

April 2013

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Volume XXXVII Number 2



50 Years of S: Scale • Narrow Gauge • American Flyer • Hi-rail



The NASG Online Membership Directory

In the February 2012 issue of *The Dispatch* I wrote an article about the newly redesigned NASG web site. At that time we had not yet decided to include the Online Membership Directory. However, that feature of the web site is back, and I would like to take you through a brief tour of its current features.

The NASG Online Membership Directory is protected from access by the general public, because it contains information only of interest to NASG members, and it contains private data. So, to gain access to the Directory, you must first be an NASG member (you will be issued your unique NASG ID), and then you must register for access (you will be issued a password). Since your NASG ID can potentially be visible (it's on *The Dispatch* label, and some people put it in their e-mail signatures, for example), the extra password makes the system a bit more secure. How does one get one's password?

To access the Online Membership Directory section of the NASG web site, go to the web site at <http://www.nasg.org/>, and click on the **"Membership"** button. Anything related to your NASG membership is discussed on that page, such as applying for membership, and NASG membership benefits, such as the NASG Library, the NASG Clearinghouse, and estate planning. The second section on that page has information about the Online Membership Directory. **If you are an active/current NASG member and you do not yet have a password for accessing the Online Membership Directory, click on the "Register Now" graphic (see fig. 1). This will take you to the NASG Online Membership Directory Sign-up page.** That page describes some of the things you will be able to see once registered, however, the primary purpose of this page is for you to register for a password. You will see four entry fields near the bottom of the page (see fig. 2). You must enter your first and last name in the first two fields. Use the name exactly as it appears on your NASG membership card. If your name includes a middle initial, a second first name, or a title, include it in the "First Name" field. You must also enter your NASG ID exactly as it appears on your membership card. Since you are accessing the NASG web site via the Internet, it is presumed that you also have an e-mail address, so enter that in the fourth field. This e-mail address will be used to send you your password. This is done automatically, so make sure you use your current e-mail address and make sure that you type it correctly. If you do not enter an e-mail address, the Membership Secretary will send you your password via postal mail, but that may take some time (an e-mail address is highly-encouraged). When finished, press the "Request Registration" button. The web site will then check with the NASG database to make sure that your name and NASG ID are valid and match, and if so, it will send you an e-mail at the e-mail address you provided. So, check your e-mail for such a message.

Once you get your password, or if you have already registered, on the main Membership page of the NASG web site, you will

see the "Log In" graphic (see fig. 1). This is how you gain access to the NASG Online Membership Directory. When you click on that graphic, you will see two entry fields on that page, one is for your NASG ID and the other is for the password that you were sent via the automated e-mail message (or your current password if you have previously changed it). See fig. 3. Once you have entered both, press the "Log In" button. Your NASG ID and password will be verified and you will be able to access the Directory, if possible. If you are having problems at this stage, feel free to contact me (see end of article for contact info).

If all went well, you should now be presented with five menu options (there are additional menu options for NASG BOT members, which are not discussed here). I will briefly describe each of these five menu options.

"View, print, and/or update..."

When you click on this option, you will see your own NASG profile information. This page will show your contact information, your membership specifics, your club affiliation if any, your interests in the various sub-sections of "S" modeling, and your interests in prototype railroads, etc. In the middle of that page, you will see a pink highlighted section that describes your permissions to show any of your personal information to other NASG members (ONLY) via this NASG Online Membership Directory (see fig. 5). For example, my profile shows that my e-mail address and my interests can be made visible to other NASG members, but not my address and my phone number. It also indicates that I am not set up for visitors to see my layout. What does that mean? If you, as an NASG member, log in to the NASG Online Membership Directory were to do a search for me, you would only be shown my e-mail address and my interests, but you would not see my street address nor my telephone number. There would also be a note listed under my entry that would indicate that I am not set up to handle visitors.

The important thing to realize about this Your Profile page is that in addition to reviewing your profile, you can also make any changes that you wish, such as update your mailing address, your phone number, and your e-mail address. You can make those updates in your annual renewal notice that is sent to you via postal mail, or you can make the changes on the web site. You can also change your permissions, your interests, your layout description, and favorite prototype railroads. Note that some fields, such as your NASG ID, cannot be modified for obvious reasons. If you made any changes and wish to communicate those, click on the "Apply Changes" button at the bottom of the page. You will see a confirmation page (see fig. 6), which sums up the changes that you would like to make to your profile. If you change your mind, press the "Cancel" button. If you would like to officially make these changes, press the "Send Changes" button. This will notify our Membership Secretary of your desired changes. Note that the official NASG database is stored offline. What this means is that your request for changes will be processed as soon as possible and it is a manual process. The NASG database that is kept on the NASG server is only updated once or twice a month as needed, so your profile change requests will not be visible for a while. If after a month your profile hasn't been updated, please contact the Membership Secretary, to make sure he/she got your notification.

As a navigation aid, please note the small icons in the lower

Continued on page 4

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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dispatch@nasg.org

Membership year is determined by the date you sign up guaranteeing 6 issues starting with the next issue after signup. All applications, renewals and membership questions should be directed to:

NASG Membership Secretary,
Claude Demers
29 Redwood Terrace
Flemington, NJ 08822
908-782-8518
membership@nasg.org

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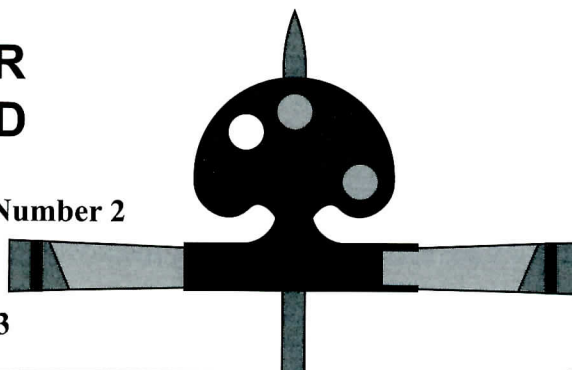
MAILING: The Dispatch is printed and mailed in the issue month. Issues received by 15th of next month depending on region.

COVER: A view of Philadelphia including some familiar Philly industries and landmarks. This view is on Roy Hoffman's Penn Western. He took the photo. Bottom photo is of the new Lionel AF SD70ACe taken by Rich Gajnak. See story this issue.

ORDER BOARD

Volume XXXVII Number 2

April 2013



NASG NEWS	2
OS from S Tower, S RailMail	5
New Products Report	6
Scranton Convention Update	10
Lionel SD70 Review Michael Greene	10-12
Quick and Easy Weathering Jim Schall	13-15
S-Pikes at Scranton	16
S Tracks Sam Powell	18-20
Slim Gauge Observations Dave Heine	21-23
Branch Lines Dave Pool	24
Switches - HO to S Bob Nicholson	26
Extra Board	28
S-Calendar	29
Updates on Constitution and By-Laws	30

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right-hand corner of the page (see fig. 7). Click on the green arrow that points to the left (circled in the figure) to return to the *NASG NEWS cont.*

previous screen on the site. Note also that you can always click on the “Membership” button at the top of the page, and then click on the “Log In” graphic to return to the NASG Online Membership Directory menu options; you will not need to log in again, unless you have explicitly logged out or closed your web browser. Some people have reported issues with using the browser's Back button. If you experience that, simply return to the Membership page.

“Change Your Membership Directory Password”

Use this menu option to change your password that you use to log in to the Online Membership Directory (see fig. 8). As with any web site, a password is a delicate balance between one that you can remember and one which others cannot easily guess. When changing your password, the page on the web site requests your current password, and then you will need to type in your new password twice. Typing your password in twice will help discover any typos you might have made. When ready, press the “Change Password” button. You will need to use this new password the next time you need to log in to the Online Membership Directory; it is stored immediately.

“Membership General Statistics”

This menu option will show you the current status of the various metrics retrieved from the NASG database. Each time the Membership Secretary updates the online version of the NASG database, these numbers may change. The numbers are fairly self-explanatory, but let me briefly review the NASG membership “interests”. I've received some e-mails that seem to indicate that these numbers aren't clear. See figure 9 for a screen capture I took of the American Flyer interests. What that shows is that 70% of the current/active NASG membership has expressed some interest in A.F. If you click on the “more info...” link, additional information will be shown below the entry. It then shows the numbers of other interests people may have selected. The first entry, “A.F. Only” indicates that those members selected that they were interested in American Flyer only and had no interest in any other aspect of “S”. You can also see that of the 1,111 members that expressed an interest in A.F., 265 expressed an interest in “scale” modeling. I'll leave it up to you how you want to interpret these numbers, but they are there, if you are interested.

“Log out”

Click on this menu option when you are finished with interacting with the NASG Online Membership Directory. If you are using a public computer, such as at the local library, for example, you **MUST** do this, otherwise the next person who gets on the computer will be able to view your profile information and possibly even change it! If you are using your home computer, it isn't quite as critical. Note that also completely closing your web browser (not just closing the browser's tab that showed the NASG web site) will also automatically log you off.

“Look for Member”

I have saved the primary menu option for last. Use this option to find another NASG member. You might want to send an e-mail to that member, send him/her something in the mail, or you are going to be in a particular area and are wondering if there are any “S” layouts open for visitors. You will be shown a form in which you can

enter as much or as little information for which you wish to search (see fig. 10). In this example, I am going to search for anyone whose last name starts with “vanv”, which should just be me. You can type in as much as you want in the Last Name field. For example if all you remember of the person's last name is that it starts with a “T”, then just type in “t”. The more information you enter into the form, the more restricted your search will be. And, yes, if you leave all the fields blank, you will see the entire NASG membership listing, which can take some time. If, for example, you are interested in finding fellow NASG members in Canada, then you would select the country in the Country field (see fig. 11). If you are interested in finding someone in a particular area that has a layout and is open to visitors, select the “Has Layout” field's drop-down menu and click on the third option (see fig. 12). Your query will then be restricted to only show those who are able to handle visitors. You could then use that information to contact the individual(s) and find out if they are available when you are in their neighborhood. Similarly, by default any and all “S” modeling interests that a member has selected will be shown, but you can narrow down your search there too. So, for example, if you are interested in seeing narrow gauge layouts only, you might want to remove all the check marks except for the various narrow gauge interests (see fig. 13).

To actually perform the search, click the “Locate Members” button at the bottom of the page. The next page contains a lot of text that restrict your usage of the private information that will be shown on the following page, should you proceed to do the search. This is primarily done to avoid members' information being used for bulk e-mail messages (a.k.a. “spam”).

Near the bottom of that page, you will find the names of the person(s) for which there was a match given your search criteria. In my original example I wanted to search for all people whose last name starts with “vanv”. This came back as only one person found, i.e. me (see fig. 14).

You will notice right above the “Show Info” button that there is a bit of text indicating how many inquiries you can make per log-in session. The NASG BOT has restricted this to just ten inquiries per session. If you need to find more than ten peoples' information, you will have to log out and log back in again. Again, this is done to avoid members' information from being used in any possible bulk e-mail campaign.

Under the “Your Search Results” section you will find all the names of the people for whom your search found matching results. Place a check mark next to the names for whom you would like to see the personal information. You can check however many you want, but only the first ten (or whatever number of inquiries you have remaining) will be shown. Press the “Show Info” button to actually see the information of the checked entries (see fig. 15).

This completes the overview of the new features of the NASG Online Membership Directory. We may add more menu options in the future, but for now it is complete. If you have any questions, or have problems using the Online Membership Directory, feel free to send me an e-mail at peter@fourthray.com.

- Peter Vanvliet (NASG webmaster)

S RAIL MAIL

Jeff...I found Sam Powell's article "Is Model Railroading Dying?" of interest, and sadly accurate. He suggested writing a Letter to the Editor in reply. Here's my take on the subject: "Model Railroading IS dying...but we are not!"

There is no question that our hobby of choice is declining rapidly. Sam Powell's article covers the facts and the reasons quite well. The world is not the same as it was, and like the hobby of making

miniature carriages and coaches in the past, the times have changed for our hobby as well. This is the unstoppable force of time.

Some say that the costs of model railroading have become too high, while others say that, in ratio, it costs no more than it ever did. Both are correct. But they are both correct because the standard of living has declined greatly in the past forty years and continues to do so. When I was a child my father supported our family on his earnings alone and mother stayed at home. How many families can live on a single income today? Yes, there are women today who want to work, but most are in the workforce because they have to work.

Continued on page 29

S OS from... TOWER by Jeff Madden



NASG is our Umbrella!

Yes, the NASG is an umbrella organization for all aspects of S - says so on the cover of our magazine.

