruise, Historic Long Grove, and layout tours in the area.

The Miami Valley S Gaugers (MVSG): The MVSG is plan-

ning to exhibit their layout at the Oct. 11-12 GATS Train Show to be held at the Exhibition Center, Dayton Airport. The club will also display their layout at the NMRA Train Show, to be held at the Hara Arena on Nov. 1-2, 2003.

The Sept. meeting of the **AF S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area (AFSGSLA)** was held at the home of Cliff Saxton, in Des Peres, MO. Several days after the club meeting, there was a work session for the upcoming Fall S Fest to be organized by the club. David Stevens of Florissant, MO. is handling the registration for the event. Moe Berk held an organizational meeting at his home to plan for the event. The Fall S Fest will be held on Oct. 31, Nov. 1 & 2, at the Holiday Inn, St. Louis Westport.

Member Barry Dolan coordinated the set up of the club's portable layout at the Boeing Swap Meet, held on Sept. 20. Barry also coordinated the set up of the club's double helix layout at the Annual Transportation Days sponsored by the Museum of Transport on October 4-5. On Oct. 10 the club will hold their last planned meeting before the Fall S Fest at the home of Charlie Taylor, in Kirkwood, MO. Charlie writes the *Club Car Column* for the *S Gaugian Magazine*. Final plans for the holiday display in the Famous Barr window will be made at this meeting as well. This annual display is in the window of a large department store and features the operation of S gauge trains on a well-designed and constructed layout. The layout is stored in a warehouse of the store during the spring, summer, and fall months. Gary Mueller edits the club newsletter. Moe Berk coordinates the club activities.

The *S Train Rail* is the official newsletter publication of the **Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN)**. Robert and Debbie Bowen, St. Maries, ID, held a

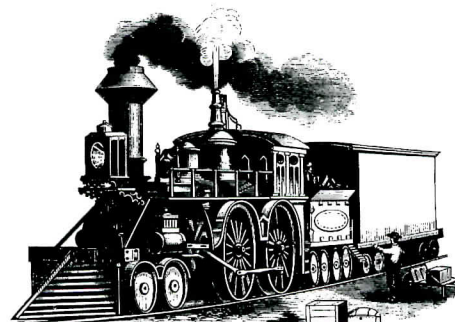
meeting of the club at their home on August 17. A Picnic was enjoyed by those attending. NASG member Vic Cherven, Valley Springs, CA, is considering moving to Idaho, and contacted the **IESGAPN** group to obtain information about the area and the club. Jon Kettner edits the club newsletter. Member Doug Eier and Bruce Renshaw will host the Sept. club meeting in Lewiston, ID.

The **Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers (RMHR)** displayed their layout at the GATS Train Show on June 21-22 at the Center Expo Bldg., Western Idaho Fairgrounds, Boise, ID. The layout was entered in the layout competition and members of the club were instructed to "Make Something Happen" during the show display time. The layout is large and includes many AF accessories which are operated for crowd enjoyment. On June 7, 2003 the RMHR club was eight years old. The club was presented second place in the layout contest and an HO (?) club from Seattle was awarded first place. The second place included a \$300. Award which was much appreciated by the club members. A club meeting was held in July at Sam Rapp's shop in Boise, to plan for the next showing of the layout. The display will be at the second annual Idaho Rails Train Show, Weiser, ID. on Oct. 11.

Members of the club were saddened and supportive of John Eichmann in connection with the death of his son Michael on July 19. The **RMHR** welcomed new members Barb Crowell and her son Andy, and Danny Lowber. These folks viewed the club's layout in June and decided to become a part of the club. The club held their Sept. annual picnic in Eagle, ID, at the home of new members Barb and Andy Crowell. The host has a barn which was offered to be used as a semi-permanent place to store and work on Lookout Junction, the club's layout.

The **Bay Area S Scalpers (BASS)** met at the home of member Ed. Loizeaux, in Los Altos, CA. on July 26. Scenery construction is under way on the large layout, which uses the New York Central as a prototype. In addition to the meeting, a club swap meet was held so persons attending could buy and sell their model RR items. Ed conducted a clinic at the meeting on how to use lasers for modeling projects. Barney Daehler edits and distributes the club newsletter, the *Bass Waybill*. A recent issue had a description of the S layout being built by eastern member Bob Hogan. The layout uses Mianne Benchwork System, one which uses furniture hardware and fasteners to assemble. No nails, screws, or hammering are required to build with the system. Parts are available in various lengths and sizes for the framework construction. Arden Goehring held the Sept. meeting of the club at his home in Lodi, CA. Those who attended enjoyed operation on the host's layout, which has been the subject of track work fine tuning recently. Lee Johnson coordinates the club activities. Newsletter issues often include articles on new products and modeling tips for the S gauge modeler.

