



The Dispatch

February-March 2014



How to Photograph Your Layout
NASG COMMEMORATIVE CARS
Detailing a Boxcar



The National Association of S Gaugers

The NASG Inc. is a 501(c)7 *Fraternal/Educational* non-profit corporation, which acts as the umbrella organization representing the 1:64 model railroading community (also known as 3/16-inch-to-the-foot, S-gauge, or S-scale). The NASG performs a wide range of activities in support of the S scale world. It sets standards for S scale and maintains lines of communication for S modelers everywhere. Through its bi-monthly magazine, **The DISPATCH**, and through this public web site, the organization communicates news about local clubs, new products, events, and projects of interest to S modelers. The NASG also works closely with manufacturers and potential manufacturers to help provide products marketable to its membership.

Note: Donations to the NASG are not tax deductible on U.S. individual income tax returns.

NASG History

The NASG's roots are closely related to the former A.C. Gilbert company, who in 1946 introduced S Gauge American Flyer trains, which were 3/16" scale toy trains. An S gauge newsletter started to make its rounds via the U.S. Postal Service around 1957-58. The NASG informal group formed a few years later. The legal entity NASG, Inc., was created in 1976 in New York state. It includes a President, Executive Vice-President, three Regional Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, and a Secretary.

The NASG is all about people. People with a common interest. In the early days people such as Jesse Bennett, Chester Bolly, Bill Crawford, Will Estes, Gene Fletcher, Leonard Giovannoli, Ambie Hennek, Evert Hoffman, Robert Shafto, William Sutliff, Bernard Thomas, and Claud Wade started and kept the S gauge circuit newsletter going. These men helped form the roots of what is now the NASG. Of course, over the years many more people have contributed much of their time and effort to this volunteer organization.

If you are interested in a full story about how the NASG came about, you can read *The NASG Story: A History* by Bob Jackson at www.nasg.org/About/History.htm.

Annual Awards

The Bernie Thomas Memorial Award

Presented in recognition of meritorious service to S scale or NASG.

The Charlie Sandersfeld Memorial Manufacturer's Award

To provide recognition to a company for its efforts in supporting and promoting S scale.

The Perles Publication Award

To provide recognition for the efforts of person or persons who best present the S scale story to outsiders through an article published in a non-S scale publication, which promotes and publicizes S scale. Staff writers paid by the publication in which the article appears are not eligible for any part of the award.

The Josh Seltzer S Website Award

To provide recognition to an individual, company, or group for its promotion of S scale modeling via a web site on the internet.

The Trustees' Award

Purpose of the Award is the Recognition of individuals who contribute extraordinary skill, talent, and time to the NASG.

What is S Scale?

S is a modeling ratio of 1:64, meaning one measurement unit on the model is equal to 64 units in the real world. It is also referred to as 3/16th scale because 3/16th, or 12/64th, represents one foot in the real world. This scale is easy to model, because if you look at a regular ruler that has tick marks down to 1/64 of an inch, each tick mark represents one inch on the model. Twelve such tick marks represents one foot, and one inch on the ruler represents 64 inches (5'-4"). The use of "S Gauge" to describe the scale is inaccurate and a holdover from our past. All types of S models, from American Flyer to Proto:64, are nominally S scale.

S scale (1:64) is larger than HO scale (1:87) by 36% and smaller than O scale (1:48) by 25%. You might also enjoy reading the **Wikipedia** entry about S.

S scale standard gauge was initially popularized by American Flyer® (AF) in the 1940s. In the 1950s and '60s there was a lot of activity centered around converting AF to scale models compatible with NMRA track and wheel standards (smaller flanges, scale sized couplers), and several manufacturers, including the NASG, offered products to accomplish that goal. Other modelers opted to maintain compatibility with American Flyer rolling stock. Thus began the dichotomy between "hirail" (AF-compatible) and "scale," which in S connotes not only the 1:64 ratio, but also compatibility with NMRA/NASG track and wheel standards for fine scale modeling. Hirail modelers generally use either code 148 or code 125 track products, whereas scale modelers with models having smaller, near scale flanges usually use smaller rail sizes such as code 100, 83, and 70. S scale narrow gauge modelers (Sn3, Sn2, Sn42) use code 70 or even code 55 rail to represent very light rail. Some Sn2 modelers use HOn3 track. Several companies produce S scale standard and narrow gauge turnouts, crossings, and straight, curved, and flexible track in these smaller rail sizes; some pre-made and some made to the customer's orders. For more information on this topic, read the **S Scale Track Products** article on the S NMRA SIG's web site, for an indepth look at S scale track products. For a complete listing of all manufacturers and retailers that produce and/or carry track, see our **S Resources page**.

To learn more about these awards, including timing, recognition, determination, restrictions and funding go to www.nasg.org/About and click on the award name. You can also read about the person for whom the award was named and a list of previous winners.



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MEMBERSHIP YEAR

The Membership Year is determined by the date that one enrolls, guaranteeing 6 issues, starting with the next issue. All applications, renewals and membership questions should be directed to:

NASG Membership Secretary

Dick Kramer

Post Office Box 268

Middlebury, CT 06762-0268

e-mail: nasgmem@comcast.net

ADDRESS CHANGES

Should be reported to Dick Kramer at the addresses above.

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David Dewey . *American Flyer Editor*

Bill Fraley *Contributor*

Sam Powell *Contributor*

Ed Kirstatter *Contributor*

DEADLINES for articles and advertising are the first day of February, April, June, August, October, December for issues dated April, June, August, October, December and February respectively.

DISPATCH

MANIFEST

for Volume 38, Number 1, February-March 2014

COVER	Brooks Stover shows how to photograph your layout	
2014 NASG CONVENTION	Read about what is planned for the 2014 Convention	4
COMMEMORATIVE CARS	See the newest NASG Commemorative Cars	5
BILL'S BOILER WASH	Words of wisdom from President Bill Winans	6
MEET AN S-GAUGER	Monte Heppe, NASG Contest Chair	7
S SCENES	Photos from members' layouts and club layouts	8
DETAILING A BOXCAR	See and read how Pieter Roos improves his boxcars	9
ENTERING MODEL CONTESTS	What you should to know to enter an NASG model contest	10
O S FROM S TOWER	Jeff Madden wants to know How Real? ...	11
NEW PRODUCTS	News of new and coming products	11 and 31
WEB SITE FOR MEMBERS ONLY	Webmaster Peter Vanvliet explains Members Only	14
THE BASICS OF LAYOUT PHOTOGRAPHY	Brooks Stover's step-by-step guide for layout photography.....	15
BRANCH LINES	Fall S Fest and S gaugers at Trainfest	20
GEAUGA MOTORS — USED CAR LOT	Steven Allen builds an S scale used car lot	22
A 4-TRUCK FLATCAR CONVERSION	Ed Kirstatter converts a 2-truck flatcar to 4-truck	25
CALENDAR OF EVENTS		26
NEWS FROM THE NORTH	News of activities from our Canadian members	27
SCRAP BUILDING	Chemical tanks from bottle tops	28
BRANCH LINES	Golden Gate American Flyer Club presents Flyer Fest West 2014 ...	29

NASG Website

<http://www.nasg.org>

NASG Website Director, Peter Vanvliet: peter@fourthray.com

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The Heartland S-Press

The **Badgerland S Gaugers** and the **State-Line S Gaugers** invite you to the **2014 NASG Annual Convention** to be held in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, from **Wednesday, July 23rd through Sunday July 27th**.

Oconomowoc is on Highway I-94, 25 miles west of Milwaukee. The convention will be held at the **Olympia Hotel & Convention Center**, 1350 Royal Mile Road, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin 53066. The hotel is offering a NASG Convention rate of \$89 per night for single or double occupancy, \$99 for triple occupancy or \$109 for four to a room. Telephone 262-369-4999. www.olympiaresort.com

Steve Lunde, on the right, of Badgerland S Gaugers is the Convention Chair and Roy Meissner is the Registrar.

Steve can be reached at ace5348@att.net or 262-574-1086

Roy can be reached at rmeissner@wi.rr.com or 262-538-4325



Registration The 2014 NASG Convention registration form is included as a separate piece with this mailing of the Dispatch. The form also contains information for vendors. The registration form can also be downloaded from the NASG website, www.nasg.org/Convention/2014/index.htm in pdf format. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the file. This is available as a free download if you don't have it on your computer. The mailing address for the form and your check are on the form.

Activities

Wednesday, July 23rd, all-day tour of **Circus World Museum** in Baraboo, Wisconsin. The tentative schedule is to leave the hotel at 8 am and arrive back at 4 pm. Information about this museum can be found at www.circusworldmuseum.com

Thursday, July 24th, an all-day tour of the **Illinois Railway Museum** in Union, Illinois. The tentative schedule is to leave the hotel at 8 am and arrive back at 4 pm.

The following is an excerpt from the Introduction on the IRM website: The Illinois Railway Museum, as seen today, is the result of decades of effort by a dynamic group of dedicated volunteers. All of the buildings, track, locomotives and cars were assembled here at Union on what was once farmland. The mainline track was laid on the vacant right-of-way of the Elgin & Belvidere Electric Railway.

Information about the museum can be found at www.irm.org

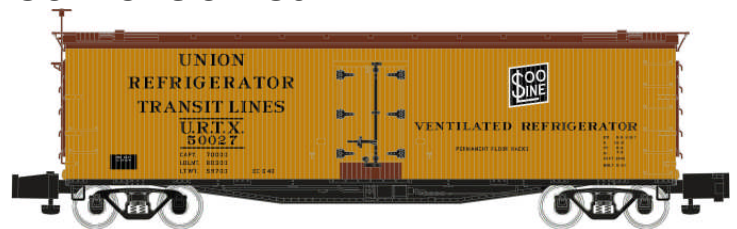


Aerial View
Illinois
Railway
Museum

Other Activities

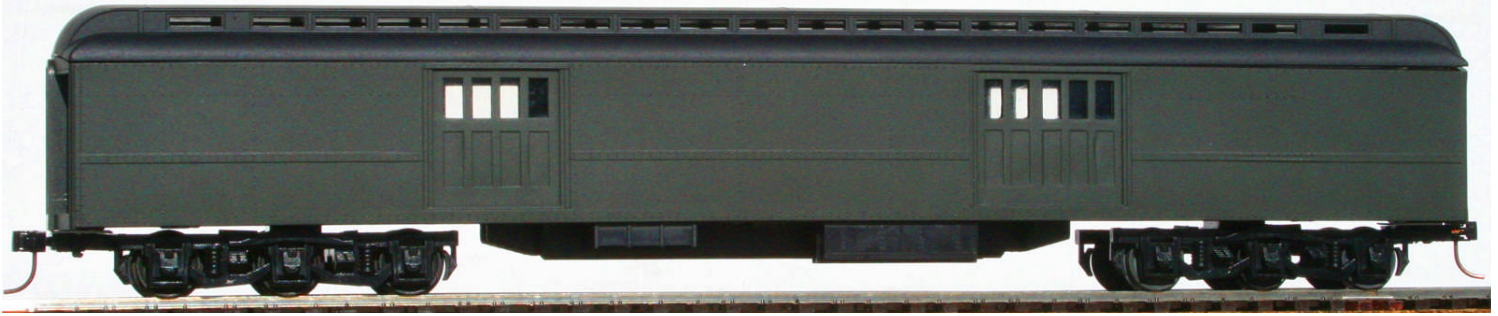
Self-guided tours of nearby members' layouts.
Operating layouts and displays for your enjoyment.
Huge trading floor with many vendors.
Programs for spouses and children.
Banquet and traditional auction.

Convention Car



A **SOO Line Wood Sided Reefer**, manufactured by MTH, will be the Convention Car for 2014. The cars are available in two numbers, 2014 for the year, or 50027. The illustration above is a drawing that was provided by MTH and the actual color scheme may vary from what is seen here. They are available in hi-rail, with no scale wheels, or with scale wheels installed. The cars are priced at \$65 each for the hi-rail version, or \$71 for the scale wheel option. You do not have to attend the convention to purchase this car. It can be shipped to you at a cost of \$10 for the first car and \$4 for each additional car. The car order form can be found on the back of the Convention Registration form included with this issue of the Dispatch or it can be downloaded from www.nasg.org as a pdf. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to do this.

Commemorative Cars



NASG Baggage Car Project The NASG has contracted with **American Models** to produce a special run of their heavyweight baggage car. These cars are undecorated, painted Pullman Green with black roof and underbodies. They are available with 4-wheel and 6-wheel trucks. 4-wheel trucks are very limited. All wheels are **scale**, however, a few hi-rail 6-wheel trucks are available. **The above picture shows the car with Kadee couplers which are NOT supplied with the car.** The first of these models have been shipped. This is an NASG-sponsored project, so you must be an active NASG member to order.

NASG American Flyer Commemorative Cars Each year since 1981, the NASG contracts with one of the S manufacturers to produce a limited-run locomotive or car specifically geared toward the collector or American Flyer operator. Since this is an official NASG sponsored project, you must be an active NASG member to order. **Dave Blum** is the co-ordinator for this project. He can be contacted at exec_vp@nasg.org

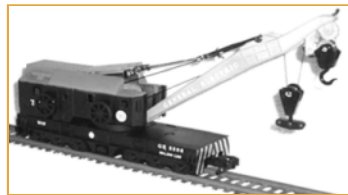
2014 American Flyer Commemorative Car is a Milwaukee Road boxcar made by Lionel. The road number is 3314 for the 33rd car in the series and the year 2014. The price is \$69 which includes shipping in the continental US. To order see information below.



2013 AF Commemorative Car is SOLD OUT

Please do not order this car! Your money will be returned, but this is a waste of Doug Peck's time. Doug has taken delivery of the cars from Lionel. **HOWEVER**, Lionel failed to package them in individual mailing boxes, which is going to significantly delay shipping to our members.

If you ordered one of these cars, please be patient. It will get to you eventually.