Originally, most early S modelers in the 1950s and '60s partnered with the NMRA, or at least acknowledged the NMRA, as they began to work at scale modeling in Standard and narrow gauge S.

Standard S modelers during this era today would be considered hi-railers as the common rail size available was code 125 from Miller Engineering and others. Standard S modelers creatively used the too small HO Kadee couplers. Ace provided frames, bolsters and scale trucks and wheelsets to those converting AF rolling stock.

So yes, standard S modelers relied a lot on converting AF rolling stock to a more scale appearance yet still being able to use AF locomotives with the deeper flanges. In those days all non-AF locos were in kit form until the 1980s when AM introduced the styrene RTR FP9 and GP9 and Omnicon, SouthWind and Overland provided some brass.

S narrow gauge modelers took a little different path when PBL and PFM introduced detailed brass Sn3 locos, mostly of RGS and D&RGW prototypes. Sn3 drew mostly from HO narrow gauge modelers who wanted a better size and more reliable operation. Most of these gravitated heavily to the NMRA.

On the other hand, standard S modelers leaning to scale came from more varied backgrounds - some up from HO, some from AF toy trains. So initially, the

background of standard S scale modelers was not as homogenous as the narrow gauge bunch.

Then along comes the *S Gauge Herald* in 1960 with a definite scale bent, actively promoting the NASG and the NMRA. Along comes the *S Gaugian* - also promoting the trend toward scale S and Sn3. Along comes the NASG which initially integrated itself with the *Herald* and then continued the theme with its own publication (the *Dispatch*) after the *Herald* folded in 1978.

So S was growing as a modeling scale in the '70s and '80s. But also during these years some other trends were growing - Lionel renewed a failed AF line bringing "S" collectors out of the woodwork. In the scale world RTR also became a trend allowing detailed locos and rolling stock to become available without the necessity of craftsman kit or scratch modeling (thanks mostly to China production).

This RTR trend thus gave us most of the hi-railers we know today. Many were adding to their AF collections, many actually became semi-scalers embracing the newer manufacturers (AM and SHS), many converted totally to scale.

Thus, standard S has become fractured with factions in standard S scale, narrow gauge S scale, hi-rail (semi-scale) and AF operators. Aggravating this mix is Lionel (and now MTH) trending toward more realism with their lines and leading to much angst among those pulling themselves between AF, hi-rail and scale. Basically, the current state of S has evolved to what it is, but overall S is still remains a minority, and the various factions are a minority of a minority.

Some of us will move to one corner of the room and stay there, some of us will want the comfort of an umbrella group or two (NASG, NMRA, TCA). Many of us will be ambidextrous and enjoy an umbrella group at times and gravitate occasionally to specific corners.

Most of us in the NASG are not those who just want to hide in one corner. At least we're all 2-rail!

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

DIANE'S ATTIC (www.dianesattic.net) offers repro American Flyer circus trucks and circus wagons - you know, the ones that came on flat cars in the 1950s Circus Train Set. As seen on the website trucks are red, baby blue, green or yellow for \$35 each. Single circus wagons with animal come in red, yellow, baby blue, dark blue and green for \$35 each. A set of truck and two different color wagons is \$95.

LANE'S TRAINS (www.lanes-trains.com) has Soo Line freight car stirrups in brass available for \$15 a spru. Tree includes 14 stirrups.

M.T.H. "Rumors" (www.mths-gaugetrains.com) At a recent World Greatest Hobby show, the M.T.H.

representative mentioned that the "S" catalogs have been delayed another month to make sure that they have enough of them. Estimated plans are for track products to be released late Spring, late Summer should see some rolling stock to be released, and before Christmas perhaps F3. For 2014 F7, 2-8-0, and switchers are planned. Brand new, never-before-released products are slated no sooner than 2015.

MONSTER MODEL AND LASERWORKS (www.monster-modelworks.com) is offering in S a brick three-story storefront kit for \$59.99. Photos of a completed structure are shown on the web site. The kit can be customized by ordering various cornices, bricks and cornice inscription.

SMOKY MOUNTAIN MODELWORKS (www.smokymountain-modelworks.com) Potential New S-scale Freight Cars. Jim King, of Smoky Mountain Model Works, Inc., has updated a web page on his web site that lists a variety of freight cars that he would be willing to produce in S-scale. He would like for you to contact him via e-mail (e-mail address is listed on his web page) indicating which cars you would like and how many of each. You can also link these potential S cars via the NASG website under NEWS. One of cars on the list is the ACF 70-ton covered hopper built in 1940. This has the triangle cutouts.

State-Line S Gaugers invite you to join them at the

38th Annual Fall S Fest

November 1-3, 2013 Janesville, Wisconsin

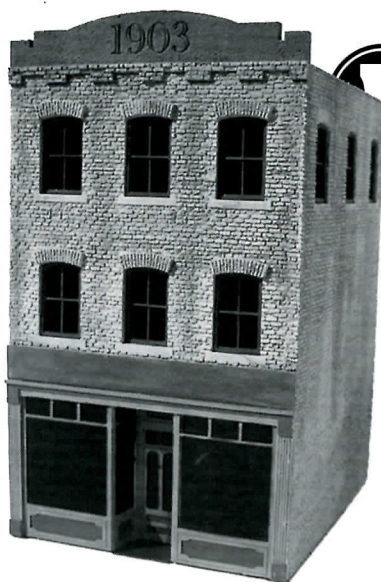
Featuring a very limited number of **Chicago Great Western Railway** American Flyer style tank cars made exclusively for the 38th Annual Fall S Fest in three color variations (black shown) by **Pikesville models**. Cars will be available in black, silver, and maroon in three car sets or may be purchased individually. The car colors are prototypical to the type of load carried in each tank car.



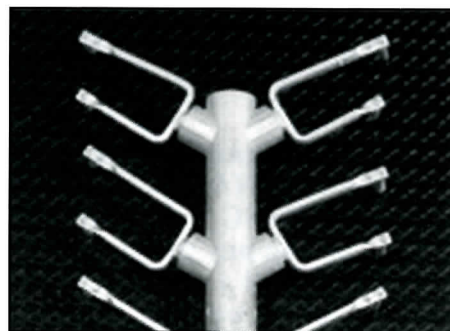
If you have attended S Fest within the last 5 years, you should receive registration material via USPS before the first week of June, 2013 if not, please contact:

E-mail: behlest@yahoo.com
Tom Behles
15804 O'Brien Road
Harvard, IL 60033

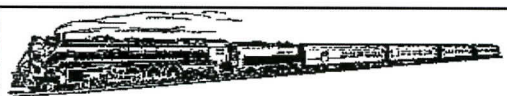
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WHAT'S NEW



PORT LINES HOBBIES



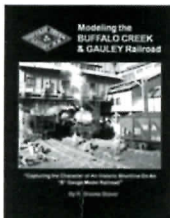
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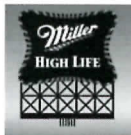
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STEAMTOWN II

2013 NASG Convention

August 7-10, Scranton, PA

Register Now!

I very pleased to announce that On-Line registration for the 2103 NASG Convention is now open. Just go to the NASG website (nasg.org) and follow the links. You can pay with a credit card or Paypal. If you want to mail a check, that form is also available to print of the website. There is also a printable form for mail-in registration. Note: There may be a form included in this issue of the Dispatch, but the early-bird registration ends April 30.

You can also **reserve a hotel room** by following the links on the site if you haven't done so already. If you have any questions, please ask. You can email me at the address above, and my phone number is available in the NASG's online directory. Stay tuned for more exciting Convention News including a special modeling contest I am planning.

- Jamie Bothwell

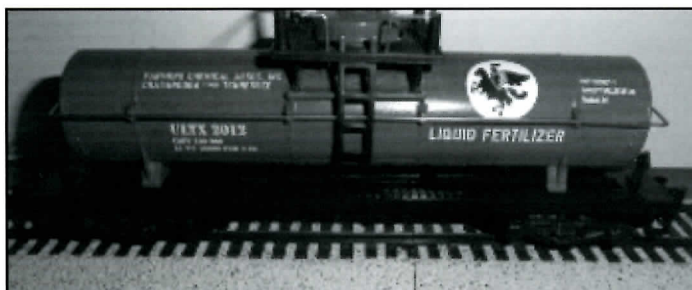
2013 NASG Convention Chairman

The tank car below is one of the convention cars. We are still planning a possible second car, so stay tuned.

Therm-ice Tank Car #83507

Therm-ice Tank Car #83511

The tank cars will be \$55 each, and will come equipped with hi-rail-compatible wheels and couplers. Scale modelers will need to replace both wheels and couplers, as desired. The left photo below is of an HO-scale model and is representative of the paint scheme only; it is not the actual model. The photo on the right is representative of the S-scale car, but not of the paint scheme. Imagine the paint scheme of the car on the left applied to the car on the right, and you'll have a more accurate picture of what our Convention car will look like. To order the Convention car, see the Registration page



(you can order the car even if you do not plan on attending the convention).



Please note that this schedule is tentative at this time. Some slight variations may occur, but this general plan will be followed. The clinic schedule is being finalized, and will be published as soon as it is available. We have arranged for several layouts to be open for visitation on the way to the convention and on your way home, but there are no layout visits planned during the Convention itself.

Wednesday, August 7, 2013

noon to 5pm

Registration

7pm to 9pm

Ice Breaker Reception

Thursday, August 8, 2013

9am to 9pm

Registration

9am to 6pm

Coal Region Tour

7pm to 9pm

Clinics

Friday, August 9, 2013

9am to 9pm

Registration

9am to noon

Clinics & Vendor Hall

1pm to 5pm

Clinics & Vendor Hall

7pm to 9pm

Clinics & Vendor Hall

Saturday, August 10, 2013

9am to noon

Clinics & Vendor Hall

12:30 - 3pm

Train Ride

3:30pm to 5pm

Membership Meeting

6pm to 7pm

Happy Hour

7pm to 9pm

Dinner

9pm to ???

Auction

THURSDAY TOUR: This one's for the Modelers!

Thursday morning we leave Scranton by chartered bus and proceed down I-81 to Frackville. Frackville was the top of the Mahanoy Plane where, after Reading Railroad shoved empty coal cars up the 3.3% grade, the

train was taken apart in cuts of three cars to go down the Plane. Totally inefficient, but the coal roads loved those planes.

We then proceed to Ashland to tour the **Pioneer Tunnel Mine** and steam Lokey train (included in the price of the tour). Since the temperature in the mine is 53 degrees at all times, sweaters are advisable.

On to **Centralia, the town on fire**. Unable to put out a mine fire under the town, the government bought the town and moved everyone out. Ever mow your grass in January? The grass here is green all year long. And step lively here. The fiery pits of Hell are just under your feet.

Leaving Centrailia (we hope) we go to **Girardville, where we see coal operations today** - reclamation mining, separating the coal from slag. We pause at what's left of the St. Nickolas Breaker, once the largest in the coal field and on to Mahanoy City, one of the largest towns in the coal region; 1920 population - eight to ten thousand, 14 Catholic churches, and 200 bars. The miners were religious and thirsty!

We go over the mountain and down to Tamaqua to the Panther Creek Valley, past the coal towns of Coaldale and Lansford. In this area were many large breakers, each with mining lokeys. 42" gauge was common. Do not be fooled by the mountain on your left. It's a 300-foot high slag heap that runs for miles. In the coal region these are known as clum banks.

Upward we go to Summit Hill, the cleanest and neatest town in coal region. Summit Hill is the site where coal was first discovered. The first large coal operation and the upper terminal of the switchback Gravity Railroad. In full operation in 1827, after its coal days, it became the world's first roller coaster. The town is also known by locals as the burying town. With many cemeteries, all in the town due to mining. Cemetery space was at a premium.

Down the mountain to **Jim Thorpe** and its many attractions, including the Carbon County Carbon Jail where some of the Molly Maguires were hanged: Asa Packer's mansion, intact from the 1880's including the furniture. The train station is restored and the focal point of the large, restored town. If you saw the movie "The Molly Maguires", the town was not a movie set. It was Jim Thorpe.

How did Mauch Chunk become Jim Thorpe named for the famous Native American athlete who never came within 40 miles of the town? Take the tour and find out.

A small snack might be advisable because there are no good places to stop before arriving at Jim Thorpe around 1:30. There are many restaurants in town. It's the main tourist attraction in the area. Tour price covers the bus and admission to the coal mine and train ride. **Lunch in Jim Thorpe is not included.** Full appreciation of this tour requires a lot of walking. The coal mine tour is not handicapped accessible.