Your column editor wishes to thank those clubs and individuals who submit information on the activities and events that you attend and organize. Please send newsletters and information for the column to: David Pool, 11 Bittersweet Trail, Wilton, CT., 06897-3902 or e-mail at: ndpool@juno.com.



EXTRA BOARD

TORONTO NMRA AND S

S scalers were an active group at the NMRA convention in Toronto in July. As well, many of us were able to attend two informal get-togethers set up to enable people from Canada and the U.S. to put faces to names. In some cases, it was an opportunity for Canucks to meet each other as well. And no one got SARS. In total, eight S scalers presented S scale clinics at the convention lead by Ed Loizeaux, Alex Binkley and Jim Martin. Chris Abbott, an Sn42 modeler, discussed the Newfoundland 42 inch gauge railway. Pete Moffet, another Sn42er and one of the convention organizers, tackled open freight car loads. Jeff English talked on NYC steam era freight cars. Dan Kirlin did DCC sound and Manfred Lesser expounded on scenery techniques.

There were other S scalers at the convention including Denis Fortier, president of the CSSQ, who won second and third place in the judged photo contest. Simon Parent, the builder of the CNR 2-6-0s, was there as was Dave Jasper of the Pines & Prairies Workshop. Andrew Baird and Brian Walsh, two more Newfoundland Railway fans, were there. Andy Malette displayed his K-3 Pacific kit at the downsized train show. Andy also had Earl Tuson's box car ends and other freight car details on display. Model Builders Supply of Toronto had a lot of 1/50 scale fences and windows as well as girders and siding material that could be used in S. Dan Kirlin of Kirlin Scale Models says he plans to produce some transition era resin freight car kits and structures in S. Apparently, the first item will be a Fowler boxcar. Jim Martin was showing off an early version of an S scale CNR wood caboose that Oliver Clubine of Ridgehill Scale Models of Brantford is planning in conjunction with Kaslo Shops. There was a nice display of SN42

rolling stock and a nice British Proto 64 layout.

- Alex Binkley

USRA MIKADOS

A little refresher might be in order explaining the choice for Lionel to produce the light USRA 2-8-2 in the AF line. It's a good choice because AF never had a 2-8-2. Prototypically, it's also a good choice because 625 of them were produced by various manufacturers to a design chosen by government committee in 1918. The USRA (United States Railway Administration) attempted to standardize 12 different wheel arrangements, basically due to a locomotive shortage occurring during WWI. The most numerous wheel arrangement produced was the USRA light Mike. The first one was B&O 4500 given the Q-3 class. B&O had the most, 100. Other roads that had them: CGW, RI, NYC and predecessors, L&HR, P&WV, T&P, WP, Chicago & Alton, C&EI, Monon, GT (New England), GTW, MEC, Monongahela, Nickel Plate, NC&STL, UP, Rutland, SAL, Southern, Wabash, IHB, L&N, MP and PRR.

- Jeff Madden

ON GONDOLAS

The Des Plaines Hobbies upcoming 40' composite gondola is a 9-panel car built around 1919 or later for clones. John Nehrich quotes a figure of 20,000 cars for 25 roads. F&C makes two gondolas, a PRR composite GR (basically sideboards on a fishbelly flatcar in appearance) and a USRA steel sided gon, both 40-foot cars from the first two decades of the 20th century. SHS has mentioned the possibility of a War Emergency gon (WWII era). Nehrich lists owning roads for a 40' War Emergency car as Wabash, ACL, GM&O, Southern, Midland Valley and T&NO. Branchline offered a kit of these in the 1960s. According to Nehrich 52' War Emergency gons were purchased by the following roads: ATSF,

CNJ, DT&I, GTW, LV, NYC, NKP, N&W, PRR, PM, Reading, and RI.

- Pieter Roos

MR READERS' CHOICE AWARDS FOR 2002.

These awards were listed in the August, 2003 *Model Railroader*. In S scale SHS took first place locomotive with their F7s. River Raisins two versions 2-10-4 took 2nd and 3rd places. In rolling stock SHS again took first for their composite hopper. BTS took 2nd with the McCabe camp cars. First place award for structures went to American Model Builders interlocking tower. Second went to BTS for their Cabin Creek Post Office. Third went to American Model Builders for their McCormac's Dry Goods store.

