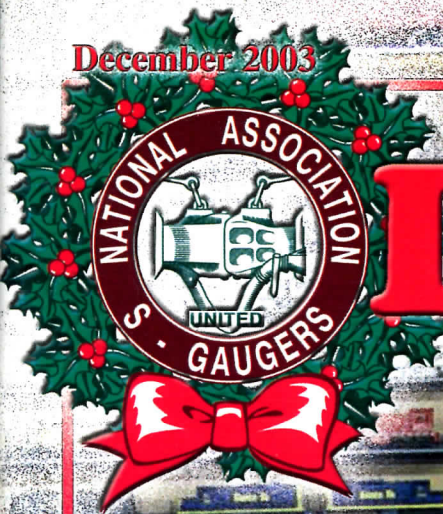
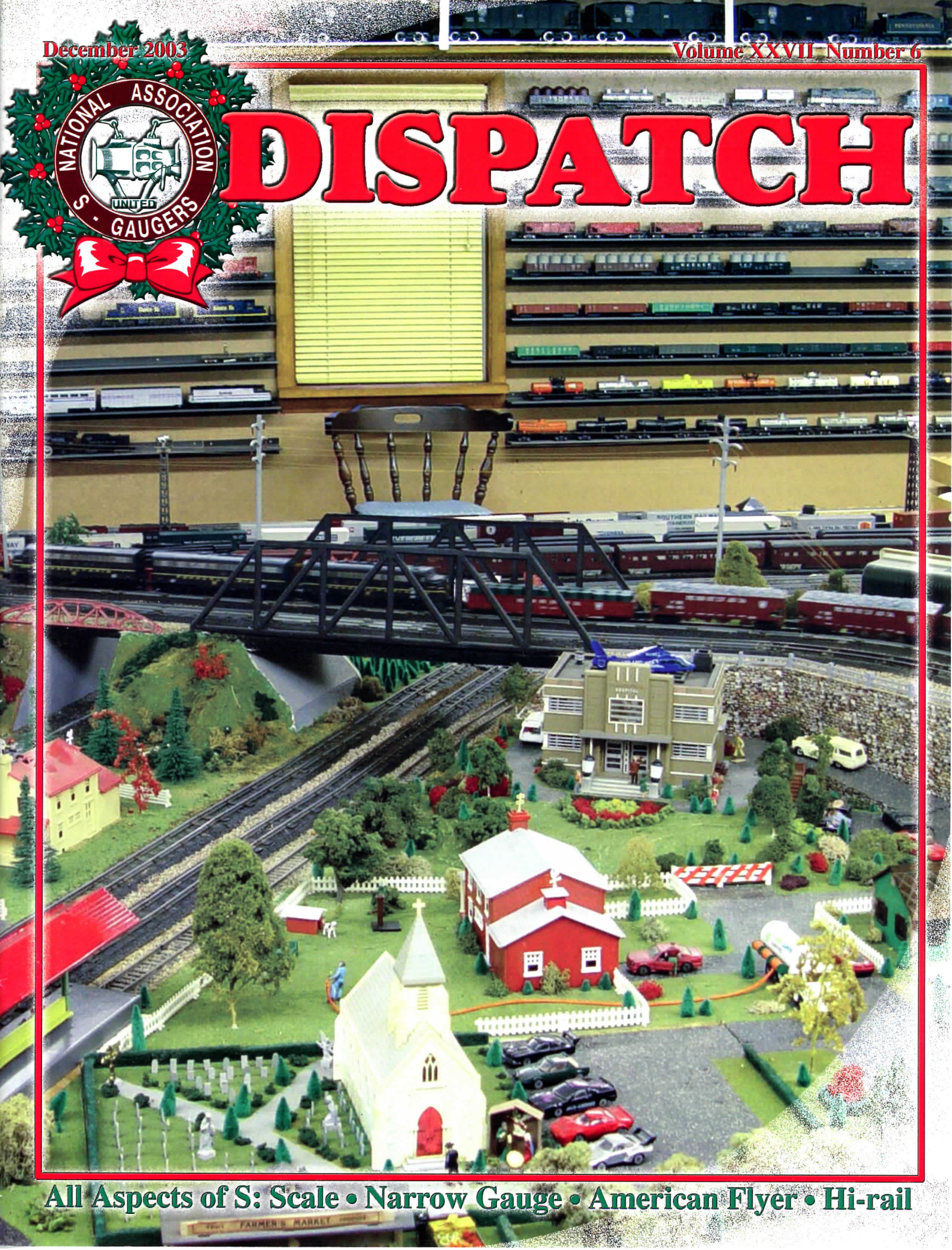


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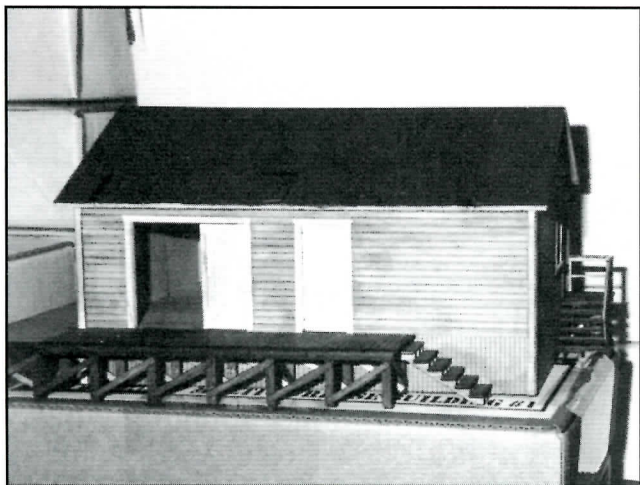


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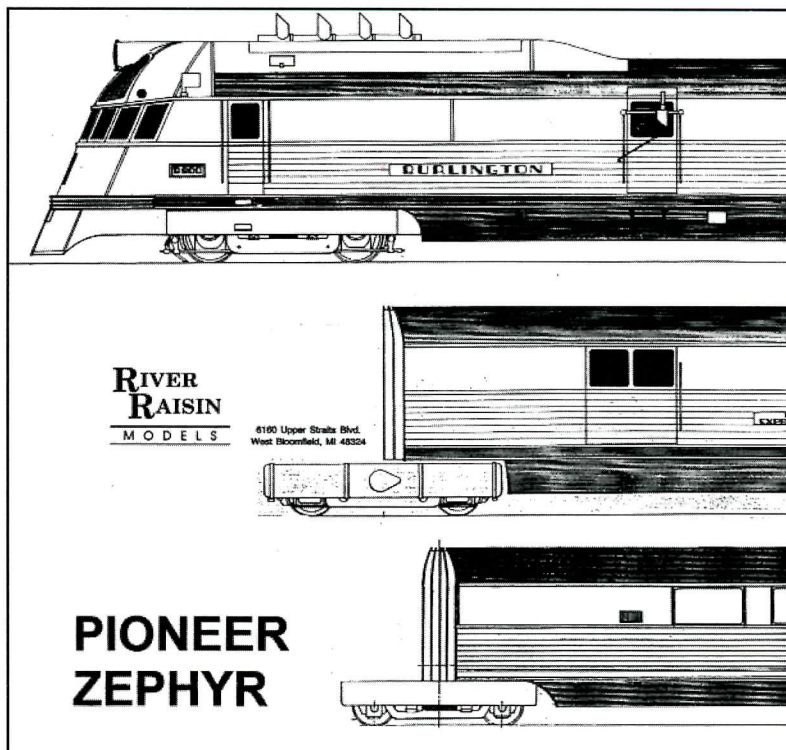


All Aspects of S: Scale • Narrow Gauge • American Flyer • Hi-rail

What 'S' New

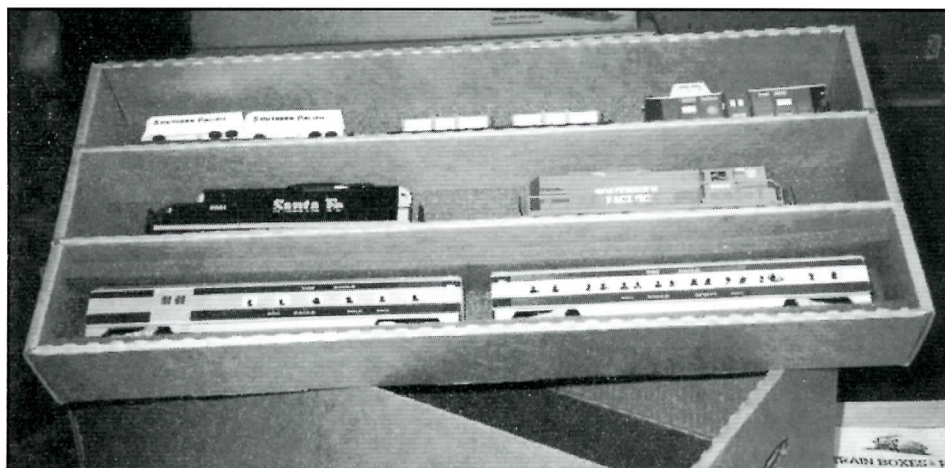


Allegheny Models has this new C&O all-purpose freight station available now to go along with the C&O passenger stations (see last *Dispatch*). Price is \$60.

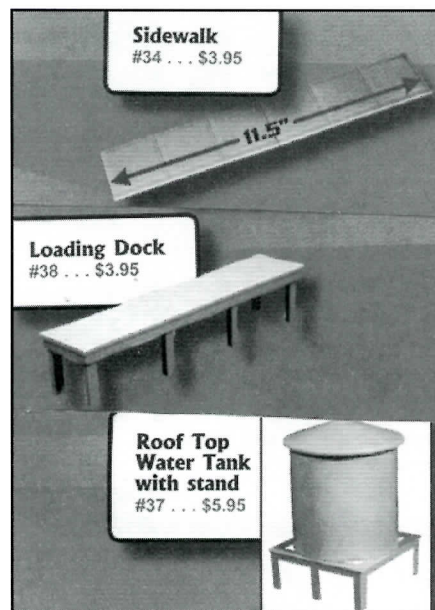


PIONEER ZEPHYR

Yes, it's a go for several versions of the Budd shovelnose streamliners. Hi-railers can order one too.



Train Boxes Plus have these moisture resistant cardboard storage boxes available in an S version. Foam provided with the boxes keeps everything from shifting. Three trays fit in larger box with finger holes for easy lifting.



The O Gauge Railroading Ameri-Towne series of O structure kit bashing parts include the above which should easily be adaptable to S.

S Helper Service has some new paint schemes available for their SW-1.

NASG DISPATCH
Official Publication of the
National Association of S Gaugers

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

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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:

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COVER:

The American Flyer layout of Harry Kidd, Enola, PA.

"Happy Holidays"

ORDER BOARD

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

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE....

Christmas is a time to remember the trains of our youth or childhood and the fun they gave us. That enjoyment has sustained us on into our adulthood. From time to time we've all wondered how we could carry that love for model trains over to the newest generation. Some kind folks on the Yahoo S-Trains list have given me some ideas on how to get more youngsters interested in trains and S in particular. I thought that I would share them with you.

Curtis Dorwart sent this:

"Today I have a 7 year old who is starting out "right" with a firm foundation in S. He is joining the Tiger Cubs (Boy Scouts for First Graders), and I plan to introduce the other kids in his den to S during a planned exercise on trains and transportation. I think that this is one way to get some younger folks involved and get their parents involved too. We need to make some memories for the kids, so we need to take S out to them. The next question is how best to accomplish this. I am a firm believer that every little bit helps!"

This was from Al Kielek:

"When we do train shows, we need to be sensitive to kids who show more than average interest in our trains. Year after year I run into the same kids and I make an extra effort to talk to the parent(s) and encourage them. The biggest problem is the perception of the "cost". I explain that your basic set from Walmart might be a great bargain, but that after a couple of months the transformer or loco will fail and then the real "cost" will be apparent. How many of us have tons of Atlantics and less than perfect rolling stock sitting in boxes or parts drawers? Thru out the year I look for cheap transformers and locos with the idea of putting together starter sets for cheap(or free!) Train shows are the place to give back to the hobby by "looking" for people with these kids who may be unable to afford these trains otherwise."

Bill Greaves has this to say:

"Watching a display layout is a great experience, but does not get recruits/ rookies. It is just a visual experience, usually happening around Christmas. It is my belief that hands on experiences are a better way of developing interest. I'm in the process of building a RR yard where my grandchildren can form a train using cars painted the colors of the rainbow. Here are some other ideas. Giving a child an oval of track is great, but soon becomes old. Beginning sets need more than just an oval. A hands-on accessory would help to wet the appetite of a youngster. Can we get manufacturers to give a discount to school age children, doing it through some school program? ... Can we figure out how to get toy trains included in the "science programs"? ... Can we help schools develop clubs in schools?... Is it possible to give scholarships to students for building model RRs? Just what would it take to get organizations, such as the Masons, The Knights of Columbus, etc: to give toy trains as prizes? Is there any way we could get "Toys-R-Us" to set up a toy train display in it's stores? I hope this stimulates thought."

Continued on page 30

NASG NEWS

New NASG Award: We have a new award. It is the Josh Seltzer Website Excellence Award. This will go to the S website that you folks vote for. You do need to get online to visit them. There are too many to list, and they change from time to time. The website can be commercial, individual or club. The subject of the website can be AF, Hi-rail, Scale or narrow gauge. You can go to the NASG links page at www.nasg.org/links.html to visit many. When you visit those websites they usually have links you can go to as well. If you are not online visit a family member or club member who is, or there's always the library. Votes can be sent to: john.foley16@verizon.net. The award will be presented at the next convention's banquet.

- John Foley, NASG Promotions Chairman

Updated promotional brochure: The *This is S Gauge* promotional brochure has been updated and is available from John Foley for distribution at various functions. Contact him if you are interested. The brochure has a new cover photo, design and blue color to distinguish it from the original one. There are 5 new photos with only two repeating from the last printing.

- Jeff

S Friendly Websites: The S Friendly Hobby Shop website has been brought up to date with the additions of phone numbers and website links. We've had some responses from the ad in *Model Retailer* and have added them to the site. It's at www.s-scaletrains.com/sfriendly. Feel free to add links to that site and also www.s-scaletrains.com/sbuyer. If you need help for that, just get in touch. I hope you'll all go to your local hobby dealer and help our cause by asking them for S trains, and please let us know of any new updates to the list.

- Roy Hoffman, NASG President

You've been waiting 10 years...Now here they come!! American Models and the NASG present **HEAVYWEIGHT PULLMANS!!** Two body styles: 10-section, 1-drawing room, 2-compartment ("10-1-2"); 12-section, 1-drawing room ("12-1"). There will be only 325 of each body style. Four color schemes: 1. Pullman green with gold "Pullman" 2. Tuscan red with dulux stripes and dulux "Pullman" 3. Two-tone grey with aluminum stripes and aluminum "Pullman" 4. CNR black and green with yellow stripes, yellow "Canadian National" and red maple-leaf roundels. Matching dry-transfer car names for 22 roads as well as general-service. Cars are 15-3/4" long over scale coupler faces. 40" min. radius out of the box; reduction to 24" min. is an easy 5-minute job.

WILL NOT CLEAR AF SWITCH-MOTOR BOXES.

Cars will be boxed ready-to-run with hirail wheelsets and AF-compatible couplers. Also included in each box: 6 scale wheelsets, scale dummy couplers, current pick-up wipers, car-name lettering set (by Artist-Aid of Palmdale CA), car-name guide (which car names appropriate for what railroads) radius-reduction instructions

NASG Members Only – Reserve yours now!