Clinics

Information about the clinics and modeling contest are available on the website - nasg.org.

Saturday Banquet

The banquet will actually be a buffet.

Area Layouts

There are quite a few "S" layouts in the eastern Pennsylvania area. More concrete details will be posted on this page, but as a teaser, here are a few people who have already announced that they would be open for layout tours either before and/or after the Convention. Of course, last-minute changes are always possible, so plan accordingly.

Some members of the Lehigh Valley S Gaugers will have their layouts open for Convention attendees either the Wednesday before the Convention and/or the Sunday after. Bill Fraley, a member of that club, has already announced that his layout is ready for visitors. Lee Rainey and Dave Heine have already tentatively announced that their scale layouts will be open. Bill Lane has announce that his S-scale layout over in nearby Jersey will be open Monday August 12 following the Convention.

The hotel is the restored DL&W train station.

Hotel web site: <http://www.radisson.com/scranton-hotel-pa-18503/pascrant>

Reservations: 1-800-967-9033 (be sure to ask for the "NASG rate")

NASG Rates: \$80 for Wednesday and Thursday nights, and \$120 for Friday and Saturday nights.

Hotel Address: 138 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503 (MapQuest link)



REVIEW: *Lionel SD70ACe*

by Michael Greene
Photos by Rich Gajnak

Wheels

Scale wheels -- passes NASG S-4 wheel standards. Using the NASG gauge, Back to back is spot on and Flange depth is spot on. Wheel Width measured at 0.126". No Traction tires (as expected). Contrast to S Helper Service locos at 0.110" and American Models in the 0.129" range.

Couplers

Couplers in the S scale world are in some respects a matter of choice, with various modelers using some or all of the following: Kadee 802/808, S Helper Service 01295, Walther PROTO Max, and Kadee #5.

On the first SD70ACe, I easily installed KD802s. Lionel provides a coupler mounting pad and screws to mount the KD802/808. On my model they were about 0.015" too high -- not a big deal. It is easily correctable with a piece of 0.015" styrene between the coupler and

As a result of additional deliveries of the Lionel AF SD70ACe from the good folks at Des Plaines Hobbies and Port Lines Hobbies, I've now got the benefit of three units to use and examine. Run time of the units continues to increase. My updates have been edited into my original message and the message is now divided into specific sections. Some of the updates are as a result of additional examination and testing I've done, while others are due to specific inquiries from folks on this Yahoo list, friends' comments, and direct emails I've received.



I must say that overall I am very happy with the locomotive. It is a very nicely detailed loco and runs very well. As with any model, it's all about compromises and choices that the manufacturer makes. IMHO Lionel made a pretty good set of choices at a very reasonable price point.

Since there have already been reviews of the Scale version of the SD70ACe posted by Rich Gajnak on the OGR forum and by Ed L. on the S Scale SIG, I will try not to replicate that material there. Here's some additional observations I have:

Prototype Fidelity

Fidelity to the prototype is very good -- I checked several key attributes like length, cab width, and height. They were either spot on or very very close. Height and Cab width measure spot on, overall length is very close. Wheel diameter is also very close (prototype is 42", model is 40").

the scale coupler mounting pad. And the Lionel supplied screws for mounting the couplers to the scale coupler mounting pad have room for that 0.015" styrene. During operations with a the load load of a train, the drawbar pull actually pulls the pivoting pilot up to its highest position (almost like it has been permanently screwed in place, but still has the option to move). This is very nice, but at the same time also increases the delta in coupler height significantly. On my model it caused the KD802 to now be about 0.030" too high. As a result on the next two models, and eventually on the original model itself, I have replaced the KD802s with SHS 01295 couplers.

The SHS 01295 couplers have the knuckle face about 0.045" lower. So I opted to use the SHS couplers on my models. They also have a slight delta (now being slightly too low), but overall it is more to my liking. If you are going to use KD802/808s on your loco, you probably want to install a shim between the coupler box and the mounting pad.



Drawbar pull

Drawbar pull of my model SD70ACE is ~0.185kg (compare to ~0.100kg drawbar pull of SHS SW9) as measured with the MicroMark Digital Pull Meter. It has been running a fair bit my Lenz DCC controlled layout pulling 30-36 cars, including up a 2.5% grade, all at a very slow speed before wheels started to slip.

Multi-unit lashups definitely increase the pulling power although I have neither measured nor tested in this area, except for noticing I could easily pull 42 cars at one point. I'm sure they will pull far more, but I can't say how many.

Smoke Unit

It has a fan driven smoke unit. Mike all work fine, but I generally prefer no smoke on my home layout -- I just used the easily available switch to turn it off.

Sound

With a variety of sounds built in, Lionel also provides an easily accessible volume potentiometer next to the Smoke/No Smoke switch, so if you prefer no sound at all, just use that potentiometer to turn it all the way down.

Motor control

With three units available I could also compare locomotive speed. Running on DCC in 128 speed step mode where Lionel implemented direct motor drive, I did notice some small differences in speed of the locos. Starting them all separated at 20" and running them for a given distance they did not all end up still separated by the original 20". But it was not enough that I noticed any issues when creating multi-unit lashups (see below).

Layout control

I did not test on Lionel Legacy, Lionel TMCC or AC, but the loco supports all of them in addition to DC and

DCC. I must say it's really nice to not have to do any installs. And with all the different control options, running at home or on the club layout becomes very easy...

DC Operations

Speed on DC is very impressive. If I did the math right, it starts at 8.2V DC (4.7 SMPH) and at 12VDC it is at 49 SMPH. (Max speed for the real loco is 70MPH), and since this loco can run up to 18V, it likely will make that speed with no issues, but I did not test it.

On pure DC Power there are nice lights and sound effects:

FORWARD:

Front Headlight on at ~2V

Cab light on at ~3.8V

Engine startup sound at ~5.5V

Ditch lights on, Cab Light off, Forward movement starts at ~8.2V

REVERSE:

Rear light on at ~4.2V

Cab light on at ~4.2V

Engine start up on at ~5.2V

Cab light off, Reverse engine movement starts at ~8.1V

DCC Operations

On DCC, programming was very easy. Comes programmed at the standard address 3. I changed it to the 4 digit road number on the programming track. It also has a special method documented in the manual to allow changing the address right on the mainline if needed -- no programming track required. Decoder Pro 3.3.2, with SPROG II USB on a Windows 7 PC had no problem reading all the CVs, although there is not yet a Decoder Pro decoder profile for this decoder yet. I also used it to modify some CVs.

For DCC Operation, I did need to change two manufacturer unique CVs (CV59 and CV60) for some decoder filter settings to have it run on the Lenz system. Just reduce the values of these two CVs to a value of 1 in each one. The loco ships with some higher values in these CVs which are tuned/tested on NCE DCC and

Digitrax systems, but the manual provides guidance on when changes to these may be required.

One nice DCC feature I noticed is that the loco will, transparently to the user, process both 14 and 28 speed steps. It is not necessary to do the normal user required synchronization of the speed step mode between the decoder and the command station by programming a CV29 value in the decoder and setting the speed step setting on your DCC cab. The built-in decoder just handles it for you. It's a nice touch to reduce user complexity. The built in DCC decoder also comes preloaded with the 28 speed table, and uses the table in both 14 and 28 speed step mode. In 128 speed step mode, it does not use the speed table.

I should also note that the built-in decoder has some nice use of functions beyond the basis of turn on the headlight, blow the horn, sound the bell. It has functions assigned to increase and decrease the volume, start up the engine, shutdown the engine, etc. Appears to be no automated crew talk in DCC unless you activate via a function. Use the functions if you like, ignore them if you prefer. You can see all the details in the owner's manual at:

<http://www.lionel.com/media/servicedocuments/6541748171SD70ACe.pdf>

With three units, I've also been able to test DCC operation of multi-unit lashups. Using my Lenz system for layout control, everything worked just as expected. Quite impressive to see the 3 unit SD70ACe lashup running! Further I should note Lionel has implemented a simple to use manufacturer unique CV (CV50) to set MU Lashup position (lead, middle, rear). Setting this adjust how sounds and lights are handled. Examples: the horn only sounds in the lead loco, all the lights except number board lights are off in the mid position loco, the rear loco only has the rear light on & only when the consist is operating in reverse, power down function on each loco only uses the appropriate sounds (lead loco gets engine shutdown and crew talk to dispatcher, middle and rear locos only get engine shutdown). All in all very nice, in a nice easy to use model.

Summary

As I said at the beginning I really like this model. Very impressive product in my opinion. I think Lionel has a real winner here, and has really delivered a well appointed model that should well serve most S standard gauge modelers interested in modern motive power. I'm really looking forward to running these double or triple headed at the front of a long intermodal freight...

Hope this might be of interest to others...

Michael Greene



A Car Story ...or Quick & Easy Weathering with Oil Pastel Crayons

by Jim Schall, photos by the author

Ever wonder why some prototype rolling stock or buildings seem older and more distressed than others, because aging, use, and weathering take a toll on paint and on all surfaces exposed to the elements. **Why then, do modelers pop a railcar out of the box and on to the track and wonder why the car seems too shiny or out of context with the scene?** Perhaps it is deemed too big a hassle to break out the air brush and the oil paints to do a proper job of weathering. **I would suggest that there is still another way to achieve the desired effect --- pastel color sticks.**

Pastels and chalks have been around forever. Di Vinci used them as a preferred medium in the 1400's, cave dwellers used them to decorate their caves. Pastels and chalks are simply pigments finely ground and pressed into a usable stick of color. Because chalk is composed of compressed gypsum with minimal amounts of pigment added to add color and little or no binder added, it is a rather weak colorant for hobby use. On the other hand, artist's pastels have been created with higher quality and greater amounts of color pigments with and oil based binder which helps keep the user cleaner and art work (or rolling stock) longer lasting.

Finding oil pastels is not difficult. They can be found in art supply stores and craft shops, but be sure you are buying pastels not chalk (there is a price difference -- that will be a clue!) Several brands to look for include Sanford Nupastels, Conte' crayon sticks, Farber-Castell Polychomo Pastels, and Sergeant Art Squares; note -- no Crayola crayons!! Earth tones and grays would be in order for most weathering and can be purchased in sets or separately. Other tools you should have, an X-Acto knife to scrap the sticks into dust, disposable tartar

sauce containers from your favorite fish house, quarter and one-half inch soft brushes to apply and rub in the pastel dust, various Microbrushes to use in fine detailing and our old friend Dullcote to add tooth and dull down any slick or shinny surfaces before working with the pastels.

To get started after collecting your tools and color sticks you should dig out your photo album or reference books and study weathering on real rail cars. Weathering patterns tend to vary regionally and by products carried. Eastern cars tend to get grimy, western cars tend to get faded and dusty. Hoppers and gons get beat up and not shopped until no longer serviceable, filthy and rusty are the key here. Box cars tend to be in better condition but time catches up with them as well. Box cars also tend to be assigned to various tasks and commodities, auto parts cars and paper hauling cars seem to stay cleaner and less beat up than general service cars or cars used in low value traffic (like bricks, animal hides, and unfinished castings.) So you will need to determine your cars' age, its use, even a bit about its whereabouts and the financial status of the railroad.

I am interested in keeping my models in a time perspective which is snap shot in the fall of 1957 and I buy no cars with build dates after 1957 but I will change shop dates for cars with an earlier build date if necessary.

Having determined what car you are going to weather and the condition you wish to render it, look closely at your photos. Your nearly new car will need some rust and grim on the trucks (remember roller bearing trucks do not get as greasy and nasty as friction bearing truck with all their grease and packing in the journals.) It might have a bit of dust and grime around the door openings and a bit along bottom edges of the car. Grease from rail greasers, some dust, and mud may have been thrown against the car ends from cars ahead of it in route. Its roof line might be lightly dusty but no rust would be found and only light fading if painted; a galvanized roof would be duller than new with a bit of rust breaking thru at the seams.

See photos page 15...

Figure 1. BCK 2454 is in nearly new condition and on road only a short time and has not been exposed to a great deal of grime. (Car is a repainted PacRail with CDS transfer lettering.)

Figure 2. Reading 113009 a bit older and carries the earlier Roman lettering and has seen some service time.

(Car is a repainted Pac Rail with CDS transfers.)

The car at five years is beginning to show some wear. The lower ends are



now quite grimy, the accumulated grease has been heated in the sun over the years and has created a nasty film of grime and dirt. The car sides have gotten grimmer and riveted panels seam overlaps have attracted a thin line of grime on the inner panel overlaps (closest to the door) and have added more grime around the doors and door corrugations. The roof appears dull with patches of rust at seams and even breaking out on flat surfaces. The monogram and lettering on the side has begun to fade and are no longer bright and clear (but not disappearing, yet.)