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

- July 2003 *CTT*: An article by Ed Hyland on AF Number 588 Semaphores and a review of AM's Train Master.

- July 2003 *RMC*: NASG ad plus article on NP 10000 series double-sheathed boxcar which matches the SHS one. Article is HO based but detail info is appropriate.

- Sept. 2003 *CTT*: Paul Nelson article about 1953 S gauge and a review of SHS F7.

- June 2003 *Model Railroad News*: Review of AM E8s and Budd passenger cars and Roy Hoffman's *S Curves* column.

- July 2003 *MRN*: Review of SHS F7.

- Oct. 2003 *CTT*: An article on postwar Lionel and AF transformer safety, Article by Roger Carp about Cuyahoga Valley member Bill Newhouse and his Flyer tinkering.

- Nov. 2003 *CTT*: Four page color article on CVSG and NASG member Lee McCarty's hi-rail layout.

- Nov. 2003 *MR*: S gauge track systems are reviewed and compared in Part II of the Track Buyer's Guide by Jim Hediger. Puzzling though, is that the Shinohara line nor the Tomalco line are not mentioned, yet all the

hi-rail systems are, and *MR* is a scale magazine. Admittedly, the Tomalco standard gauge line is not out in the market full force, but the Shinohara code 100 track line is readily available from Scenery Unlimited.

- Sept. 2003 *Scale Rails* (NMRA): This issue has Bill Fraley's *S Scale Rails* column in it.

INDIANA CLUB BUILDS S

The Columbus (Indiana) Area Railroad club has begun to build an S scale railroad. Although modest in size because our other 3 scale layouts have already used most of the clubroom space, we plan to create a nicely scenicked layout. We will be hand-laying the track with code 100 rail. Four or five members are participating in the effort. If anyone within traveling distance of south central Indiana is interested in participating in this effort, please contact me. Alan Askerberg at - aberg@insightbb.com. The club website is www.trainweb.org/carc/

DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS

The BTS (Master Creations) Slatyfork sawmill mentioned in the June New Products Report is really an HO kit at an HO price. If an S one comes along, it'll be more.

CANADIAN CYLINDRICAL HOPPER

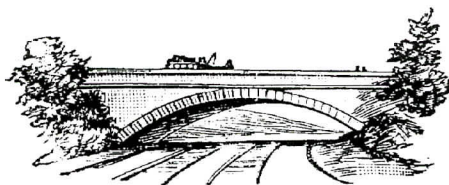
The Canadian S scale group is working with Kaslo Shops Distributing to produce a model of the cylindrical hopper car that has been used to haul western Canadian grain and other products all over North America since 1975. Counting both the trough and round hatch style of hopper, at least 13 different paint schemes have graced this car. Most common have been the Government of Canada, Canadian Wheat Board and provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan schemes.

Kaslo has a rather full order book and says it will try to fit us in next year. What we need is a strong

expression of interest in the car. It would come unpainted and without trucks or couplers. We will make sure it will accommodate No. 5 and 802 couplers. The roller bearing trucks offered by S Helper Service and American Models would suit this car. We are investigating whether there are custom painters who would paint the cars for those who wish such a service at an additional fee. It should be in the same range as the PS-1. Now without much trying, we think we have almost enough commitments for cars to get this project off the ground. However the more orders, the more attractive it becomes to Kaslo.

So we want S scalers who want one or hopefully more of these cars, to tell John Whitmore at KSD that you are interested. Even if you have told Joe Pereira, Denis Fortier or Alex Binkley you are interested, please confirm your intention with John. When KSD thinks it has enough commitments, it will ask for a down payment as it did with the PS-1.

You can reach John via e-mail at jwhitmoreatrogers.com (change the at to @). Or you can mail him at KSD, 2516 Quartz Place, Coquitlam, B.C. V3E 3K9 Canada. If you want to more about KSD, check their web site www.kasloshops



You won't believe!

www.americanflyertrains.com

or SASE to:
P.O. Box 681895
Orlando, FL 32869-1895

S-CALENDAR

Oct. 18-19, 2003: 6th Annual Maple Valley Operating Model Train Show. Kent, Washington. Info: John Warner - 877-822-1823, email: socsecl@aol.com

Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2003: Fall S Fest. St. Louis area, Holiday Inn Westport, Craigshire Rd., 314-432-3417 or Moe Berk, 39 Graeler, St. Louis, MO 63146. www.trainweb.org/afsgsla

Feb. 13-15 2004: 19th Annual Sn3 Symposium, Courtyard by Marriott, 180 North Fair Oaks Ave., Pasadena, CA 91103. Info: Slim Gauge Guild, 6234 Hillandale Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90042.