Cars expected Summer 2004.

Price each \$65, checks payable to "NASG Inc." PA residents add \$3.90 sales tax (6%) per car. Shipping: \$5 first car, \$2 each additional car.

Send reservations to: NASG Pullman Cars
c/o John Foley, 164 W. Railroad St., Pottsville, PA 17901-1126

NASG Members ONLY, please!

RAIL MAIL

On the Directory: First, of all I would like to congratulate the person(s) who put together the new NASG Membership Directory on a job well done. I like the printing of the NASG Constitution and By-Laws. I would like to suggest some ideas for future directories: 1. A brief history of the NASG. 2. A list of all past presidents and the years they served. 3. A list of past conventions and who hosted each. 4. A list of future conventions and hosts. 5. A list of Bernie

Thomas winners (life members). 6. Maybe a brief history of S. 7. A list of annual awards and winners. **Keep the booster ads and other ads.** Again, congratulations on a fine directory.

- John Wickland, West Allis, WI

The congrats go to a variety of folks - Michael Paschall, Chuck Garman of MI Printing, the NASG BOT and yours truly. I am compiling some of the things you mentioned, and yes, the directory would be a good place for these to fill up odd pages. Jeff

On Heavyweights: I think most of us in S thought the

Continued on page 31

Jeff's Junction



The Achilles Heel of S - Track Planning.

With Sam Powell's planning articles this issue and last, I felt this editorial would be appropriate. Coming from HO and having been involved with realistic track planning most of my model career, I have noticed since being in S since 1993 that for the most part good layout plans and/or layouts with good designs are sorely lacking.

Now, with S, as opposed to the smaller scales, there are naturally more restrictions to realistic layout designs due to space and radius requirements. Regardless though, many S layouts I have seen in person or in articles seem to be crying out for better track design. Immediately, I want to exclude 90 percent of the Sn3 layouts and/or track plans I have viewed. Why you say? Well, it's because Sn3ers as a group have followed the many recent lessons passed on from the HO world. So, this commentary will focus on standard gauge AF, hi-rail and scale home layouts.

Here's a list of a few layouts I feel follow good planning: Mike Fyten's Kaw Valley (*Model Railroading*), John Beck's Kentucky Railroad (since torn down), Frank Titman's Spiral Hill, Jess Bennett's GNP, Brooks Stover's BC&G hi-rail, Roger Nulton's previous Monon and, of course, Sam Powell's Penn Creek Valley. Oh sure, there are others, but many of you would be familiar with at least some of these.

Now, why might many S layout owners have trouble coming up with good designs?

1. Scalpers and hi-railers in S often came directly from an AF tinplate background with the round and round syndrome imbedded.

2. Many S gaugers haven't associated that much with the HO and N (NMRA) crowd thereby missing out on the huge track design leap those scales made in the last 20 or 30 years.

3. S gaugers tend to be older than those in the smaller scales - they started layouts in the 50s and 60s before the advent of many of the recent trends such as linear design, staging yards, helixes, etc.

4. Space needs for S home layouts do limit track design.

Here are some tips for any style standard gauge S layout that might be helpful.

1. Open frame benchwork is preferable and cheaper.

2. Linear layout designs (around-the-wall with or without peninsulas) will give you better space utilization.

3. Always keep scenic features in mind in the track planning stage. These would include: highways, waterways, hills, mountains, villages, industries, etc.

4. Backdrops (even plain sky) will do wonders for any layout.

5. Always design in some sort of operation. That means industrial sidings, yards, staging yards, passing sidings, crossovers, engine terminals, etc.

6. Use the largest possible radii and medium to large turnouts for best operation, looks and fewer derailments. At least make an effort for the main lines.

7. My choice for optimum height for a home layout is around 45-50" from floor to main level railhead. My own layout is 47 inches from floor to rail height on the bottom main level. (See Extra Board and Sam's article for some differing comments on this topic).

Now, if you're an AF guy you may say these don't apply to me, but at least some of these design tips can apply to even the basic 4' x 8' AF layout. For example, a backdrop on 2 sides of a table-top layout (even if the layout is out in the middle of the room) can do

continued on page 22

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

BALLAST KING (2721 Trinity Ct., Avon, OH 44011 - 440-937-6771) has a variety of ballast and scenery products available for S gaugers. The ballast is a rubber product that can absorb noise, won't scratch, will not damage gears and gear boxes according to the company. The ballast and scenery products (stone, coal, grass, earth) can be fixed in place with the usually 50 percent white glue and water mix. Most items are sold in 1 or 2 pound containers. Price examples: A 1 lb. Container of (HO-S-O) light gray ballast is \$4.00. A 1 lb. Container of coal cinders (HO-S-O) is \$4.00. A 2 lb. Container is twice the price. Add \$7.00 minimum for S&H. Larger volumes available as well.

GREENBERG'S AF POCKET GUIDE (Kalmbach Publishing - www.kalmbachbooks.com). The 1946-2004 American Flyer Pocket Price Guide is out by now. Each timetable size softcover book includes a brief description of each item with production date and significant variations. Besides American Flyer products, American Models and S Helper Service items are also listed. \$12.95 list price.

KASLO SHOPS (2516 Quartz Place, Coquitlam, BC V3E 3K9) will hopefully produce 4 full-length Scale Budd car kits in 2004. They will be resin cast cars listed on the following website: www.kasloshops.com/projects.htm. Kits will have the following details: cast resin body, underframe and details; etched parts such as grabs, ladders, window frames, etc.; trucks, couplers, flush fitting windows. They can be hi-rail or scale. They will not come painted or with decals. Check the web for sign up for individual

styles. John Whitmore says he needs 50 orders for each style car in order to produce. Once he gets enough orders for a car he'll ask for a 25 percent deposit of total order. Expected U.S. price is \$125 per car.

NMI (Newgard Model Industries, 65 Centrepark Dr., Ottawa, ON K1B-3C9 Canada - www.newgard.com) makes a resin cast bus model kit in S of a 1936 Yellow coach Z-CT-843. The S gauge model is designed with separate frame, axles, springs, etc. The kit includes decals for lettering, and bus company names. Cost is \$75 plus S&H.

O GAUGE RAILROADING (Ameri-Towne building parts - www.ogauger.com). The Ameri-Towne line of building parts has a few new offerings that might be of interest to S gaugers. One is a roof-top water tank kit at \$5.95, one is a concrete sidewalk piece at \$3.95 and one is a wood plank freight loading dock at \$3.95.

PINE CANYON MODELS (www.pinecanyonscalemodels.com) had just announced a bunch of new S resin structures when another e-mail showed up that said they were discontinuing all S production due to lack of enough interest to support production costs. They still may have a few gas station and diner kits left, and several dealers such as Port Lines, Scenery Unlimited and Michigan Models may have kits available. **But hold the phone** - Pine Canyon is now backing off this decision after a slew of emails and is considering some new S kits such as a "back alley" series.

RIDGEHILL SCALE MODELS (148 Pleasant Ridge Rd., Brantford, Ontario N3T-5L5 - 519-

753-9809 eves.) now has the Kaslo produced CNR cabooses available. The quality resin kit contains a 1 piece main body, 1 piece cupola, 1 piece roof, etched stainless steel ladders and details. Three different kits are available: SK-2 has the high cupola, close window spacing and wood underframe. The SK-3 has the low cupola. The SK-4 has the low cupola but wide window spacing. Price is \$79.95 Canadian, less trucks, couplers and lettering.

RIVER RAISIN (6160 Upper Straits Blvd., West Bloomfield, MI 48324) is going ahead with the Zephyr "shovelnose" project. Detailed info was in the last Dispatch. RR did add that they are trying to offer choices that include scale DC/DCC ready, hi-rail DC and Hi-rail AC. Back in 1934 the original "Little Zip" traveled around the country visiting 30 eastern cities, so besides the Burlington and B&M, the streamliner would make sense to be seen on most popular railroads. The NYC painted version of the troop sleeper and kitchen cars are sold out, but several Pullman green or gray painted ones remain.

S HELPER SERVICE (www.showcaseline.com). Actual ore cars were seen and handled at the Fall S Fest in St. Louis and Trainfest in Milwaukee. There were even a couple running in Milwaukee. They are beeeeeeautiful and should be popular for ore train fans and those who would like a short gravel train or MOW cars. Don and Mike noted in a recent e-mail that they have added a 2nd set of 5 cars (Set B) from the DM&IR, B&LE, GN and Milwaukee Road since there was enough interest to warrant additional numbers. So you can actually get these roads in 11 different numbers. A fully painted sample

of the B&O 2-8-0 was also on display at the Fall S Fest. Again, wow!

The 40' wood stock cars have 4 new roadnames including: Armour Stock Express (red), UP (yellow), NKP (boxcar red) and the GN Christmas car (red with Rudolph). The PS-2 covered hoppers also come in 4 new schemes BN (gray), D&H (silver), Chessie (yellow), NAHX (gray). New schemes on rebuilt boxcars include DT&I (boxcar red), GN (red), NYS&W (green) and PRR (oxide with PRR Keystone). All cars list at \$39.95 except the Christmas car that is \$49.95. And new wide-vision caboose schemes: Frisco (red and white), CB&Q (aluminum), D&RGW (gold and silver), GN (red), RI (red) and Maine Central (scheme III - yellow with green circle pine tree. These are \$69.95 each.

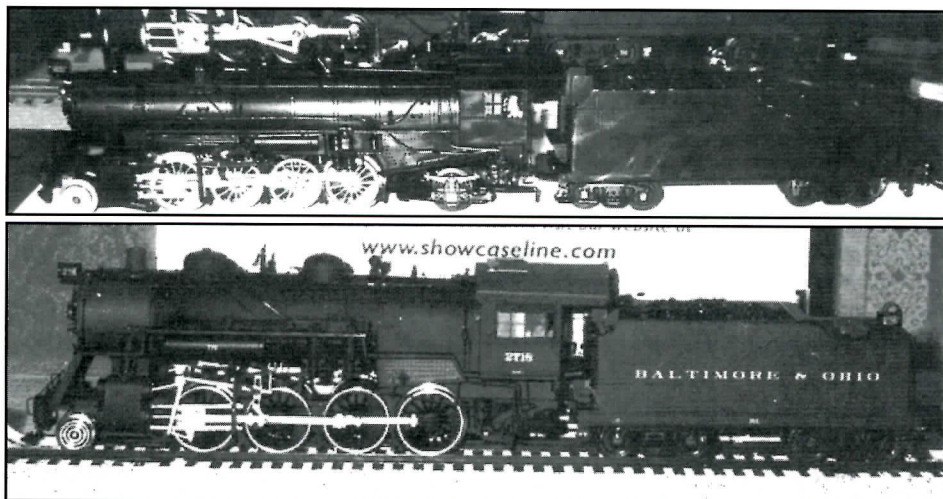
SOUTHWIND (P.O. Box 3175, Plant City, FL 33564 - (email: jpadget4@tampabay.rr.com) has a few new things to report including twin grand daughters born on the 4th of July. Jettie still hopes to do the long Harriman passenger cars and the SP version of the MK-5/6 2-8-2. The latter may have to be consolidated with another SP steam engine project. SW also has a large list of consignment brass for sale.

TM BOOKS (www.tmbooks-video.com) now has the updated 2nd edition of their American Flyer S Gauge Price and Rarity Guide 1946-2004 available at \$12.95 plus S&H.

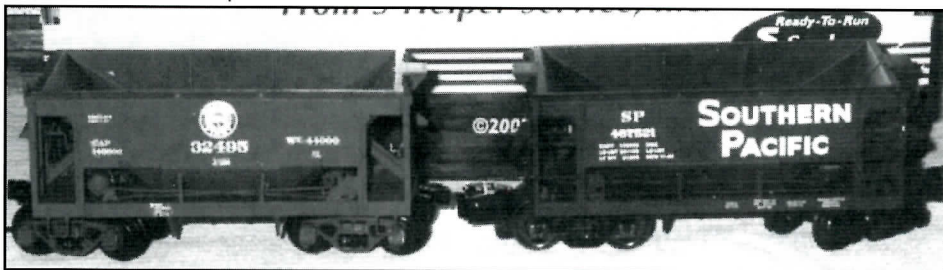
TRAIN BOXES PLUS (email: trainboxesplus@yahoo.com). Various cardboard tray type storage boxes usable for S were seen at the Fall S Fest. Ron and Jennie Smith were there from Texas with several samples. The one I saw was about 30" long with three trays with 3 slots in each. These are moisture resistant cardboard with handles, a seamless base and

side locking tabs. The trays are 28" long and include 4 foam strips for each slot to snug up cars and

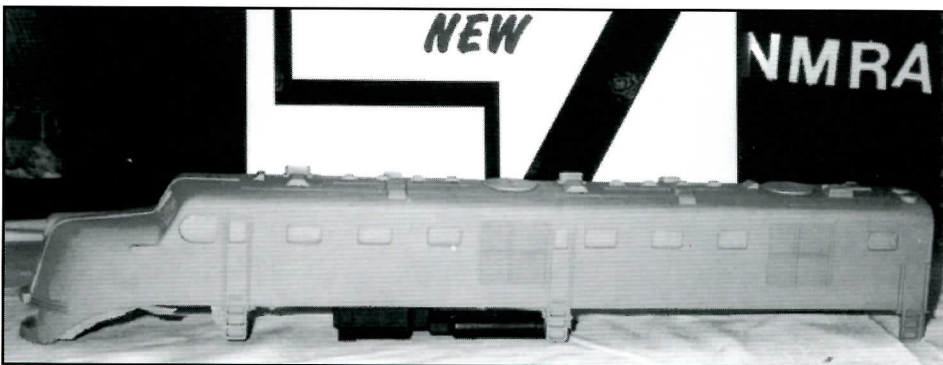
locos. Email for pricing.



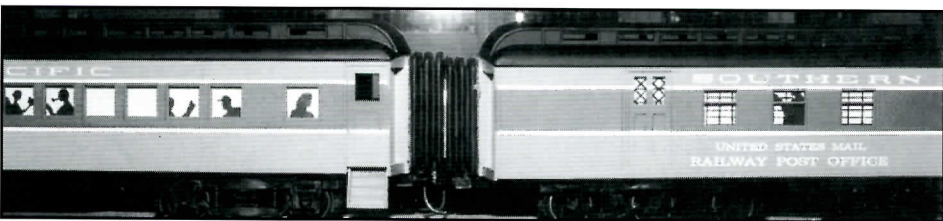
Above are a pair of new steamers which will be available to the S world soon. Top - Lionel's new USRA 2-8-2. Bottom - SHS's E-27 B&O 2-8-0.



Also from SHS comes the ore cars which will be available in scale or hi-rail. Other uses for the ore cars would be for ballast and gravel.



Beauty or beast? American Hi-Rail is producing this resin shell of the Alco DL109. Roads that used them include Rock Island, C&NW, GM&O, NH and Southern. If powered, they will most likely come hi-rail only.



These 2-tone gray SP AM heavyweights are available exclusively from Howard Sheffield at HJSheffield@earlink.net - phone: 916-773-4415. That's in California. Vic Cherven, Jr. detailed these up and let us know about them. Set includes 74' RPO, baggage, comb., coach and obs.