By the time the car reaches ten years old, it has seen better days. The ends are blackened by grime and light rust is breaking out along panel seams and end corrugations. Car sides have deteriorated to a heavily begrimed condition with rust streaks along the path of the sliding door; much of the paint has been thinned to a point where large patches are covered in rust and the monogram and reporting marks beginning to fade away. Side panel seams are beginning to show rust as well as heavy grime. The car's doors have been abused by forklifts used to open its bulky doors and are dented and rust covered. The roof has succumbed the elements and is now covered in rust with streaks of rust discoloring the side panels.

By the fifteenth year the car has been sidelined with a placard stating home for repairs but then its siblings have also seen hard use and are headed for the car shop for rebuilding, to begin the process again.

See photos page 15...

Figure 3. C&O 7204 has been in service a number of years and its age is evident.
(Car is an American Models with factory lettering.)

Figure 4. SFRD 3465 is a rebuild of an early wood side reefer that has seen hard service.
(Car is an American Flyer IC reefer with updates, painted and MicroScale decals.)

This has been a bit of a story but plausible. What does it take to make this happen to your model? It is good to have a story line and to build up that story with your pastel sticks stroke by stroke. Start with a dull finish car; either by spraying with Dullcote or dull paint finish from the manufacturer. **(Be certain that the spray is dry.)**

Begin with a light dusting with a pastel stick closely matching the car color to soften the lettering and reporting marks (use your half-inch brush and pastel dust from the scraping of the color stick.) Using a darker brown or a mix of the car color and a bit of black pastel go over the car side seam lines (try using a piece of sticky note as a dodge over the rivets to place color on flat panels. Use this darker color around the door openings and upper sides of the door ribs.

The door tracks could stand could use a bit of the orange rust color. In both cases use the quarter-inch brush and do not broaden the grime line along the panel seams. The ends could also use this mix of color with a bit of tan along the lower edges of the car also.

The roof is what most of us will see on the layout and you will want to work carefully on it. Whether painted or galvanized the roof will get some light grime color especially under and near the roof walks and laterals which seem to attract or protect the grime from washing off the roof. A bit of grime along the roof ribs will also highlight the weathering but don't be too precise, miss a rib or two and heavier weathering on some than others.

If the car is older, rust would also be order using the quarter-inch brush. You need some rust rash (that coarse textured rust that comes from metal exposed to the elements too long?) Try blending a darker brown with rusty orange; once you are happy with the color paint a few patches with thinned white glue using the dry-brush technique. While the glue is still wet, dust your rust mix onto the glue -- do not wipe off but blow the excess away leaving the rust to dry in the glue.

Trucks and wheel sets also need some attention. If the trucks are to be the car color rather than black paint them before you begin weathering --- they have traveled the same places as the car and gather the same nastiness. Remove the wheel sets and mask the treads paint as well. If the trucks and wheels are the proper color be sure to give them a shot of Dullcote. Weather the trucks and wheels with our same dark grime mix and remember that friction bearing are always greasy at the journal boxes. Hit them with black or dark gray pastels or try dry brushing a bit of gloss black to the journals.

Typically I do not Dullcote my cars after weathering. The oil based pastels are pretty durable and do not wipe off easily. **However** if you decide that your efforts are not quite what you want and you want to lighten the weathering give the car a light shot of Dullcote. Don't panic, set the car aside and try another car. As you develop your skills you will see fixes and changes to improve your previously completed cars.

Totally unhappy with the results? Want to try again? The pastel weathering can be washed off with a soft brush and a bit of water and dish detergent. Try that with air brushed paints or oil washes --- I think not!





SCHALL WEATHERING

Fig. 1

Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Fig. 4





SPIKES

at the Convention

Above - Part of an industrial complex in Allentown, PA. The Penn Western RR runs lines from Philadelphia to Allentown. Below - A view of Philadelphia including an oil refinery, railroad yard and 30th Street Station. Photos by Roy Hoffman





Above - Lee Rainey's layout will be a layout on tour at the NASG convention. This scene shows some Sn2 equipment by the Damariscotta station. *Lee Rainey Photo.* Below - Roy Hoffman's Penn Western also has a narrow gauge component featuring the East Broad Top. If you visit this layout you will see lots of East Broad top modeling plus the extensive standard gauge Penn Western *Photo by Roy Hoffman*





Six Details that Make a Difference

to the effectiveness of the finished scene. I will attempt here to describe each detail and how I model it.

Here is a list of the details:

1. *Soffits, gutters, rake board, and fascia boards at the eaves.*
2. *Downspouts.*
3. *Light fixtures and electrical service details.*
4. *Window treatments.*
5. *Signage*
6. *Exterior foundation grading.*

As an introduction to this I want to say I was instructed

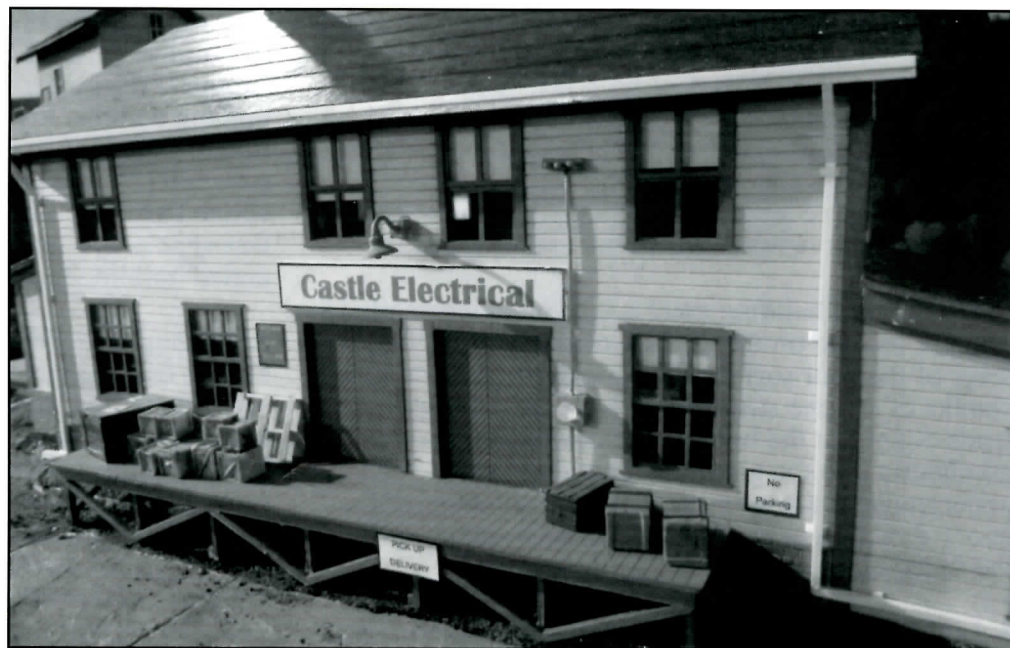


We are talking structures here. Once you get your rolling stock and track working and running, structures are one of the keys to draw the viewer into the scene and convinces him or her the miniatures in front of them is real. In the presence of this “real” scene, our rolling trains come to life with less required of our imaginations. The structures thus enhance the trains. The quality of a structure has a big impact on how well the structures accomplish our goal of drawing the viewer in. There are certain details which folks in the real world observe every day, and take for granted, even though they are not even aware on a conscious level of what those details are. Over the years I have kind of developed the practice of adding a set of details to any kit, scratchbuilt, or built-up structure, regardless of it’s “quality”, which add considerably to the impression of its realism. None of them is hard to do, yet together they add

by some generous convention attendant several years back that you can glue styrene to wood. I wish I remembered who it was so I could thank them. Simply



hold the styrene against the wood and apply the liquid cement to the joint. Hold it for a bit with some pressure, and you will find that it will bond almost as firmly as styrene to styrene. One of the great benefits of this is the speed with which you can work if you use fast drying glue such as Plastruc's Plastic Weld. This technique has made it possible to easily apply styrene details to a wooden structure. This would be true of rolling stock as well. It is a wonderful added technique for our modeling. I use styrene strips to reinforce wooden walls as well to keep them straight and true.



1.Soffits, rake boards and fascia boards: These are actually easier to model than to describe. To do so requires various thicknesses of Evergreen strip plastic. I like to have on hand various widths of .060", .080 and .100 thick stock. The widths I use most are .040, .060, .080, .100, .125, .185 and .250. I also keep heavy square styrene stock on hand to brace structures in the .180-.250 range. Since I never know ahead of time what I am going to do with them, I am in the habit of stocking up when I go into a hobby shop. I just pick things up that look like they might be useful. This habit is because the closest good hobby shop is now at least a 40 mile round trip. That is another article for another time. I do most of the gluing with Plastruc's Plastic Weld where I want a fast bond, or Testors liquid where speed is not essential.

Soffits. Pardon me if I have this terminology wrong. These are terms I have heard over the years, but I am no architect. There may be more accurate ones out there. The soffits are the boards which enclose the underside of the rafters at the eaves of the roof, and up the peak end, or gabled end. The soffits can be either level to the ground, or slant back up parallel to the underside of the slope of the rafter. They can be level only if the tops of the windows are not too high. I prefer to model the level style where possible, and make them stick out beyond the edge of the roof where they simulate the fascia board with the top half of a gutter fastened to it. This is not a 100% accurate representation, but it works visually if you do not get down and squint close-up at the model. Then to represent the bottom half of the gutter, glue a strip of .060" styrene to the underside edge of the soffit, stepped back just slightly. This small offset back represents the seam rolled into gutters to stiffen them. Obviously these model gutters are not hollow, but this is not obvious unless viewed really closely. The effect is good enough for me. I have modeled hollow ones and do not think it is worth the effort, or the

more delicate nature of the finished product. After applying the soffit, you must box in the end of the soffit with a few small pieces of styrene cut to the shape of the slope of the roof.

Peak End Rake Boards and soffits: Once the eave soffit is boxed in at the end you can apply the rake boards at the peak ends of the roof. The rake board is essentially a cosmetic covering over the end rafter. It has its own soffit which extends between the bottom of the rake board and the end of the house. You can make these as deep as what the rafters most likely would be, which would be 10 or 12 inches in many cases. I use heavy square styrene for this so as not to require complex fabrication of the rake board and its soffits. A 12" rafter is .187" in S. So I glue a .188 square strip of styrene under the roof that sticks out at the gable ends. This is illustrated by the in-process photo. This square strip butts firmly against the end wall and firmly up under the roof material, and thus represents the rake board and its soffit. In this case I applied it to the end wall first, and glued the roof on later, after the interior was detailed. This piece adds considerably to the strength of the final roof structure. If these descriptions are not clear enough, study the photos here, and spend some time looking up at real roof details.

2.Downspouts are sometimes modeled but not as often as you see them in the world. Adding them to your structures enhances the scene considerably. I model the downspouts from either .040", .060" or .080" square styrene strip, depending upon the size of the building and whether this is a commercial building or private home. The most common color for downspouts is white, which is the color of the plastic strip, so I usually just leave them unpainted. Some commercial buildings use colored downspouts of some kind, and in those cases I will paint them. The down spouts must clear architectural details of the building and thus must sit out

slightly from the side. To accomplish this I glue small pads of .020x.040 styrene to the side of the building in appropriate places to fasten the downspouts to. They are parallel to the wall until they get up to the top where they must angle back out to meet the gutter. This is easily accomplished by applying the vertical portion first with a 23 degree angle cut at the top and then piece in the angled part between the gutter and downspout.

For a flat roof building there is a collector box called a scupper located on the outside of the wall right at the level of the roof surface. These can be made of small chunks of styrene strip from which the downspout extends down. At the bottom, the downspouts can either go directly into the ground, where they would enter an underground drainage system of some kind, or bend off in one direction or another to lead the water away from the foundation.

3. Light fixtures and Electrical service details. These are everywhere on buildings. They need make no sense to the casual viewer. It seems their location is simply a matter of whether it was easier to run major wires inside the building or outside. It seems the more elaborate the structure, the less of this is visible outside. I suspect architects do not like it. I model this detail with scraps of styrene to represent the junction boxes, and wire called "floral wire" sold at craft shops. Michaels sells two colors. They have a silver, which represents galvanized conduit nicely, and a green, which has a nice industrial look to it.