Dave Blum is running out of space. The cars pictured in these six small photographs are commemorative cars from previous years. For the equivalent of just a few coins a day, you can enjoy owning some of NASG's commemorative cars and feel good about helping one who is storage space deficient. Details and prices of these cars can be found on the website, www.nasg.org, click on **NASG Store**.

TO ORDER any car on this page, make your check out to **NASG** and mail to **Dave Blum**, 3315 Timberfield Lane, Pikesville, MD 21208-4425. Be sure to include the following: Your NASG ID number, your name and shipping address, which car or cars that you want and how many of each, Your telephone number or e-mail address in case there are questions about your order. Maryland residents please include 6% sales tax.

Bill's Boiler Wash

Hi everyone!

A belated Happy New Year to all.

Now that we have a couple of the new *Dispatches* behind us, it is also time to recognize the several people who have worked behind the scenes over the last few years. During this time, the NASG has had a strong positive turnaround in its fortunes, and these people are the ones who made it happen: **Jim Kindraka** as Treasurer, **Claude demers** as Membership Chair, **Walt Jopke** as Convention Chair and producer of the Duluth Convention, **Jim Bresnahan** as Webmaster following the death of **Stan Furmanak**, **Dave Blum** as Executive Vice President and producer of the Chattanooga convention, **Jamie Bothwell** wearing many hats and doing whatever job needed doing including *Eastern Vice President* and producer of the Scranton convention, **Greg Klein** as Promotions Chair along with **Will Holt**, **Doug Peck** as American Flyer Project Chair, **Alan Evans** as another *do whatever needs to be done* person, and **Jeff Madden** as Dispatch Editor. All these fellows kept things moving while new people came along to really ramp up what the public and members see of the NASG. Key of the new persons is **Peter Vanvliet** as Webmaster and now **Bill Pyper** as Dispatch Editor. Also taking over from previous men behind the scenes are **Dick Kramer** as Membership Chair, **Monte Heppe** as Contest Chair and **Dave Blum** as the American Flyer Car Project Manager. Virtually all the people that are listed are STILL working behind the scenes, though maybe in a slightly different capacity.

What is the point of all this? Some of these volunteers, both appointed and elected, have been carrying the load for a long time because they enjoy what they do for the NASG. However, none of us will be around forever, so if you think you would like to try your hand at any of the volunteer positions, let us have your name for future reference, especially if you have a particular skill (law, accounting, hotel management, engineering, journalism, photography, etc.).

While I am talking about doing things for the NASG, I would like to see more participation from the **American Flyer** side of the group, particularly as it pertains to the **Website** and the **Dispatch**. The website can use photos of your layouts and American Flyer equipment. The scale side has a fairly complete set of rolling stock photos, including a few American Flyer photos plus the *S Helper* Service dual purpose rolling stock pictures, but there is not very much that brings our American Flyer heritage to light. I know many of you have amazing collections of rolling stock and accessories. How about taking photos of each piece and submitting them to Peter Vanvliet, our webmaster and to Bill Pyper, editor of the Dispatch? While they can't really take a hundred at a crack, they can handle quite a few. I suggest maybe starting with locomotion and then working your way through your other pieces of rolling stock. You might check with them first, just to make sure there aren't fifty others doing exactly the same thing.

The Dispatch can use articles of all kinds – layout design, repair, rolling stock modifications including DCC, etc. If you have questions about writing articles, you can e-mail Bill Pyper



at dispatch@nasg.org or refer to *Manuscript Guidelines for Dispatch Authors* on page 30 of this issue or you can look on the website, www.nasg.org under **Dispatch**.

I also want to point out the accomplishments of the NASG over the last few years. Too often, things are done out of sight from the membership which have actually had an impact on the members, whether or not they realize it. Here is a list of what I see as significant:

The Russ Mobley Library was moved from Dick Karnes to Michael Greene's management.

The new **NASG Website** was brought on line, thanks to Peter Vanvliet!

The **On-line Directory** was made operational by Claude Demers and Peter Vanvliet.

New staff: **Dick Kramer** as Membership Chair, **Monte Heppe** as Contest Chair, **Bill Pyper** as Dispatch Editor.

Insurance costs were reduced by changing carriers.

Updated the NASG Constitution.

Updated contest rules (Monte Heppe)

Improved the production of the Dispatch (thank you Bill Pyper!)

Established a new **Trustees Award**.

Improved our finances: the **Railroad Model Craftsman** inside cover ad page is paying for itself (Greg Klein and his team), the conventions have made money (thank you Walt Jopke, Dave Blum, Monte Heppe and Jamie Bothwell) and we have more new members!

A couple of things came up in late 2013 that needed prompt dissemination to the members. While Peter Vanvliet immediately put the word out on the website, and Bill Pyper got it into the next issue of the Dispatch, we missed out on using one of the best methods we have for this: the NASG members Yahoo group. Right now, only about 140 of us are on that group. If we all were on it, announcements could be passed along almost instantly, and without having to go to a dozen other Yahoo groups to get the message out (maybe). This is not a "chat" group, so you don't have to worry about being inundated with e-mails. You can sign up at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/group/nasgmembers/info>

Have fun!

Bill Winans

GOLDINHANDS

www.goldinhands.com

American Flyer - Lionel

- Train Repairs

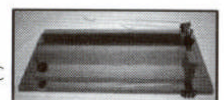
- A/F Chassis Re-bushing

TMCC and D.C. CONVERSIONS

Custom Built Maintenance Cradles



Edward Goldin
Phone: 847-727-0857
Fax: 847-884-9285
Member NASG #05R0025C



Meet S-Gauger Monte Heppe

I was born in 1947 in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, in the heart of the anthracite coal region. I got an American Flyer set for Christmas 1950. It included a #290 Pacific locomotive that I still have. Our apartment was a half block from the Lehigh Vally line that ran from Mount Carmel to Penn Haven Junction. Steam was still running on this line in 1953 when we moved over the mountain to Ringtown. Although only about a six mile move, it was quite a change in scenery, from strip mines to farms. Our house was about a quarter mile from the Reading Catawissa branch which was an alternate line from Tamaqua to Williamsport. My most vivid memory is 150-car coal trains with four F7's in the lead and four more in mid-train. My father and I built increasingly intricate Christmas layouts until they took up most of the living room.

I graduated from Penn State and went to work for the Rural Electrification Administration in Washington DC. Fortunately, my father saved my trains and after marrying Jan, I got back into model railroading in 1983. Jan enjoyed going to train shows with me and encouraged me to buy operating accessories.

Eventually we obtained almost every Gilbert accessory and many from Lionel. The layouts grew in size until I built an addition to our house for the trains. Jan is a very understanding wife. I was the fourth member of the *Baltimore Area American Flyer Club*.

The club has a modular layout that now has more than 50 modules. I had 10 modules of my own and my own trailer. After setting up the layout for 15 years at an average of 15 times a year, at shows, community events, children's and veterans hospitals and the B & O Museum, I decided that this was enough. When Jan retired in 2009 we moved to North Carolina and I donated the modules and the trailer to the club.

Our local club, the *Intracoastal Model Railroaders Club*, has modular or portable layouts in everything from Z scale to G scale. While I was building a home layout to showcase my collection of toy and hi-rail trains, I became interested in scale

modeling and built a portable switching layout, the *Calabash Terminal Rail Road*. It is hi-rail but leaning toward scale. In addition to local events, the CTRR was displayed at the 2012 NASG convention at a clinic I presented about its construction. It was also displayed April 4 through 6, 2013 at the *Savanna Prototype Modelers* meet in Port Wentworth, Georgia.

I am a member of NASG, NMRA and TCA. I was the cochairman for the 2007 NASG Convention, NASG Eastern Vice President from 2007 to 2011, and am currently the NASG Model Contest Chairman.

Monte Heppe



From the Conductor



In his commentary *Bill's Boiler Wash*, NASG President Bill Winans suggested that we could publish individual pictures of locomotives and rolling stock from member's collections in the *Dispatch* and on the Website. I think that's a great idea! Start sending me your photos.

I am really impressed by how thoroughly so many of you read *Dispatch*. It has been pointed out to me by several people that there are about 10 typos in the October issue. There were more than 20,000 words in that issue, not counting captions and ads. That works out to .0005% wrong or 99.9995% correct. Not a bad average in anybody's book (or magazine).

You have probably noticed that name **Dispatch** on the cover of this issue is different than any you have previously seen. It is common practice among magazines, newspapers and other publications that are sold on newsstands to always have their name or *masthead* look the same. This is to insure customer recognition and hopefully increase or at least maintain sales. *Model Railroad Craftsman* will always be seen in black letters in a yellow box. The *Dispatch* is not sold in stores, so we don't have to worry about recognition. Beginning with this issue, and I admit that I got the idea from Google, each issue's masthead will be in the style of a recognized railroad. This month's cover is printed in the colors and type style of the Denver & Rio Grande Western. I also used that style for the page headings throughout this issue. Some of you will probably not like that. Rest easy, it is only for this issue. I will be using the styles of both current railroads and fallen flags in coming months. I think I will try Chesapeake and Ohio next. **I have more to say on page 26**



On the right, This 1921 vintage New York Central container car, posed on the North Cornwall Railway Express siding, is perhaps the earliest example of railroad containerization in the United States. The car and its containers were scratchbuilt, painted, and lettered by **Kent Singer** some 25 years ago. The prototypically-correct trucks are T-section Bettendorfs imported by G&W Models.

Photo taken by **Dick Karnes** on his S scale New York, Westchester & Boston.



On the left, **The Flying Yankee** leaves Troy, New York at 1:30 p.m. on a summer day in 1955. The Yankee will take six hours and forty minutes to reach Bangor Maine via Springfield, Massachusetts and White River Junction, Vermont. The three-unit Yankee is a **River Raisin** import converted to run on DCC. The actual time the Yankee appears on **Dick Karnes' New York, Westchester & Boston** from the time it leaves Troy is about ten fast-clock minutes before it disappears into State Line Tunnel and thence to staging. Photo by Dick Karnes.



Left: One of the many freight trains rounds a curve on **Pete Gehret's Keystone, Columbine & Blue Hen RR**
Photo by Ron West

Right: A Lionel Challenger rounds a curve on the **Badgerland S Gaugers** layout at the annual **Trainfest**.
Photo by Jeff Madden.



A short time ago, former NASG Secretary **Glenn Ritter** of the **Pequea Valley Model Railroaders** submitted pictures to the NASG Dispatch. The pictures were printed on page 13 of the December Issue along with many other very nice pictures. A crew of wandering **Baltimore Area American Flyer Club** members stopped by to see us on December 28, 2013 with the Dispatch issue in hand, so that we would know for sure they were the Baltimore Crew. We had a great visit, stories were told, tips exchanged, pictures were taken. The reason for all of this is if the Dispatch had not printed the pictures then the Pequea Valley Model Railroaders would have missed meeting some great model railroaders and we thank the Dispatch staff for their support.

Pictured are: Glenn Ritter (PVMR), Jim Lyle (PVMR), Don Daller (PVMR), Jim McMorrow (BAAFC), Butch Gregg (PVMR), George Glover (BAAFC), Margaret (BAAFC), Diane Daller (PVMR), Sharon Russell (BAAFC), Kyle Russell (BAAFC), Gary Boyd (PVMR), DJ Daller (PVMR), Herman Kruelle (BAAFC).



Detailing a Boxcar

DETAILING A SINGLE SHEATHED USRA BOXCAR by PIETER ROOS



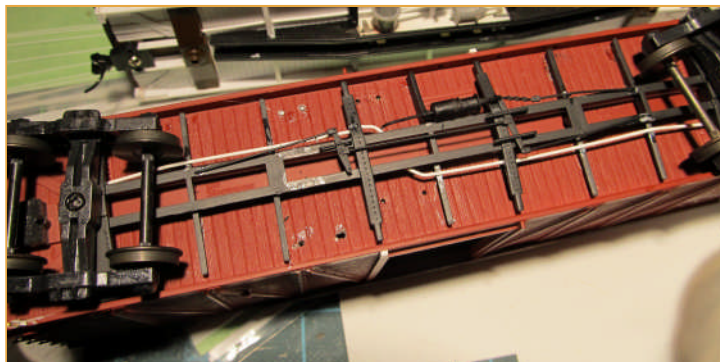
The USRA single sheathed boxcar was a very common car from 1919 on serving with railroads across the US from Maine to the Pacific coast. The design was successful enough to be continued, with modifications, by the ARA into the 1920s. The S Helper Service USRA single sheathed boxcar is a very good model, but there are few areas that can be improved. This article will cover a number of these points. You can pick the ones that you want to do and leave other areas as-is.

UNDER FRAME The car has the correct straight center sill, but it is too shallow. The prototype had 12 inch channels for the center sill and nine inch channels for the side sills. The model has them all the same depth, probably as part of the compromise to fit high rail trucks and couplers. You might wonder why anyone would care about $\frac{3}{16}$ ths (.046875) of an inch, but when viewing the car from the side, the center sill should show better than it does behind the side sills.

The car as provided has AB type brakes. When built in 1919 the cars had the KC style brakes. By the late 1940s most would have been changed to the Westinghouse AB type. The arraignment of the brake components appears to have been taken from the Hundman drawing in the July/August 1980 Mainline Modeler. While some cars may have had this arraignment, most photos indicate that the cars had the reserve tank and AB valve located a bit further from the door and closer to the side sills.

First the brake equipment. The reserve tank and AB valve will pry up. You probably will break the piping connecting them, but you will have to replace it after moving them anyway, as the pipes will be too short. Try not to break the levers and rodding, as that can be reused as is. Leave the two levers, supports and connected rods in place, sliding the piping out from under. Or you could scrap it and use a Grandt Line set to replace it.