Meet an S Gauger

By Bill Fraley

Roy Hoffman

What can you say about over 50 years of fun and enjoyment that S scale railroading has brought me? Like the song goes: (*If they asked me I could write a book*). However they only asked me to do an article, so that will have to do. It all began at Christmas 1951 with a set of American Flyers. After a few Christmases, I asked if I could leave them up all year round and began trying to become a full time model railroader. Sometimes I see examples of modeling by people in their teens and I'm amazed at the quality. When I was a teenager, my attempts were pretty ratty affairs. Any skills I have as a model railroader have been acquired little by little over the years. But actually I wouldn't have it any other way.

Learning and trying new things have kept the hobby fresh and vital to me.

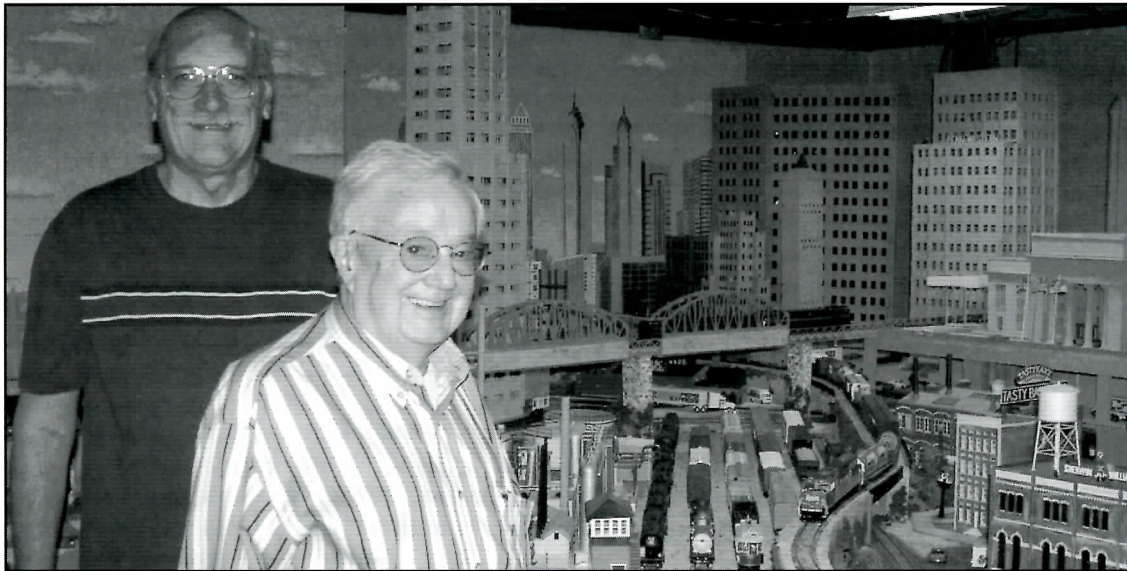
The American Flyer years were fun and began the long process of teaching me the art of model railroading. I ruined some future collectors' items by painting over them. I won't say which ones, but ignorance was bliss. When AF gave up the ghost, I continued to run my Flyers and added new cars by building kits like the Kinsman cars and using the Ace hi-rail trucks and other Ace parts. I also began scratch building some cars. This began to expose me to the scale side of S and I made the decision to go with hi-rail for my first real layout after many years in

apartments and homes with no basements or garages. That was in 1981 when we moved to Southern New Jersey. We still didn't have a basement, but I decided to let the trains win out over the car and built a layout in my 1 car garage. I had kept a bunch of code 172 flex track that I purchased while in the Army and stationed near Boston. I finally got to install the track. I also bought some code 125 rail and Miller tie-strips to use. My AF ran great and now I could begin adding hi-rail cars. I converted some of the Flyer to hi-rail with Ace parts. I used Kadee #5's for couplers and had some "confusion cars" with an AF coupler at one end and a KD at the other so I could mix the cars in one train.

When American Models came on the scene, I chose to buy the scale versions and even began mixing scale with the hi-rail and AF. It was quite a mix, but it worked great for 11 years. I had an article in the third issue of *Classic Toy Trains*



NASG President Roy Hoffman looks over his Penn Western.



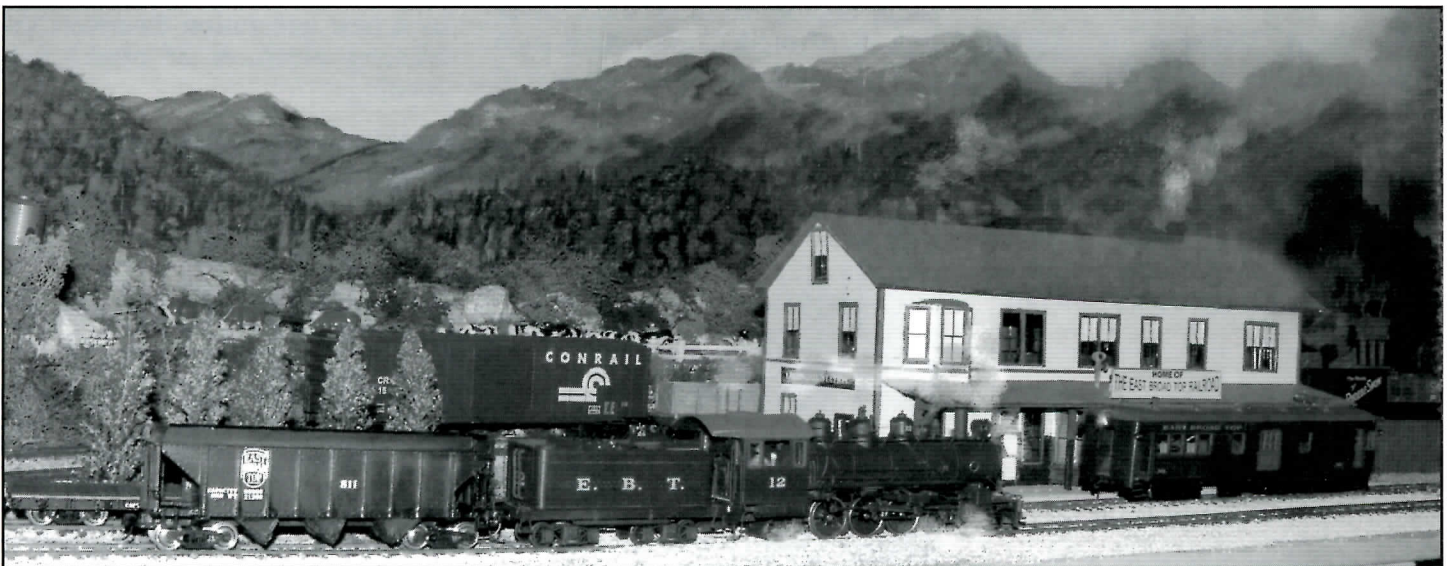
Roy Hoffman (left) shows Wally Collins the new Penn Western. Wally is the former publisher of the *S Gauge Herald*.

back in the Fall of 1988 and later they reprinted the article in the *CTT Toy Layout Tour*. The article won the Perles Publishing Award for 1988. Back then I named the railroad the "Penn Western", and that name is still in use. In 1988 I helped to form a new club: The South Jersey S Gaugers nee S Scalpers.

Then in 1992, I was laid off from work and after a time we were convinced that a move would be necessary in order to find work during that recession year. However, along came a job at Conrail and the move was put off. I had torn the layout down in anticipation of the move and now was faced with the pleasure of rebuilding the layout.

It was at this point that I made the commitment to doing a scale layout. It was a big decision because of my love for American Flyer, but I weighed the pros and cons. The biggest impetus was the fact that I wanted scale track work and also wanted to hand-lay my track. I also decided to concentrate on modeling Pennsylvania and having Philadelphia as my main city. My biggest achievement was a large model of the PRR/Amtrak 30th Street Station with full interior detail. I'm hoping to write an article some day on the construction of the station. The layout was on the layout tours for the joint NASG/NMRA Valley Forge Convention in 1993.

In 1996 another important life-changing event took place. Conrail offered early retirement based on age and I qualified. With an eye on eventual full retirement, I sold my house and moved to South Central PA and set up a consulting business. The consulting assignments took me to places like Colorado and Virginia as well as Philadelphia. There was a lot of time between contracts to work on the new version of the Penn Western. Now I had a rancher with a full basement to build my dream layout in. The design phase took place while I awaited settlement on the house. I had built the last layout with L-Girder construction techniques and was able to transport all the lumber and that gave me a good start on the new layout.



Roy's newest expansion includes Sn3 East Broad Top.



Roy Hoffman and his wife Peg.

I began with Philadelphia and gradually filled the entire basement with lots of new benchwork. The railroad reached it's western terminus in Harrisburg. I added a section of suburban Philly and also added a section depicting South Jersey to give me my eastern boundary. I also set aside a portion of the layout in order to develop some SN3 by modeling East Broad Top. I'm only a half hour away from EBT and have made many trips there to do research. I'm currently expanding my EBT to include Saltillo and Sideling Hill Tunnel to accommodate my recent acquisition of EBT's #12 Mikado from B.T.S. I also have several hopper and flat cars from them as well as their Saltillo Station.

The Penn Western is 100% scenicked, but is far from complete. Now I'm in the super detailing stage of the scenery. I go back and work to improve each scene and area of the layout. The current layout has been featured in cover articles in the *S Gaugian* three times now and I got a picture pub-

lished in the *Model Railroader* Trackside Photos section last December. Another reason for the switch to scale was the lifelong dream of getting into MR that at long last was fulfilled. I now am a member of the Lehigh Valley S Gaugers.

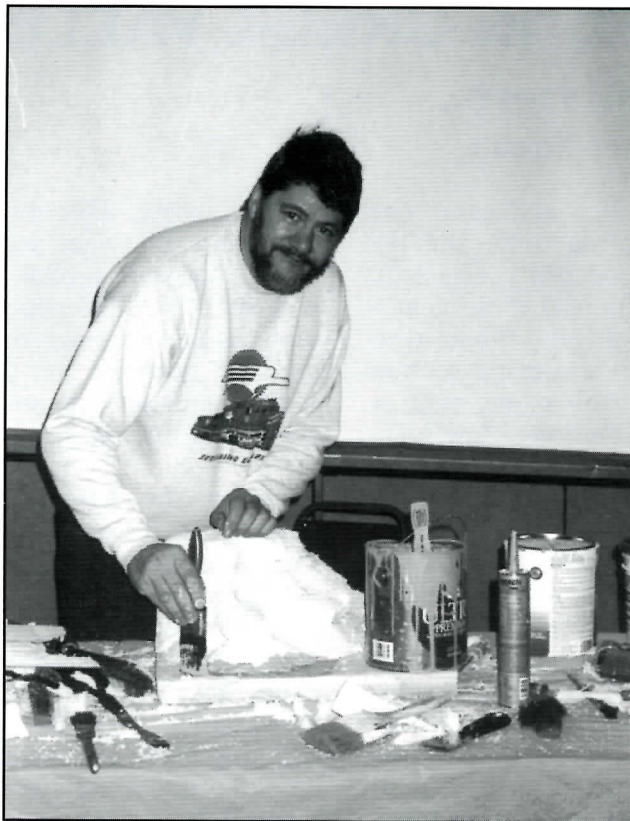
I'm not a perfectionist or I would never get anything done. I subscribe to the philosophy of the model railroader I try the most to emulate, Allen McClelland. He invented the "good enough" approach to his layout. I do strive for a high level of excellence and constantly work hard to hone my modeling skills. Scenery has remained my first love and my best area of expertise, but I'm also using and/or learning some other aspects of model railroading such as DCC and operating the layout prototypically. One of

McClelland's gifts to the hobby is his philosophy that a model railroad should be considered as part of a transportation system that goes beyond the walls of the basement. Therefore, I'm trying to develop an operating scheme for the Penn Western so I can treat it as part of a transportation system. I divided the railroad up into 7 divisions and have been busy giving "spot numbers" to 46 industries, 7 yards, 4 piers, 3 stations and 2 interchanges. The next step will be to develop a system that will include such things as train orders and waybills. I'll operate the EBT as a tourist line that is owned by the Penn Western.

It's strange now that I'm retired to have virtually unlimited time for the hobby. During the years that I worked as a computer programmer, the trains were a relaxing escape from all the stress. It's so different now. Of course, my duties with the NASG take a lot of time, but I still have more time than I ever dreamed of to work on the Penn Western as well as other pursuits. I maintain several web sites for the layout and for promoting S and they keep me busy too. I also like to write and have produced the *S-Curves* column in *Model Railroad News* for almost three years now. As you can see, I have a passion for promoting S in a variety of ways. My biggest wish is to see S scale continue growing as a new generation discovers the lifelong pleasures of model railroading.

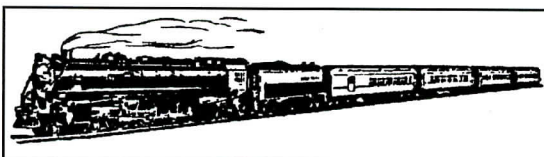


Roy (left) and Wally Collins are examining some track work.

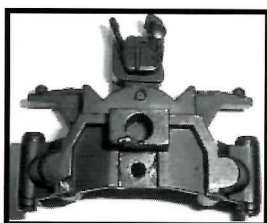


Marty Glass gave an informative clinic at the Fall S Fest on making styrofoam scenery. This was using the pink (or blue, or other color) construction type foam in layers. Hi-railers and scalers alike really enjoyed this one.

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TOWARDS A NEW PENN CREEK VALLEY

I'm Still Here...

By Sam Powell

One of the reasons for dismantling the old Penn Creek Valley was the thought that the family was moving to a smaller house. Well, here it was five years later, and while I was making other plans, life happened. My mother in law passed on, and my father in law moved in with us, so what looked like a likely move to smaller quarters turned into indefinite plans to stay put. Sooo.....thoughts of a new layout started buzzing around in my head. Fears of re-creating the old layout's problems were keeping my creative juices in check, however. It was clear that a lot of careful thought and planning was needed to get me started again. I had several possible layout locations. It was time to put together a list of desires in a new layout, to study the list of cautions that emerged from the post mortem of the old layout, and then compare the two possible locations in depth and see which space met the needs best.

Everything is a compromise...

Designing a model railroad is a daunting task. You can simply start nailing down track to a board, and running trains if you want, but long term satisfaction and enjoyment will be enhanced if we do a fair amount of planning and research in advance. The problem is, almost everything in the planning and execution of a model railroad is a compromise, and "excellent", or "perfect" becomes the enemy of "good". If we hold out for "perfect" we may never do anything. The reality is limited space, money, and time. Trains will arrive at the end of the line much too soon, and we will have way too much track for the amount of layout space depicted. The line-side industries and the stations will be too small, and too close together. Most of us will end up with way

too many engines and cars. The curves will be too tight, and the trains will be too short. The only possible exception to these generalizations would be those who chose to model a specific section of a specific narrow gauge line, or perhaps a small terminal line serving as a bridge between two larger railroads such as the Union Railroad in Pittsburgh. The saving grace is 'the suspension of disbelief'. We willingly overlook those elements of the model that don't tally with reality. Visitors to the layout will get wide eyed in wonder, and have a great time despite the compromises. The question becomes, how much suspension of disbelief are we willing to tolerate? And, can we be clever enough in our design to make this suspension of disbelief a little easier for the viewer?

Enhancing credibility of our miniature world...