The light fixtures are made with the same floral wire bent to represent the support bracket, and available commercial lamp shades. I like the green ones marketed by Plastruc, but there are many out there. Simply bend the wire into the goose neck that is common, and push it into a hole drilled into a block of styrene glued to the wall above a door or wherever you wish lighting to be. We don't want our S gauge men stumbling around in the dark.

I model the three electrical service connections from the power company with a strip of .100x.100 styrene drilled for the three straight pins to represent the hook up points. This is mounted high up on the wall somewhere convenient to a utility pole. From there a conduit runs down to a meter box, which I model with a chunk of styrene scrap. A clear plastic kit window pane sprue slice is glued to the front of it to represent the clear meter face. If you glue the clear to the white plastic before painting the box silver or grey, the white plastic left behind the clear plastic will make the meter dial white as it should be.

4.Window treatments. Windows that do not have shades represented result in a building that looks abandoned. Almost all windows have some kind of shade or blind if they are occupied. I do not get fancy here. I simply cut 3x5 card stock and glue it to the back side of the

window with Tacky cement. If you think the owner of the building is OCD, then make them all the same height. If the owner is a college kid, then make them at random heights. If you do not intend to detail the interior, or light it, then finish off the inside with black construction paper. If you are really into interior decorating, which I am not, then you can model drapes or curtains. But shades are more effective to eliminate the abandoned building look.

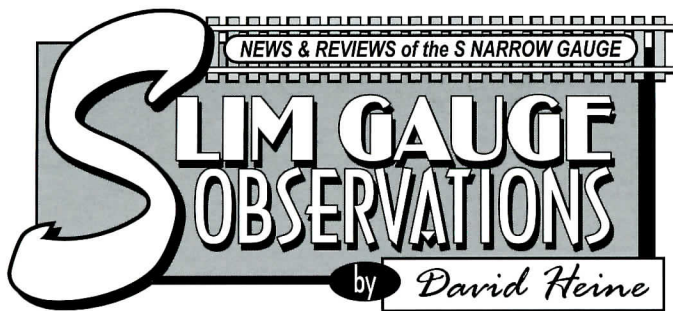
5.Signage. This detail is not overlooked by many modelers. I find though, that many of the smaller incidental signs are often missing from models of commercial buildings, and these can add to the effect of the scene. These include parking, or no-parking signs, and directions for customers and delivery people. Exit signs, pick up and delivery, and hours of operation add to the scene. These can easily be modeled today with our computer and printer. You can pick any font and color you want. I find it works nicely to print them on card stock, which can be purchased at office supply stores in 8.5x11 sheets, and then cut out with an exacto knife. Again I like tacky cement as it tends not to warp the paper as much as other water based glues.

6.Exterior Foundation Grading . This is way easier to do than to explain. Simply take a scrap of foam, and cut a long strip of foam off the edge that is wedge shaped in profile. I use a hack saw blade or an Exacto knife depending on how smooth I want the surface to be. It will be thin along one edge and thick along the other. Then glue this to the layout surface right up next to the building foundation with the thick part against the building and the thin part away from the building. In a sense you are creating a strip of foam molding to fill the gap between the building and the table top. Glue the foam to the table, but not the building, so you can remove the building later. Then color and texture the foam strip like the ground around it. This creates a gentle slope away from the building, which is nearly always done with real buildings to make the water drain away from the foundation. This is so simple. It takes about 5 minutes to cut the foam, and maybe another 10 to color and texture it. Yet, it makes the building appear rooted into the ground just as real structures are.

I do not do all of these to all of my structures, but I do some of them for sure if they are intended to be long term residences of the layout , and not just temporary space holders. The more of these details I add, the better the scene looks. I encourage you to try one or two of them on existing structures and see for yourself the difference they make. Happy modeling, and keep those trains rolling.

- Sam





SLIM GAUGE OBSERVATIONS

by *David Heine*

An Update on My Lehigh & Western and Associated Railroads

It's time for an update on my own layout. Since the 2013 Scranton convention is only a little over an hour's drive from where I live, I am planning to be open for visitors before and after the convention. My layout is still in the track laying and wiring stages, but my S mainline is operational and the Sn3 mainline should be operational this spring. So, if you don't mind an under construction layout, you're welcome to visit.

You could say that I'm someone who never saw a narrow gauge they didn't like, so when I'm finished, I'll have four gauges in operation, but all in S scale. I have trains in S, Sn3, Sn2, and Sn20. Right now, I can at least run something in all the gauges back and forth on the layout except for the Sn20. That only works on my quad-gauge test track. The layout's time frame is supposed to be in the 1920's, because any later and the large stands of hemlock trees in Pennsylvania were already cut. The logging, lumber, and related industries will be the central theme. Related industries include tanneries using hemlock bark as their tannin source, and the wood chemical industry. Mining will still be significant revenue source on the layout.

The Spiral Hill standard gauge runs from staging (Bensburg) to Jennville, where it interchanges with the Sn2 Jamestown and Jennville; then on to Lehigh, where it interchanges with the Sn3 Lehigh & Western and then back to staging (Andrews). The standard gauge staging is actually a double ended yard, but operationally, they're supposed to be opposite ends of a branch line.

Yes, the Spiral Hill is a Frank Titman's railroad. I did not have a name for my standard gauge railroad and on my last layout, the standard gauge was just scenery, so it didn't matter. Frank was getting rid of some of his motive power and he thought an Omnicon 4-6-0 he had lettered as Spiral Hill #18 would fit my layout and asked me if I wanted to buy it. I did, and because Frank painted, lettered and weathered it, I do not want to modify its appearance. I asked him if I could use the Spiral Hill name on some other equipment and he did not mind, so when I bought an unlettered SHS 2-8-0, it became Spiral Hill #19. Frank did not letter a lot of equipment for his Spiral Hill, but what he did was done with alphabet sets; but I cheated, and had some Spiral Hill

decals made. I view my Spiral Hill as a branch of his layout. I use smaller rail, so that makes sense.

The common carrier Sn3 Lehigh & Western interchanges with the S Spiral Hill at Lehigh where there is a currently under construction dual-gauge interchange yard. Engine facilities are being developed including a turntable with four rails to accommodate both S and Sn3 locomotives. The L&W runs from Lehigh to Moyersville and then on to Jamestown, where it interchanges with the Sn2 J&J. There will be some dual gauge Sn3/Sn2 track at Jamestown. From there it runs to the division point of Carlaton. Carlaton has a large yard plus shops and engine facilities, and is supposed to be the headquarters town of the L&W. From Carlaton, the railroad runs to staging (Andrewsville), but there is also a continuous run connection back to Lehigh. The S and Sn3 staging are both in the same space and they overlap for four tracks, but the Sn3 staging is stub-ended since only one ladder is dual gauge. The ladder at the other end is only standard gauge.

Moyersville is the headquarters town for the Moyer Lumber Co, which is supposed to be a sister company to the L&W. The Sn3 Moyer Lumber Co.'s logging railroad has trackage rights on the L&W plus will have its own logging branches and sidings. Since the MLCo recently purchased a standard gauge Shay, it will also have trackage rights on the Spiral Hill, and will have to transload logs at Lehigh. Moyersville is located on a peninsula and will feature two sawmills, one for hardwood (built) and one for hemlock and other softwoods (not yet built). It is also planned to have other woods industries including a tannery which will use hemlock bark for tannin.

The Sn2 Jamestown and Jennville runs between its two namesake towns via Carlaton and Lehigh, but its freight business will be at Jamestown and Jennville.

The Sn20 is a tram railroad that will run between a mine and a mill located at the outskirts of Carlaton. In my case, Sn20 is S scale with N gauge track/wheel standards. I'm planning to automate this tram road after it is built.

My layout is located in a roughly 27' X 32' basement, which is mostly filled with layout bench work. There is a walled-off model workshop in one corner of the basement, but it also contains staging on the main level, and a second level which will contain a logging camp on a logging branch. My bench work is open grid, mostly made from lumber that was used on previous layouts plus various other sources. Most of the layout is one level, with very little in the way of grades. This is unlike my last major layout which had a 3-1/2% grade in the middle of it. The exception will be logging branches. Since most of the layout is one level, I set that at my chest height and let the relatively small second deck be too high; at least too high for someone of

my stature. The main track level is around 48" which is a height I like for viewing. The highest track will be on the staging yard for the logging branch, which will be at about 69", which is over my head.

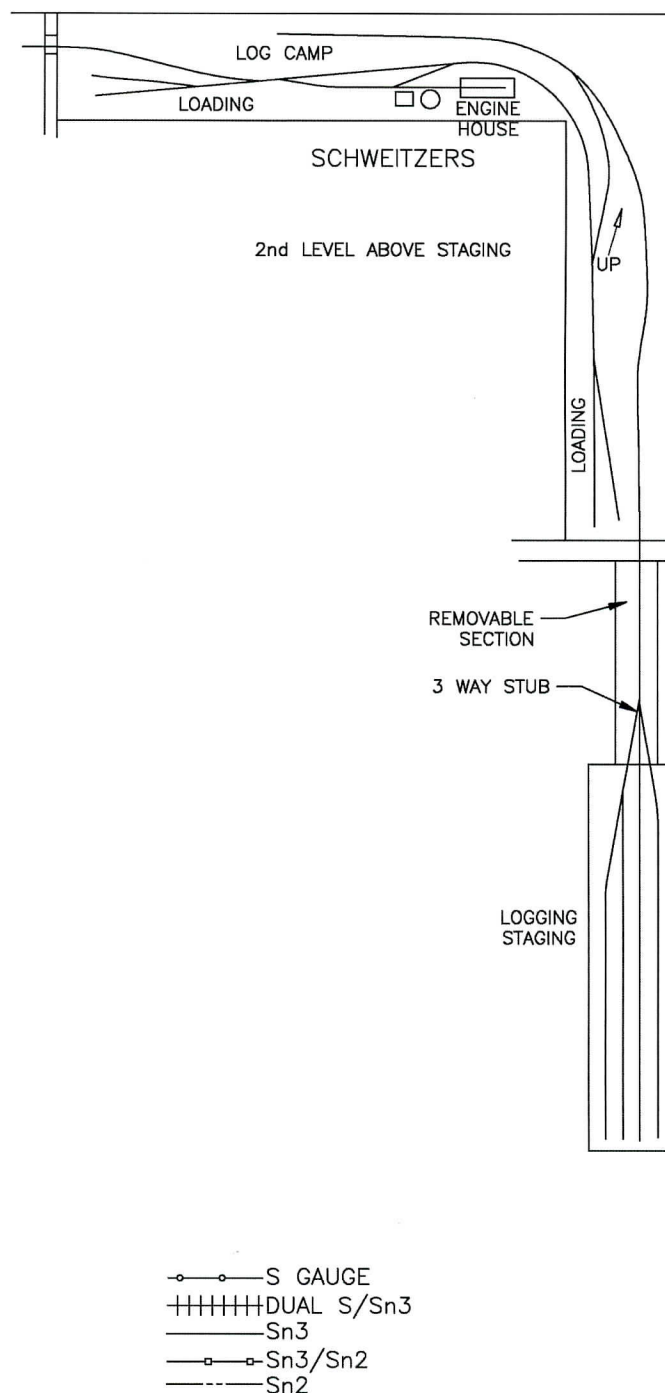
Dave's layout will be open before and after the NASG convention in Scranton this summer.

Because of the layout's arrangement, I have three vertical lift sections in place. While guests can see most of the layout without crossing any of the lift sections, they must be crossed to get in my model workshop area or get back to Jennville. When they are in the up position, I can walk under them with no problems and have several inches of clearance. Taller than average people will have to nod their head when transversing them. Hinged lift-ups had worked well on my previous layout and one was required to enter it; but I did not have the vertical room in this case without hitting the lights or making the lift-up section narrower. So I went the vertical lift route. The outside basement entrance is another obstacle I have to address since three tracks need to cross in front of the door.

I like well lit layouts, so I have a row of fluorescent tube fixtures following the perimeter of the layout bench work, with 5000K, 92CRI lamps. Where there are two decks, I installed undercabinet fluorescent fixtures with similar lamps. I also installed some blue incandescent lamps for night operations. It is either day or night, no transition exists. I have several lighting circuits for all the lights and normally don't have all of them on while I'm working. However, I do have a master switch that can turn on and off all the lights. It operates a contactor to control the lighting circuits.

When I designed the track plan, I did not plan on using only standard turnouts, but instead forced myself to build what is needed to get the track to where it needs to go. This approach results in more curved turnouts and crossings, but lets me get more railroad in the available space. The track is all hand laid on wood ties and all turnouts, crossings, and special track work is being built in place. I did have some flextrack and commercial turnouts in place for the standard gauge staging yard, but that was ripped out last year and I built the new combined S/Sn3 staging yard since then. The largest rail is Code 83 on the standard gauge "main-line". Code 70 rails are being used on the narrow gauge mainline, standard gauge sidings and the staging area. Code 55 is used on narrow gauge sidings and logging railroad track.