Once all the brake parts are removed remove the center sill. Unscrew the trucks and set them aside. The center sill with cross bearers and cross ties is held on by screws from inside the body. If you are removing the roof, you can unscrew them from above. Otherwise, locate the fastening points (small blocks between the sills). Using a heavy chisel blade in an X-acto knife or a fine screw driver, insert the tool under the center sill near the block and pry until the screw pops loose inside the car body. Once both have released, the center sill, cross pieces and bolsters can be lifted free. I made mine deeper by adding .030" x .060" strip of styrene to the sill, gluing the .030" edge to the top of each side of the sill where it meets the floor. The cross ties must be cut off before adding the styrene strip and glued back to the floor. The bolsters and cross bearers end up too low also. I cut a wedge out of the webs of both the bolsters and cross bearers using a rail nipper and bent them down so that the ends touched the floor. This leaves a triangle open near the floor, which can be filled with scrap plastic bits. It's nearly impossible to see, so I left it alone. With the center sill piece glued back in place, the trucks will no longer need the adapter to bring the car floor and couplers to the correct height. I remounted the brake parts, moving the reserve tank and the AB valve from under the door to locations



between the cross bearer and the first cross tie toward the A end of the car. Replace the piping with .030" styrene rod, and add a train line from .060" styrene rod. The styrene rod bends and glues more easily than brass wire in this application, but it is not as strong if subject to handling. See above and below.

On the Milwaukee car I replaced the AB brakes with a K brake taken from an S Helper reefer. I built up a bracket on the side sill and attached the end of the cylinder throw rod to the supplied lever. This would be a common change if you are modeling these cars in an earlier period. Ted Cullota's article indicated that the Milwaukee never upgraded their cars, hence my back-grading of the model. On the Milwaukee Road car I used Smoky Mountain Model Works new draft gear and Kadee air-hose brackets drilled out for S Scale America air hoses.



ENDS The grab irons on the bottom of the ends, next to the coupler pockets, should be straight grabs, not drop like all the others on the car. On the PRR X26 model I was able to bend them upward to the correct configuration. As this didn't work on the Milwaukee car, I replaced them with Tichy straight grabs. You will find that the legs of the Tichy grab irons need to be cut shorter.

The biggest change for the ends is the brake wheel. The cars come with Ajax power brake equipment, which was fitted to some cars when rebuilt (D&H for one), but a majority continued to use the original vertical "stem winder" brake rod and wheel until scrapping in the 1950s. Also needed are the retainer valve and pipe, and coupler cut levers. The cars were built with Carmer type two piece coupler cut levers, which some retained until scrapped. Others were replaced with single piece top-operating uncoupler rods. If the couplers themselves were modernized, the car could even have bottom operating cut levers. See prototype photos of the cars that you want to model to determine which type you need.

Continued on page 12

Entering Model Contests

By Monte Heppe, NASG Contest Chair

Why would you want to enter a model contest? Certainly an award would be recognition of your modeling skill. However, that is not the only reason. It gives you a chance to compare your modeling skills to those of other members and learn how to improve your skills and possibly learn new techniques. Other entrants are generally willing to explain how they did something. NASG views the contest as a showcase of our members' modeling. Most members enjoy seeing what others are doing. It is an opportunity to learn and gain ideas for something you could do for your own layout. Even if you would rather not compete, we encourage you to bring a model for display only. Placing a model on display shows your work without the pressure of competition and you can gain recognition as a competent modeler.

Please don't be afraid to enter a model because you feel that it might not be good enough. Everyone has to start somewhere and your model may be better than you think it is. If you don't enter, you will never know. All models are treated fairly and with respect.

One should get into the right mindset before starting a contest model. Most of us, including modeling greats, build to "good enough" for most of the models populating our layouts, saving our best efforts for foreground models where the increased level of detail can be seen and appreciated. A contest model should represent your best efforts at modeling. Do not be intimidated by this. The judges know that this is your best effort and will try to be constructive in their comments.

Before starting the construction of a model intended for a contest you need to do some research. If the model is of a particular prototype, you should find pictures, plans and any other information that will help build a model that is true to the prototype. The more specific you can be, the better your model will score. For example, most prototypes have been modified, often several times after they were built. You should specify that your model represents the prototype "as built" or as per a specific modification.

On to the contest entry form, the information that you provide must be clear and complete to insure that your model gets the proper consideration. It is advisable to obtain a copy of the detailed version of the **NASG Model Contest Rules**. Rules and forms can be down loaded from the NASG website under **Events, About NASG Conventions**, click on the link, see all available planning documents. The contest form is listed as the **Contest Registration Form**. This registration form can be filled out on line or hard copies can be obtained from: monteheppe@me.com

The class to enter is determined by Sections 5 and 6 of the rules. Section VII. Will help you determine the category of your model. Please note that **American Flyer Imagineering** is an open category so you do not need to designate a Class.

Under description, provide information as to exactly what your model depicts. This is where to explain how your model conforms to the prototype. For freelance models, explain how the model represents something that logically might have been. For American Flyer Imagineering, tell us how the model represents something that A C Gilbert might have made.

Under construction check all that apply. The information provided here will help the judges in determining the quality of the construction.

For Conformity, check all the boxes that apply and refer back to description and any attachments relevant to conformity.

The finish section is self-explanatory.

Under details, list all of the details you have added to the model beyond the basic shell.

For the commercial parts section the judges want to know what parts were purchased rather than scratch built. Be sure to note if you have modified any of the parts as this could earn extra credit.

Next, we want you to tell how you constructed the model, especially any unique methods you may have developed.

Under scratch material, beside listing the fabricated parts and assemblies, you should tell us how you fabricated them if not previously described.

You should add any information that illustrates why the model looks like it does. Information provided should be clear and easily understood. Due to time constraints, judges cannot be expected to look through numerous pages of detail.

In general, you want to tell the judges about all the effort you put into your model. Do not assume that the judges will know by looking at the model exactly what you were trying to do.

Impact of New Technologies On Model Contests

A significant issue under consideration by both NASG and NMRA is how to consider models built through the use of 3D printers and laser cutting machines. One view is to consider these machines as tools. As long as the modeler has developed the instructions given to the machine the part or model, the modeler would be given the same credit as someone using more traditional tools. However there are a number of potential problems with this approach. For example, many prototype cars are constructed in a series with minor changes. A 3D printer program could be easily modified to produce any or all of the cars in a series, which could then be entered in separately in a contest. A modeler who scratch builds the same series of cars with traditional methods would have a more difficult time in achieving the same results.

We could also add a separate category for models produced using such machines.

The committee would greatly appreciate the thoughts of members on this issue. Comments and suggestions can be sent to Monte Heppe at monteheppe@me.com or to 695 Lapwing Lane, Calabash, NC 28467.



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How Real? By Jeff Madden

How realistic do I want my equipment and layout to be? The answer varies as to where you are on the scale-to-tinplate spectrum. All models are a compromise, but some want more fidelity than others.

The hard fact is that miniaturization is a compromise no matter what! Most scalers and hi-railers want as much scale fidelity as possible, and the acceptability of compromises varies from individual to individual. If we had our druthers, we'd all love to have painted RTR locomotives with the detail of brass but at $\frac{1}{3}$ the cost. Cost is usually the limiting factor here, influenced by manufacturing processes, volume of sales, and overseas politics.

I'm a scaler myself, and I like locomotives and freight cars to be prototypical, somewhat detailed and painted correctly. I am willing to accept more compromises with passenger cars, but I insist on decent paint schemes and accurate proportions.

I like scale size track, code 100 or less, but since I combine freelance and prototype I only need representative realism for scenery, structures, bridges, track plan and details. Structures, for example, can be a mix of generic kits, prototype kits or kit-bashed buildings from other scales.

All this brings up the argument of what is *good enough* for a model layout. This term has been bandied about on the internet and the model press and means different things to different people. In essence, *good enough* means compromising realism and detail to whatever suits you and people who view your layout or equipment. We all have our limits as to how *good* we want our modeling to be.

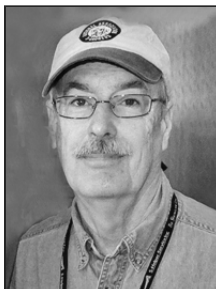
Sometimes we can buy the detail as in brass engines, but most of the time we compromise with lesser detailed products that aren't as expensive. Maybe we'd like to build all those nice laser craftsman structures but can't find the time to build them. Again we compromise with kitbashed plastic structures or even re-worked Plasticville buildings.

Show me the modeler who is a perfectionist in every aspect from rivets on a freight car to hand carved stone bridges, and I'll show you a guy with a 2' x 4' diorama.

So *good enough* is a good goal to work toward for most of us. Remember, *good enough* can be temporary. Some hastily built things can be replaced or upgraded over time. On my former HO layout, I would put a quicke plastic industry in place thus making my layout look complete, but with the intention to replace it when a better structure could be built or bashed. Even cardboard mockups are better than a blank space.

As your modeling skills go, *good enough* can move up a notch or two. As newer and more detailed equipment comes on the market, less detailed rolling stock can be replaced. For the more budget conscious there always a way to add detail to items. Look at what Brooks Stover is doing with the AM Pacific and the Lionel AF 2-8-8-2. (See pages 16 and 17)

Basically, what I'm saying is that model railroading is an art form and perfection is in the eye of the beholder. Thus the goal as model railroaders is to create and continually upgrade a miniature railroad to meet our own expectations. The idea of



"good enough" is really on a continuum, and for most of us improves as we gain more experience, update ourselves by reading current publications, view more layouts and so on.

As time progresses in our modeling careers, the "good enough" seems to progress. Buildings are upgraded, scenery is spruced up, backdrops are added, details are added, rolling stock becomes more detailed or replaced by newer items, etc. As proof, just look at some of layouts and equipment you see in the current S publications.

So why not make your New Year's Resolution to make your "good enough" a little better?

Jeff

New Products

Jim King of Smokey Mountain Model Works is willing to produce a new freight car, a Milwaukee Road horizontally ribbed 40-foot box car as a resin kit. It is similar to the B&O wagontop and the SAL



Prototype photo from www.rr-fallenflags.org.

turtleback soon to appear on the market. Whether the car will have the ribs extending to the ends or represent the later, more numerous version with the ribs stopping short of the end ladders and grab irons is not yet decided. The car will reflect the prototype and can be constructed so that it will accept tinplate trucks and couplers.

Jim King will need a minimum of 80 orders to make this a go. Tom Baker, bakert@andrews.edu and Bud Rindfleisch, BlackDiamondRR@gmail.com are the agents for taking orders. Send no money at this point. We are asking for a firm commitment to one or more cars.

It is true that a brass version of the car appeared more than a decade ago, but that was brass and commanded a high price. The price of the Milwaukee Road ribside boxcar in resin will be priced in the \$80 range, commensurate with the B&O wagontop and the SAL turtleback. The ribside boxcar appeared on every railroad in the US and could be seen from 1939 through the early 1980s in regular freight service.

Sergeant Engineering Coupler

Frank Sergeant, of Sergeant Engineering, has been working on a new version of the S-scale coupler. These are true-to-scale, works-like-the-real-thing kinds of couplers. He shared a photo comparing the S-scale couplers with an HO-scale one, to show the size difference. No word on when they will be available.



He had previously announced that he had problems getting them to operate, but he was able to resolve that. Now the issue is that he is trying to get the sprue that connect to the coupler

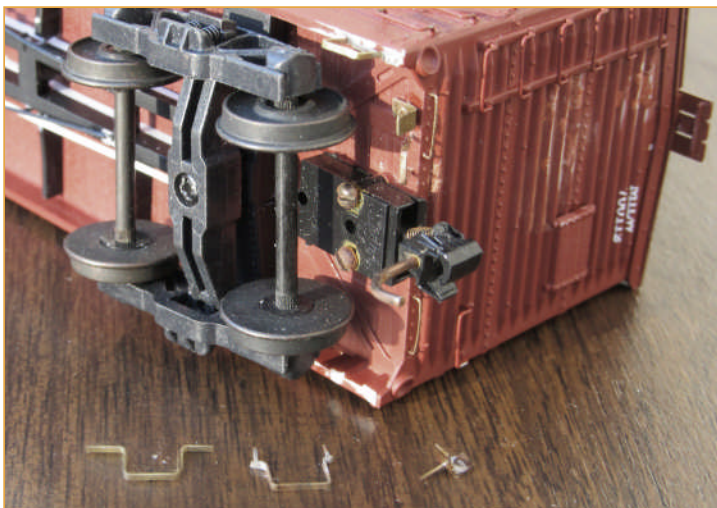
Continued on page 31

Detailing a Boxcar continued

Carefully remove the Ajax brake gear and the platform. Fill the mounting holes with styrene rod and/or putty and sand smooth when dry. Drill for and mount a brake retainer valve (I used Wiseman's) and a retainer pipe from .012" wire. The retainer pipe bends underneath the end of the car, where it can be glued into a hole. The prototype is held in place by a couple of mounting straps, which I reproduced with narrow strips of aluminum foil fixed with ACC.

I used an A-Line HO scale straight side sill step, bent out a bit, for the brake bracket. I mounted the brake platform higher on the end, added a ratchet and pawl from a narrow gauge brake set and used a pair of eye-rings from Detail Associates to hold the new brake rod in place. One of the eyes was concealed as the top rod bracket, made from strips of foil and styrene. The brake wheel can come from a narrow gauge set, spare from another SHS car (reefer), or an oversize HO part like those found in the old Walthers/Train Miniature car kits. Maybe your HO friends have some to spare after replacing them with more in-scale HO parts. The Walthers part matches most USRA cars best.

Carmer cut levers are available from Earl Tuson's Standard Railway Castings Company. (www.srccredmansefarm.com) They require a bracket, which I fabricated from an L shaped piece of thin brass pinned to the car floor at the end, and a small block of styrene. The etched levers are bent to shape according to the directions and pinned to the bracket with a provided nut bolt washer casting. Other types of uncoupling levers can be bent from .020" wire and mounted with eyebolts.