April 30-May 2, 2004: Spring S Spree, hosted by the Central Ohio S Gaugers, Holiday Inn East (I-70 East and Hamilton Rd.), Columbus, OH. www.cosg.org.

July 10-14, 2004: Puget Sound 2004, 1st NASG Regional Convention. La Quinta Inn, 1425 E. 27th St., Tacoma, WA 98421. Rooms: 800-531-5900. Aimed at having a Pacific Coast venue for S following the NMRA National Convention in Seattle. Info: Gil Hulin 541-344-6858 or email: ghulin@guardnet.com.

July 28-Aug. 1, 2004: S Curves Through Chicago, NASG Annual Convention hosted by the Des Plaines Valley S Scalers. Chicago Sheraton Northwest, 3400 Euclid Ave., Arlington, Hts., IL 6004. www.sheratorn.com/chicagonorthwest. Reservations - 847-394-2000. www.2004nasgconvention.com.

Bids Open for NASG Annual Conventions -- 2006 and beyond. Contact Lee Johnson, 2472 Lariat Ln., Walnut Creek, CA 94596-6635 - 925-943-1590 - e-mail: leemax@jps.net

2003 NASG Board Of Trustees MEETING

This year's NASG B.O.T. meeting was held on July 11, 2003 at the Olympia Resort and Conference Center in Oconomowoc, WI. The meeting was called to order at 4:47pm by President, Roy Hoffman. Present at the meeting were President Roy Hoffman, Executive Vice President John Foley, Secretary Glenn Ritter, Treasurer Michael Shea, Eastern Vice President Bill Fuhrman, Western Vice President Gil Hulin, Lee Johnson (Convention committee), Alan Evans (Freight car committee), Jeff Madden (editor for the Dispatch), Jamie Bothwell (Election chairman), Bill Mark (Clearing House), Walter Jopke (Central Vice President elect), Michael Green (Secretary elect & NASG Website Chairman) and Richard Karnes (Executive Vice President elect & Russell M. Mobley Library).

Prior to the formal meeting we reviewed the 2004 NASG Chicago Convention with Sam McCoy.

The meeting opened with the following reports: The Secretary's report was noted as having been printed in the October 2002 Dispatch. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the report as published. Seconded by Gil Hulin.

Convention Committee report by Lee Johnson. The 2002 convention was hosted by The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Association in Strongsville, OH (Cleveland area). It was well attended and a profit was made. Although they did send a check to the NASG Treasurer for the NASG's portion of the profit, they did not send a Financial Summary of the convention to NASG. They are in the process of completing that task. The sudden passing of Josh Seltzer was a blow to their club and the S community in general. All appreciate his chairing such a good convention.

The 2003 convention is being hosted by the Badgerland S Gaugers from July 9-13 in Oconomowoc, WI (Milwaukee area). The host group has worked very closely with the S manufacturers to overcome some of their concerns from previous conventions. Presently the pre registration

for the convention is lower than expected for this time frame, however, this could be offset by a larger than expected registration at the door. The convention is promising to be very enjoyable by all. At the time of the BOT meeting there were 195 registrations for about 300 people. There were more than 40 walk-ins.

The 2004 NASG Convention had two groups submitting proposals for hosting the 2004 Convention. The outcome of the NASG's BOT approval is that the Des Plaines Valley S Scalpers will host the Annual Convention from July 28 – August 1 (Wednesday – Sunday) in the Chicago area. This will be the first time the convention has been held in the Chicago area since 1987. The coordinated effort of the Greater Seattle S Gaugers and the Northwest S Scalpers will host an NASG Western Regional Convention from July 10 – 14 (Saturday – Wednesday) in the Tacoma/Seattle, WA area. This will be the first NASG regional convention, and the National Train Show is included as a part of the convention. A general meeting is planned for the West coast members and the contract will be the same as for a National Convention. Future regional conventions may not be in the summer. Start up money for the regional conventions should be the same as the national conventions. Space in the *Dispatch* will also be allotted to the regional conventions. These are not like the sprees or the fests and must be reviewed and approved by the BOT.

