

THE DISPATCH



NOVEMBER
DECEMBER 2014

BILL'S BOILER WASH



National Model Railroad Month is upon us. I hope a few of you have made arrangements for holding an open house for others to see your trains and be impressed by the size and operation of S scale.

November is also a time for Thanksgiving. We should all be thankful that we are able to model railroad in the best scale: S. We should also thank all of those who have made this possible: our manufacturers, big and small. A lot of these folks do this without getting much in return.

November 30 is the end of the officer nomination period for the next election. If you haven't nominated your person of choice for one of the offices up for election, get moving! Make sure you have the approval of the nominee. Don't forget, you can nominate yourself. Offices up for election are the Executive Vice President, Secretary, and all the regional Vice Presidents. The office of Secretary must be filled, as our current Secretary will not run again (he has been Secretary several times). Nomination forms can be pulled from the website, www.nasg.org or can be obtained from me, Bill Pyper, or your regional VP. You can also send in a nomination not using the form, just be sure to include the person's name, what office he is being nominated for, and a brief summary of his qualifications. Verify that you have gotten this person's consent and sign with your own name. Send your nomination to Jamie

Bothwell, Secretary/Elections Chair before November 30th. Nominations postmarked after that date will not be honored.

Jeff Madden has offered to take Lee Johnson's place as the gatherer of S articles for the Perles Award. This is a difficult task because of the number of possible media to peruse. Please give Jeff a hand by letting him know of any qualifying articles you might see, particularly if they are in a limited circulation publication, like the historical societies' magazines. We have also expanded the type of media the award covers to include on-line "E-zines," so get that information to Jeff also. The time frame for the articles to be considered is from May 1 to April 30 of the next year, and Jeff can use help getting articles going back to May 1, 2014 which he might not have seen.

In a related development, we have seen the demise of Carstens Publishing, but the possible launch of a new internet S scale magazine. Whatever comes along, a big thank you to Greg Klein and Will Holt for working with Carstens and the manufacturers of S scale to make the RMC inside front cover ad space a success. Of course, we also wish the best to the owners and employees of Carstens and thank you for many years of supporting the model railroad hobby. Now we get to see what **White River Productions**, the new owners of **RMC** and **R&R** will do. I wish them all the success they can handle.

December is traditionally the time for the hobby to come to life. I hope that everyone has a chance to have a railroad running for the holidays!

However you celebrate this time of year, best wishes to everyone for the best of holidays and a happy new year!

— Bill Winans

On the Conductor's Clipboard

This is the first issue of The Dispatch to be published on the new schedule. The reason for the change in the schedule is so that advertisers can get their messages out in time for the appropriate holidays and celebrations. So I encourage you to do your Christmas shopping with our advertisers. I know that most of the readers of the Dispatch are men, so gents let me suggest that you leave this issue laying around where it can be seen. Maybe even folded open to pages 28 and 29.

I hope that you liked the October issue. Because of the date change, I am writing this about a week before I will actually see a printed copy. I really like the cover that I did for October. Gerry Evans sent me a great picture to work with. It enabled me to do something that I should have done from the beginning: match the cover photo or photos to the type style that I am using for the headings inside.

With that in mind, I am making a request for specific photos to use on the covers of upcoming issues of The Dispatch. In the next year I want to use the styles and color schemes of the Santa Fe (not BNSF), Southern Pacific Black Widow style, Great Northern, Genesee & Wyoming, Conrail, and Amtrak. If anyone has any suggestions for others, please send them to me along with pictures. The important thing to remember for pictures is good, sharp focus.

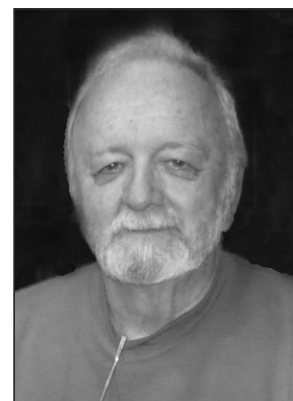
I'm more than a little surprised that more people haven't taken advantage of the free classified ads. I thought that more people would be buying, selling and trading used S gauge equipment. See page 30 for details. The price is right. You can't beat free!