The picture above shows the Standard Railway Castings side sill step as it came, modified with soldered pins, and mounted on the car. Also the bracket that I made for Carmer cut lever. The mounting holes for the original brake gear on the end are filled in and the lower grab irons have been replaced with Tichy straight grabs.



SIDES On the sides of the car, I removed the lower door track as it is much too bulky and not like the Camel original. In particular, the prototype track is folded over and held out from the side by brackets, which allow light to show behind the track. After considerable dithering and trying to figure out how to copy the prototype brackets, I simply used two pieces of .030" square styrene to make a .030" x .060" bracket, fastened to the car side. The track itself is a length of .040" x .010" styrene with a strip of Detail Associates .030" x .010" brass strip stock glued to the front, with the top edges matching. The brass makes the track sturdier, while simulating the folded-over metal of the prototype. The upper door track is too deep, so I narrowed it by about 1/3rd. For the Milwaukee car I removed the roof and replaced it with one from a PRR stock car to get the full-width upper door track. Realistically, making a longer track would probably be easier.



I carved the lower door stop smaller and to a more realistic shape, and removed the upper stop, replacing it with a part from the Tichy HO early door parts, actually a lower door roller.

For the PRR X26 with the steel Youngstown door I removed the tack board and re-mounted it one panel higher. The Milwaukee car has wood door. I removed the upper hand hold, as most cars do not show one. I also removed the center of the lower hand hold, drilled two holes and used .008" wire to make a replacement. Using a razor saw, I dragged over the surface of the door to re-grain where I removed parts, and lightly sanded all surfaces of the door to de-emphasize the grain overall. The doors are glued in place as they will not work in the new tracks.



The “hat shaped” framing on the USRA cars had a tendency to trap water and rust out. The PRR X26 cars often had cast reinforcements applied over the ends of the metal side framing. I built these up with layers of thick tube acrylic paint, then sliced the top even using a sharp knife. One photo of a Milwaukee car had the bottom ends of the “hat” sections cut off at an angle. I didn’t take that step, but it would not have been too hard to cut and carve off a bit of the sloped ends of the framing to capture this detail.

Replacing the sill steps on both cars, I used re-bent staples, on the X26, inserting the legs into holes drilled in the car side sill bottom and using bits of styrene .010” x .030” on either side to represent the mounting legs of the step. On the Milwaukee car I used Earl Tuson’s pre-formed steps. These require some trimming, and the only way I have found to mount them that will survive handling is to drill through the mounting legs and solder mounting pins in place, then drill for the pins and glue into the side sill. The result is nice (much better than the staples) and quite robust, but a good bit of work.

On the Milwaukee car I added some decal-bashed lettering. To get a good re-weigh station and date (following the photos), I used some left-over data sheets. “Coupler Shank” provided the ‘PL’ and “Brake Beams” the ‘M’ and ‘S’ for “MPLS”, the abbreviation for the Milwaukee Road’s Minneapolis, Minnesota shop. There should be some end lettering as well. I started to add this, but decided not to as too much cutting individual tiny letters was involved.



The X26 is weathered with washes and dry brushing of black, dark gray and rusty colors to suit a car that served in the sooty damp eastern industrial zone, while the Milwaukee car was sprayed and dry brushed with tan colors to simulate the faded and dusty colors of a car serving the granger lines of the mid-west. In reality, many PRR cars served in the mid-west grain belt, and Milwaukee cars frequented dirty industrial areas like Chicago and Minneapolis, but these color choices matched the photo evidence as well as pre-conceptions of their prototypes. Both have dry-brushed wheel tracks on the ends. The Milwaukee car was first sprayed with some thin grimy color along the framing, then over sprayed with light tan to fade the paint.



The picture above clearly shows the new lower door track made of styrene and brass strip mounted on brackets seen in the view on page 12. This model used re-bent staples and styrene mounting strips in place of Earl’s brass strip corner steps. Note that the tack board on the steel door has been moved higher and thick artist acrylic paint used for the cast reinforced boots on the side framing.

Some time later I read the article on weathering in the April 2012 Model Railroader, which got me to re-examine the great 1940’s era photos by Jack Delano (available online, search images for Jack Delano photo Chicago). The article and photos caused me to re-do the roof weathering on these cars to show some paint peeling and car cement patches. For peeling paint I used a technique from Allen Keller’s video on Allen McCelland’s V&O. I applied a very wet wash of black water based paint, then applied Testor solvent based silver with a tooth pick to make the bare metal patches. The water constrains the silver paint, and the interaction of the types of paint makes very realistic chipped paint effects without repainting the whole roof as is needed for the rubber cement technique. Delano’s photos have some great roof shots, which included Milwaukee cars with the Murphy XLa roof to verify that the paint chipping is a proper weathering technique to apply to these cars.

References:

- Essential Freight Cars 14: USRA 50 ton Single Sheathed Boxcars; Culotta, Ted, July 2004 Railroad Model Craftsman
- The Postwar Freight Car Fleet; Culotta, Ted and Kline, Larry; NMRA 2006
- USRA Single Sheathed Boxcar; Hundman, Robert; Mainline Modeler Jul/Aug 1980



Editor’s Note: Pieter Roos is a highly skilled craftsman. His Kansas City Southern Lines rebuilt USRA boxcar pictured above won Best in Show at the 2013 NASG Convention. It also won Best of Craftsman Class and 1st Place Kit and Converted Freight and MOW Equipment. His Milwaukee Road USRA boxcar took 2nd place in Craftsman Class Kit and Converted Freight and MOW equipment and his CNJ Class NEa Wood Caboose won 1st Place in Craftsman Class Scratch Built Freight and MOW Equipment. Larger pictures of these models can be seen in the October, 2013 Dispatch.

Web Site for Members Only



By Peter Vanvliet, NASG Webmaster

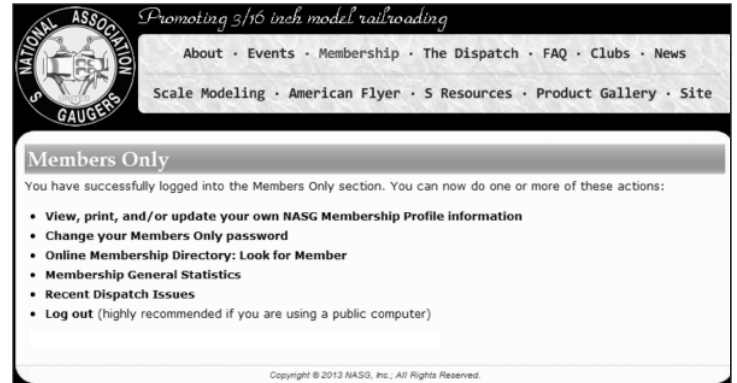
Welcome to this issue's column about the NASG web site. After the flurry of activity updating the web site after the 2013 NASG Convention (click on the web site **Events** button, then click on the **Past NASG Annual Conventions** link, or scroll all the way to the bottom of the page), I have settled back into doing regular updates of the web site.

One such update was a rename of the web site's **Online Membership Directory** section of the **Membership** page. As the content of that section grows, it became clearer to me that the section really should be called **Members Only**. Many club web sites, including some of our S-scale clubs, have a similarly named section on their web site. So around mid-October 2013, I renamed that section to **Members Only**. I want to take this opportunity to talk about some of the recent changes I have made in that section. You can follow along by going to <http://www.nasg.org/> and clicking on the **Membership** button. The second section of that page, **Members Only**, is what I'll be discussing here.

When you click on the **Log In** graphic of that page, you will be presented a simple form that asks you for your **NASG ID** and your password. If you have not registered for a password for online access, you must do so first on the **Membership** page (click on its **Register Now** graphic). The recent new feature I have added to the **Members Only** log in page is the ability to e-mail yourself your password. If you have forgotten your password, you can enter your **NASG ID**, and the web site will automatically e-mail you your password. To keep things safe, it will only send the password to your previously registered e-mail address. As always, if you have any problems with this, just e-mail me at webmaster@nasg.org.

As shown in the illustration above right, at the time of this writing, the options of what you can do once you are logged in include, viewing (and optionally updating) your membership profile (such as your contact information), change your **Members Only** password, view the **Online Membership Directory** (i.e. search for other NASG members), some statistics about our membership, **Dispatch** issues, and the ability to log out. *Note that you should log out if you are using a public computer (such as at a public library) when you are done, otherwise someone can come in behind you and change things in your profile.* You will automatically be logged out when you close your web browser. Most of these individual options were discussed in my **April 2013 Dispatch** article, titled **The NASG Online Membership Directory**, and those discussed haven't changed, so I invite you to (re-)read that article as well.

The new feature we have added is the ability to view recent NASG Dispatch issues. At the 2013 NASG Convention, the Board of Trustees decided that recent Dispatch issues should be available to the NASG membership in electronic format. One of the primary reasons for this was that some members were having problems getting their mailed hard copy in time or at all. We have a number of years worth of Dispatch issues publicly available on the NASG web site (see the *Dispatch* page), but more recent issues should only be available to active NASG members. The decision was to make up to one



year's worth of issues (6 issues) available electronically behind the password-protected **Members Only** section.

To kick this feature off, starting with the February 2013 issue, you can download the individual issues in the **Members Only** section of the web site. Note that not all issues may be available yet, but we are working on it. To avoid someone from by-passing the security system and still gain access to the PDF files, we have also (*starting with the October 2013 issue*) applied a password to the PDF file itself. The only place where you can get that password is when you log in to the **Members Only** section, and click on the **Recent Dispatch Issues** link. The password is listed to the right of the issue link. So, once you have downloaded the PDF file, you will be prompted to enter that password to actually open and read the PDF file.

Our Dispatch editor will have the printed issues mailed out in the early part of the cover date month. The electronic online version of that issue will not be available until at least the 15th of the cover date month. Keep an eye on the web site to find out when it is posted.

So, as you can see, our **Members Only** section continues to expand with new features, and that is why it warranted a new name. We have a few additional ideas brewing that we might be able to add to that section in the future.

Web site tidbit: Our most popular single page on the site, excluding the home page, is the **By Prototype Railroad Name** of the **Product Gallery** main page. This page lets you browse all the S-scale products that have been released over the decades based on their prototype railroad's name. The page averages over 850 hits each month in the past year.

As always, if someone is curious about S-scale, point them at www.nasg.org.



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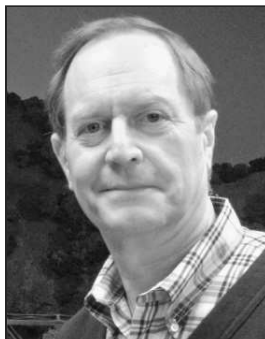
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Basics of Layout Photography

By Brooks Stover, MMR

I have been a model railroader for all of my adult life and it has been a wonderfully rewarding hobby. Over the last couple of decades, photographing my layout, and the layouts of others, has become a hobby within a hobby. I first started taking photos before the days of digital cameras when you didn't know how a photo would turn out until the slides returned from Kodak days after the shutter was released and by then, it was too late to correct any mistakes. With today's digital cameras taking high-quality photos it is much, much easier and can be done with relatively inexpensive cameras. I have had dozens of photos published in the model railroading press, most which were taken with a point-and-shoot pocket camera costing about \$250. In this article I describe the basics of how to get the most out of your digital camera photographing your layout and railroad models.



Model Railroader's Guide to Digital Photography

There is not room in this brief presentation to cover all the aspects of using digital cameras for layout photography. But for those who want to study the subject in detail, I have written a 30-page *Model Railroader's Guide to Digital Photography*, referred to in this article simply as *The Guide*. It can be read and/or downloaded as a pdf from the *National Association of S Gaugers* (NASG) website. It can be found by going to www.nasg.org and clicking on **Scale Modeling**, then scrolling about halfway down the page. The direct link to the photography guide is: <http://nasg.org/Scale/ModelRailroadersGuideToPhotography.pdf>. I can also send anyone interested a pdf. copy by contacting me at buffalocreeksteam@comcast.net. I prepared *The Guide* in response to inquiries I have received over the years about how I take photos. In this article I have highlighted the most important points covered in the guide as well as providing page numbers in *The Guide* where subjects are described in greater detail.

Picking a Camera

One key to getting good layout photos is using an appropriate camera. The good news is that you don't have to have an expensive camera to get good results. However, there are several features that the camera must have to be usable for model railroad photography. *The Guide* contains a very complete discussion of all the features required as well as a review of the several classes of cameras that typically have the required features. This information can be found starting on page 5 of *The Guide*.

Briefly stated, a digital camera for taking layout photos must have the following features or capabilities:

1. Allow manual selection of the the lens opening or f-stop.
2. Be able to focus within about 4" or less from the end of the lens. (the closer the better)
3. An autofocus mechanism that allows manual selection of the focus point.
4. A *delayed release* or remote release feature so you don't have to be touching the camera while a picture is taken.
5. Ability to take photos at a minimum of 8 megapixels of resolution.
6. A provision for attaching to a tripod.

In today's market, most cameras with these capabilities will also have the capability of manually setting the white balance (see page 27 of *The Guide*) and the ability to manually set the ISO (sensitivity to light, see page 28 of *The Guide*). Most will have a lens with an adjustable focal length. Focal lengths from about 25mm-100mm (*measured as 35mm camera equivalent*, see page 23 of *The Guide*) are all that are typically needed for layout photographs. Explanations of why these features are needed are presented throughout *The Guide*.

The photo on the cover shows the simple tripod the author constructed that allows placement of a small point-and-shoot camera directly on the layout, even where the terrain is irregular. The base is a piece of masonite and the adjustable legs are long threaded carriage bolts. The camera is an older Nikon P4 that was used to take all the photos accompanying this article unless otherwise noted. The key to using a small camera under these conditions is to not exceed the camera's capabilities for focus distance.



Lighting a layout scene typically requires a minimum of two lights, one positioned on each side of the camera. The author tries to get the lighting spread uniformly across the scene with the lights positioned high enough to suggest mid-day sun. More dramatic effects can be tried once this basic approach has been mastered. Inexpensive photo floods and lightweight tripods are easy to move around.