One proposal has been received for the 2005 convention by the Alto Model Train Museum Association in Altoona, PA. Another group had indicated they might submit a proposal for the 2005 convention, but has now declined to bid for 2005. The BOT is presently considering the Altoona proposal for approval.

In the preliminary planning stages, there are two groups that have indicated an interest in submitting proposals to host the 2006 convention. One of the conventions would be a joint NASG/NMRA convention in Philadelphia, PA and the other would be a traditional "stand-alone" style convention in the Detroit, MI area on the 10th anniversary of their last convention. The 2007 NMRA convention will be in Detroit, MI. The 2007 conventions and beyond could include the Trinity Express

S Scalpers who had requested and received an NASG Convention Handbook and expressed interest in eventually submitting a proposal for hosting a convention in the Dallas, TX area.

The NASG Convention Handbook: Over nine copies of the handbook have been sent to clubs and individuals other than BOT members since the BOT approved the handbook. Convention proposals have already been received which used the handbook as a basis. There are presently four revisions to the handbook in front of the BOT for approval.

The NASG Convention survey: A survey was conducted to determine the feelings of the NASG membership about future NASG/NMRA joint conventions. The survey intended to see if there were any changes since the 1991 survey on the same subject. Of the 245 that responded to this year's survey, 54.7% were in favor of joint conventions, 16.3% were against them and 20.9% had no opinion. The 1991 survey was 72% were in favor of joint conventions, 21% were against them and 7% had no opinion. Of the 54.7% that were in favor 21.6% felt they should be held every 2 years, 26.9% said every 3 years and 16.4% said every 4 years. The other years were less than 15% for each one up to 10 years. From the 1991 survey, 71% favored a joint convention every 3 – 5 years, and using the present survey, 55.9% favor the same time period. It is up to the individual BOT members to draw their own conclusion from these numbers. Discussion about promoting convention tours. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the report. Seconded by Gil Hulin. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the 2005 NASG Convention in Altoona by the Alto Model Train Museum Association. Seconded by Glenn Ritter. Approved by the BOT. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the four revisions to the NASG Convention Handbook. Seconded by Roy Hoffman. Approved by the BOT.

Clearing House Committee report by Bill Mark. This past years sales were \$602.82. Expenses were \$422.07. Only 4 shirts were sold this year. A denim type full button shirt may be more popular. We should exhaust a major portion of the present shirts before starting a new line. Roy and John had looked into and priced

team type jackets. Jeff had priced embroidered caps at \$10 each. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the report. Seconded by John Foley.

Election Committee report by Jamie Bothwell. Executive Vice President and Secretary plus the three regional Vice Presidents were up for election. John Foley and Glenn Ritter were not running again. Richard Karnes is our Executive Vice President, Michael Green is our Secretary, Bill Fuhrman is our Eastern Vice President, Walt Jopke is our Central Vice President and Gil Hulin is our Western Vice President. It would be nice to have more nominations for each office and they should be submitted earlier. An article in the *Dispatch* may be needed. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the report. Seconded by John Foley.

Freight Car Committee report by Alan Evans. For 18 months we have had the Armco Steel Building kit. As of July, 200 had been shipped. John noted that 5 more had been sold. John Foley has bagged each building. The buildings sell for \$20. We need to sell 141 buildings over the next year to break even. We have a deficit of \$2,218.00 to date. Pennsylvania Heritage Models has purchased 6 kits. Some manufacturers had questioned why we did not solicit bids from them for this project but the Armco kit was the idea of Model America, who proposed the idea to us. The committee hopes that there will be other new buildings or S products in the future. Bill Fuhrman made a motion accept the report as corrected. Seconded by John Foley.

Roy Hoffman has talked to Jerry Porter but there is no report on the warehouse project. All the dies may have been cut so the next step is a prototype sample for the BOT's review.

Contest Committee report by Jim Whipple. There were about 12 models at this convention. Jim had sent a letter to the BOT with some concerns. Jim requested that a BOT-member observe the process of judging to avoid criticism of the process. Jim has overseen the contest for 11 years. Last year's contest was jeopardized by the hotel's staff rush to reset the room and loss of papers and damage to a model. The local club supplies the judges for each convention. The contest

committee oversees the judging for consistency. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to thank Jim for his 11 years of overseeing and excellent coordination of the contests and accept his report. Seconded by John Foley.