One major compromise is that of fidelity to prototype. All models are in some way a compromise of the original. Wheel flanges are too big, there is seldom enough detail on the outside, and never enough on the inside. Those pipes on the outside of a steam engine model are really solid wires, and not hollow, etc. etc. A model railroad design presents the same kinds of compromise to be considered, and dealt with. How realistic should it be? The layout itself becomes more and more convincing the more we take care to make all elements of scenery and operational style consistent with the equipment we want to operate, and to chose equipment that would have appeared in the place and time we are being careful to depict. The details of the layout can enhance the impression we are trying to create in our model world if we are thoughtful about choosing what

we put where. This thinking will put limits on what we buy and operate on our model empire. It will not only influence what locomotives and cars we run, but the kind of geology we depict, the style of architecture, and the engineering of line side structures.

Keeping the Atlantic between America and Europe...

I had a model railroad buddy once who gave no thought to this at all, and his layout had adjacent scenes with replicas of the Alamo and the Eiffel tower. While it was fun to view, and it was obvious he was enjoying his hobby, what he created was not a convincing model railroad. It was simply a collection of loosely related items.

I am not advocating carrying this thinking to the other extreme. There are experts out there who will know if the gondola you are running had the right number of rivets on it for the paint scheme. Would I remove that gon from my layout? Absolutely not. But there is a happy middle ground somewhere between the two philosophies. Of course you have to please yourself as Ricky Nelson sang in Garden Party, but thinking about these elements when planning the layout certainly will help produce an end product you can be happy with.

What follows is a list of the elements that we must consider when designing a layout. The choices made in one area may not at first be in agreement with each other. We all will almost certainly want more track than we have space for. In the end we may own some equipment that we simply don't put into operation on the layout. These conflicts must somehow be worked out. It takes a lot of thought and careful consideration

of how the different elements bear on one another to produce a 'good' plan. The formula for a 'perfect' layout thus comes from having none of the following choices in conflict, or as few as possible..

The complex process of creation...

The process wasn't as linear as it appears in writing. I bounced back and forth between different plans, and locations many times. I spent almost two years thinking through the ideas that are outlined here. Each plan would hang in my head for awhile as I mentally went through my list of pros and cons, and held each of the design criterion up to one particular plan for evaluation.. Each design criterion took on clearer focus as these designs were examined. By the time I settled on the chosen space, my track plan was more or less roughed in, and most of the other considerations had been settled.

When construction of the layout began in earnest in March of 2003, the initial stages of construction went very quickly, and it seemed like a lot had happened in a very short period of time. In fact, I had been in process for 2 years by then. Here then is a quick, and rough summary of the considerations that shaped the new Penn Creek Valley.

DESIGN ELEMENTS THAT MUST BE IN AGREEMENT:

- Benchwork construction style
- Layout size
- Era being modeled
- Equipment standards
- Operational considerations..
- Artistic considerations.
- Choosing the layout space
- Maintenance considerations.
- Locomotive control-wiring
- Construction considerations.
- Avoiding the negative.

BENCHWORK CONSTRUCTION STYLE:

1. Movability is Key...

The first fellow to bring this idea to my attention was fellow S

gauger Dan Vandermause, who is currently building a very nice, very large pike in his basement. His layout is designed to be saved and moved in the event of an eventual relocation. The realization that a layout could be designed to be moved later, gave rise to a lot of creative energy in me. I don't mean portability. A portable layout is meant to be moved around all the time, and requires special considerations for weekly transport. I didn't want that. Modular layouts are fine, but I wanted something a little more complex. So what are the things that would make a layout portable?

1. Dividing the layout into movable sized sections.

The pathway in and out of the layout room is limited by the size of the doors, halls, and stairs between the layout and the outdoors. All sections must move through these restrictions to be considered movable.

2. Nothing "permanently" attached to the floor or walls.

To make a layout movable it must be essentially free standing. It cannot depend upon screwing or gluing it to the walls and floor for its strength.

3. Clearly separable joints.

The joints between sections of the layout cannot have complex track work over top of them.

4. Removable scenery.

All scenery can be modeled of lightweight foam and designed to be removable as a unit. This makes the eventual transportation of the layout much simpler, as well as simplifies installation and maintenance of track.

5. Wiring designed to be disconnected at joints in layout.

Some sort of plug-in wiring connections will simplify any eventual move.

6. Lightweight everything.

The old Penn Creek Valley was built like a fortress. It weighed a ton partly because all the lumber used was heavy, and partly because the scenery material was very heavy, and permanently fas-

tened to the layout.

Even though the entire layout might not be incorporated into a new space, if major portions of it could be, that would be much better than having to start over entirely. Although nothing is truly permanent in this world, the thought of being able to reuse part of a layout again in the future gives more energy to the current efforts. Another side benefit of making everything portable, is major construction can be executed in the garage, thus keeping the mess out to the layout room. Trying to keep the layout room clean was a major source of stress with the old Penn Creek Valley. The mess was not only an eyesore, it affected reliability of operation, as dust settling on the tracks interfering with good electrical conductivity.

After visiting fellow S gauger Skip Mercereau's future layout site, and examining his modular construction style, I came away convinced that I could build a movable layout of simple modular construction that was strong enough to hold up to fairly hard use, and light enough to move. The bench work style Skip uses is based upon the modular layout construction that O gauge modelers use. It's heavier than S-mod construction, but not too heavy to be portable. My final table top design consists of panels that are essentially custom shaped hollow core doors. Two panels of cheap 1/2" Luan are spaced with pre-cut 1"x2" lumber. More on that later.

VERDICT: Everything should be built to be lightweight, and portable.

LAYOUT SIZE:

I thought the last Penn Creek Valley was too big. But I also thought the first Penn Creek Valley, back in Beltsville, 30 years ago was too small. So clearly, something in between the two was a good goal. The problem with big is maintenance, and the daunting task of completion before you sim-

ply run out of steam. The problem with small is it can be boring. I've seen a number of nice small layouts, but they demand a kind of attention to detail, and a type of vision and planning that is not my strength. I like to think big, and work fast. Since one key to happiness is going with your strengths, and not beating yourself up, or wrestling with perceived weaknesses, and since model railroad-ing is supposed to be fun, I ruled out very small: not my strength.

Baby bear's layout

Little Red Riding hood didn't build a train layout that we know of, but if she had she would have chosen baby bear's because it would have been neither too big nor too small. John Armstrong, in his book, *Track Planning for Operation* says, "the more turnouts, the better". In fact, he makes a blanket statement, that 75 turnouts is a minimum for a 'fun' operational layout. I'm here to report that 75 turnouts was too many for the most recent Penn Creek Valley. Over time, things that move, and electrical contacts, will fail, and you need to fix them. So I am keeping that in mind this time. The first Pen Creek Valley had only about a dozen turnouts. It was easily maintained, but boring.

How long is the 'Run'?

The amount of time it takes for a train to traverse the entire layout is important too. Of course it would fun to be able to run our trains for an hour or so and never cross over the same track twice. This is an ideal that is seldom achieved. I have seen a few club layouts where I thought maybe that was possible. Given the limitations of the four walls of our layout rooms, the question then becomes, how many times are we willing to bring the train through the same scenery in order to extend the run? My answer is two. I can think of several places in the real world where trains pass in one direction and then pass back in the opposite direction while making linear

progress on the route map. But, I can only think of several of these locations. When we model a scene where the trains passes through the same scenery twice, we are modeling something rare, and not common. I am willing to represent rare, but not ridiculous or unbelievable. The more times the train travels through the same scenery, the more our railroad loses credibility. I am willing to believe that my model railroad duplicates this rare phenomenon of twice, but would like to hold the line at two, unless I can disguise the multiple passes with effective scenery. My goal became then, to have a train run for 3 to 4 minutes, and only pass through the same scene twice. I like to run my trains at realistic heavy freight speeds in the 1950's of 20 to 30MPH. This translates to 1.5 to 2 scale miles of track. At 1/64th full size, this comes to somewhere between 120 and 180 feet of track. Could I fit that in my basement and not violate any of my other guidelines? That is the question.

VERDICT: Between 120'-180' of track minimum, and 25 to 50 turnouts.

ERA BEING MODELED:

This is pretty easy. All my current 'S' equipment is from the transition, steam diesel period between 1945 and 1955. I have no intention of getting rid of it, and feel pretty married to the 1950's.

OPERATIONAL GUIDLINES: Freight Cars

At least one major yard does several useful things for a model railroad. First it simply gives us a senicked place to store our vast roster of models. Beyond that it can be designed to function as an arrival, assembly and departure point for trains to be run on the layout, just as in the prototype. For a single ended yard to be of much use in 'S', it should be at least four cars long on the shortest track, and have at least three tracks. The number of 40' cars storable on such a yard ladder built with #5 switch-

es,(my standard for yards), is 4; 5; 7; 8; 10, etc. Each additional longer track adds 1.5 cars. Since you can't cut a car in half, the #2 track yields 1 extra car, while the #3 track yields 3 extra cars, and so forth. The smallest three track yard would thus hold 16 cars. If you add a track to make up and receive trains, simply see it as a four track yard, with the fourth track unavailable for storage. Our smallest (three track yard) with a make up track then becomes 8 cars long. If we are running 40' cars, that works out to about 64" long. The bench work for such a yard ends up being about 12 inches wide. I have laid my 'S' yards tracks on 2" centers with no problems. I think this is tighter than NMRA standards, but I have had no problems with this spacing. Minimum space for freight car handling turns out to be 12"X 64", and will hold 16 cars. Since I have a current freight car roster of well over 100 cars (I've never actually counted) I needed a bigger yard than minimum. It turns out that increasing the yard space to 18" X 10' jumps the car handling space to a 41 car yard space and a 12 car make up track. A little more space yields a lot more yard.

Where do the trains go?

If one yard is good, then two yards are nicer. A second yard can keep a second yard crew occupied during operation sessions, and give our trains a logical place to terminate and be turned. Beyond the limits of our modeled yards, the trains should be going to and from somewhere, and this somewhere should imply the rest of the world, outside the basement. There are many ways of doing this. Interchange tracks are one, where our railroad swaps cars with 'foreign roads. Another is to simply have one section of track go around the bend or into a tunnel into an imaginative 'other world' from whence it doesn't immediately return. Trains running down these tracks can be handled by humans behind the scenes who will set up return trains that re enter our imaginative world and

thus are the source of outside shipments and travellers. Do I have room for 2 yards? I don't know yet. Current plans call for just one, but I haven't ruled out the possibility of adding a second yard if I can do it without seriously violating my other standards. There will be tracks going 'beyond the basement' to extend the world of the Penn Creek Valley.

YARD SPACE REQUIRED: minimum one 18" X 10', and maybe two with tracks going beyond the yards connecting with the 'rest of the world'(ROTW):

Engines...

An engine facility will also give us a place to store our roster and add to the operational realism of the layout. A loco facility can be one of the scenic highlights of a layout, with it's multitude of interesting structures and locomotives. It helps considerably if the engine facility incorporates some means of turning locos. This is not so important for those running hood unit and later diesels, but for anyone running steam and cab units, turning the engines enhances the realism of the operation and keeps human, and ultimately destructive hand off the locos. You can do this with a 'Y' track, which is a simple feature that takes up a lot of layout real estate, or a turntable, a complex feature which takes up minimal real estate. The features included in a loco terminal can be as inclusive as the space, imagination and available structures will permit. I still have all of the structures from the old Penn Creek Valley terminal, except the roundhouse, so my loco facilities need to incorporate many existing structures.

Turning locomotives...

Strangely enough, one of the first purchases I made in the pursuit of my new layout design, was a turntable kit. In order to plan the loco facility, which would determine the shape of all the remaining

available space, I had to see if I could get a nice looking, reliable turntable I would be happy with. With some trepidation, I ordered an HO kit from CMR in Baltimore MD after seeing one at a train show near there. It required a fair amount of modification to make it work in S, but the results are fairly attractive, and work well. The prototype in HO was 135' or 18.6" long. This is long enough to hold S gauge Pacifics, Mikes, and Decapods if they have standard tenders. It will even hold an AB 'F' unit lash up. After plotting on craft paper the placement of all the service structures, and the turntable, it became clear that I would need a layout space of 2' X 10' with the turntable location being wider by at least 6" to 12".

Switching the yard...

Not mentioned earlier is the yard lead. This is the track the switch engine runs back and forth on as it pulls cars in and out of the yard. This yard lead doubles the length of the yard, but the good news is, it can parallel another feature of the layout. It is only one track wide, and will fit beside a passenger terminal, or loco facilities nicely. Since these features are usually located together the space a yard lead takes up need not be a concern. In addition to the yard lead, a passing track on the main entering and leaving the yard is highly recommended. This gives incoming trains a place to sit while an outbound trains gets clear of the yard. This is another feature that will sit parallel to the yard lead, and end up in either the passenger or engine terminal.

As with the yard, if one loco facility is nice, two is better. Could I do two? Again, I might be able to. Current plans call for just one, but don't be surprised to see two eventually.

VERDICT: at least one 10'X 2' loco terminal with a turntable.

PASSENGER SERVICE:

I have always enjoyed riding trains, and enjoy modeling passen-

ger equipment. While a prototype passenger facility can be enormous, I would like to represent on my layout a reasonable representation of what the casual train rider sees as he enters and leaves metropolitan stations. Certainly not the entire thing, but enough of the 'edges' of it that more is suggested, and what we do see looks convincing. This would suggest the station itself, a few arrival and departure tracks, a passenger shelter if possible, and maybe a few of the peripheral buildings such as commissary, the building where food is stored and prepared for loading into the dining car. kitchen car. I know my passenger service is going to be 'token' at best. Not only that, most of the cars will probably be shorty cars now, 70' or shorter. I will see how 80'ers operate on the new layout. But I enjoy passenger car operation too much to give up on completely.

LINESIDE INDUSTRIES:

This is determined in large part by the location of your prototype. While there are grain elevators 'Back East', and coal mines 'Out West', grain is more closely associated with the Midwest, and coal with the East (or at least it used to be). Since my equipment is mostly Eastern, and my chosen location is being settled on as Appalachian, coal will probably surface as the major customer of the new Penn Creek Valley. This means there will probably be a mid route yard of some sort just for the purpose of marshalling hoppers. In addition to that, numerous smaller line side industries will be served by the Penn Creek Valley. This will give way freight operators plenty to do while dodging the passenger trains and coal drags.

PASSING TRACKS vs DOUBLE TRACK MAINLINE:

Double track simplifies traffic control, and the flow of trains over the route, but double track works against our purpose of trying to make the mainline look longer. Single track not only looks better

on a layout, but the added complication of meeting at passing sidings makes the operations far more interesting. In general, passing sidings should occur at major switching locations, and any spot on the layout where trains will be arriving and departing regularly.

Verdict: A single track main with appropriately placed passing sidings.

OPERATIONAL GOALS:

At least one major yard, one major loco terminal, passenger facilities that allow storage or display of

passenger trains, a single track mainline run of 120'-180' with several passing sidings, lineside industries along the mainline, and at least one major industry such as coal or steel.