The author's home studio is a simple affair. The seamless backdrop is the grey back side of a piece of linoleum flooring. When a backdrop with a little color is needed, a piece of blue matte board is placed on top of the linoleum as shown here. The lights are the same ones as used for layout photos, one positioned on each side of the camera.

Text continued on page 18

The photo on the right, taken on Ed Nottage's N scale New York Central layout demonstrates the capabilities of even the most modestly priced camera when properly used. The author made the image with a Canon SX160 pocket camera costing about \$150. By making sure that the object in the scene nearest to the camera was within the camera's focusing capability and setting the aperture to the smallest f-stop available, a sharply-focused image was obtained. Two photo floods were used to light the scene.



The photo below, by the author, of his model a big B&O EL-3 in the snow won **First Place, Model Color Print** in the photo contest at the *NMRA North Central Regional Convention* held in Troy, Michigan the weekend of November 1-3, 2013. The model also won **First Place, Steam Engine Model**. This is a composite picture, the locomotive, road, truck, bridge, buildings and photographer are all one piece. The trees and foreground snow were photographed last winter in my back yard. The smoke was taken from a photo of a BC&G locomotive. The snow on the rooves and the steam from the generator was done in Photo Shop.



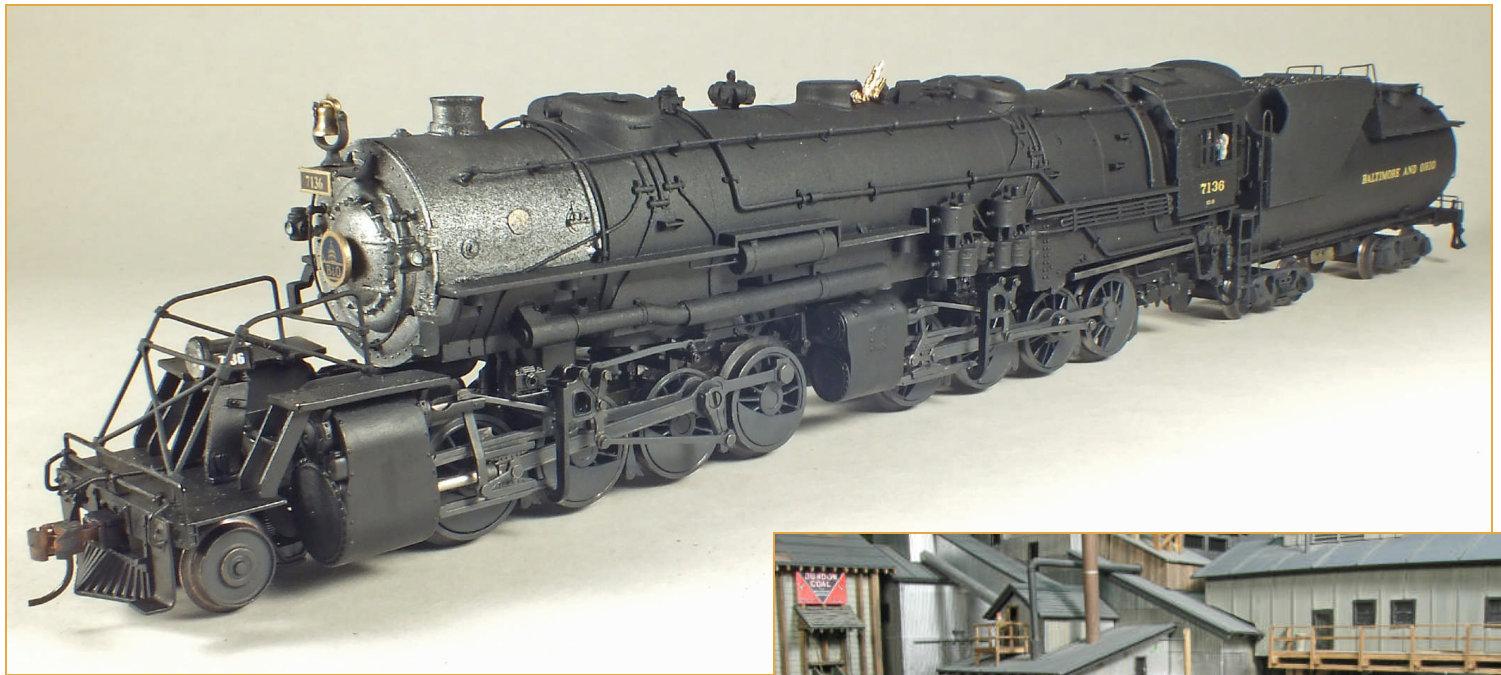


Photo above of the author's model of a B&O EL-3 locomotive (made by modifying a Lionel 2-8-8-2) was made in his home studio shown on page 15. By focusing the camera on the boiler under the front sand dome the entire locomotive is in focus. The camera was set in *Aperture Priority* mode, the aperture was set at the smallest one available on the camera and the exposure was automatically determined by the camera.

The photo on the right illustrates how figures can be important compositional elements in a layout photo. Without them, scenes look lifeless. This photo was taken on the author's Buffalo Creek and Gauley layout. The barrels and tall grasses in the foreground add visual interest to the image. A substantial discussion of composition appears in *The Guide*.



Real trains are very large and very often are viewed and photographed from a level equal to or lower than the track. Models can be made to appear larger in photos by placing the camera near *ground level*. In the example on the left, the fascia of the layout is lower than track level allowing a low, and dramatic, viewpoint. The human figures create mini-scenes within the overall image which was taken on the author's S gauge BC&G layout.

Basics of Layout Photography

Lights and Lighting

Perhaps the most common mistake that beginning photographers make is using a camera mounted flash to light a scene. Simply put, never use flash for layout photography as it will result in harsh shadows and uneven lighting. If existing light in the room is adequate and a tripod is used, acceptable photos are possible. Usually a couple of auxiliary photo lights are needed. There is a complete discussion of lighting options starting on page 29 of *The Guide*. While generally appropriate lights will have to be purchased, they are relatively inexpensive and can be obtained at a good camera store or on line. As explained in *The Guide*, the camera's **white balance** must be set for the lights used to illuminate the scene. This is easily done on today's digital cameras. Setting the white balance is explained in the camera's manual and why it is important is discussed on page 27 of *The Guide*.

14 Steps To A Good Photograph

In its most basic form, taking a quality layout photo can be thought of as a series of 14 steps. At first it may look like a lengthy sequence, but once you get started, you'll see that it is pretty straight forward. These are the steps I go through every time I take a photo of a layout or a photo of model on a table in my *mini-studio*. For a detailed explanation of why these are the recommended steps see section G. MORE ABOUT CAMERAS AND LIGHTS.

1. To maximize image quality, set the camera at its lowest ISO setting and its highest megapixel resolution. If you can select between Fine and Normal image quality, select Fine. (Go to page 28 of *The Guide* for more detail.)
2. Select the image format by selecting JPEG, or if you plan to do substantial post-shooting manipulation on the computer select JPEG + RAW if your camera shoots in RAW.
3. Set the camera for Aperture Priority mode and set the aperture at the highest numerical value available (smallest lens opening) for maximum depth of field. (Go to page 23 of *The Guide* for more on apertures.)
4. Set the camera focal length (zoom) at the widest setting (least amount of zoom) to maximize depth of field. (Go to page 23 of *The Guide* for more on focal length.)
5. **Turn off the flash**
6. Mount the camera on a tripod to prevent blurring the image.
7. Brightly, but uniformly, light the scene avoiding areas of dark shadows or bright spots. This involves placing one light on each side of the camera at an equal distance from the scene (There is more on lighting on page 30 of *The Guide*.)
8. Set the White Balance using a photographers 18% grey card or white paper (per camera instructions). If a manual setting is not available, set White Balance to Auto. (A more complete discussion of white balance is on page 27 of *The Guide*.)
9. Compose the scene by looking at the LCD display on the back of the camera.
10. Check the point of focus by pressing the shutter release half-way down while looking at the LCD display. An indicator (usually a green or black square) will indicate the point the camera has selected to focus on. If this point is slightly rearward of the nearest to the camera on the main subject, you're

ready to take the photo. If not, use the camera's controls to manually select a focus point that is. (A discussion of depth of field appears on page 21 and there is more on focus points on page 27 of *The Guide*.)

11. Set the self-timer to control the shutter and then press the shutter release button. Don't touch the camera while it automatically counts down and releases the shutter.
12. Review the image on the LCD display and zoom in to confirm that the main subject is sharply focused while the camera is still in position on the tripod. Make adjustments if needed and reshoot.
13. Repeat steps 5-11 for each scene you want to photograph. If the same lights are simply moved to light the next photo, there is no need to recalibrate the white balance.
14. Download the image(s) to your computer

Following these steps carefully will generally produce digital photographs with the maximum depth of field, clarity and resolution that the camera used is capable of.

Composition

Knowing how to use a camera to get a correctly exposed and focused image does not, in and of itself, insure that the image will be visually appealing...a "good shot." Just as building a layout is an art form, taking photos of a layout is also an art form and there is no right or wrong way to compose a layout photo. There are as many opinions as there are modelers, and that's great. Volumes have been written about photo composition and some of those principles apply to layout photography, but there are also some elements unique to our task. A complete section of *The Guide* is dedicated to this topic. It begins on page 10. That section specifically covers elements that make for interesting composition including ways to give an image a sense of life using figures, lights and vehicles, the use of "visual texture" and handling foregrounds and backgrounds.

Conclusion

There are a lot of reasons to get involved taking photos of your layout. Photos can be taken for your own pleasure, for recording your modeling efforts to share with friends and family and, even better, for submission to magazines such as DISPATCH. There is nothing quite as satisfying as seeing your layout appear in print! Once you get started, you will not doubt find as I have that model railroad photography can become a wonderful hobby within a hobby.

A. C. Gilbert's

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S-GAUGERS IN OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The November-December 2013 issue of *s gaugian* has a six-page article featuring **Pete Gehret's** *Keystone, Columbine & Blue Hen Railroad* S scale layout. Below is a shot of Pete's layout that didn't make it into the original article.



The *Track Plan of the Month* in the November 2013 issue of *Classic Toy Trains* is **An S Gauge Starter Set Oval with add-ons**. Written by NASG member **Will Holt**. It describes how to use MTH S-Trax to form a compact 3½' x 6' layout.

On page 70 of the December 2013 *Classic Toy Trains* is a story by **George Hoffer**, 1953, *American Flyer* at its finest. It is "An appreciation of the landmark's S Gauge line offered 60 years ago." Twelve pages and the cover of the 1953 American Flyer catalog are shown in full color.

Warm memories of Christmas and *American Flyer Trains* are shared by **Scott Plunket** in the January 2014 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. Written by Roger Carp.

NASG member **Ron Warner** published **Some B&O Newark Division Memories**, *Glass-Plate Negatives Trigger Some Searches*, in the 3rd Quarter 2013 issue of *The Sentinel*, a publication of the B&ORRHS. The 14-page article features 21 photographs of railroad scenes made from old glass negatives. Some interesting pictures for someone modeling turn-of-the-century (20th) American railroads.

2016 NASG CONVENTION

The **Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers** members have voted to place a bid to sponsor the 2016 NASG Convention. The location would be in the greater Detroit area and centered around Greenfield Village and the Henry Ford Museum. Activity dates would center around the end of July or early August, 2016. A convention committee has been selected from members of the SMSG and details of the event are being developed. The SMSG will submit a formal bid in mid 2014.

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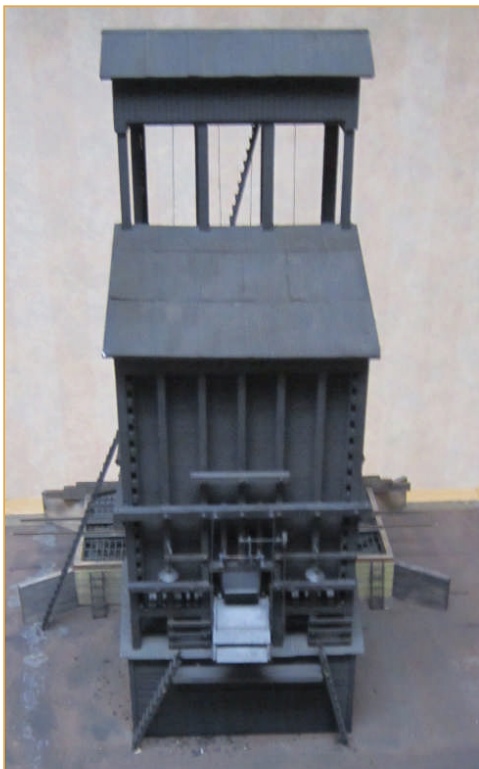
Report and Photos by Jeff Madden

On November 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 2013, the **38th Annual Fall S Fest** was again a success. 322 folks registered for this popular event sponsored by the **State-Line S-Gaugers**, held this year in at the Holiday Inn in **Janesville, Wisconsin**. There was lots of American Flyer for sale at 173 tables and there was enough for everybody. Major vendors included **Gary Clark** and **American Models**. The 300 Chicago Great Western tank cars, produced in three colors by **Pikesville Models**, virtually sold out. The people who attended the banquet saw the Joe McDoaks comedy show, listened to award presentations, heard **Randy Garnhart** give a presentation on the Chicago Great Western, and were entertained by the usual auction.

There were few contest entries, but they were all very nice. **Chic Hartert** took **Best-of-Show** with his scratchbuilt **Sn3 Chama coaling tower**. Other quality entries included a **GP-9 Milwaukee Road** short hood diesel by **Mike Ostertag**, a detailed **American Flyer 0-8-0** by **Thorin Marty**, an **American Models 4-8-4**, and a large station with interior kitbashed from several **Plasticville Union Stations** by **John Hempfling**. **John Mann** displayed the beginnings of the scratch build ore cars that he is working on.