NASG Website report by Michael Green. Pages have been added along with S mod information. Online membership is being accessed by interested parties. We should add a checkoff box as to how people heard of the NASG. Trainweb has not been removed as our host but we have our own domain at www.NASG.org. We still include the NASG Constitution, By-laws, 1980's History by Bob Jackson, Russell M. Mobley Library and many other features such as the building kits. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the report. Seconded by Glenn Ritter.

Standards Committee did not have a report but Michael Green stated that he is on the NMRA Standards Board. The NMRA BOT has accepted some S standards which are now posted on the NMRA website. The NMRA will have a ballot on standards but you must be registered in your scale to vote.

Russell M. Mobley Library report by Richard Karnes. Richard presented a multi page report stating the purpose of the library and materials and activity. Check the website at www.nasg.org then click on "Library", then click on "Mobley Library". Richard listed all the magazines and publications now available for loan or extracts but noted that he needs to subscribe to *S/Sn3 Modeling Guide*. The BOT asked if the Library subscribes to Sn3 Modeler. It does not. John Foley made a motion to pay for these back issues and subscribe to the two magazines and secure back issues of Sn3 Modeler. Seconded by Bill Fuhrman. Approved by the BOT. Of the \$1000 seed money to set up the library and only \$697 has been expended over two years. Of the material sent out, all has been returned and/or paid for in a timely matter." Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the report. Seconded by John Foley.

NASG Dispatch report by Jeff Madden. 2002 - 2003 was the 26th year for the *Dispatch* although it was not titled *Dispatch* until 1979. August 2002, 60pp including covers. 2,000 printed. October

2002, 40pp including covers. December 2002, 32pp including covers. February 2003, 32pp including covers. April 2003, 32pp including covers. June 2003, 36pp including covers. All issues were printed by MI Printing of Millersburg, PA. Things went well including promised turnaround time. Again much praise should be heaped upon those, who fill up the *Dispatch*. Thanks especially to current columnists: Ted Larson, David Pool, David Heine, Kent Singer and David Dewey. Praise also to Bob Werre, who provides some photo assistance especially involving the contest entries at the convention. Recommendations: Keep printer consistent with 3-week Turnaround; maintain budget; encourage membership participation in the area of layout design, photos, construction/repair articles and others; work on increasing advertising support now that we have 1 more S magazine. Glenn Ritter made a motion to accept the report. Seconded by Gil Hulin.

Bill Fuhrman made a motion to suspend the meeting for dinner.

Meeting suspended at 7:00PM.

Meeting reconvened at 8:00pm

The Treasurer's report by Mike Shea. Total income for 2002 - 2003 was \$88,440.83. Total Expenses for 2002 - 2003 were \$106,786.14. The net loss of \$18,345.31 was a result of switching from dues being paid by May 31 to dues being paid on the anniversary of your membership. Car sales for the past year were PFEX Reefer (36 sold), GN caboose (24 sold), UP Box car kit (16 sold), And the Armco Building Kit (159 sold). Major items remaining were the GN Caboose (329) and the Armco Building kit (442). The brick warehouse structure is not complete yet. There was extensive discussion and Dick Karnes offered to pick up communication with PBL to move the project forward. Gil and Dick will review the contract for the warehouse before Dick contacts PBL. The budget projection for the next year would be Income: \$61,825.00 and expenses: \$40,070. These numbers are tentative and will be refined. John Foley made a motion to accept the report. Seconded by Bill Fuhrman.

Promotions Committee report by John Foley. Advertising for the past year has gained 7 new members. Roy Hoffman drafted a mission statement for promo-

tions. John presented a very comprehensive report consisting of Advertising, Conventions and Train Shows, Literature costs and Miscellaneous items such as postage and banners. When all items were tabulated a realistic budget of \$13,000 per year would be needed. A trailer was mentioned to transport the NASG S Scale Modular layout but the BOT agreed it was not needed. A shipping crate may be built to protect the layout. Members would be contacted to keep the layout moving around the country for major train shows. A second Hi-Rail layout was discussed but there are quality layouts in local areas for other than the National Train Show. Bill Fuhrman made a motion to accept the report including a budget of \$13,000 per year. Seconded by Gil Hulin. Approved by the BOT.

New Business:

(1) Liability insurance should be investigated for conventions. Someone may get hurt and the NASG should look into a

policy at least for the duration of the convention.

(2) Estate assistance for the widows. A list can be put in the Dispatch but someone should meet with the widows to guide them in train disposition.

(3) There should be a record and statistics on complaints on the E-Mail lists so we can address and correct areas of concern.