Layout control is DCC with all turnouts being controlled using accessory decoders. Many of my locomotives have sound and I am planning for the layout to also have suitable background and industrial sounds. Layout control is still evolving as the track grows. Although it is still in the "plywood pacific" stage, you are welcome to stop in before or after the Scranton convention. While scenery hasn't started, I do have a number of structures completed.



LEHIGH & WESTERN RR

BRANCH LINES

News and Notes from S Gauge Clubs • By Dave Pool

The Bristol S Gaugers (BSG) held their annual Christmas get-together at the home of club members John and Pat Fucile, in Holbrook, MA. After a great Christmas lunch with lots of good eats, a grab bag gift swap was held, which has become an annual club event. Club member John Korajczyk was scheduled to host the January, 2013 club meeting at his home in the middle of the month. The club set up their code 0.148 modular layout at the huge train show held at the Big E fairgrounds, West Springfield, MA on Jan. 26/27. This show is held in several large buildings and attracts various dealers and manufacturer's representatives. Club members built rolling carts on which the various module sections can be moved and stored in the recently-acquired trailer.

The Connecticut S Gaugers (CSG) held their Dec., 2012 meeting at the home of Bob Davis, in Old Lyme, CT. Bob has a large sceniced S layout that has custom built trestles in the mountain section of the layout. He is particularly proud of a coal loader that he can operate to fill the tenders of steam locos that he operates on the layout. The club purchased a road trailer in which the layout modules can be stored and transported to show set up events. The trailer was first used to bring the modules to the Ram Band Train Show held at the Cheshire, CT. high school on Nov. 18, 2012. The club members welcomed new member Bill Roots at the club meeting held at the home of Bob Davis.

The Pioneer Valley S Gaugers (PVSG) The annual Christmas display at Look Park was expanded this year with a third operating S scale layout to have four S scale trains running at once on the layouts along with an On3 trolley. Recent issues of the club newsletter have included modeling tips on weathering, scenery details, and scale vehicles as well as other articles of interest to the members. The December meeting was held at the display at Look Park. Club members met at the home of Dave Sullivan, in Bloom-

field, CT. on Jan. 12, 2013. Harry Rud-dock was scheduled to host the club members for a meeting in South Deerfield, MA. in February, 2013. Steve Allen's wife Mary slipped on black ice on Dec. 17, and has had surgery to repair the damage to her knee. Club members George Reneris and Gary Lacroix have helped to replace Steve at the Look Park display while Steve was helping his wife with her recovery.

The Western N.Y. S scale Association (WNYSSA). The club members recently discussed a project wherein the members attending a club meeting could build an S scale building, vehicle, etc., that could be used on a home layout or the club display layout, as desired. A recent issue of the Classic Toy Trains magazine had an article on a train loading platform that could be used as a club project. This kind of a project is a good one for a club as the more skilled members can guide and help the less model construction experienced members. The club displayed a layout at the TTOS Train Show, held on January 27, 2013, at the Leonard Post, Cheektowaga, NY.

The South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSG) club displayed their layout at the Ocean City Music Pier, on December 1 and 2.

The Pittsburgh S Gaugers (PSG) held a Coffee and Trains get-together at the Kings Restaurant, in Harmerville, PA. on Dec. 17, 2012 and on Jan. 28, 2013 at the same place. The club has two operating layouts, including a high-rail layout and a modular layout both of which can be used to display and operate trains at shows and events. Club members were planning to display and operate their layout at the Greenberg Train Show to be held at the Monroeville Convention Center on Jan. 19/20. The club set up and displayed a layout at the Locomotion weekend on Dec. 1 & 2, sponsored by the Carnegie Science Center and the TCA. On July 27, 2013 the PSG club will be ten years old, having first met at the home of Bud

Goldby's, and originally was called the West Penn S Scalers. Club members are considering plans to commemorate their tenth year.

The Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC) members planned to hold their March, 2013 club meeting at the home of Walt Westerfield. Club members set up and operated their modular layout at the TTOS Train Meet on March 10, 2013. For eight years (including this one) in a row, the club has operated a layout at the B & O RR Museum. In December, 2012 the club set up their layout at the Museum as usual. David Avedesian has been coordinating the design, construction, and preliminary operation of an S gauge (AF) layout in the home of Ron Kolb, who coordinates the club activities, and edits the club newsletters. Ron is very appreciative of the effort made by the various club members to complete the layout in his basement. The club has developed a new web site as built by club member David Blair. The address is: <http://baltimoreamericanflyerclub.org>. BAAFC members were planning to set up and operate their layout at the Timonium Great Scale Model Train Show, to be held on April 13/14, in Timonium, MD.

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers (CVSG) met at the home of Jim and Mary Ann Sima for their Christmas banquet on Dec. 11, 2012. Side dishes, drinks, and desserts were brought by club members attending the event. The hosts provided a turkey, large ham, and sweet potatoes for the banquet. The address of Tom Boldt who is at the Sandusky Veterans' home, in Sandusky, OH. was passed among the club members so that they could communicate with him. The club is organizing and hosting the **Spring S Spree**, in Akron, OH. on May 2-4, 2013.

The Chicagoland Assoc. of S Gaugers, Inc. (CASG) meetings for January, February, and March, 2013, were planned to be held at the American Legion Room of Hinsdale Village Hall, Hinsdale, IL. Will Holt coordinates the home meetings of the club members. The club held several sessions last Spring for club members to learn about and program their trains to operate on DCC or Legacy/TMCC electrical supplies. Members were encouraged to bring their Legacy/TMCC locos to be loaded with the Club's Legacy control sys-

tem with unique numbers to be recorded on a listing for use at train show operations. The second session had to be cancelled for June, 2012 and will be re-scheduled for a date early in 2013 when the staging track modules for the club modular layout will be completed. The club is hosting the 2014 Fall S Fest and planning is underway for that event. The Westin Lombard Hotel, adjacent to the York Town Shopping Center is the location and an S gauge event car is planned. The web site of the club is: www.casg-trains.org

The Miami Valley S Gaugers (MVSG) set up and operated their layout at the NMRA National Trails Train Show, on Nov. 17/18 at the National Trail School, New Paris, OH. A recent newsletter issue included notices of various train and model RR related activities in the area where the club members reside.

The Badgerland S Gaugers (BSG) operated two layouts (one AF and one semi-scale) at the Mad City NMRA show in Madison, WI, in February. Also in February the AF layout was displayed at the Milwaukee Domes - this is a year-round attraction that has live plants. They have a G-scale layout in the lobby and once a year invite other layouts. When the trains are there, it is their busiest time of the year. The March meeting was held at Jeff Madden's - fittingly on St. Patrick's Day and the day after St. Gilbert's Day (3-16).

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (CSG) set up and operated their layout at the Great Train Expo., January 19/20, 2013. The event was held at the Lausche building, of the Ohio Expo Center. Club member John Myers coordinated the club members attendance and operation of the layout. Roger and Pat Johnson hosted the club members for their January 16, 2013 meeting, in Lewis Center. Mike McPherson was scheduled to host the club for their February meeting in Upper Sandusky, OH. and Bob Berridge was scheduled for the club meeting in Hilliard, OH. on March 17, 2013. The club was planning to display their layout at the Buckeye Train Show, on April 19/20, 2013 at the Lausche Building, and the Spring S Spree as organized by the CVSG in Akron, OH. on May 2-4, 2013.

The AF S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area (AFSGSLA) again set up and displayed an S layout at the downtown Macy's store this past December. The layout was installed in the store window at the Seventh and Locust Street entrance to the store. Chris Rather arranged for the layout to be remotely monitored with a club member assigned to respond to any daily problems. The club held their annual holiday party hosted by Norm and Ione Pilarski on January 4, 2013. The Pilarskis will be part of a layout tour as organized by the TCA this Summer in combination with the TCA Annual Convention. The club members removed the layout from the Macy's window on January 5, 2013. Moe Berk coordinates the club activities and Gary Mueller edits the club newsletter.

The Kansas City S Gaugers (KCSG). Club members Roy Inman, Bob Crown and Bob Agne were in charge of the separate Christmas display at the Kansas City Union Station this year, and the layout will be expanded using new track that the Station management has purchased. There were two S gauge layouts at the Union Station site this holiday season. Club members were saddened by the passing away of Tom Thomason, from Sedalia, and Springfield, MO. in early Dec., 2012. Tom was a friend to the club members and was a longtime member of the NASG and TCA. The club welcomed new members Mike Korando from Kansas City, and John Fulkerson, a retired CPA.

The Inland Empire S Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IES-GAPN) club met on Dec. 8, 2012 at the Messiah Lutheran Church, Spokane, WA. where they could meet and work on their layout. The club is fortunate to have a permanent room (24' x 36') to set up and store their display layout, located at the Church. The club held a banquet at the Golden Corral restaurant on Jan. 12, 2013. Club members planned to set up their layout at the March 10, 2013 swap meet held at the Spokane Community College, and the swap meet to be held on March 24, 2013 in Lewiston, ID. Meetings were planned for Feb. 9, March 9, and April 13, 2013 at Messiah Lutheran Church, Spokane, WA. Club member Bruce Renshaw had back surgery in Lewiston, ID. and was transferred to a rehab center after the surgery.

The San Diego S Gaugers (SDSG) clubhouse is open to the public Sundays and Wednesdays from noon to 3:30 P.M. when their layout can be viewed, and they had an open house on Saturday, Dec. 15, 2012.

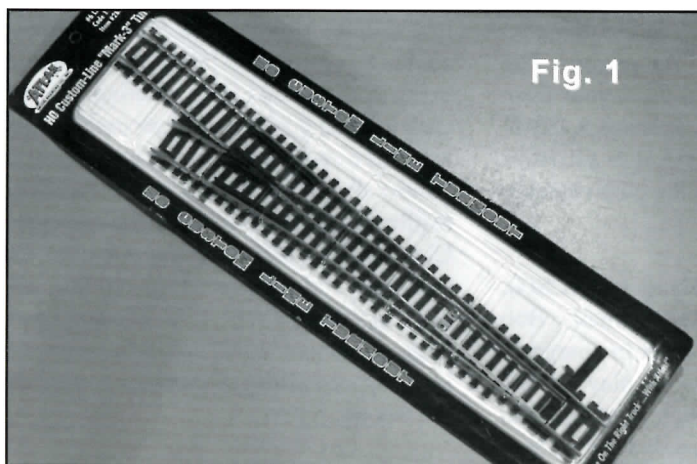
The Golden Gate AF Club (GGAFC) held their holiday dinner on Dec. 15, 2012 as coordinated by Rich Ridgeway at Izzy's Restaurant, San Carlos, CA. Club members decided to purchase club shirts for the individual members which are yellow with blue letters. The club is to sponsor the 2014 Flyer Fest West, and plans are being formulated. The meetings of the club include a raffle wherein participants are given tickets to enter by bringing a "Show & Tell" program to the meeting. Raffle tickets are also sold at the meetings. Club member Bill Reichmann hosted the members for their meeting on Jan. 18, 2013 in Walnut Creek, CA. The host has a large ell-shaped layout and members were encouraged to bring S trains to operate on the layout.

The Bay Area S Scalpers (BASS) were at the O Scale West & S West event in Santa Clara, CA. on Jan. 24-26, 2013. The idea of having a "secret model" meeting to complete a model and display it at a designated club meeting was discussed and might be implemented in the future. The club set up and operated the club layout at the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Train Show on Feb. 23/24, 2013 at the Calif. State Exposition & State Fairgrounds in Sacramento, CA. The club planned to set up and display their layout at the PCR/NMRA "Iron Horse Express" Convention, in Dublin, CA, on April 3-7, 2013. Club member Rusty hosted the members for their meeting on March 16, 2013.

Your column editor wishes to thank those club members and clubs that submit information on the activities and events that you organize and attend. Please submit information and newsletters for the column to David Pool, 11 Bittersweet Trail, Wilton, CT., 06897-3902 or e-mail at: ndpool@juno.com. If your club was not mentioned in the above column, you should send a description of your club recent and future activities to the column editor.

by Robert Nicholson, Photos by the author

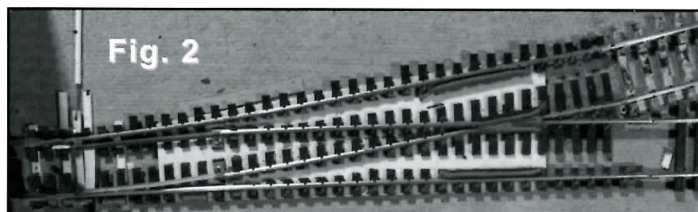
One area where the legendary resourcefulness of model railroaders working in S scale has manifested itself over the years is in conscripting “off the shelf” products and materials to uses for which they were never intended. The HO Atlas Customline #6 is one of those products (Fig. 1).