In the October, 2013 issue of the Dispatch, the first one that I edited, I pointed out that this is your magazine. I am just the editor. In order for the Dispatch to be interesting and relevant to all members, it is

necessary for members to contribute articles about the hobby. During the past year we have published many great articles contributed by members.

One area in which we have fallen short is **Product Reviews**. Knowing what your peers think of a piece of equipment or accessory can be invaluable when deciding what to buy. Much of what we buy for our layouts can be pretty expensive, so it is helpful to know what experiences others have had with different products. Send in some reviews. Please.

— Bill Pyper





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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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Gerry Evans *Contributor*
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Ed Kirstatter *Contributor*
Bob Nicholson *Contributor*
Peter Vanvliet *Contributor*

DEADLINES for articles and advertising are the first day of January, March, May, July, September and November respectively.

THE DISPATCH MANIFEST

Volume 38, Number 6, November-December 2014

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Bill Hutton's Christmas layout. Photograph by Roy Inman.
Both men are members of the Kansas City S Gaugers.

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NASG Web Site
<http://www.nasg.org>

NASG Website Director, Peter Vanvliet: webmaster@nasg.org

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NEW PRODUCTS

Scenery Unlimited is offering an S gauge reefer brilliantly decorated for the Arizona Brewing Company. "Chief of them all."

These great S cars feature two road numbers: 2440 and 2442. They are ready to run with hi-rail wheels and couplers for \$59.95 or \$66.95 with scale wheels. Add \$13.95 per order for shipping and handling. Two pair of Kadee couplers can be added for \$7.30. The carbody is ABS plastic with steel wheels. It has opening Ice Hatches plus metal ladder rungs and sill steps.

You can order at 708-366-7763 or info@sceneryunlimited.net or you can mail your order to 7236 West Madison Street, Forest Park, Illinois 60130. Illinois residents add 9% sales tax. Go to our website www.sceneryunlimited.net for more products.



The Southwest Division of TTOS and the Nor-Cal Division of TCA present the **2014 Cal-Stewart Candy Cane Peppermint LIFESAVERS® Tank Car**. American Flyer S-Gauge Car 6-41018 with die-cast trucks.

A big **Thank You** to Mark Kelly, club member from Pennsylvania, for discovering a great looking Holiday Seasonal roll of LifeSavers on which to base this year's car. We thought we were finished with the series, but with sharp eyed people like Mark out there . . . who knows! He found the LifeSavers flavor in a local restaurant and passed it on to us. Also, a big thanks to the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co. staff for providing the original artwork for the car.

The Cal-Stewart Meets began over 40 years ago as co-operative activities of TCA's Nor-Cal Division and TTOS' Southwestern Division. The November Ontario, California Meet (visit www.cal-stewart.org) is open to all Toy Train, Model Train and Toy Enthusiastes and is the largest club sponsored public train and toy meet west of the Rocky Mountains. Nor-Cal TCA sponsors the Spring Meet in Northern California. See www.norcaltca.com for information on the Spring Meet. For updates on estimated delivery dates, see our website, www.cal-stewart.org and click on **Cal-Stewart Souvenir Cars**. Contact Bruce Lazarus, 4858 Dunman Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91364 with any other questions. Email: cars@cal-stewart.org; Phone: (818) 225-1710. Order Deadline: February 28, 2015. Approximate delivery: October, 2015. You can download an order form at www.cal-stewart.org

Both clubs deeply appreciate your support of the Cal-Stewart Car Program and the Cal-Stewart Meets.