(4) Scale car projects were discussed and they would be under the care of Alan Evans. Jamie Bothwell is interested in a scale length passenger car project. American Models could be worked with for a passenger car project since they had already started this project.

(5) The Constitution and By-Laws will be reprinted but the dues were \$17.00 per year and will need to be changed to \$20.00 per year. John Foley made a motion to change the dues in the By-

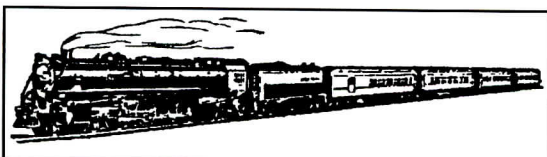
Laws. Seconded by Mike Shea. Approved by the BOT. The Constitution may need a change to permit Michael Pascall to renew memberships on their anniversary Months. This would take a vote of the membership.

(6) How much seed money, inserts in *Dispatch* and space in *Dispatch* for regional conventions? Seed money is returned out of the profits of each convention. Conventions must be sanctioned by the NASG. Each convention will be reviewed and approved by the BOT.

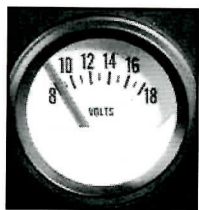
Farewell speeches and comments were made by John Foley, Executive Vice President and Glenn Ritter, Secretary.

Motion to adjourn was made by Glenn Ritter at 10:10pm and seconded by John Foley.

PORT LINES HOBBIES

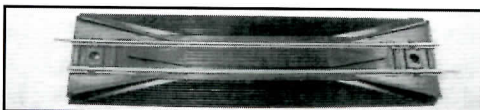


"Specialists in S-Gauge Railroading"
—AMERICAN FLYER PARTS SERVICE —
ON-LINE CATALOG & SALES LISTS,
OR \$5.00 BY MAIL.



NEW ITEM! —
Pullmor diesel wheels
with vulcanized rubber
face and tread,
like originals!
\$21.95 per pair.
Pullmor steam rims:
\$18 per pair.

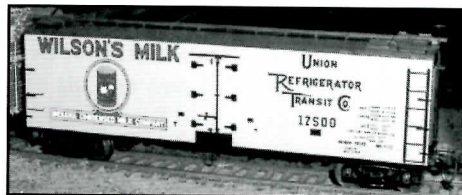
Replacement voltmeters for the A.F. 30B,
and similar transformers.
\$18.95 each.



Reproduction #728 Re-Railer; \$19.95

6 Storeybrooke Drive
Newburyport, MA 01950
(978)-465-8798 (Phone/Fax)
E-mail: doug@portlines.com

Our newest release - This six color URTX reefer featured Wilson's Milk (Indiana Condensed Milk Company) on its sides is now available in two prototype numbers 17500 and 17501. \$45 per car, plus \$5 shipping for the first car, and \$2 for each additional car. Immediate shipping.



VISA, MASTERCARD, DISCOVER, AMEX ACCEPTED.

VISIT US AT: www.portlines.com for more details !

Dungeons and Dragons: At the last Gen Con (2002) in Milwaukee (Gaming Convention) I went hunting for figures for my model railroad. I was armed with fi of a 6" S scale ruler that lives in my wallet. These are measured in millimeters. 25 mm men scaled out to about 4-1/2 feet tall. These make great older kids. 28 mm men scaled out to between 5-1/2 and 6 feet tall. This is perfect. 33 mm men were in the 7-foot range.

I ended up purchasing a lot of people made by "Revisesco". Each package contained between five and eight unpainted metal people for about \$5.00 a pack. Some of the variety included: scoundrels with mutton chops, top hats and capes; '20s era flappers and dandies; Safari set with two men, a

woman on horseback, and a Calamity Jane type; Irish civilians; Mexican bandits with sombreros. There's even a "Creature from the Black Lagoon." What I learned is that 28 mm translates to S scale.