END PART I



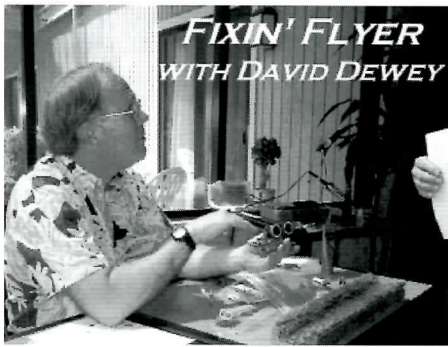
S-PIKE PIX



Wayne Beachy decorated this SHS PS-2 covered hopper to represent a prototype from a short line about 50 miles west of Richmond, VA. Wayne made the decals using RapidRail on his computer. *Photo by Wayne Beachy*



Chuck Ansell of Dawson, PA, created this 1930s gas station using the American Model Builders (B&S) Dill's Market for the office part and scratched the bay addition. Added siding is from Northeastern. Doors and windows are from Grandt Line. The vintage Esso signs were obtained from the internet. Details were from various sources, but the gas pumps were from a kit ordered from Scenery Unlimited. He added the globe on top of the pumps. The shingles, signs and corner trim were made from cereal box cardboard. The red is Badger Signal Red. The overall footprint of the building is about 24' x 46' x 18' high at the peaks. *Photo by Chuck Ansell*



Runnin' for Christmas

Christmas is coming, and you've just found your childhood trains, or acquired some, that have been stashed away for at least the last 30 years. Now you want to run them under your tree. While they may run by simply taking them out and setting them up, they will run better and more reliably if you do some 'recommissioning' first. It's not difficult, and doesn't really require special tools, although small screwdrivers and nut drivers will make the job more fun. You will also need some needle nose pliers, and, if your eyesight is like mine, a magnifier or close-up glasses.

Start with a clean work surface, some small trays to hold loose parts, small screws, and springs that like to fly off to nowhere land. I use the heavy plastic dishes from microwave entrees--after the food has been eaten!), and a good work light. I have a 'cradle' that I use to hold my locomotives upside down. It consists of three pieces of lumber, forming a shallow U channel, which is lined with some carpet scraps, although you can just use a folded towel (Not the good ones, find one that is relegated to "car polishing" duty). You just want a soft cradle to keep the locomotive from 'flopping' over on its side at the wrong moment!

The biggest problem after long-term storage is corrosion and dehydration of the lubricants. Three items will help here, a good plastic-safe oil, a similar grease, and a tuner cleaner-lubricant that is also plastic-safe. Hobby shops sell these, as does Radio Shack. There are those who swear by certain brands, and those that swear at them, but I believe almost any brand you buy today will be superior to those used on our trains

originally. The job is to clean off the corrosion, look for problems, and remove & replace the old lubricants.

STEAMERS:

We'll start with steam locomotives, as they are the most common. First, you need to determine if your locomotive needs to be taken apart. Place it upside down in your 'cradle' and look for any visible damage, such as flat spots on the drive wheels, or broken pullmor tires. To make the job easier, remove the shouldered screw at the rear of the main chassis; this will either hold the drawbar to the tender or the trailing truck depending on your locomotive. You can now easily see and move the motor armature. Now remove the plate over the rear axle. This will expose the worm gear. (If your locomotive is a late five-digit one, there will be one screw in the middle of the bottom, no separate plate. Remove this screw and the whole bottom part of the chassis will lift off, exposing the axles and the gear). Now 'wiggle' each main drive wheel. You won't be able to turn them because of the Flyer worm drive system. You're checking for gummed up or frozen axles; the wheels should move easily a very short distance. Also, the rear set should also move the motor armature (that's the part of the motor that spins around) back and forth a small amount too.

The other thing to look for here are **loose tires** (the outside rim) on the wheels. If everything moves easily, and the tires are tight, apply some light oil to the axles, and lift out the dried grease on the worm gear. A toothpick is handy for this. Apply a drop of oil to the motor shaft bearings and put fresh grease on the gear. By turning the armature by hand you can 'rollover' the wheels and make certain everything is moving easily. If you do have loose rims, you'll have to repair them first. This can be simple or complex, as explained in an earlier *Fixin' Flyer* column (For those with Internet access, check the FAQ's at the S trains web site: <http://www.trainweb.org/s-trains/>). With this problem your best step now is a full tear down and overhaul.

If the wheels don't move easily, the axle **bearings are likely gummed up**. You may be able to free them up by carefully spraying some tuner cleaner between the wheels and the chassis, so it can work its way into the axle bearings. If you have a late chassis with the removable bottom half, the entire axles are now exposed and you can lift them out a small amount (limited by the connecting rods). This kind of a problem is often a sign that you need to disassemble the locomotive and give it a complete cleaning and lubricating. This is not a disaster, but it will take longer, and you need to observe the way parts go together before disassembling them. More on this process later, for now we will assume all is well.

Motor brushes sometimes get frozen in their tubes. (Late locomotives have square brushes that go on each side; the following test won't work for them) You can check for this by looking at the brush end of the armature while wiggling the rear drive wheels, so the armature works up and down. If you can see the brushes following the armature, then they're not stuck. If they are stuck, you will have to take the motor apart and clean the tubes. This usually requires removing the chassis from the boiler shell. Assuming this is not a problem, we will go on.

If your locomotive has a lever sticking out of a slot on top of the boiler, you have a "Reverse In Boiler" locomotive. For these, lift the boiler front off (it just pulls straight out. You should be looking at a light bulb on a bracket. Behind the bracket (no, you can't remove the bracket from there) you should see the drum and some finger of the reverse unit. If it doesn't look corroded, spray some contact cleaner (use the little straw to reach in there) and work the lever back and forth to rotate the drum. If your reverse unit is in the tender, remove the four screws (sheet metal tenders will have four tabs, you need to carefully straighten these!) on the tender body and lift it off. You will see a square metal unit with an electric coil, a round drum and two sets of metal fin-

gers. Look at the fingers for discoloration, or burned away parts. If they look good, spray some contact cleaner and work the drum around by pushing down on the small tab near the coil by the lockout lever.

Now you can test your engine. If it runs fine, you're lucky, otherwise you will have to service the reverse unit. Reassemble and enjoy (On sheet metal tenders I wouldn't recommend bending the tabs again, as they will eventually break off, just slide the body back on.). On the reverse in boiler models you will have to disassemble the engine to get to the reverse unit.

The complete disassembly of a locomotive is more than we can go into this time. There are some good suggestions on the S-trains web site, as well as a place to ask questions. I will give a few pointers here though! First, don't assume your locomotive is assembled properly--the factory may have goofed, or a past repair person did something "different." I use nut drivers or miniature open-end wrenches to take the hex-shaped screws off the main drivers. The three axle side rods do have a front and back, notice the "bump" to one side of the center hole. This should go to the rear of the locomotive. Locomotives with eccentric linkage, the piece that is held down by the main driver hex-screw always faces the center of the driver, any other location will cause problems!

Now onto diesels: These can be a real problem, as there actually are problems with the ACG design--it wasn't intended to run forever! There are a lot of production changes in these, as the engineers worked to make them better (and late in production, cheaper!). It is easier to take the chassis out of the body shell by first removing the side frames, each held on by two screws on the bottom. Be careful in removing and replacing the body shell screws, it is easy to crack the screw holes (if they aren't already from plastic aging). A drop of super glue just before re-inserting the screws can often save a cracked post.

Be GENTLE when putting them in, just tight enough to hold! After you have removed the screws, lift off the shell and set it aside so it won't get sprayed by the cleaner or bumped by an elbow (voice of experience!) I will also mention that the horns get easily broken, here is where having the locomotive in a soft cradle when removing the shell is a horn-saver.

Now you can see how the mechanism has fared. Just as with the steam engine with reverse in tender, the reverse unit needs the same care. **Check the wires** to the motor(s) for breaks, or near-breaks (only one or two strands left holding the wire on). Because the trucks move to go around the curves, the wires get more of a work out than in the steam locos. Remove the gear covers, each held on by a single screw. This exposes the gears. Rocking the wheels should move the armature a bit, if not, clean the axle areas and apply tuner cleaner. Often the axle bearing holes in the chassis are worn, you can check this by trying to rock the wheels from side to side. There is always a little bit of "rock," but a lot of rock allows the gears to wear into each other. This will either a) overheat the armature, and burn it out, or b) wipe out a gear. Neither scenario is pleasant. The only repair for worn holes is a rebushing of the chassis, best done by someone with a milling machine AND the correct dimensions.

Yes, this is one place where even I will admit one should "see a pro." If your locomotive passes the "rocking" test, proceed with the inspection. **Look at the brushes;** the springs should hold them tightly against the commutator, and there should be enough brush that the brass arm isn't touching the commutator. New brushes are available, but soldering them to the arms takes an experienced soldering technique. It's not hard to do, but I wouldn't attempt it as one's first soldering experience! If all looks well so far, then clean out the old gunk in the gear area, apply new lubricants (don't forget the armature bearings), reassemble the chassis and test. If you have a two-motor unit, both motors

should run at the same speed (need I mention in the same direction too?). If all is well, place the chassis in the shell and carefully put the screws back in.

On many of the diesels, there is a **slider shoe** (on the Baldwin locomotives it is a button and the following doesn't apply). Check to see that it moves easily in its box, and that the spring does push it against the rail. The springs sometimes lose their "spring" and don't keep the shoe against the rail. New springs can be carefully wound in without removing the slider. If the slider does need replacing (they do get worn down), you will have to remove it. It is retained by a small tab that sticks through the slot in the box. Push in on the tab with a very small screwdriver while pulling the slider out of the box. Try to put as little stress on the box as possible, as it is only crimped onto the sideframe, and can be easily broken loose. If the sliders are in good shape, put the sideframes back on and run your loco! I hope this helps you all with your Christmas layout. I have promised to bring you the third part of my switch rebuilding series, covering the early 720 switches, and I will! Right now all my 720s and my notes are in a box somewhere at the "new" house. As soon as I find them, I will finish the article! Meantime, I will NOT suggest you send me ideas etc., as I will probably lose them too, until we get settled in.

Happy Holidays!



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The Straight & Narrow

By David L. Heine

News and Reviews on the Narrow Gauge Front

The Latest Edition of the Lehigh & Western Railroad

As some of you know, I have moved again this year. This means my "dream" layout that was shown on these pages earlier this year will not be built and was just an exercise in layout design. The new layout is in a slightly smaller area than the main area of the former basement; however, you may remember that I was planning on a large staging area in a crawl space. Using the crawl space is probably something I would regret 25 years from now anyway.

The new basement layout home has some major differences. First the laundry is in the basement and I will not be running track over the washer and dryer, so the laundry area is essentially off limits. The second is the workshop. There was originally a woodworking workshop in the basement. I have learned years ago that woodworking and model railroads do not work together in the same space, so my woodworking shop is not in the basement. I do need a space for model building, so I am making the workshop area smaller and using it for a model workshop. You can consider this space to be serving the model railroad.

My "givens and druthers" for this layout are:

The main railroad will be the Sn3 Lehigh & Western Railroad, a common carrier set in Pennsylvania in the late 1920's.

The Hemm-Locke Lumber Company will be the Sn3 logging railroad with trackage rights on the L&W and a major logging branch.

The Jamestown & Jennville

Railroad will be a small Sn2 line that needs to be fit in somehow.

There will be a standard gauge interchange at Lehigh. The standard gauge should be operable, ideally a loop arrangement with some staging tracks.

The workshop area can contain staging tracks, etc., but no major town.

The L&W should be point-to-point, but ideally with a continuous run connection.

There should be a major division point type yard with a roundhouse and some railroad shop facilities. Joville serves this purpose.

There should be a major lumber town. It should be large enough to accommodate a sawmill and other lumber/logging related industries. Jamestown will be the home for the Hemm-Locke Lumber Company and will also have repair facilities.

There should be a coal breaker at Lehigh (saved from my old layout) and a coal tipple elsewhere.

A logging branch is a given, which can be mostly on an upper deck. To reach the upper deck and incline can be used. The branch should include some scenic elements like fording a stream and at least one log bridge.

The layout should be designed for operations, but there should be only one set of track in most scenes, unless they are different railroads or a mainline and branch line. There should be some staging tracks and a barge for staging will be a bonus.

The minimum mainline radius for the standard gauge shall be 48" and the Sn3 L&W mainline shall be 32". The logging branch, secondary track, and the Sn2 may have sharper radius curves, but none should be designed less than 24".

What resulted is shown on the track plan. As usual, my first thoughts did not really fit in the space available. The following are some things that resulted to accommodate my "givens and druthers".

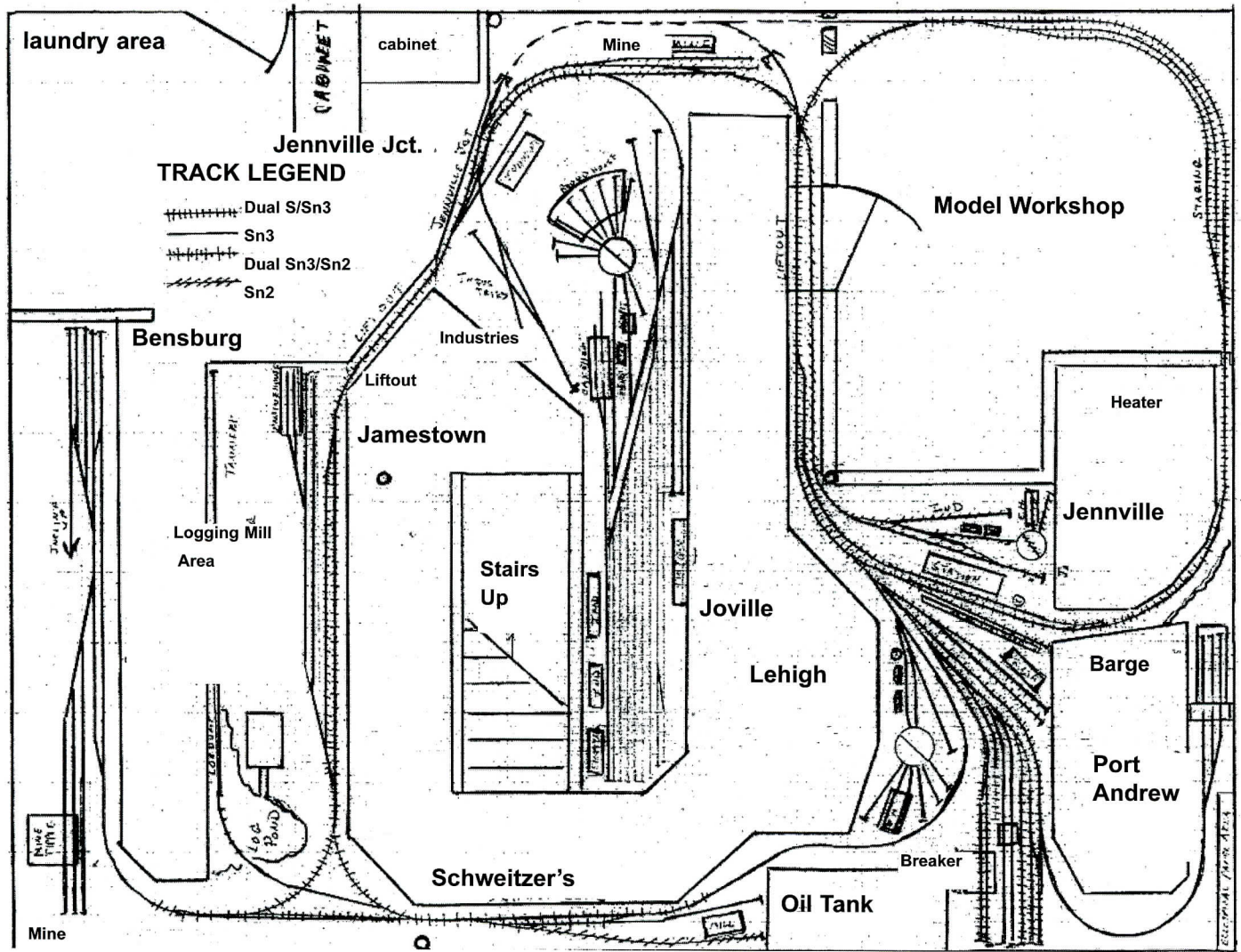
The L&W mainline is relatively short; essentially it just runs from Lehigh to Joville via Schweitzers', Jamestown, and Jennville Junction. This is the result of the workshop and laundry area. Also, there is no scenic loop like on my old layout or the smaller one in my last plan.