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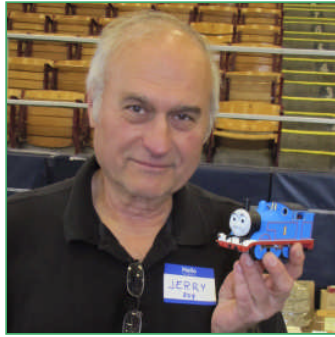
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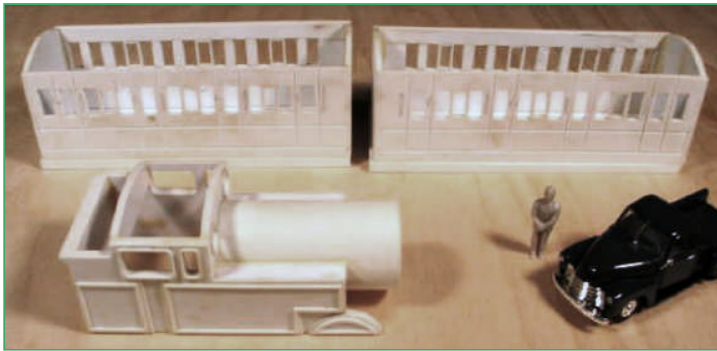
ThomaS

By Jerry Poniatowski

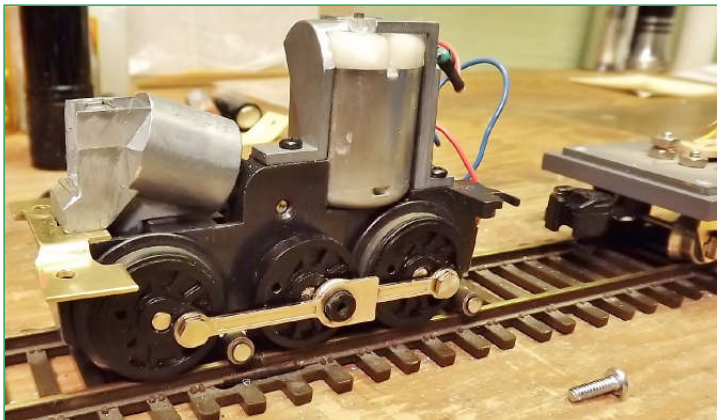
What would the A. C. Gilbert Company be making now if they were still around? For a number of years, little railroaders have taken to Thomas and his friends, and S gaugers have had to contend with very limited conversions or scratch building. I chose the latter for my Thomas.



The project began at least 10 years ago, but wasn't a priority so the project proceeded in spurts with long periods of taking up space in the to do box. The birth of our first grandson finally gave me the reason to finish the project. Using a catalog photo of the O gauge Thomas for proportions, and a standard width of 10' as a baseline, I scaled everything to S.

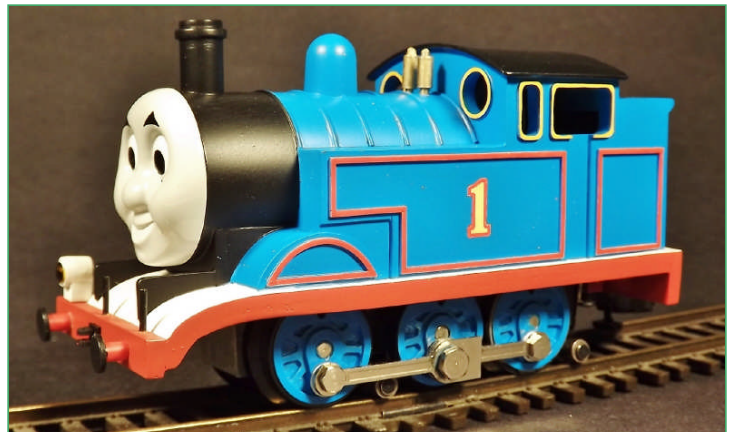
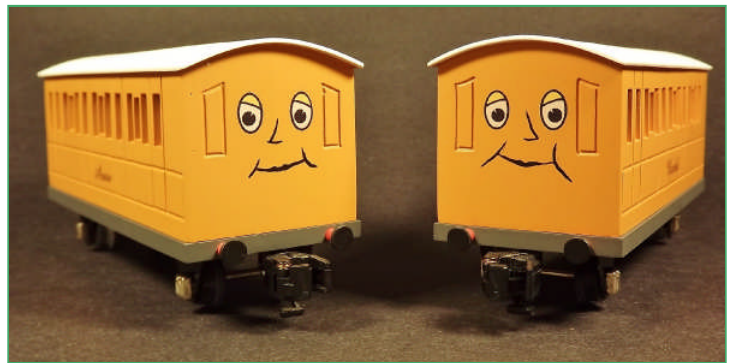
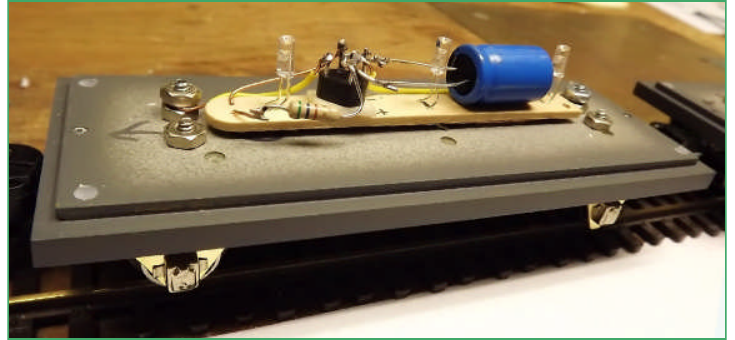