- Thorin Marty *Note: Tom Hawley also found some 25 mm animals in a hobby shop which should fit in as close to S using the above calculations. Ed.*

A Switcharoo: I've been in HO for about 46 years, and before that (late '40s and '50s) my dad had "L" stuff. So, I grew up with "L", and my dad sold all his great "L" structures and rolling stock so I could get into HO. Two years ago, I "threw the ground throw" and switched to S. It was getting more difficult to see that HO stuff. I'm a retired music teacher from the New Jersey schools. I'm a "Hi-

Scaler". I'll use hi-rail track from SHS and AM. I'm not doing Flyer. Why? 1. It's a might pricey. 2. I come from an HO scale background. 3. I didn't grow up with Flyer. My 3-level HO railroad was based on Santa Fe's Cajon pass. All the benchwork is still there. I plan to use two of those levels. The time period ends in December 1959, therefore, all motive power and rolling stock had to exist prior to that. I'm buying SHS 40" sections of flex track by the box load. I have a lot of new S friends in the South Jersey S Gaugers. I have been learning a heck of a lot, and that's something for a 60 year old. After switching computer platforms about 6 years ago (to Macintosh) I feel right at home in the minority. Now all I need is a Studebaker.

- Don McGinnis

...IS THERE ANYONE UNDER 30 OUT THERE...

As I was reflecting on my landslide victory over three write-ins, it occurred to me that, at age 64, I may be the oldest person elected to the NASG Board of Trustees. So when I attended my first BOT meeting at Oconomowoc last July, one of the topics that I brought up was how to better represent our youth members. Some favored establishing an NASG "youth" committee. Others thought that establishing a new "at-large" BOT position specifically for youth within a certain age bracket was the way to go. Yet another person pointed out that "old men's" proposals may totally miss the mark regarding what young members really want. Still another wondered how many members under 30 we actually have.

So heres your chance, NASG members age 30 and under - Tell me what you *REALLY* want from your NASG, and how you think we can accomplish it. Please contact me with your views, and include your name and age. Warning: Opinions from members over 30 will be ignored!



Dick Karnes, NASG Exec. VP
4323 86th Ave. SE
Mercer Island, WA 98040-4124

karnesrn@earthlink.net
(206) 232-7281

MAK'S IRON PONY

American Flyer Trains & Parts: Buy, Sell, Trade
Tony & Karen Papador



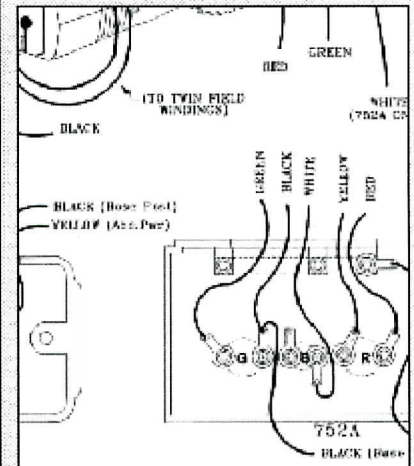
W151 N7070 Plainview Drive
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051
(262) 532-2634
makpapador1@msn.com

www.maksironpony.com

Thanks to donors:

Rollain Mercier, Ed Vogler

**Tom Krell's AF Accessory
Diagrams -
Including pushbutton
innards!**



#583, 751, 752, 752A, 758, 758A, 785,
944, 4 & 5-wire tenders

50¢ each postpaid
(free via e-mail)

Russell M. Mobley Memorial Library
Dick Karnes, Librarian
4323 86th Ave. SE
Mercer Island, WA 98040-4124
nasglibrary@earthlink.net



American Models, 10087 Colonial Industrial Dr., South Lyon, MI 48178
Phone 248-437-6800 Fax 248-437-9454 Web site at: www.americanmodels.com



Dual AC Flyer units with dual power and dual sound ! \$549.95 (DC units \$429.95). AC Flyer units with sound \$299.95, DC \$224.95. Burlington and Santa Fe units are chrome plated in hi-rail versions (silver painted in scale versions). Santa Fe units are \$10 more.

* Runs on original 20" radius American Flyer track.

- All versions will include "bright" LED directional headlight.
- All versions will include eight tree turning fans and see-through fan grills.
- All versions will include a pilot streamliner cover and operating couplers.
- All versions will include fine DX features such as wire grab irons, windshield wipers and lift rings.
- All AC flyer versions will include a two speaker sound system, horn, bell & real E-8 V12 sounds.
- All versions will include a larger 5 pole motor with large flywheel and heavy die cast frame.
- All new drive system with sprung "Gripion" wheel-sets, greater traction and electrical conduction.

Shipping Now !



E8: road schemes: B&O, Burlington, Central of Georgia, IC, NYC, PRR, Santa Fe, & Union Pacific

Now available at discount prices without sound ! Single AC hirail units just \$234.95, dual sets \$449.95

E-8/9S the final standardized EMD passenger locomotive, in production till late 1963. 12 wheels of tremendous pulling power !