Today, even though S scale commercial track products are plentiful and among some of the finest available in any modeling scale, these Atlas conversions that got the old timers through the “lean times” in the days of yore can still have a practical application. Mounted on styrene switchblocks, they will be rugged and reuseable on either permanent or temporary S scale model railroads. Also, used Atlas HO switches can [almost] be had for the asking at model railroad shows and swap meets.

The Atlas switch is designed for non-selective route control, which means both routes receive power at all times. The frog is insulated and the points, closure rails and the routes extending from the switch never change electrical polarity, either, no matter which way the switch is lined. That eliminates any chance of the back of a wheel flange briefly contacting an open point and causing an intermittent short (a definite no-no for fragile DCC electronics), making these switches “DCC friendly” (whatever that means) right out of the gate. It also permits more realistic spacing between the stock rails and adjacent open points (Figs. 7, 9).

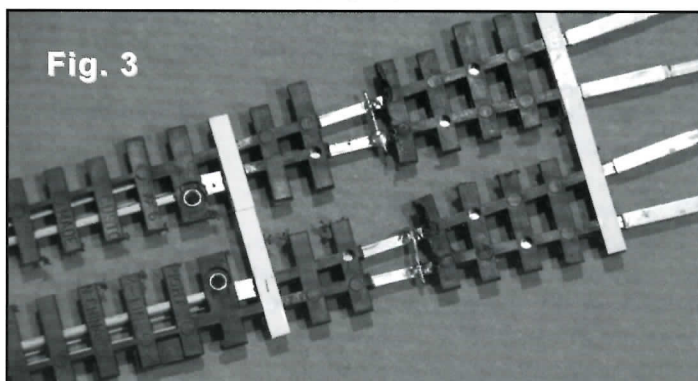
The Atlas HO point-to-frog dimension of a “short” conversion (Fig. 2) measures 39 S scale feet. While short for a #6 switch in S scale, it compares to the 38-ft P/F dimension of an Old Pullman #4 S scale turnout kit, but with the advantage of one-piece reuseable construction plus an increased turnout radius on the diverging route due to the lower angle of the #6 frog, in about the same



Early conversion. Gaps just filled with ballast.

amount of space.

Cutting the Atlas tie strip at the heel of the points to sever them from the stock rails (Fig. 2) will result in an even smoother, wider radius on the diverging route. It will also sever the OEM non-selective electrical connection, which is easy to restore by soldering jumper wires between the adjacent closure and stock rails on each side of the switch (Fig 3.).



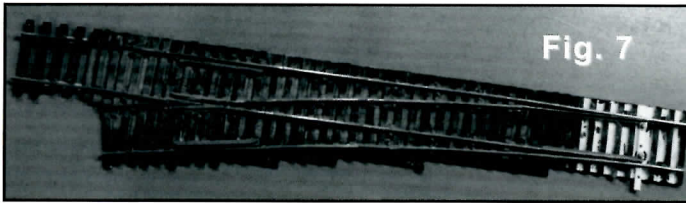
Note jumper wires. Wires not needed on extended version - see text.

I did my first conversion many years ago by bonding the switch on a sheet of Plastruct ABS sheet with cement for plastics. It was right on the money with NMRA wheel and track standards for S scale frog and guardrail flangeway width and check gage dimensions in effect at the time – making me wonder how well it worked in HO for which it was originally intended.

That conversion worked well with then-standard Code 125 wheelsets, but new standard Code 110 wheels will drop in the gap between the frog point and the closure rails with a noticeable “click”. To minimize that, I bond the .040” surface of Evergreen .015 x .040” styrene to the length of the inside edge of each frog wing rail with ACC glue (Fig. 5), blending and



Fig. 5 - .015 x .040” styrene strip will narrow Atlas switch frog flangeways to minimize wheel drop, esp. with code 110 wheels.

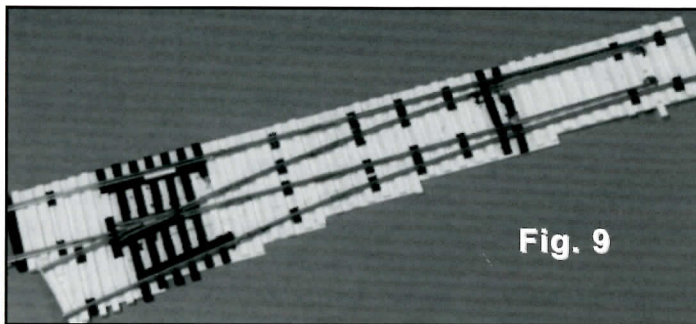


Finished #6 "extended conversion" - durable, portable and reusable.

smoothing the ends and edges of the strip into the frog shape with a file.

For an improved, closer to correct S scale #6 point-to-frog dimension, I cut the switch in half lengthwise about five tie lengths ahead of the frog and insert 9-ft. (S scale) lengths of rail in the stock and closure rails for a 48-ft P/F dimension (Figs. 7, 9). The insert rails on the diverging route may require slight bending to blend into the curve. I use rail joiners and solder to align the rails hold them in place permanently.

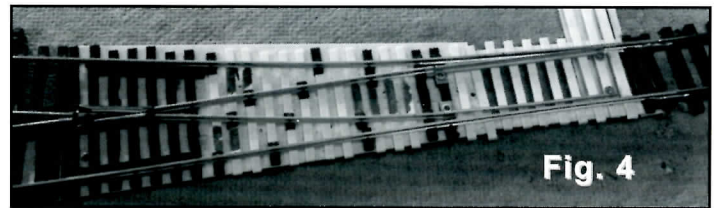
Extending the switch eliminates any need to separate the points from the stock rails to create a smooth curve in the rails on the diverging route and thus retains the original non-selective properties of the switch. When I put these switches on styrene switch blocks, I leave two or three remnants of the Atlas ties and anchors in the



Expanded for accurate S scale point-to-frog dimension and mounted on styrene switchblocks. Note the (dark) original Atlas tie strips left under the point heels and the frog/guardrails and filled in with scrap Atlas ties cut to fit. Note also the Atlas rail anchors between styrene ties.

point heel hinge area to avoid disturbing the OEM electrical connection and fill in the gaps between the remnants with either scrap lengths of Atlas ties or .060 x .125" styrene strip. Remnants of the Atlas tie strip also support the frog and guardrails (Fig. 9, upper)

After building the styrene switch block, I sand lengthwise across the top of the styrene switch ties with medium grade sandpaper and to impart a wood grain effect to them, then paint the finished switchblock with flat black, using masking tape between the ties where I will bond rail anchors. When that dries, I use a brush to paint the tops of the ties with Folk Art artists' pigment (from WalMart) #462 Burnt Umber (Figs. 6, 9, bottom). If that's not dark enough, use #2560 Dark Brown or



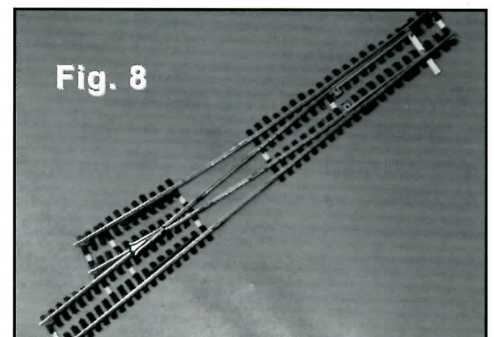
Short conversion with .060 x .125" styrene ties.

leave them black.

Where required, I use inexpensive SPDT micro-switch to provide selective control to the routes extending beyond a converted Atlas switch. Actuated by the point throwbar, it will automatically power insulated rails in the selected route beyond the switch. Since the frog itself is metal in later versions of the Customline switches, powering it at the same time, with automatic polarity switching, no less, is also possible. I have done it both ways.

As most S scalers should be well aware, any of these conversions will require some "fiddling and fudging" to make them work properly, but certainly not any more, and maybe less, than assembling laying a switch kit with the traditional wood ties and spikes or using ready to lay switches.

Thanks to the Atlas rail anchors between the ties, no spikes protrude through the bottom of the switches, thus they "float" on the roadbed and are otherwise immune to temperature and humidity related expansion and contraction. I have many of these very workable,



No frills extended. Shows where to make perpendicular cut and add the expansion and extension rails. Mounting on .040 x .125" styrene strip makes this the easiest conversion of all. Good for hidden trackage

smooth and trouble-free Atlas #6 S scale conversions, especially the space-saving basic (Fig. 2) "short" version (Even these would be on detailed styrene switch blocks if the easy way to fabricate them had occurred to me earlier) on SHAB-BONA RR, and know that, if the time should ever come, I can easily salvage them and use them on another layout.



EXTRA BOARD

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

NASG is looking for a volunteer to take over the Membership Director role. Claude Demers has served ably in the role but would like to move on to other things. He has created a database and complete instructions on managing the membership roster. Anyone interested can contact Claude directly at: membership@nasg.org or send your inquiries to NASG President Sam McCoy at: president@nasg.org

1-64 MODELING GUIDE IN LIMBO

According to the latest and "last" issue of 1-64 Modeling Guide (Fall 2012 - a bit late) the magazine will cease publication, but may be revived under a new title if there is enough interest. Bob Nalbhone says he will know by April 30 if a new e-zine will surface. If not, refunds of ongoing subscriptions will be made on June 30, 2013. For details on this announcement check the website for the magazine: www.1-64ModelingGuide.com. Bob says he will be attending the Scranton convention so maybe you can share ideas with him then.

COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE

I don't know how many of us are or have been subscribers to the *Modeling Guide*, but nobody as mentioned that their last issue was sent a couple of days ago. Bob cited two main reasons--economics and the poor reputation.

Back in the day there was a pretty good magazine started by Ed L. with the help of a few of us. Although it probably didn't make a profit (most magazines don't for several years) it was also produced in the days before the digital revolution had obtained critical mass to lower production costs.

Billy Wade then tried a somewhat similar but smaller version, but again it was a lot of work and likely not profitable enough either. After the sale to Richard Bendever things took (in my opinion) a deep dive of unfilled efforts and bad medicine seemed to follow. I had a subscription to all of those magazines for awhile but never saw them progress to anything near what was started in the late '80s! This brings us to the present! Mr. Nalbhone seems to be will-

ing to start another publication with the same concept in mind, but could it succeed?

It might be time for us to realize that furthering S Scale through a publication isn't possible without an actual printed copy available in a hobby shop. Many of us seem to be well informed by just linking a website to a discussion. It also seems difficult for our smaller manufacturers to actually advertise beyond this list or an occasional announcement. In most cases it's the advertisers who supply the economic means for a magazine to exist. So at this point it looks like maybe S and our communications have changed to a point where speciality magazines, newsletters and similar promotional means aren't necessary for our personal needs (despite the fact the internet isn't reaching a large percentage of us).

What remains is the promotional effort that needs to happen to make S progress. Since these magazines with the exception of the *S Gaugian* never made it into too many hobby shops, we really don't know what impact they could have had on furthering S in general, their subscriber base or in moving advertiser's products. Just some thoughts.

- Bob Werre

MORE ON THIS FROM MICHAEL:

I might add a few personal observations on digital pubs:

1) I believe that top shelf content is really THE key to retaining readers in digital media.

2) I believe use of digital media is generational -- no offense intended, but the greater the age, the less likely digital media is used. But a lot depends on having the right device. With the right device (usually a tablet), digital media is more acceptable as the age rises. (next bullet)

3) I believe acceptance and use of digital media is based on having an easy to access, comfortable to use (for each user) digital device. For example, digital media was of little value to me personally (except for archiving) as long as I had to read on a Windows PC. I consider (a very personal opinion IMHO) a Windows PC to be a very inflexible reader for Digital media. Highly functional, but not convenient. It's not easy to carry everywhere...and as a result I rarely read digital media. But when I got my iPad 3 tablet, digital media came

alive for me. I always have my iPad 3 with me, and thus I always have all my reading materials with me, magazines, books, etc. 4) A great concern of mine for digital media is archiving. If the content is important to me, do I trust the publisher to be available in 5 or 25 years when I want to look up an article in a back issue? If not, then I prefer the publisher to distribute pubs in PDF form, or some other form I can download to my PC. Then it can go into my personal digital archive. Also recognize most digital devices like tablets have limited storage. So likely a user would only have the last 1-4 issues on hand. All the rest need to be either available for instant access via the publisher's digital archive or mine.