Jennville is adjacent to Lehigh. However, there are many towns adjacent in my area of Pennsylvania. Lehigh is in an irregular shaped space because of the workshop and heater.

All the standard gauge trackage is actually dual S/Sn3. While I was planning that Lehigh would be dual gauged, the staging area in the workshop was originally supposed to be stacked vertically. Dual gauging the whole thing solved some elevation and grade problems.

The L&W mainline is dual gauge Sn3/Sn2 between Schweitzers' and Jennville Junction to accommodate the Jamestown & Jennville. Between the S/Sn3 and Sn3/Sn2 dual gauge track, only a small portion of the mainline is just Sn3.

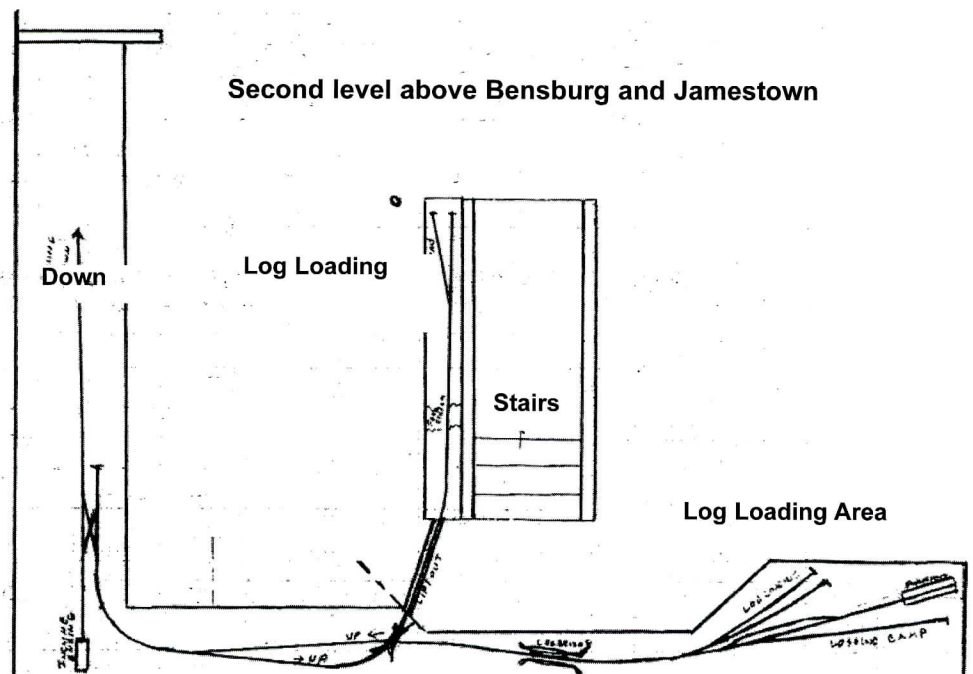
I managed to include an incline for the logging railroad. I did have an operating incline at one point in the past and always liked this idea. I also learned some lessons the first time around which should help this time.



Main level

I managed to include a barge facility at Port Andrew for additional staging.

This layout is not as ambitious as the previous design. On the plus side, that makes it more likely to reach a finished state. When I compare it to my last operating layout, the mainline is shorter, but there are some other features that more than make up for that. This one should have some better operational opportunities. From past experience, this layout will have some changes as it is being built. This will be especially true in the industrial siding area, so I did not spend too much time on all the siding details. There should be enough area for some switching and reasons for the railroads to haul freight.



Second level above Bensburg and Jamestown

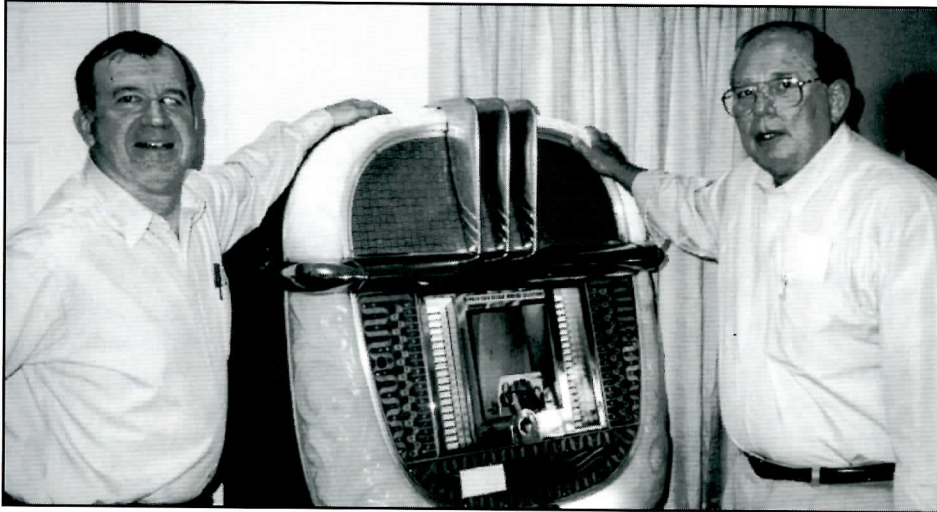
I am planning for most of the lower level track height to be in 45-48" from the floor area. The logging branch will be around 66", which is above my eye level. The part of the logging branch next to stairs may be close to 72", which means that I will be able to walk under it. I will need a step stool to operate this part, but some of my taller friends may like it.

All of the dual gauge track along with the Sn2 will be handlaid out of necessity. I can use flextrack for the Sn3 only portions; although the logging branch will be mostly handlaid so I can do things like simulate hand-hewn ties, etc. I am planning to use Code 83 for the dual gauge S/Sn3 mainline and Code 70 for the S/Sn3 yard tracks and also the Sn3 and Sn3/Sn2

mainlines. Code 55 will be used for most of the Sn3 sidings and the Sn2 only track.

Any help will be appreciated, so if you are in the area and want to help, let me know. And as always, please write if the mood strikes-

- Dave Heine
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What's a juke box got to do with S?
It seems that John Wickland (left) and John Heck discovered another interest of Cliff Saxton's while visiting his AF layout during the St. Louis Fall S Fest. Cliff has 6 originals. This one plays 78 rpms.

Jeff's Jct. from page 5

wonders for appearance. For a larger Flyer layout imagine, if you will, a neat double track Flyer main encircling a recreation room on about a 30" wide shelf paralleling a waterway along the benchwork edge, a highway with roadside structures paralleling the other side of the track (roads should not always be strictly paral-

lel to track), hills and tunnels hiding the sharp curves in the corners, and even some cosmetic graceful curves along the straight areas. This all backed up with a nice backdrop. Flyer or hi-rail layouts can often make use of the fake double track - that is the double track is really single track coming back from a loop. This makes for a longer run, yet retains an uncluttered look of a single railroad.

In conclusion, I feel good track design is key to obtaining personal satisfaction from a layout, and if successful with scenery and modeling, then promoting S is enhanced when folks visit or when your layout is finally published.

- Jeff

LAST RUN...

From the October *Newsletter* of the Connecticut S Gaugers - Unfortunately, I must report to you that yet another one of our long time members has passed away. One of our very first club members, Don Ross, died at the age of 78 on Friday, September 26, after a long series of bouts with heart disease and cancer. Don was one of the early members of the Connecticut S Gaugers, along with our former President Bill Krause and our current Treasurer

Dave Pool. Private services were held by the family on Saturday, Oct. 4. The Connecticut S Gaugers mourns the passing of our friend Don and extends condolences to the family.

Don was a collector of brass S gauge equipment and was an early pioneer in the development of a brass locomotive kit produced by former club member Joe Scales. Don's collection, featuring a large S scale layout, was always on display at his home when club meetings were held.

Don was a key figure in helping me to develop a short history of the club after Bill Krause passed away. Don was also the guy who would create and maintain the list of operators at club shows. Don would set up a list of those who would run the trains, noting whether they were running freight or passenger and the times of operation for each individual. We will miss Don and his many contributions to our club.

- Craig O'Connell

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The **Bristol S Gaugers (BSG)** met in Sept. at the home of their President, Tom Robichaud, in Fitchburg, MA. The club set up their layout at the Newmarket Festival in New Hampshire around the same time. Member Bob Hogan held the November meeting at his home in Concord, MA. The club is planning to attend and operate their layout at a Greenberg Show, on Nov. 15 & 16. The holiday party is scheduled for December at a date and time to be announced. Doug Peck edits and distributes the club newsletter. Other means of communication are used for timely updates and announcements of club activities (e mail). The **BSG** lost two past active members recently, when Gene Fletcher and Don Riley passed away. Gene was one of the founding fathers of the club. Don Riley was very active some years ago, and your column editor visited his home and layout in connection with a **NASG** convention in the early 1980's. It was the first convention that yours truly attended, and the trip home was made with a large box of S roadbed and track work on the roof of a small station wagon. The trip home included a stop to see Don Riley's open house and layout (S gauge at the time). Don wanted to operate model trains using overhead wire, and he was so prompted to change to European prototype HO trains where overhead was readily and easily available. Helen Lenart is Vice President; Chet Brown, Treasurer; and Dick Connors, Secretary of the **BSG**.

The **Maine S Gaugers (MSG)** held a meeting at the home of Tom Stoltz in September. There was a clinic given by Tom and Roland Perkins on various ways to make model trees. Attendees at the meeting went outdoors to paint the trees, and their newsletter likened the event to be like "craft time at a daycare center, only there was no

adult supervision". The spray painting was done outdoors to relieve the mess of clean up. The meeting was used to discuss activities and future plans for the club. Some useful outcomes included the need for a newsletter which Tom Stoltz now edits and distributes, where more input by the members would be useful. A member to direct a committee to construct a sectional layout, and another to organize meetings and programs for them is needed. Activity to promote S gauge is an important purpose of the club and activities to do this are needed. The **MSG** lost a good member, Gene Fletcher in August. After being instrumental in starting the **BSG** club, in Mass., Gene moved to Brunswick, ME. to be near family. He hosted the club for a meeting this summer before he passed away.

The **Conn. S Gaugers (CSG)** held a meeting at the home of Harriet, Bill, Jr. and Bill Mark III in September in Pleasant Valley, N.Y. The Marks operate a scale layout with N.Y.C. RR prototype equipment in strong favor. The layout has long sweeping curves and operation is very good. The layout has spectacular city scenery with many award winning buildings including some that have been entered in **NASG** convention contests. The **CSG** welcomed several new members this Summer at the Yale All Gauge Train show. Vincent Manjoney, Stratford, CT.; Angelo Nista, West Haven, CT.; Edmund Rice, Harwinton, CT.; and Mike Giordano, Branford, CT. were all welcomed as new members to the club. The club is looking forward to the Cheshire High School train show in late November where they will set up and operate their modular layout. Steve Kutash coordinates the module activities, which include several layout displays each year. Craig O'Connell edits and distributes the club newsletter, and includes write ups on S products.

Member Pieter Roos custom painted and lettered with decals ERDX plug door boxcar/reefer cars. The cars were operated by the Eastern States Farmers Exchange, which was later part of Agway. The cars were used to haul produce on the New Haven and other eastern RR's. Club members who supplied a suitable boxcar and plug doors along with payment for decals and materials could have a unique car for operation on their layouts. Bill Fuhrman is president of the **CSG**.

The **CSG** lost one of their longtime and important members recently, when Don Ross passed away. Don had a scale S layout that he had purchased from **NASG** member Joe Scales, and transported and set up in his basement. In the early years of the club Don was a frequent host to the club members as he had a large operating layout. Don originally had a very comprehensive collection of AF trains and sold the entire collection to **MSG** member Butch Kiss. Don then proceeded to operate S scale trains using his home layout which was scenedecked and new scale equipment that he purchased. Don was instrumental in using a list of operators for use at train shows so club members could sign up and operate their S equipment at scheduled times. Such a procedure is very useful to create a time when a particular member can operate his or her trains, and feel that they are an important part of the display, rather than a general "welcome, everybody can operate their trains" (if you can squeeze one of the members that always seems to have something running, out of the way). Don Ross was interested in classic automobiles(scale 1 : 1) and drove an Olds Toronado to one of the **NASG** conventions where he had to have the transmission rebuilt before he could drive home. Your column editor asked how he found a suitable mechanic, and he explained that it was easy, he simply went to a local diner and asked a waitress.

The **Canadian S Scale Quarterly (CSSQ)** is edited by Charles Hicks and distributed by e-mail. Member Alex Binkley organizes the material that

is to be included in the newsletter, and Charles puts it all together. Member Ken Garber described a survey that he conducted using 400 members of the S Scale Yahoo list. One third of the respondents have modeled in S for under ten years, while the average is 20.6 years. Over half of the modelers came from HO scale with N a distant second. Ken extols the construction of small S layouts for display at train shows and other public places. Such layouts are less costly than large layouts, easy to transport, easy to detail, and useful for display. Ken explains several model scenes that would be easy to make, including a model of a garage sale with tables at a church or in the driveway of a house. A barrel with a light in the bottom and red plastic wrap on top would simulate a fire in the barrel. A factory strike with several model people marching around a factory and the barrel for warmth would depict a labor strike. A hotrod meet in a field would be easy to model with all the S scale vehicles now sold as hot rods. These same vehicles without the air intakes in the hood and wide tires would be your column editor's dream.

The Western N.Y. S Scale Assoc. (WNYSSA) met in Sept. at the home of Dave Blaufuss. Joe Chavanne was welcomed as a new member. The host has a collection of AF trains that were enjoyed by those attending. Members attending were considering adding an S scale loop to the Buffalo Model RR Club layout or renting a classroom at the Boys & Girls Club and building an S layout there. The room can be rented for a fee of \$ 75.00 per month. The club set up and operated a layout at the TTOS Show at the McKinley Park Inn, Blaisdell, N.Y. on October 26. Plans for a holiday party were discussed, and Dave Blaufuss was to investigate possible locations and restaurants that could hold such an event. It was decided to hold the event at the Old Red Mill Inn, Williamsville, N.Y. on Dec. 17. Gregg Mummert coordinates the WNYSSA activities, and his wife Colleen helped organize a Reading RR program at the Sheldon

Elementary School. As part of the program, Max of "Max's Railroading Show" on Time-Warner cable made a presentation at the school. Colleen was interviewed for a future show, and Gregg coached her on plugging S scale. The club held their Nov. meeting at the home of Ron Kemp.

The official publication of the South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSG) is *The Waybill*. Member Michael McConnell is temporary editor of the newsletter. The club is having elections for two officers including the vice president and treasurer. The duties of the VP include organizing and recording the club meetings, act as program chairman by coordinating speakers and clinics for the meetings, and to assume the duties of the president if he is unavailable. The treasurer is responsible for maintaining fiscal records and records of membership dues from the members, along with maintaining records of the club's incorporation. Hank Worrell will continue as the president, and he does a fine job. Wayne Schneyer held an open house at his home in Mt. Laurel, N.J. on August 2. Wayne's layout can operate AC, DC, and DCC in both hi-rail and scale S gauge. On Saturday Sept. 27, club members traveled to the **Central Jersey S Scalpers (CJSS)** annual Fall gathering. The SJSG are planning to set up and operate their layout at the Riverton, N.J. annual holiday Christmas tour, in the Riverton Farmer's Mechanic Bank. The layout will be set up after the bank closes and operated for the tour. Past President of the club, Dan DeSantis underwent quadruple bypass surgery in July. Dan is recovering very well, and has moved away from the South Jersey area where he is planning a new S gauge layout.