Sheet styrene was cut, bent and cemented into various shapes. The boiler is a sheet of styrene that was submerged in boiling water, and then wrapped around a broom handle. A cheap Thomas floor toy supplied the face. A Lionel-Flyer Docksider frame was severely cut to fit in the body shell while retaining the chuff mechanism. The smoke unit had to be removed, however, and the motor mounting bracket had to have the corners rounded to fit. Because the locomotive shell is so small, a reverse unit would be a very tight fit, so it presently runs on DC only. Warm LEDs provide the directional lighting effects.



The Annie and Clarabel cars were made in similar way as the locomotive shell. Their door lines and fluted details were added by using a small ball bit in my drill press running at slow speed. Since there are only four wheels on each car, the trucks were hand made from sheet brass using journal boxes

from stamped steel postwar Flyer trucks for detail and original Flyer wheels and axles. With only two wheels per car supplying power, each car has three LEDs in a circuit with a capacitor to keep them steadily illuminated. Extra weight was also added. One of the hardest things to find was the correct color for the locomotive! The Annie and Clarabel cars were painted Southern Pacific Daylight Orange by Floquil which proved to be a perfect match. The blue is Light Blue from Tamaya.



Decals were made on my computer, including the eyes for Annie and Clarabel. Since this is an interpretation of a "might have been made" item, contemporary Flyer Docksider couplers were used. The train made its debut at the recent Spring S Spree, and even though there were no kids present on the Friday I was there, it was a hit with many of the older kids. So, how about it Lionel? An S gauge Thomas might prove to be a hit with S Gaugers, like the Polar Express seems to be. I'll even allow your Product Development division to borrow it if you want! That's how the Gilbert Frontiersman set came about long ago, but that's another story.

CONTACTING THE WEBMASTER



By Peter Vanvliet, Webmaster

I have recently added a new feature to the NASG web site. Before I added this feature, the only way to contact me was via e-mail at webmaster@nasg.org. This works fine, and continues to be available. However, some people don't find e-mail convenient, or have a hard time with attaching files to an e-mail message.

Contact Via e-mail

To make it easier to contact me, and especially to send me files, I have created the new **Contact the Webmaster** page on the NASG web site <http://www.nasg.org/contact.php>. You can get to the page via the small envelope icon that is shown on the lower right-hand side of nearly every page (below). The page, at the time of this writing, consists of three sections. The first section states the e-mail address you can use to contact me. This works as before, and nothing has changed there.