There were several good clinics given by **John Heck**, **Jim Larson**, **Jeff Madden**, and **Ken Zieska**. Sunday layout tours were offered. The train races and incline contests were dominated by **Danielle** and **Donald Goeke**. A large modular layout was brought by the **Chicago Area S Gaugers**, plus **Alan Evans** brought the **NASG modules**. A small detailed tabletop layout was displayed by **Jeff Young**.

This scratchbuilt **Chama Coaling Tower** by **Chic Hartert** of Oconto, Wisconsin, won **Best-in-show** at 2013 Fall S Fest.



Pictured at right: **South Jersey S-Gaugers** display their layout at the First Baptist Church in Collingswood, NJ on November 30, 2013.

Right: SJSG member Joe Sullivan helps keep order as some children play on one of the two American Flyer floor layouts assembled by SJSG members during their display at the First Baptist Church.

Photos by Hank Worrell



Above: A small, highly detailed 3 1/2' x 4' layout by **Jeff Young** of **Badgerland S Gaugers** was displayed at the **Fall S Fest**.

S. Jersey S-Gaugers Show their stuff



S Gaugers at Trainfest

Report and Photos by Jeff Madden



Steve Lunde of Badgerland S Gaugers guards the Geezer Gate lift up bridge on the BSG modular layout at Trainfest.

Labeled as the largest visited train show in the country, the annual **Trainfest** was held November 9 and 10 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the weekend after the S Fest. It is sponsored by the **Wisconsin Southeastern Division of the NMRA**. The show includes a manufacturers section, many portable layouts, vendors, displays and many attractions designed to entertain the youngsters. Attendance usually tops 23,000. There were three nice layout displays featuring S gauge trains. **Ron Schlicht** brought his rectangular donut shaped **American Flyer** layout, the **Badgerland S Gaugers** had their large hi-rail/scale layout and **Larry Blank** brought his scale diorama. Both Larry and Ron are members of the Badgerland S Gaugers. Thanks to **Will Holt** and **Joel Lebovitz** of the **Chicago Area S Gaugers** for providing the newer **Lionel American Flyer** locomotives such as the ES44 and SD70ACE diesels and the Challenger. They coordinate the operations with the Lionel Legacy control system. Other member trains operate with either AC or DC power.

The only all-S manufacturers there were **River Raisin** and **Scenery Unlimited**. Both **Lionel** and **MTH** had some S on display. MTH only had undecorated F3s, a boxcar and a PS-2 covered hopper, but representatives said a shipment of these items and track were on the way. Future production of steam engines and smaller diesels is on hold waiting for a small enough sound board.



Jeff Madden and grandson Connor Haen check out the Badgerland S Gaugers layout at Trainfest.

Pictured on the right: Chicago Area S Gaugers Joel Lebovitz, left, and Will Holt helped out on the Badgerland S Gaugers modular layout. They brought equipment and a Lionel Legacy control unit.



Below: Badgerland S Gauger Ron Schlicht built his traditional American Flyer layout at a lower level for easy kids viewing.



An Omnicron 2-8-0 operates on Badgerland S Gauger Larry Blank's modules. Larry has brought this large S scale modular diorama to Trainfest for the last several years. It is part of his home set-up which should be on the layout tour for the NASG convention next summer.

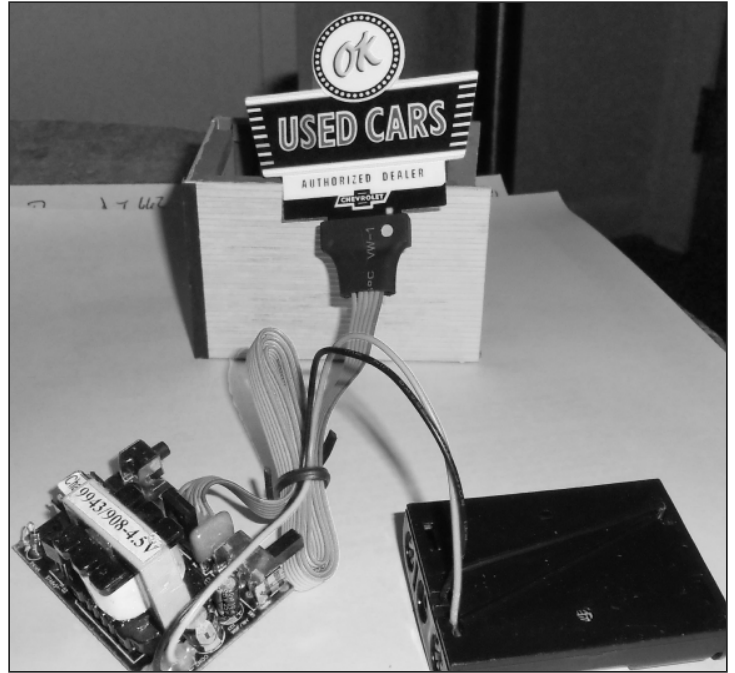
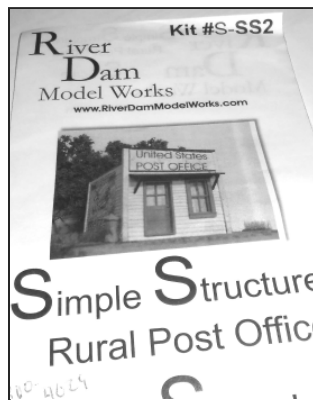
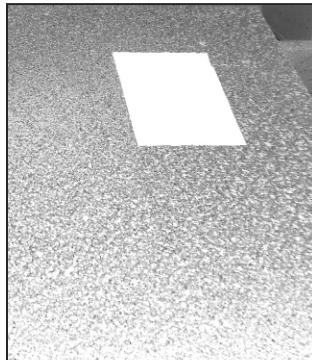
Geauga Motors - Used Car Lot

By Steven Allen, Pioneer Valley S Gaugers

My most recent project was to build a used car lot named **Geauga Motors** (pronounced GEE-awe-ga), after the county in Ohio where I spent my early childhood. The base was made using foam board. I purchased a package of four 11"x14"x1/4" sheets by *Elmer's* (the glue people). I found it in the kids' craft section. The first thing I did was to spray the board with gray primer. For the lot surface I used *Floquil #F390005 Moss Green* textured paint. When I applied the primer and base color, I held the spray cans at least 16" from the surface to prevent the paint from soaking and possibly warping the foam board. The primer dried in less than 30 minutes and the base color in about 3 to 4 hours. I masked off a 2" x 3 1/2" area with 3M painters tape where the building would sit on the lot. I carefully removed it within 5 minutes of applying the texture paint using tweezers and an X-acto knife. This was to prevent any possible paint peeling from the lot surface if it had dried to the tape. (See picture below)

I had purchased a small laser cut kit (2"x3"), former *River Dam Model Works* kit #S-SS2 Rural Post Office on e-Bay about 2 years ago rather cheaply. I soon found out why; the windows and doors were missing. (Picture at right) Fortunately I had *Grandt Line* doors and #4024 double hung windows on hand. The only problem with the windows was that they were a little too large, I made small alterations to the window opening using an X-acto Knife with a #17 chisel blade and carefully widened and elongated the 3 windows. The kit took about 10 minutes to construct, leaving the front panel off until later.

I used a *Miller Engineering* HO/N Scale Animated Billboard Sign #5482 (upper right picture) for OK Used Cars. I went with this sign vs. the O/HO because of the building size, as well as the fact the signs came in a multitude of sizes. Before attaching the front of the building to the rest of the kit, I had to cut a section out of the floor, about 1" x 3/8" so I could install the sign through the building interior. I cut a slightly larger opening in the foam board to pull the wiring into the building. I attached the wiring in the building to the front section with double sided tape and used CA glue to attach the sign base to the back of the exterior of the front section. The blank sign board came with the building kit. I added HO scale 16" laser cut letters from *Vector Cut* (www.vectorcut.com), and the border was micro-cut scale lumber (.0208" x .0625") from *Midwest Products Company*. The sign board was painted *Model Master* flat white, the lettering was *Model Master* gloss red, and the border was *Apple Barrel* Acrylic English Navy #20773 paint. I attached the borders, the letters, and the finished sign to the building using *TiteBond III* wood glue.



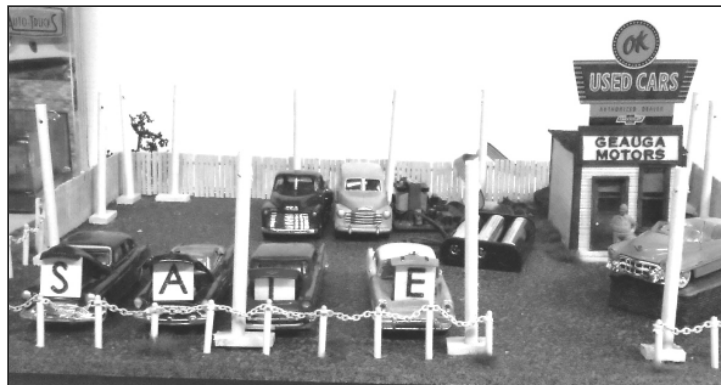
The building was attached to the lot using DAP sealer caulk. The next step was to install the OK Used Car Sign. I had considered placing the circuit board inside the building, but elected to leave it outside. Once I place the building on my layout, I will cut out a 2"x2" box in the layout's foam and place the circuit board there. The plug for the sign was attached to the back side of the façade with Cyanoacrolate glue, a notch was cut in the roof and it was glued into place. At this point I tested the light fixture to make sure that it worked. I elected not to use the roofing material provided by the manufacturer. Instead I opted to use non-skid stair treads which were 1 7/8" wide. I cut them to length and then cut them in half lengthwise and installed them on the roof. At this point I placed ground tufts purchased from *Scenic Express* strategically around the building, and as the project progressed, additional tufts were added to the rest of the lot. I now prepared the perimeter fencing for the rear of the lot using S-Scale *Insta-Fence* from *Bar Mills* (pictures on pages 23 and 24). Once they were put together, I used a wash of *Testors* flat white paint on the fence.

Before installing the fence, I laid duct tape under the perimeter of the bottom side of the foam board for added support for the fencing. I also covered the wire leading to the sign plug with the duct tape to flatten it out. I used 4 1/2 sections of the fence, the rear sections (2 1/2 pieces) were installed about 1 1/2" from the edge, and the 2 side pieces were installed about one inch from the edge. I used 1/8" masking tape to line the fence up straight. I punched holes, smaller than the size of the fence post, placed a dab of *Aleene's Tacky Glue* in the hole to install the fence. I can also put a dab of foam compatible CA glue at the base of the post for added support. The half section of the fence went in the middle after the 2 end pieces where installed at the rear of the lot.

Now that the fence was in place, I placed an *Arttista* S-Scale figure #704 at the entrance to the office and a German Shepherd from the *Arttista* S-Scale dogs #766. The dog protects the lot from thieves at night. I put 2 dabs of CA glue on the dog's

Geauga Motors - Used Car Lot

neck and wrapped EZ Line stretch string around the area and cut off a 2" piece to represent the chain. A *Johnny Lightning* 1956 Ford F-100 pick up truck made the ultimate sacrifice to my hammer, as the severely damaged junk which the dog was chained to. I used artist acrylic burnt umber, yellow ochre, rust paints and applied the mixture with a medium bristle paint brush by stippling the paint on the truck. After the paint had dried I applied a fine mist of *Model Master* flat black from an aerosol can to finish off the rotting vehicle appearance. I sprayed it with dull-kote to prevent chipping. The junk vehicle was placed behind the building on a bed of *Scenic Express* medium soil blend #SE0413 which was laid on top of *Elmer's* glue and followed up with a couple drops of scenic cement.



The next step was to partially enclose the front portion of the lot using #223 *Evergreen* $\frac{3}{32}$ " styrene tubing cut to the length of 4 scale feet. I made small holes in the foam board and set the posts 4 scale feet apart, securing it with foam compatible Cyanoacrolate glue. I took some 2.3 mm oval brass jewelry chain that I bought at Michael's, primed it then, spray painted it flat white. (See picture above) Then I used straight pins with oval tops, snipped off to match the height of the posts, slid it through one link of the chain and then into the hole at the top of the tubing. I used a micro brush dipped in CA glue to set the pin on the top of the post. I carefully hung the chain between posts leaving a little slack in it around the remainder of the lot except for a 12 scale foot entrance to the lot. After everything had set, I used another micro brush dipped in flat white paint and covered the heads of the pins and any section of the chain that needed touching up.

Next I cut $\frac{3}{16}$ " diameter dowels into 12 scale foot sections with a hole drilled at the top of the pole in order to feed 26 gauge black floral wire through the hole. The wire is used to support the mini lights that will be strung around the perimeter of the lot. (Pictures right and top right) Since the foam board base is only $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick, I purchased scale dimension lumber from *Northwest Precision* cut $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick by $\frac{3}{8}$ " wide, with a carefully drilled $\frac{3}{16}$ " hole in the center of each piece. This was to give the light poles more support. Once they were set in place using *Aleene's Tacky Glue*, I let them set for 24 hours. Before stringing the floral wire, I carefully inspected the bases of the poles, and added foam compatible CA glue as need. I cut a 5 foot piece of the floral wire and strung it carefully through the poles being careful not to pull them from their bases. I started in the rear of the lot, and when I got to where I started, I cut the excess wire, leaving enough to twist together tightly.

Then I hung a 36-light string of *Lemax* clear mini lights around the perimeter of the lot. Unfortunately they didn't go around the entire lot. So I had to string another 36-light section, carefully cut off the excess and apply liquid wire cover to the exposed tips. I considered purchasing a string of 50 clear mini lights, but it still would have been short, and resulted in only 4 to 6 lights from that string being used. I adjusted the blinking light sequence until I was satisfied.