SJSG meetings are normally held at the Stratford N.J. Senior Center. The Dec. 5 club meeting will be held at the home of Larry Gawlinski. Larry lives in Pennsylvania, so car pools will be organized for the trip to the meeting. Don McGinnis hosted a play trains event at his home on October 31, to help convert a large HO layout to S

scale (Way to Go !). Club members attending helped in the reconstruction of the layout. John Heggan, long time S gauger and friend of the SJSG members passed away on Sept. 10, 2003. He will be greatly missed.

The North Penn S Gaugers (NPSG) met at the home of Glenn Ritter in Sept. and members attending reviewed the modules that would be needed for the Frederick Mennonite Train show held on Sept. 19 & 20. The club's modular layout was set up and operated along with a G scale club. Member Ray Nase held the October meeting of the club at his home. Early in the month their layout was set up and operated for the residents, their children, and grandchildren at Schwenckfeld Manor. This was a public service event for the club and very rewarding as those who saw the layout were very pleased. The big news of the season for the NPSG is that they have been offered to have the Evangelical Congregational Meeting House, by the Worcester Historical Society. The building is 25 ft. x 36 ft. inside and has electricity but no plumbing. Heat is provided by a coal stove. A porta-potty in the back yard could solve the lack of plumbing. Use of the building offers a place to set up, repair, scenic, and show their layout without taking it down between sessions.

The NPSG plans to display their layout at the Greenberg Train Show on Dec. 13 & 14, pending available space. Doug Maurer hosted the club for their November meeting. Another annual event for the club is set up and display of their layout at the Traves Family Restaurant in January. Set up will be on Jan. 29, 2004 and operation will be on the two following days. Glenn Ritter edits the club newsletter, *Trackside*.

Cyndi & Tom Keegan held the October meeting of the **Neshaminy Valley AF Club (NVAFC)** at their home in Shohola, PA. Members attending operated the hosts layout and five trains were operated simultaneously. A white elephant exchange was held at the meeting. Joe & Nancy Fisher held

the November meeting of the club at their home. Mike Ramsey coordinates the activities of the club and is scheduled to host the December meeting. Two train shows that the **NVAFC** usually set up and display their layout at are not being held this year. These include the Chalfont Show and the Holy Family Show. The club members discussed the possibility of having their own show in the spring. Locating a suitable hall where they can rent tables is one of the questions that are being considered.

The **Lehigh Valley S Gaugers (LVSG)** met at the home of Dolores & Fred Rouse, in Kinterville, PA. for their July meeting. Members attending discussed the status of club members who have fallen delinquent in their dues. The idea of printing direction maps to the various members homes was discussed, for attendance at meetings. The home layout of the hosts is the Ontario, Seneca, & Southern, and operation on it was enjoyed by those club members attending the meeting. The Rouses are considering moving to Florida's west coast in the not too far distant future. They operate the S Scale Loco & Supply business, a distributor of S scale steam loco parts and American Models & S Helper Service trains. On August 24, 2003 the club held a picnic at the Strasburg RR. Rides on steam trains were enjoyed along with a picnic under the trees along the train route. There are several model train supply/hobby shops in the area which were also visited.

The **LVSG** met in October at the home of Steve & Elaine Spence, in Allentown, PA. A guest, Stan Furmanak from Annville, PA came to the meeting. Stan is an excellent S scale modeler, according to the newsletter, edited by Bill Fraley. An interesting portion of the newsletter is devoted to descriptions by the various members of their current modeling activities in S gauge. Tom Doherty operates the PA. Heritage Models company and reported that a scale S trolley is in the works and should be available shortly. The Corgi PCC trolley now has a Black Beetle chassis, and can navigate

6.75 inch curves. The cost is revised favorably with the new chassis. The older chassis is still available as it can operate on AC electrical power, and has replaceable bearings. Member Wally Collins reported that he has been working on scenery for his Midland Pacific RR. The use of a removable access panel or mountains to get at back portions of the layout are being implemented. Frank Titman has a new Mack Truck building on his Spiral Hill RR. Frank worked for the Mack Truck Co. and knows a lot about the trucks. He also knows a lot about and is very good at custom building model steam locos in S gauge. Readers of the **LVSG** newsletter were not disappointed by the latest issue which included another column by guest editor and columnist Lottie Steamchester. Lottie is always photographed with a scarf on, period.

The **Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC)** met at the home of Paul Love in September. The host has a layout that includes O and S gauge trains on multiple levels. Seven trains can operate concurrently on the layout. The club set up and operated their layout at the Earleigh Heights, MD. TTOS Train Show held on October 12. A two day excursion to the CASS Railroad, Cass, W.V. was coordinated by Jim McMorrow. Jim rented two cottages in Cass and the club members left on Saturday, Oct. 25 and return on Sunday, Oct. 26. On Nov. 15 the **BAAFC** set up and operated their layout at the Hartly Train & Toy Show. Nineteen members attended the October meeting at the home of Lee Scott, in Mt. Airy, MD. The layout of the host is extensive and fills his basement. It has four scales of trains which provide perspective in the scenery (N to O gauge, including an extensive S layout). The layout includes a great number of and variety of city, industrial, and rural scenes. The club set up and displayed their layout at the Westminster MD. Toy & Train Show, on Nov. 23, and at the York Train Show on Nov. 30, 2003. The club also displayed their layout at the Timonium, MD. Greenberg Train & Toy Show, on Dec. 6 & 7.

The annual Holiday club party is tentatively scheduled for Dec. 11.

The **BAAFC** plan to display their layout at the TTOS Swap Meet, on Dec. 14, in Earleigh Heights, MD. A community service event is planned for Dec.20 wherein the club will set up and operate their layout at the John Hopkins Hospital., Baltimore, MD. This is an event that the club has done in the past and it brings a good thing to the patients and friends at the hospital. Member Ed Tooley is scheduled to have the January meeting at his home.

The **Carolinas Div. of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers (ACSG)** set up and operated their 26 ft. x 30 ft. layout at the GATS Train Show, Winston Salem, NC. in October. The club was awarded a first place ribbon and prize for their layout display. Member Calvin Azarowicz provided a train block control system, so four trains could be run continuously for the show display. The display included a junior engineer's cab for control of a Thomas the Tank Engine train, as provided by the **Tidewater Div., ACSG**. The club displayed their layout at the Black Mountain Community Days on October 11, in Black Mountain, NC. and at the Neuse River Valley Model RR Show held at the State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, NC. on Nov. 15 & 16. A 40 ft. x 40 ft. operating layout was set up at the latter event. Joe Haenn coordinates the **ACSG** events with others, and reports on the activities of the various divisions. Joe operates Joe's Train Repair, a service which specializes in S gauge and advertises over 85,000 AF parts in stock.

The **Suncoast AF Enthusiasts (SAFE)** met at the home of Carol & Joe Flora for their September meeting. John Phipps reported that Rich Brown was doing well following his recent hospital stay for carotid artery surgery. Club past president Louis Blithe arranged to have an operating layout at the annual country Jamboree held by the First Baptist Church of Indian Rocks on Oct. 31, Nov. 1 & 2. This church has supported the club in

past years time by making a trailer available for movement of the club's layout components. The **SAFE** is planning for their own train show to be held on Dec. 6, 2003. On Dec. 20/21 the club will set up their layout at the GATS show. Member Les Baynard hosted the club meeting in St. Petersburg, FL. on October 2. The November meeting will include a visit to Frank's Trains, a model RR hobby store in St Petersburg.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (SMSG) met at the home of Dave Held, in Imlay City, MI. on October 19. The host has an operating layout that has been recently improved. It includes operation on DCC control, and kit bashed and scratch built structures. A new member Bob Black was welcomed to the club. Member Sig Fleischmann held the Sept. meeting at his home which is near the CSX double track mainline. Sig has built a shed behind the garage that resembles a miniature train depot. The November meeting of the club was held at the home of Dale Baker, of Owosso, MI. Carl Olson is scheduled to host the club for their December meeting in Oxford, MI on Dec. 13. Jerry Poniatowski edits the club newsletter and is Secretary of the club. Dale Baker is President; Jim DeWitt is Treasurer; and Ken Garber & Tom Hawley are Members at Large.

The Northern Ohio S Scalpers (NOSS) met at the home of John & Mary June Armstrong in Kirtland, OH. for their Sept. meeting. Ten members attended the meeting, including Don Thomas who along with the host had model RR items to sell to those attending. Refreshments were served and a good time was had by all. The October meeting was held at the home of Bob Yahnke, in Spencer, OH. Bob's wife was not able to attend the meeting so usual events for the spouses and significant others were not available. George Ricketts edits the club newsletter, the NOSS News, for the club.

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG) began their train season on Sept. 21, when Brenda

& Dennis Lavender hosted the initial season club meeting (for the fourth year) in Newark, OH. President Larry Robertson called a Board of Trustees meeting for the hours before the regular meeting was to begin. Dennis & Brenda operate the Western Star Rail Service, which sells full sized railroad parts. The building of the company also houses a large AF layout. The Lavenders have finished the second floor of the building and are planning to construct another AF S layout in that area. The meeting included elections for VP, Treasurer, and one Trustee. David Stilp was elected to VP.; John Gafney to Treasurer; and Rob Berridge, Alan Evans, and Tom Brinker are the Trustees for the club. The club set up and displayed their modular layout at the NMRA Division 6 Train Show held on Nov. 16, at the Franklin County Fairgrounds, Hilliard, OH.

The **COSG** planned to display their layout at no less than four shows in December, 2003. These include the Marion Union Station Show, Marion, OH. on Dec. 6, and the Springfield Train Show at the Clark County Fairgrounds the following day. On Dec. 13 the layout would be displayed at the Buckeye Train Show, State Fairgrounds, Columbus, OH. and on the following day at the TTOS Train Show at the Franklin County Fairgrounds, Hilliard, OH. What a schedule ! Because there are many hours of layout set up and take down along with operation, the club would like to have several teams, each in charge of one of the show displays. This would reduce the time required of only a few members who might undertake attending and setting up at each show. The club has over 40 paid up dues members and the time involved from each team would be significantly less than if the same members were to do all the work. Sounds like a good plan. The October meeting of the club was hosted by Janet & Larry Robertson, in Columbus, OH. The meeting was held at the Central Ohio Model RR Club building so trains could be operated. Larry is President of the Central Ohio Model RR Club. Alan Evans ably edits the

COSG club newsletter.

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers (CVSG) met at the home of Barbara Seltzer in Cleveland Heights, OH. The layout of late Josh Seltzer was visited by the club members that have lost a good friend and hard worker for S gauge and the club. The family has not decided what to do with Josh's layout and collection, but it was good to see the layout, and be hosted by Barb Seltzer. All the club layouts were set up and displayed at the NMRA show at the Berea Fairgrounds on October 4 & 5. Joe Jansky is coordinating the set up and display of the tin plate layout at the St. Pious Church on Dec. 7 & 14. President Lee McCarty and Bill Newhouse were the subject of articles in recent issues of the Classic Toy Trains Magazine issues. The annual club holiday party is scheduled for Dec. 14 or 21, and alternatives to the Pufferbelly Restaurant in Berea are being considered. Max Gruber held the October meeting of the club at his home in Bay Village, OH. The tin plate layout will be set up and operated at the Parma High School Train Show, on Nov. 2. President Lee McCarty is distributing the club news letter. A recent issue had an article by Chuck Fonda entitled "Thoughts on the Future of (S) Model Railroading" The author concluded that our favorite hobby will be around for years to come.

The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers (CASG) meet every third Friday of the month at St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School, Melrose Park, IL. The club provides badges to the members for use at club meetings and other events. Art Doty is in charge of the distribution of the badges. The club brought their portable layout to the Intl. Hobby & Model Show, held in Rosemont, IL. on Sept. 13 & 14. Don Heimbürger edits the club newsletter called the Chicago Flyer Don has been formulating information on the **CASG** club history. Andrew Jugle has been contributing information, and the club history will be completed and be available on the history link on the club's website. The club has

coasters, glasses, pins and S scale club cars for sale to members. Norm Schreiner is handling the sales. Member Art Doty is the member acclaimed expert on the line-up of railroad and model RR events that are going on. Art reports at the club meetings and confirms the dates of the various shows and displays.

The Miami Valley S Gaugers (MVSG) brought their layout to the GATS Train Show held at the Dayton Airport on Sat. & Sun., Oct. 11 & 12. John & Patti Clifford held the annual club picnic at their residence in Englewood, OH. Norman Hass is the recording secretary and Anthony Garza helps distribute information about the club. On Nov. 1 & 2 the club set up and operated their layout at the NMRA Train Show, at Hara Arena. The club members met at the Golden Corral at 7:30 for breakfast before setting up at the show. Club member Norman Hass is hosting the December meeting of the club at his home in Dayton, OH. The **MVSG** is planning to host the Spring 2005 S-Spree. This will be an event that will require some planning and organizing. Dennie White has volunteered to be chairman for the event. The club is planning to set up and display their layout at the forthcoming GATS Train Show to be held at the Ohio Exposition Center, Columbus, OH. on February 7/8, 2004.

The Badgerland S Gaugers (BSG) hold their Train Trade Shows on a monthly basis with shows on Sept. 21, Oct. 26, Nov. 30, and Dec. 28, of this year. The shows are held at the Waukesha Expo Center 4-H Bldg. 8:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. Member Dick Kloes held the Sept. meeting of the club at his home in Milwaukee, WI. As part of a publicity program for S gauge and the **BSG**, a small layout was displayed at the Train & Hobby Store, Hales Corners, WI. for the month of Sept. and part of October. The club set up and displayed a large layout at Trainfest Meet at the State Fair Park Convention Center, in November. The club plans to display their layout at the Mad City

Train Show, Madison, WI., in February. A smaller non-modular portable layout is displayed at the **BSG** Train Trade Shows. Club President Dave Smukowski had an unfortunate accident and broke his foot. Hopefully he is on the mend, but with the fall season in full swing all help is needed from the various members. Ron Schlicht edits the newsletter. The October meeting of the club was held at the home of Steve Lunde, in Waukesha, WI. Jeff Madden is club V.P.; Jeffrey Young, Treasurer; and Ron Schlicht is Secretary/Editor.

The official newsletter of the Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN) is the S Train Rail. The club held their Sept. meeting by visiting two layouts in the Lewiston, WA. Area, approx. two hours from Spokane where most of the members reside. Hosts for the meeting were Doug Eier and Bruce Renshaw. On October 5, the club set up and operated a layout at the Train Swap Meet, held in Spokane, WA. Member Bob Beshore held the November meeting at his home in Spokane, WA. Jon Kettner is selling 35 th anniversary **IESGAPN** boxcars made by American Models which have hi-rail trucks. John Kelley, a longtime club member died on Sept. 13. The club sent it's regards to his wife Lucy and their daughter. Member Pat Spino will host the club for their December meeting, and the annual banquet is scheduled for January 18, 2004 Jon Kettner edits and distributes the club newsletter

The Rocky Mountain High Railers (RMHR) publish their newsletter the S Say on a regular basis to keep members informed of the club activities and work sessions. The club set up and displayed their layout called the Lookout Junction at the second annual Idaho Rails Train Show in Weiser, ID. On October 11. The show is sponsored by Idaho Historical Railroads and was at the Vendome Events Center. Barb and Brian Crowell along with son Andy hosted the **RMHR** for their summer picnic. The club welcomed new

member Danny Lowber recently. The club held a meeting at the Government Buildings shop in Boise, ID. courtesy of member Sam Rapp. The club members can work on their layout and check wiring to insure a good operation at the next display. The plans are to meet at the shop in January, February and March to prepare for the next layout display at the Boise Depot Celebration, that will be held on April 17/18, 2004. John Eichmann coordinates the **RMHR** events and activities. Shane Jibben is the treasurer of the club.