5) I know that in the paper era I over-subscribed. Meaning a lot of pubs I never read, or skimmed only occasionally. With digital media at least for me, I have substantially reduced digital subscriptions to a small set of publications that have I consider as having substantial amounts of great content (my definition of great may not be the same as yours). Not just acceptable content -- but pubs where most of the content I consider above average. These days I've reduced the list of pubs I read consistently.

6) Reading digital media for me is now convenient, but I skim less, looking for more higher quality articles to spend my reading time. And for it to be considered, digital media MUST be readable offline (without an internet connection except to load). And preferably the latest issue pushed to my device -- not that I have to remember to download. But even in these I don't read always read the whole pub. But by having digital media, I can always read it when it is of interest. I will say that most of my reading has moved to the digital device -- why? it's very simple. It always with me. Paper media I have to go and find, remember to take with me, etc. Here's a sample

Read in digital media:

Paid subscriptions:

Boston Globe (daily), Model Trains - 2 mags (*RMC*, *1:64MG*), 1 current weekly news magazine, 1 photography mag., 1 home theater mag, *Consumer Reports*.

Free subscriptions

Model Railroad Hobbyist

PRR Keystone Modeler

A few top shelf club newsletters

(e.g., *Pioneer Valley S Gaugers News*)

1 Current events weekly mag

S Scale SIG journal

Read in Paper Media

Model Railroad News (I will soon switch to reading in digital media form)

Read in Paper Media (much less frequently, would prefer digital media):

NASG Dispatch, S Gaugian

One person's opinion.

- Michael Greene

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

- May 2013 *CTT*: A Roger Carp article on Rod Price's American Flyer layout.

- May 2013 *MR*: Brooks Stover describes how to scratchbuild a small factory in S.

END OF AN ERA: The West Bay Model Railroad Club in Menlo Park, CA dismantled their layout on 3/23. It was a three scale layout - O, S and HO. I took home

the Henry Sprague operating steam shovel and the two hopper cars he built. These date from around 1952. The new layout will be HO only. The HO members outnumber the O and S member so they had a 'fair and democratic vote', to end the the S and O. Rest peacefully my friends.

- Rusty, as in James Rustermier

S RailMail cont. from page 5

Wages have not kept up with prices, but just as bad is that in recent years inflation has raised it's ugly head. As more and more unbacked currency is produced, the dollar is of less value to manufacturers, particularly those of other nations. Since so much is now produced in the Orient, and the dollar is failing against their currencies, this has a profound effect on the prices of hobby items.

Because of this "one-two punch" financially, young folks raising families have less time and money to spend with their children. This leads them away from hobbies where construction and complexity are required even to demonstrate the hobby to their children. Add in research to make the hobby really accurate, and it becomes an overwhelming problem. A train set is purchased for the child. The child quickly tires of it, and the parents have no time to instill more interest, so the set goes into a closet and is forgotten.

Remember also that today's parents are in their twenties and thirties, so they would have been born well after trains were commonplace or popular as a hobby. Their toys were HO slot cars, Atari games, or Legos, not trains and Erector sets. Unless WE hooked THEM into our hobby, they have been only marginally exposed to it. Chances are they won't even think about trains when their child is clamoring for the latest electronic wonders. And what parent won't give in to what the child wants (if they can afford it) just to stop the continuous whining?

Of course, just as electronics have changed the world as a whole, they have changed hobbies. Today, there is incredible demand for DCC and all sorts of sound boards in even the most basic locomotive (Of course this greatly increases the price, which feeds back into the high cost of the hobby). Electronics is like any technology, it has a good and bad side.

In the past six years, I have been using a TRAINZ simulator on my computer. At first I used it occasionally as a layout planning tool. But more and more I find myself building the layout and running trains in the computer. The need to build a real model railroad layout and real trains slowly becomes less of a desire. I can do far more in the computer and for a fraction of the price of real stuff. I fully understand now why today's kids are into electronics, they can do it all in a virtual world with little cost, knowledge, or effort.

If all this makes you think that I firmly believe that our hobby is doomed, you're correct. The long term forecast is bleak. Time marches forward relentlessly! But as my father told a youngster in his old age; "Son, I ain't dead yet!" And this hobby "ain't dead yet" either! We're still here, we still love it, and as long as we're interested, and we live, THE HOBBY LIVES! Do smaller numbers of Model Railroaders really have an affect on you building your layout? Does it ruin the relaxation of reading railroad books and magazines? Is the hobby's eventual fate stopping you from building all those kits you've been buying? Do those shelves of collectible trains mean less to you all of a sudden?

Don't mope around and hang your head because you can't do anything about the future of the hobby... DO SOMETHING! Build a model, get back to work on that unfinished layout, run some trains! Don't give up until the game is actually over! Turn back your own clock and play with trains! Live for today, enjoy the hobby today, life is far too short to be wasted. I'll be damn lucky to live another twenty years, but by God, I'm going to play with my trains until the coroner pries the transformer handle from my cold, dead, hands! :- Terry "Stumpy" Stone



May 3-5, 2013: Silver Anniversary - Spring S Spree, Quaker Square Inn, Akron, OH. Railroad theme inside, next to CSX tracks. Shopping nearby. Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Ry nearby too. www.quakersquare.com. Contact: Mike Graham 216-398-9313 mograham@hotmail.com.

May 3-5, 2013: S Fest West 2013, Em-

bassy Suites, Arcadia, CA. Layout tour, swap meet, etc. Fred Ruby: 310-390-3369, sfestwest2013@yahoo.com. Sponsored by the Southern California S Gaugers.

June 22-30, 2013: TCA National Convention, St. Louis, MO www.tca59.org.

July 14-20, 2013: NMRA Peachtree Express Convention, To be held in Atlanta, GA. www.nmra2013.org

Aug. 7-10, 2013: NASG Annual Convention, Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel,

Scranton, PA. Hotel # 570-342-8300. This is the location of Steamtown. Info: www.convention2013@nasg.org

Nov. 1-3, 2013: 38th Annual Fall S Fest, Janesville, WI. Contact: Tom Behles at behlest@yahoo.com or check website: www.state-linesgaugers.org.

Bids open for NASG Annual Conventions 2014 and beyond. Contact Walt Jopke, 6611 Countryside Dr., Eden Prairie, MN 55346-2211. jopke@vic.com - 612-934-9183.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE NASG CONSTITUTION

The NASG Board of Trustees has approved these changes to the NASG Constitution. They now need the support of the membership to become effective.

The changes to Article III, Section 8 are being proposed to bring the NASG in line with modern communications technology which was not available 40 years ago when the Constitution was first established. The terminology was chosen so as to be useful in the event that something other than email becomes the preferred means of non verbal communication.

The change to Article V, Section 8 is being proposed to streamline the election process under one particular set of conditions: that all offices that are up for election have only one or no nominated candidates, and that there are no other issues to be voted upon, rendering any vote superfluous and unnecessary. Additionally, past experience has shown that write-in candidates are often not NASG members, and if they are, they have declined to serve. Therefore, under these conditions only, no ballot would be issued saving the NASG considerable time, money and volunteer effort. There is also the hope that this change will stimulate members of the NASG to run for office, rather than lose the ability to elect the candidate of their choice.

Changes to the wording are underlined.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Winans
NASG western VP

Article III, Section 8: A majority of the votes taken on specific questions by the Board of Trustees will be done so via mail or by recordable electronic balloting; all members of the Board of Trustees thereby represented in the decision. In the event of a scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees, a majority of all the duly qualified Trustees shall constitute a quorum. Any Trustee not able to attend such a meeting may appoint, by written proxy, another NASG member to act on his behalf, provided the member is not a member of the Board of Trustees. Such a proxy shall be valid only if written or recordable electronic notification is delivered to the President at, or prior to, the applicable meeting. (Continued unchanged ...)

Article V, Section 9 In the election of offices, the candidate receiving the largest number of votes cast for any given office shall be declared the winner. In the case of a tie, the majority of the incumbent Board of Trustees shall have the right to cast the deciding vote. In the event that there are no contending candidates for all offices up for election and there are no other matters to be decided, it will be assumed that any nominated candidates are elected by acclamation and no ballot will be issued for that election; and, for that election only, Article V, section 3 shall be suspended.

MINUTES OF THE NASG BOARD OF TRUSTEES TELECONFERENCE

February 27, 2013

Submitted by Vic Cherven Jr., Secretary
Conference convened, 6:30 p.m. CDT. Present: Bill Winans, Dave Blum, Gerry Evans, Vic Cherven Jr., Jim Kindraka, Jamie Bothwell, Sam McCoy.

I. Discussion of Proposed Changes to NASG By-laws

- Winans motioned that the changes to the by-laws that he has prepared be opened for discussion. Motion seconded by Kindraka.
- Winans asked if there are any questions about the changes. Cherven asked about item #3 and the members discussed possible rewording to clarify the change. Based on the discussion, Winans revised the wording.
- Winans motioned that further discussion of the by-laws be tabled until after consideration of proposed changes to the NASG Constitution.

II. Discussion of Proposed Changes to NASG Constitution

- McCoy asked whether the Constitution requires that an election ballot be issued. Kindraka confirmed that a ballot must be issued, but the intent of the proposed changes is to eliminate that requirement under certain circumstances.
- Proposed change to Article V, section 9 of the Constitution was discussed, and a minor change in wording resulted.
- Winans motioned that the changes to Article III, section 8 and Article V, section 9, be approved as amended for submission to the general membership. Kindraka seconded.
- McCoy asked for clarification of the reason(s) for the change. Bothwell mentioned two reasons:
 - 1) voter turnout in recent elections has been 25% or less, and therefore the need to issue a ballot in uncontested elections is questionable;
 - 2) mailing ballots costs the NASG money and is not a worthwhile expense when elections are uncontested;
- Kindraka mentioned a third reason:
 - 3) preparing and counting ballots requires expenditure of considerable time by the Election Committee volunteers.
- Winans and McCoy commented that the reasons for the proposed changes should be included with the ballot when presented to the membership to explain the proposed changes.
- Winans called for a vote on the proposed changes to Article II, section 9. Vote: 7-0 in favor.

III. Update on 2013 Convention

- Bothwell reported that on-line registration procedures are nearing completion and should be ready to post on the website soon, possible by February 28. A tour has been planned and the bus has been reserved and paid for. He is working with Webmaster Peter van Vliet to set up the procedures for registration using Pay Pal. He has also contacted some vendors.

IV. By-laws Discussion Re-opened for Discussion

Article V, section 1: The dates for opening and closing nominations for officers was discussed. It was proposed to change the opening date from October 1 to the date of the prior year's annual convention. The closing date was proposed to be changed to December 31 of the year prior to the election.

It was decided to table further discussion of proposed by-laws changes until after the membership votes on the proposed change to the Constitution.

V. Decision on Ballot for 2013 Election

Members discussed the question of how the ballot for the 2013 election would be issued. Winans motioned that if the next Dispatch is mailed prior to May 1, 2013, the ballot would be included with the magazine. If the magazine is not at the printer by April 15, the ballot will be sent by first-class mail. The vote was 7-0 in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. CST.

Respectfully submitted,
Vic Cherven Jr., NASG Secretary



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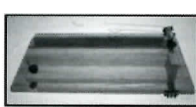
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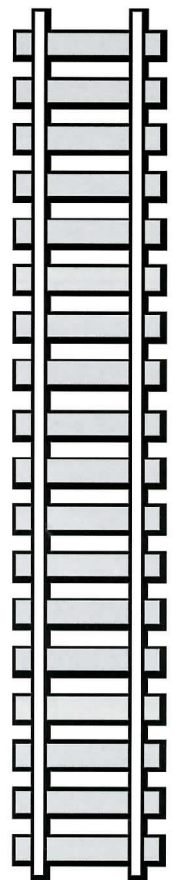
Membership Chairman. Must be able to spend at least two hours per week processing memberships and related information, with the exception of the early summer months when many more hours are required. Must have a computer with Windows XP or Windows 7 operating system. The database uses Windows Access 2010 – if you don't have, the NASG will reimburse you for the cost of getting it. You will work closely with Pat Evans, Peter Vanvliet and Jim Kindraka. All postage costs related to the position will be reimbursed. Claude Demers, current membership chair, will aid in the transition.

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