Continued on page 24



Side Track

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Geauga Motors - Used Car Lot



The Johnny Lightning '56 Ford F-100 above gave its all to be a part of this layout. The German Shepherd is chained to the old wreck to protect the car lot.

I downloaded GM car related images that I found on Google. I saved the document to a zip drive and took it to Staples and had 2 sets of prints made, one using photo gloss paper, and the other using flat 24 lb. bond paper. From these documents I made a couple signs attached to scrap black Evergreen styrene and added them strategically in the lot.

Then I went to my treasure trove of diecast cars and used a number of late 40's and 50's GM cars, a lone 56 T-Bird) and trucks from *Racing Champions*, *M2 Auto-thenics*, and *Johnny Lightning*. I made a base using scrap gatorboard and wrapped scrap HO scale brick from Cripple Creek around it. A car was added on top with glue dots on the wheels to secure the car in place. This represented the weekly special. The four cars in the front row have the letters S-A-L-E attached on scrap Evergreen #4505 styrene tiles and inserted under the raised hood.

The lettering is peel and stick letters I purchased at Michael's. I added a tow truck to the lot along with a couple more S Scale figures from Artista and my used car lot was complete. This will eventually end up on the lower level of my layout once the track work is complete.



A 4-Truck Flatcar Conversion

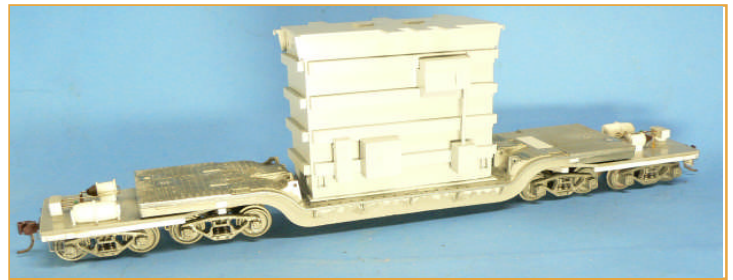
From Lionel to American Flyer or S Scale By Edwin Kirstatter

Another Lionel to S scale conversion can be this heavy duty flatcar with four trucks under it. This project started with a junker of a *Lionel* two truck drop center car that was cast in that *Zamac* white metal that is very hard to work with. It is also available as a plastic car and now is used for an American Flyer car too. I could have done more to it if it was a plastic body. It is a bit wide for S scale but it is too hard to cut and narrow down closer to S scale.

I started by removing the load, trucks and couplers, hand brakes, paint and lettering, and some cast on grab irons. I then filed the end sills flat and filled in some unwanted holes where the hand brakes and the former load had been. I drilled holes in the drop deck that Lionel hadn't finished. I collected S scale trucks, couplers, detailing parts and the plastic needed to build platforms for mounting the trucks on a span bolster under ends of this Lionel body. I chose *Culp Brothers Bettendorf* type trucks, (not manufactured for decades) with a 6-foot axle spacing. They are bigger than ordinary trucks of this type, have springs, and look just right for a heavy-duty flatcar. Alternate trucks could be the *S Helper Service* 70-Ton type or those from their ore cars now made by *MTH*.

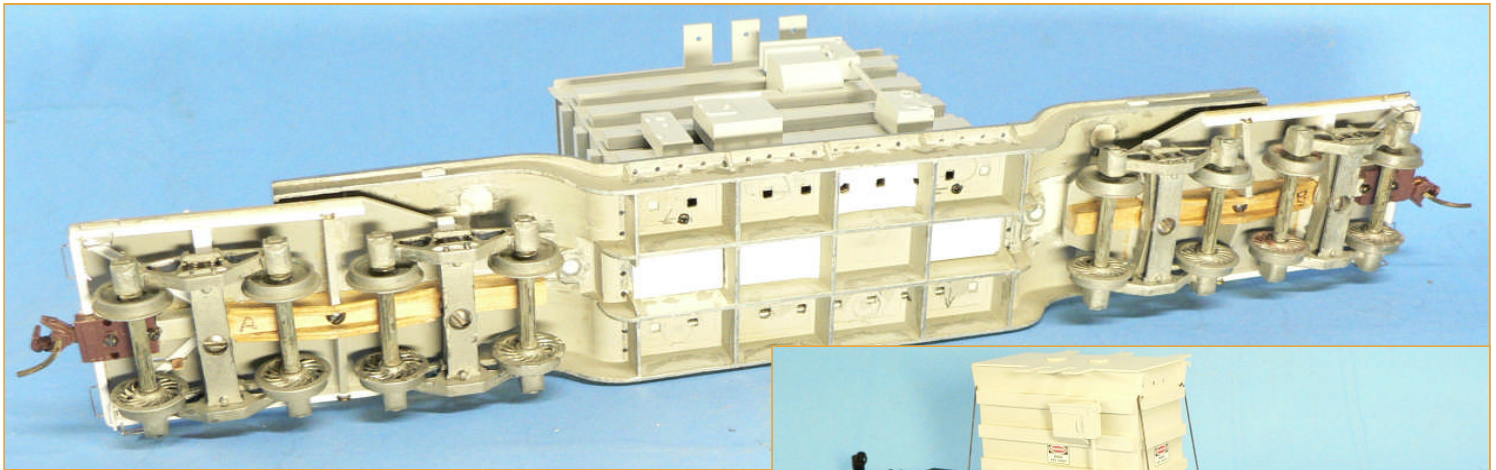


I started with a Lionel drop center flatcar similar to this.



Before permanently mounting these I detailed them with four grab irons and two sill steps and roping staples made from .025" wire under the sides at center between trucks and cut levers at ends made from .016" wire. I also added the Ajax type power hand brakes on each end and AB brakes on top of decks for greater detail with all of the piping they should have and a brake lever on the brake cylinder going through the deck to the trucks below. A builder's plate and tack board was placed on each side of the car. I didn't put brake hoses at the ends, but I could have used the new rubber ones by *Hi-Tech Details* or flexible ones by *BTS*.

A *SouthWind Models* Type A large transformer fit perfectly with tie-down rods added but screws from below held it on this model. With the furnished decals added it makes a nice load



I designed the end platforms with span bolsters under them using these trucks. I fit them under the Lionel body to look like real cars of this type. It is not an exact model but, a reasonable facsimile of many that I had seen in photos. The plastic I used for the decks was .060" thick ABS from *Plastruct* and the sides and ends were *Evergreen Scale Models* #155 .060" x 100" styrene strips cemented on with *Super Glue*. After the glue set the corners were rounded. The span center sill was made from *Northeastern* deep channel wood stock, but it could have been made from plastic. I added corner braces under it made of *Evergreen* #262 .080" channel. The trucks were mounted to it with wood screws. Midway between the trucks is a hole for a screw to hold this to the body. A bolster was cemented under the drop-center body at the ends and reinforced with two small machine screws from above. The bolsters were drilled for wood screws to attach the platforms. The couplers are *Kadee* #808 with a plastic rod inside the centering springs to reduce the slack action caused by these springs.



for this car. The insulators and cooling coils could be used on another car. Other loads could be used on this model.

This turned out to be a 62' long car with a capacity of 138 tons and an AAR class of FD. This model was painted black as most cars of this design were and I scrounged HO decals to letter it as an Erie car. On a car of this type, with dual brake systems, the ends must be stenciled to designate which is the A or B end. The wheels were made to look rusty as they were not to be painted. The sign at one end was made from some *Northeastern* wood and leftover *Walthers* decals put on it as an afterthought. A small bit of paper was put on the tack boards to represent the destination cards the railroaders used.

References on page 26

Calendar of Events

This column is dedicated to the listing of model railroad events, with emphasis given to S-gauge or S-scale.

If you know of an upcoming event related to S-scale model railroading, or model railroading in general, please e-mail the information to dispatch@nasg.org as soon as possible so that we are able to print it in a timely manner.

February 8, 2014 — Willamina, Oregon

Northwest Modelers Train Show and Swap Meet

26 miles west of Salem off Highway 22. 10 am to 3 pm.

More info at pry626@juno.com

February 22, 2014 — Jacksonville, Florida

36th Model Train & Railroadiana Show For more information go to www.gserr.com

February 22-23, 2014 — Virginia Beach, Virginia

Greenberg Train & Toy Show For more information go to www.GreenbergShows.com

February 27- March 1, 2014 — Irving, Texas

29th Annual Sn3 Symposium. For more information go to www.Sn3-2014.com

March 1, 2014 — St. Cloud, Minnesota

Granite City Train Show and Sale National Guard Armory, 1710 Veterans' Drive. 10 am to 3 pm. Buy and sell. Operating model and toy train displays and play area. For more information contact edwardolson@cloudnet.com

March 1-2, 2014 — Palatine, Illinois

36th Annual High Wheeler Train Show. 9 am to 5 pm Harper College Sports Center, Bldg. M, Algonquin and Roselle Roads. www.highwheeltrainshow.com

March 2, 2014 - Cheshire, Connecticut

Cheshire High School Spring Train Show. 10 am to 3 pm 525 South Main Street, Cheshire, CT (on Route 10) This is the first place that the Connecticut S-gaugers displayed a layout. Adults \$6, Children under 10 free.

March 9, 2014 — Toledo, Ohio

Toledo Toy Masters Greater Train & Toy Show For more information go to www.toymasters.org

March 15-16, 2014 — Wilmington, Delaware

Greenberg Train & Toy Show For more information go to www.GreenbergShows.com

March 22, 2014 — Seabrook (Houston), Texas

Gulf Coast Chapter of the TCA 4th Annual Toy Train Show & Swap Meet Bay Area Community Center, 5002 NASA 1, 10 am to 3 pm. Operating layouts, buy and sell, door prizes, refreshments. For more information go to www.tca-gulfcoastchapter.org

March 22, 2014 — Columbia, South Carolina

TCA Model Train Show, all gauges. For more information go to www.palmettotca.org

March 23, 2014 — Dalton, Ohio

CJ Trains Spring Wayne County Train & Toy Show Buckeye Events Center, 624 Henry Street. For more information go to www.cjtrains.com

April 30 - May 4, 2014 — San Luis Obispo, California

Pacific Coast Region NMRA Convention Information at www.pcrnmra.org/conv2014

May 1 - 3, 2014 — Marion, Ohio

Spring S Spree. Four operating layouts, Clinics both days, Over 135 Dealer Tables, Daily Door Prizes. More information at www.COSG.org

May 3 - 4, 2014 — Rickreal, Oregon

Model Train Show and Swap Meet Polk Station Rail Operating DCC Model Railroad Club. Rickreal Grange Hall on Highway 99W just south of Highway 22, 10 miles west of Salem. Go to PRY626@juno.com for more information.

May 16 - 18, 2014 — San Mateo, California

Flyer Fest West 14. The Golden Gate American Flyer Club is planning a three day event that will be packed with activities. It is our hope that S Gaugers from all over America will plan this as a vacation for the whole family in The San Francisco Bay Area. We are still formulating our plans but so far I can tell that a huge hall is nailed down for table sales and final negotiations are underway for a spectacular convention car. Visit our website, www.ggafc.org for updates.

July 23-26, 2014 — Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

NASG Annual Convention (Milwaukee area) Lots of S home layouts, prototype tours, local attractions galore. Contact Steve Lunde 262-574-1085. e-mail: ace5348@att.net

4-TRUCK FLATCAR *CONTINUED*

References:

The Official Railway Equipment Registers.

Car Builders' Cyclopedias.

AAR Rules Governing the Loading of Commodities on Open Top Cars, 1945.

AAR Code of Rules Governing the Condition of and Repairs to Freight and Passenger Cars for the Interchange of Traffic, January 1, 1955.

United States Safety Appliances for all classes of cars and locomotives, 16th Edition (1950).

O'Brian's Collecting Toy Trains 6th Edition by David Doyle, Krause Publications 2006.

More From The Conductor

In the survey taken last year the membership expressed a desire to see more **How To** articles in the Dispatch. In this issue we have **The Basics of Layout Photography**. I hope that those of you who are unsure about how to photograph your layouts will read this one. And then inundate me with pics go on our **S Scenes** pages. Award winning member Pieter Roos tells how he **details boxcars**. Ed Kirstatter describes how to **build a heavy duty flat car**. My latest **Scrap Building** article shows how I made some **chemical holding tanks**.

I was really pleased to receive a short story and picture from the **Pequea Valley Model Railroaders** of Pennsylvania. They were visited by the **Baltimore Area American Flyer Club**. This December 28th visit was inspired by the stories about Holiday layouts in the December Dispatch. I hope that showing pictures and stories about club events will encourage more visits like this.

News from the North

With Andy Malette and Jim Martin

Hi folks. Andy and I have been asked to provide a regular column of news from Canada, that strange land where the word *modelling* is spelled with two ells, and cab diesels are called "eh-units." It's our hope that you'll get to know your northern cousins a bit better, away from the bad impression we (mostly Andy) make at NASG conventions. And it's not just about us. We hope this column will also attract news from the far reaches of our vast country.

Starting off, we all know that **S** is a scale that encourages scratch building. Well, how about scratch building one's own S scale train meet? Here's Andy to pick up the story:

Andy: In 2009, Jim hosted a small S Scale get together at his house, mostly members of the **S Scale Workshop** and a few other area S-scalers. We talked about what was coming down the line from various manufacturers, how to promote S; our most recent projects, rail size, couplers, DC versus DCC, whether steam should have been scrapped, etc. It was the usual inflammatory stuff that S Scalers always talk about on *Yahoo Lists*. Some of us brought models to show.

In 2010, Jim decided to go larger and international. We ended up in a community centre at Lowbanks, Ontario which is close to where Jim lives. Attendees were now coming from as far away as Napanee, Ontario in the east and from Windsor, Ontario in the west. From Buffalo, Rochester and other parts of northwestern New York State. This was the beginning of the annual **CanAm Meet**. The event has grown to where people bring their stuff to sell, show models both under construction and complete, give clinics, have a nice catered lunch and go on local layout tours of both HO and S scale.