The Bay Area S Scalpers (BASS) met at the home of Lee Johnson, their coordinator, in Walnut Creek CA. on Nov. 15. The S scale Sierra Railroad was operated for the members attending. The club was hosted by Arden Geohring for their Sept. meeting, where model gas turbine and articulated steam power was used to haul 40 car reefer blocks up 1.5 % grades on the host's layout. It takes about 20 minutes for a train to make it around the complete railroad. Michael Eldridge is scheduled to hold the Jan. 2004 meeting of the **BASS** at his home on January 17. Barney Daehler edits and distributes the club newsletter, entitled the Bass Waybill.

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., 06897-3906 or e-mail at ndpool@juno.com.

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EXTRA BOARD

ON LAYOUT HEIGHT #1

I use 48 inches. At 6 feet, 2 inches tall, this makes a nice level to work on without a lot of backaches. It also gives lots of storage room underneath, pleases others in the household and lets me have more layout. Also, lots of lumber comes in 48" lengths.

- Barry Comer

ON LAYOUT HEIGHT #2

Most layouts are about 38 to 43 inches in height; mine is but has two crawlunders. NASG Module standards are, I believe, 42" including track height. I might consider 63" height (eye level). It sure does look realistic and this is great for crawlunders. Actually, were I to start over, I would go to modules. They are easy to build, and if you have to move or take them down, it presents no problem at all.

- Bill Fraley

ON LAYOUT HEIGHT #3

I like the S-MOD standard of 42" to top of rail. My home layout is too low at 36" table height. I find it much easier to work under our club modules. The 42" height is high enough for almost everyone. Smaller kids do need to stand on a chair at train shows, though.

ON LAYOUT HEIGHT #4

I think those with families should read Sam Powell's comments in the latest *Dispatch*. I made the same mistake he did. Fortunately, I have a grandson who is willing to hop up and down on stools.

- Chuck Porter

ON LAYOUT HEIGHT #5

Something right around your belly button ought to work OK for starters. Higher is fine if you like to look at things from a trackside perspective. Lower is fine if you want grades, mountains and high bridges. Between the belly button and the armpits works for the average single level layout.

- Ed Loizeaux

ON LAYOUT HEIGHT #6

Hey guys, with all this measuring of armpits, nipples and navels, what do you do for a club layout? When we toured MR's layout at the last convention, I mentioned the fairly tall benchwork and asked if they used it for photography. The answer was yes and they did have trouble lighting the layout. One thing many of us forget is the distance from the layout to the ceiling. If you have a great eye-level layout in a 7 foot basement, with 18 inches of scenery, you are going to have trouble lighting it where it will look good. When the design of my layout room to have 10 foot ceilings in case I had to use it for a photo studio as well. It has worked quite well for me.

- Bob Werre - *Bob didn't mention the actual height of his layout*

ON LAYOUT HEIGHT #7

Most of the trackwork on my layout is at 57 inches, and if I would do it over again, it would be at 59 inches. It allows an easy duckunder.

- Tom Potthast

AN S WEBRING

I started an S-Scale/S-Gauge oriented webring, called S-WebRing. If you have a website and want to be part of the ring, send me your site name and URL, and I will add you to the list and send you the HTML needed to add the navigation buttons to your site. Visit <http://S-Scale.org/webring.html> for more info.

- Paul Yorke

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

- Nov. '03 RMC: Review of NASG Armco steel building.

- Dec. '03 CTT: An AF track plan based on a 5' x 10' space with Plasticville buildings. An article on coordinating Plasticville and Dept. 56 buildings.

AGE OF S GAUGER POLL

An internet straw poll on S operators resulted in only 1 vote for the 0 to 30 year age group, 2 votes for the 31 to 40 age group, 21 votes

for the 41-50 age group (27.27%), 37 votes for the 51-60 age group (48.05%), 15 votes for the 61-70 age group (19.48%) and 1 vote for the over 70 category. Nothing new here, but either we have to recruit the younger folks or perhaps just wait until they age.

2003 FALL S FEST REPORT

The annual FSF, held by the American Flyer S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area and co-sponsored by the Badgerland S Gaugers, the Chicagoland S Gaugers and the State-Line S Gaugers, was held at the Holiday Inn-Westport in St. Louis the weekend of Oct. 31-Nov. 2. The FSF attracted almost 400 basic registrants and about an additional 100 family members from across the nation and Canada. All of the 180 available trading tables were occupied during the 2-day event. In addition, AFSGSLA provided a schedule of five clinics with topics including building kit construction, styrofoam scenery methods, wiring and signal techniques, the use of a national railroad library for research, and a fun-filled session by Classic Toy Trains associate editor Roger Carp on "Who was First, American Flyer or Lionel?"

Throughout the weekend the host club distributed approximately 450 FSF 2003 Meet Cars produced especially for the event. A double helix layout was on display and there was a silent auction. The Model Contest winners were Joe Swift for scale rolling stock; Randy Zbaren, Tom Nimelli and Norm Pilarski won prizes for hi-rail rolling stock; Brandon Lester, Andy Lester and Larry Strassburger took prizes for structures. Train race winners were: Steam 1st - John Baker; Diesel 1st John Weakley. The overall winner was John Baker. *As I recall this was an AF Atlantic - Jeff.*

The Incline Challenge winners: Steam 1st - Doug Allen; Diesel 1st Donald Goeke; Overall - Donald Goeke. Some family fun was pro-

vided with a children's Halloween party, a children's pizza party and holiday craft workshop.

The usual Saturday evening banquet opened with the showing of the traditional film *Joe McDoaks*. The 250 banquet attendees were treated to a sit-down dinner which received many favorable comments. Winners of special table center pieces were determined and many door prizes were awarded. The featured speaker was Richard Eichhorst, retired history teacher and founder and executive officer of a number of St. Louis area organizations of historic and railroad interest. His presentation of *Hoboes, Cabeese and Train Travel* was delightfully informative and entertaining. An auction followed the banquet.

The next day many home layouts were open for self-guided tours. Eleven locations were open including the National Museum of Transportation. Now the St. Louis club moves on the installing the Great Christmas Train Display in the corner window of the Famous-Barr downtown department store. This is the 16th year for this effort. - Moe Berk

S-TIP

Shinohara Turnouts: The Shinohara turnouts are the closest we can come to a ready-to-use code 100 turnout, but they have several problems that can be time consuming to solve. First, the hinges used on the points are too

weak. Excess pressure against the point rail can bend the hinges, and it is not possible to bend them back into position. These hinges are made of a much lighter weight material than a normal rail joiner.

To fix the problem, I drill out the rivet in the throwbar and remove the point rail assembly. I cut the metal throwbar with a mototool, leaving about 1/8" of the metal throwbar attached to each point rail. These remaining portions of the metal throwbar are then drilled for bolts. I make up a new plastic throwbar from Plastruct channel stock, and use brass nuts and bolts to attach the now separated point rails to the new throwbar. The use of the channel stock allows the nut to be ACCed to the bottom side of the throwbar, providing a strong point of connection for the point rails. Then I use a mototool to cut a standard code 100 rail joiner in half. These 1/2 length rail joiners are then used to replace the Shinohara point hinges.

A second problem with the Shinohara turnouts is that the gauge around the frog is too tight. Some wheelsets tend to pick the frog fairly violently. Instead of regauging, I epoxy a .010" x .040" strip of styrene in the web of the guardrail, and then epoxy a .010" x .060" strip on top of that. After filing a bit, this offers a smooth transition.

- Dan Vandermause

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

S-CALENDAR

Jan. 24-25, 2004: Also - April 3-4, 2004. Great Scale and All-American Hi-Rail Train Show. Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD Admission \$6. 25,000 square foot shows. 410-730-1036, www.gsmts.com.

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 Scalpers. 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

Pres. Message from page 4

Incidentally, Andrew Mallette has begun a school train club at his home in Canada.

We got some fantastic advice from Barbara Rudnicki:

"As long as we're discussing way to get kids interested in Trains (S, of course), I'll add a thought and my technique. I opened my train room up to the public (have to call and make an appointment) last December for the first time. The price of entry is that the visitor must bring a 'kid'. One gentleman called to make an appointment and said he was over the age of 75 but still wanted to bring his "kid". He asked if it were okay if his "kid" was 48 years old? :-). Of, course, I said yes. I learned a bit about kids and trains last December that I didn't know. There is a lower age limit. No one is now allowed in my train room who is under the age of 3 unless a parent is holding them and doesn't let them down. A little boy, aged 2 1/2 was quickly bored by the whole scene and proceeded to beat on the tops of my 980 series boxcars. Had his Mom not grabbed him faster than I could, his little body would have been imbedded in the West wall of my train room. Anyway, the real point here is that people are calling me already to see if the train room will be open again this December. Their kids are still talking about Miss Barbara's trains and they want to come back. Some parents even brought a camera to take pictures of the kids with the trains. There was a lot of excitement generated. Requiring an appointment helps to keep the number of people to a manageable number. Besides I have to work. So I feel as though I am making a contribution to our hobby even though there is one rule in my train room; Thou shalt not touch anything. When I get more accessories working,

there will be buttons for kids to press.

PS One Grandma called me this spring and said she bought 2 sets of trains for her 4 year old, twin grandson's. They were just so excited about the trains they saw at my place. That's a real success.

I have an additional idea based on some feedback I received about my input on the subject. SHS has offered to send me some catalogs to hand out at my next 'open house'. I don't really do an open house but when visitors come to my train room, I can give them a catalog if they are interested.

Also, another list member offered to make me an "S" info sheet that I can hand out. I think having something for parents of kids who visit to read when they get home is an excellent idea even if it is nothing more than a list of local hobby shops and addresses / phone numbers. Anything to make it easier to act on getting trains once they leave the train room. I am also going to print up an info sheet on my trains and layout (i.e. dimensions, what S is, names of accessories, etc.)"

Here're some ideas from Joe Kimber:

"I also have been taking my grandson and granddaughter to the the basement to see the trains since both were very young. I have a small S Gauge layout (4-1/2' X 17") with vintage American Flyer and new AM & SHS Equipment. The children especially like the operating accessories (cattle loader, barrel loader, sawmill, etc.) My grandson is 4 and my granddaughter 2 years old. I must admit though, some of the new equipment is rather expensive for young families. Locomotives in excess of \$500 are priced at many people's weekly take home pay. The lowest priced steam locomotive is the AM pacific at \$299. If S gauge had some sets priced in the \$150-

\$200 range similar to "O" gauge we might have more people buying trains. I know tooling is very expensive but how about the old AF tooling for the 302? Does it still exist?"

Well, Joe Haenn, an S dealer, has one solution to the above. He wrote: "I am assembling several starter sets. Each set will consist of an inexpensive AF loco (e.g., 303, 307, 21160) plus 2-3 new K-Line cars, a new K-Line caboose, a circle of track, track clip, wires, and inexpensive AF set transformer. These will retail for \$80-\$130 each (depending on loco and number of cars) with a set box. It will be a way to get new blood into S gauge. I hope to have 6 of these sets ready for our next train show, which is just before Thanksgiving."

All that great advice makes it possible to produce a list of suggestions for getting our youngsters interested in S model railroading:

1. **Scouting programs**
2. **Parental education.**
3. **Low cost starter sets.**
4. **Hands-on involvement for the kids.**
5. **School model railroad clubs.**
6. **Hosting open houses or inviting visitors.**
7. **Having lots of handouts available.**
8. **Every little bit helps. Actually, this sums up all of our collective promotional efforts.**

It's great to see such enthusiasm for spreading the word about model railroading in S to the newest generation. After all, they are our future in so many ways.

Have a great holiday season!

- Roy Hoffman

rhoffman@innernet.net

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Railmail cont. from p. 5

full-length heavyweights by SHS/AM were beautiful. We just wish we could still get them and a couple more (long) cars to go with them, especially a dining car and an open platform Pullman observation car so that we could have an aesthetically complete heavy-weight train. The Heavyweights are what I wish Kaslo was producing.

- Earl Henry

Amen, as I have said before. This would be on my wish list too - hey Ron B, maybe offer these as upgraded with lights, interiors and improved trucks. - ed.

S in the Heart of Dixie: The Carolinas Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers has almost completed a very busy second half of 2003 by taking its second consecutive first place ribbon and prize at this past weekend's Great American Train Show (GATS) in Winston-Salem, NC. They ran a 26 by 30 foot layout complete with T-modules and 6-track center passing yard, Calvin Azarowicz's block system with 4 continuously running trains, over 50 operating buttons, Rhett George's track-power-supplied constant voltage camera car, and the Tidewater Division's Thomas the Tank Engine Junior Engineer's cab.

Since the beginning of July, the Carolinas Division has participat-

ed in 7 shows including two on the same day (Oct. 11). We used one set of corners and some straight modules in Kings Mountain and the other set of corners, the T and yard modules and several straight modules at the NC Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC. In all it is estimated that our division will expose more than 10,000 people in our area to S gauge in the last 6 months. S gauge is truly alive and well in the Carolinas.

- Joe Haenn

Looking for Structures: I emailed DPM and Rix Products about the possibility of doing an S line of modular building parts. DPM replied that their products are just fine for S. Rick at Rix, however, said that he had been thinking of expanding to include O. He says he'll keep S in mind. Perhaps he could use a nudge. While I was making a pest of myself, I emailed Grandt Line. His reply, What did you have in mind? You can email Rix at rix@rixproducts.com and Grandtline at sales@grandtline.com.

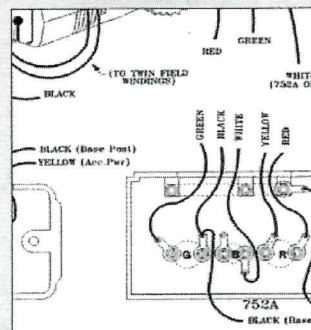
Since he asked, I replied that I was looking for larger S scale factory/warehouse doors (12' 6" x 14' 3") among other things. I'm also glad that Pine Canyon is rethinking its decision (see New Products) and is taking suggestions too.

- Stan Furmanak

Thanks to donors:

Stan Furmanak, Lee Johnson

Tom Krell's AF Accessory Diagrams Including pushbutton innards!

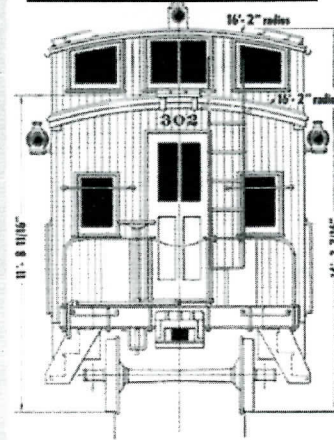


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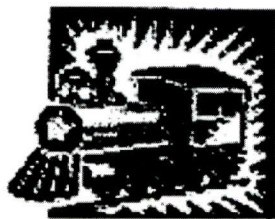
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