Above: Richard McQuade and John Johnston putting legs on a module for the S Scale Workshop.

Below: Bud Rindfliesch, left, with Paul Raham, is so excited about being at CanAm that he cannot contain himself.



Neil Froese built these very cool S Scale models from Kaslo Grain Hopper kits.

Although it is not really well-publicized, it is open to anyone from any scale but the focus must remain S scale. Some O models slipped in this year and I will have to inform the S Scale Police about it to make sure that it does not happen again.

This year we had about 30 people attend as well as two module sets from the S Scale Workshop. *Richard McQuade*, a fine scale HO modeller and author of the book **From Wood to Steel**, came along to see what it was all about. It is good to have HO people help set up.

Jim gave clinics on scenery and how to make use of unexpected stuff for modelling.

Jim: Of course, the gist of this story is not about me, but what you can do to bring a little more fun into your hobby life. You don't have to wait for a local S scale show to happen, or travel far to find one. You can host a modest party in your own back yard with surprisingly little effort.

The yearly CanAm Social is a private get together that is essentially set up with two phone calls...one to rent the hall, and the other to set up the caterer; and then a group e-mail letting those in my acquaintance know about it. The list gets a little longer each year as I find more people or they find me. Church and community halls rent for surprisingly little on Sundays. A small fee paid by each attendee helps me defray most of the cost of the hall and the food.

The CanAm Social is helping to bring American and Canadian friends back together and is a great way to kick off the model railroad season. If S scale camaraderie is lagging where you live, something like this might be just the ticket to turn up the volume.

Till next time, Cheers Eh!

If you are in the area in early October, 2014, please do join us. Contact Jim at themartins@farmhouse.com

Scrap Building

By Bill Pyper

I make no bones about it. I enjoy building my layout a lot more than I enjoy running it. I have boxes full of small scraps that I have saved because they remind me of something. One of the buildings on my **Mendacity Canyon Railroad** is the **Soylent Industries Transfer Station**. It's a simple scratch-built cinderblock building where the raw materials that are used for the manufacture of **Soylent Green** that are collected in the Mendacity Canyon area are transferred from truck to railcar.

Most of the raw material is solid and is transported in a converted Butterdish Milk Car. However, some of it is in liquid form that is moved in a tank car (also scrapbuilt from PVC pipe). Sometimes it becomes necessary to store that liquid in holding tanks prior to transfer to the railcar.

To build a set of holding tanks, I chose three different size detergent bottle caps. A piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick scrap wood (smelled like cedar) cut to 3" x 9" serves as a base. Using a $2\frac{3}{8}$ " hole saw, I cut three evenly spaced circular spaces in the wood.

I am eternally grateful to my wife for nagging me into installing a drip-irrigation system in our yard in California. Because of that, I discovered that there are dozens of small, inexpensive, plastic fittings, intended for use in drip systems that make excellent plumbing parts for S and O scale models. I used three of these on my holding tanks, drilling $\frac{1}{8}$ " diameter holes in the tops of the bottle caps to fit them in. The fittings are connected to each other by pieces of plastic soda straws. I spray painted the assembly green and installed it in the wood base, which I had painted gray to simulate concrete. I will probably cover the base with chipboard in the near future. The hose leading from the tanks to the railcar is a scrap of insulated single-strand 12 gauge copper wire, bent to shape. I will probably add more drip fittings to it in the future to add realism.



Branch Lines

The Golden Gate American Flyer Club

will host **Flyer Fest West 2014** on May 16, 17, and 18, 2014.

This is the largest gathering of **S** gaugers in the western United States. Activities begin on Friday at 10 am with a trip on BART, the Bay Area Rapid Transit system. We will leave Millbrae, near the San Francisco International Airport for a 20-minute ride into downtown San Francisco. From there we will board a cable car at the turntable on Market and Powell streets for a climb up Nob Hill. There, we will get off and visit the world famous *Municipal Railway Cable Car Museum* where we will see the huge wheeled machinery that pulls the cables up and down the hills. This is in the brick structure that houses the repair and maintenance department for the cable cars. From there we will board another cable car for a return to the turntable at the end of Powell Street. A short half-block walk will take us to *John's Grill* for a fabulous lunch. This is the home of The Maltese Falcon and Dashiell Hammet Society. The famous mystery writer hung out there. After lunch, we return via BART to the Millbrae station. In the evening we will gather at a top hotel a short distance away in San Mateo for a cocktail gathering to get acquainted and talk trains.

On Saturday, the real fun begins with the big convention swap, buy, and sell show. Several clinics are planned, including an *Explanation of Legacy* clinic, a re-wiring of *American Flyer smoke units* clinic and a clinic on repairing *American Flyer* reverse units. The Saturday location is the spacious Elks Lodge at 233 West 20th Avenue in San Mateo. Buyers and sellers will gather to deal in trains of our favorite gauge.

Saturday evening is not to be missed. We will have a marvelous dinner with a surprise guest speaker. It will include a silent auction along with a live auction; a display of rare Gilbert items; a display of Gilbert bashed items, and a raffle.

On Sunday there are planned several spectacular layout tours. *Paul Guaraglia's GREAT AMERICAN FLYER*, a 76-foot long pike will be open along with *Richard Ridgeway's* huge layout. Other layouts may be open as well.

We urge everyone near and far to enjoy a wonderful time in sunny California in May. Make San Francisco your vacation spot and take in a great **S gauge** convention. Register prior to February 28th and take advantage of a package deal that will include one banquet dinner and registration for \$150. It also includes a \$20 voucher for a discount with any vendor. A special convention car will be offered. It is very limited, so order it early.

A 4-foot table for sellers is \$10 and an 8-foot table is \$20. Registration is \$20. For more information on registration, the banquet, the cable car/BART/luncheon and the event car: Contact Don Mattheis at norcaltt@aol.com or Jake Jacobsen at nut4afrns@aol.com

L-R below are GGAFC members Bill Reichman, Mike Stanton, Don Gholson, Secretary John Dalton, Publicity Chair Al DiMatteo, 2014 President Don Mattheis and Treasurer Jake Jacobsen



Above and below: Paul Guaraglia's layout, The Great American Flyer Railroad.



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Manuscript Preparation Guidelines for Dispatch Authors

The **NASG Dispatch** wants to publish layout articles and how-to feature articles from any NASG member. Good quality photographs that accompany the article are necessary for publication.

What we need from you:

A text file (MS Word or similar, of 1,200 to 1,500 words, prepared with no special formatting, typefaces; colors, or symbols. That text length particularly applies to layout features; some how-to features may be shorter or even, on occasion, longer. Some basic style considerations that you should keep in mind:

1. Use caps and lower case for all text, including titles and sub-titles.
2. Use only a single space after the period at the end of a sentence.
3. Spell check your text file prior to sending it in.
4. If you refer to online Websites in your article, be sure to include (and double-check) the full Web address.

If you are writing a layout feature, keep in mind that you will be providing a word-and-picture tour of your layout for your readers. Tell them how your interest in S gauge developed and how the concept for your layout originated. Tell them about the things that you feel make your layout special. Include important technical details such as type of track used; minimum diameter of curves; the types of power and control systems used; brands of locomotives, rolling stock, accessories, and structures.

Don't be overly concerned with writing style, punctuation, etc., we'll take care of that. That is what editors do. Just make it a personal and informal account, in your own words, of everything and anything you want a visitor to know about you and your layout.

A good selection of quality photographs or other graphics. For layout features, about 10 or so images are usually selected to appear in the magazine. However, we like to have many more available to choose from. Some wide shots, some mid-range, and some close-up shots of individual features are desirable. Images must be high resolution. The easiest way to determine this is to set your camera for the least number of photos, or the highest resolution, however that might be designated for the brand of camera you are using. Digital cameras capable of 6+ megapixel images should be adequate. **On-camera flash should not be used.** The use of a tripod is strongly recommended. We look for photos that are evenly lighted, have sharp focus, and have good depth-of-field. They should have an easily distinguished primary subject. Do not crop your pictures. We will do that if necessary. If you are not doing the photography yourself, the photographer should receive credit.

A track diagram is preferred for all layout features. This diagram can be hand-drawn. Overall dimensions of the layout, length and width, should be noted on the diagram. Any major layout features should be labeled, especially if they are referred to in the text.

A photo of the author/builder is also needed. This can be a photo of the author or builder with anyone else he/she may care to include (spouse, child, friend, pet, mentor, etc.)

Author biographic information is needed for both layout and how-to features. For layout features we would like a couple of paragraphs. This can include anything that the author cares to reveal about himself or herself: career, other hobbies or interests, club affiliations, civic activities, education, etc. For how-to articles, one paragraph of information is usually adequate.

Captions for all the photos will be needed, but they can be written after the final images have been selected for publication. A thumbnail sheet of the selected images will be sent to the author so they can provide caption information.

Submitting the material:

The best way to submit your completed article is on a CD, sent by **USPS Priority Mail**. That puts everything in one place, and also provides a backup. If the track diagram is drawn on paper, place it in the same envelope, along with a printed copy of the text file.

If you do not have the use of a computer, you may submit your story as a typewritten manuscript, single sided. Photographs should be glossy finish, a minimum size of 4" x 6".

Send everything to:

Bill Pyper, Editor, NASG Dispatch,
PO Box 885, Salem, OR 97308-0885

If you prefer to use UPS or Fed Ex, address to:

Bill Pyper,
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410 Mill Street, #885
Salem, OR 97301

Be sure to retain a backup copy of anything and everything you send to us. We are not responsible for any materials that may be lost, and submitted materials are not normally returned to the author.

IMPORTANT: Please do not submit any photographs or articles that have been sent to other publications. This can cause copyright problems.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me at **dispatch@nasg.org**

Bill Pyper, Editor

New Products

Continued from page 11

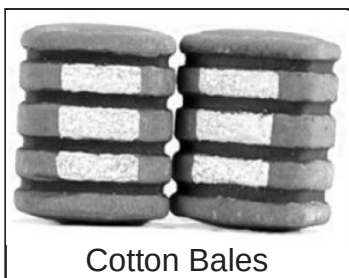
head itself to be smaller, so that there isn't quite as much flash to remove. If he can solve that, we, as customers, won't have to file it down. If he can't, then we will. The S-scale couplers will come unassembled, because he doesn't have the manpower to build them. The couplers are investment cast from 3D-printed waxes (the previous versions were spin-cast). Go to www.sergentengineering.com for updates.

Lehigh Valley Transit Decals?

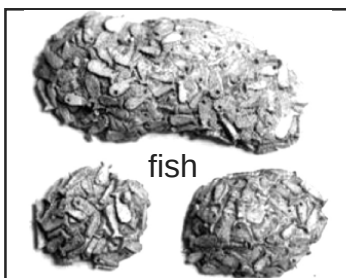
Ed Skuchas, of **Berkshire Car Shop**, has O-scale decals and artwork for the LVT C series freight express. If there is enough interest, he can produce them in S-scale as well. Contact Berkshire Car Shop and express your interest. E-mail to berkshirecarshop@comcast.net.

Various Detailing Parts

Model Tech Studios has released several more detailing parts for S-scale, including cotton bales for use in freight cars, trucks, or on docks. Interior radiators for building interiors, to keep your S-scale people warm, and a sawdust collection system for keeping your S-scale factory workers healthy.



Cotton Bales



fish

Model tech has also released a **roof-top venting** detailing set. Parts are painted and weathered, ready for installation. Also available are **piles of fish**, to complete your marine scene. See their complete line at www.modeltechstudios.com

Company Store



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Visit the **NASG Company Store** for this and other items of interest to NASG members. Visit the NASG website, www.nasg.org and click on **NASG Store** to see what is available and to download an order form. For more information Contact Roy Meissner, Storekeeper at: rmeissner@wi.rr.com

I-HOBBY EXPO October 1-4, 2013 by Will Holt

I-Hobby Expo is an annual trade show sponsored by the **Hobby Manufacturers Association**. It includes the radio control, plastic model kits, die cast and model railroad manufacturers. It was held October 1-4, 2013 at the Schaumburg Convention Center in the Chicago suburb of Schaumburg.

There were several products announcements of interest to S-gauge and 1:64 scale model railroaders.



MTH Electric Trains had pre-production samples of the former **S Helper Service** products on display. The 40-foot rebuilt box car, 40-foot American Car and Foundry wooden refrigerator car, the Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range U-25 70-Ton ore car and the Pullman-Standard

PS-2 two-bay covered hopper car are due to arrive in hobby shops December, 2013 through March 2014. Production samples of the **S-Trax** line of S gauge sectional track were on display. See more at www.mthtrains.com



Greenlight Collectibles will be adding several new 1:64 die cast vehicles to their line which will provide S scale model railroaders with items they have been wanting for quite some time. The releases will include both



contemporary and classic vehicles. For the first time, Greenlight is entering the medium-duty truck arena. An International Durastar 4400 straight truck will be available as a tow truck, car carrier and beverage truck. The Ford Bronco is coming in versions covering 1966 through 1977 and 1967 Chevrolet Impalas and Biscaynes will be available. For up-to-date cars, the 2013 Chrysler 300, 2013 Dodge Dart and the 2013 Chevrolet Cruze are in the works. They also have coming in 2014 travel trailers by Winnebago and classic Air Stream designs. During 2014 there will be several releases that feature New York City agencies. www.greenlightcollectibles.com is the website to check for updates. Click on News.

AW Auto World is entering the 1:64 die cast vehicle market. They have several series of classic automobiles on the market now. Their new products coming in 2014 include 60's and 70's station wagons and El Camino pickup trucks. Their website is www.autoworldstore.com

Tonkin Replicas, known to S model railroaders for their line of PEM and AHL trucks, formerly the products produced by Hartoy, has a license from Caterpillar Corporation to produce CAT construction equipment. The first releases in 1:64 will be coming early in 2014. **DHS Diecast** will be the exclusive distributor of these CAT models. www.dhscast.com

The World of S gauge by American Models



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