Message Via Form

The other sections on that page are new. The second section makes it possible for you to send me an e-mail message by filling out a simple form and pressing the **Send** button (see figure 2). This does the exact same thing as sending an e-mail message, but it might be easier or more convenient for some. The form requires your name, so that I know with whom I am communicating, your e-mail address, so that I can reply to your message, and the topic of the e-mail (a simple drop-down list from which you can choose), and your message itself.

A screenshot of the contact form. It includes fields for 'Your Name' (John Smith), 'Your e-mail address' (jsmith@yahoo.com), 'Topic' (Clubs), and 'Message' (Here's some updated information about our club...). At the bottom, there is a CAPTCHA question 'Answer this: 3 + 4 =' with the answer '7' entered. A 'Send' button is visible. A note at the bottom states: 'Note that the "Answer this" field requires the correct answer, which we use to prevent automated submission of spam (i.e. it is used to make sure that a human being is submitting this form).'.

There is an additional field which requires the answer to a very simple mathematical question. This is needed because hackers or spammers like to use forms to overwhelm the webmaster of a web site. They tend to do this with automated programs or scripts. This simple mathematical question virtually eliminates that possibility. When you have filled in all of the fields, you can press the **Send** button, which will then forward the information in the fields to me. You will see a confirmation page acknowledging the message, or a red error message in the form should one of the fields not have been filled in.

Send Files Via Form

The third section on the page is an entirely new ability that has been added to the web site. It allows for a very convenient way for you to send me your file (see figure 3; screen capture taken using Firefox browser and it will look slightly different using Internet Explorer). It can be any computer file, such as a photo, a Word or PDF document, a convention presentation file, etc. You can do that via e-mail as well, but sometimes your Internet Service Provider puts a restriction on the number or size of files that you can send via e-mail (due to bandwidth limitation or storage space associated with your e-mail account). The form on the Contact the Webmaster page allows you to upload a file up to 40MB (megabytes) in size. If this file limitation becomes too restrictive in the future, I can make settings changes to our web server to increase this number. For now the form only supports uploading one file at a time, but you can return back to the form to send another file. This also makes it possible for you to associate a different comment with each file, which is a tremendous help to me.

A screenshot of the file upload form. It includes fields for 'Your Name' (John Smith), 'Your e-mail address' (jsmith@yahoo.com), 'Recommended For' (Product Gallery), 'Select the File' (Browse... IMG_9828.JPG), 'File Size' (2 MB), and 'Description' (Here's a photo of the SHS box car that I mentioned before.). At the bottom, there is a CAPTCHA question 'Answer this: 2 + 5 =' with the answer '7' entered. A 'Send' button is visible. A note at the bottom states: 'Note that the "Answer this" field requires the correct answer, which we use to prevent automated submission of spam (i.e. it is used to make sure that a human being is submitting this form).'.

As with the other form, your basic contact information is needed so that I know with whom I am communicating. There is also a drop-down selection from which you can choose for which section of the web site the file is intended (or you can select **General Use**). The form has a button, called **Browse**, which you need to press to select the file that you want to send to me. It presents the standard file browsing window that you will need to navigate to find the file that you want to send. When you select the file, the web page will determine if the file is too big. If it is, you will be notified immediately. The file size will be shown on the web page. Be sure to fill in all the fields in the form. The **Send** button will be disabled until all fields have been filled. You may need to press the tab key to move to the next field to have the last one be validated. The reason why the form works that way is because once you press the form's **Send** button, the file that you have selected will be uploaded to the server, even if the other fields in the form weren't correctly filled in. Again, all of these restrictions are in place to defeat hackers.

Continued on the next page

MODEL RAILROADING IS HISTORY

Model Railroading at any age and in any scale is all about HISTORY!

By Jeff Madden, Editor Emeritus

Many WWII model railroaders around today grew into the hobby during a specific time frame; 1946-1960. These would be the pre-Boomers, the Boomers, and the just past Boomers.

The toy trains that they got were models of the 1930s, '40s and '50s. When most of us were getting into the hobby during the 1950s and early 1960s, the real railroads still resembled classic railroading dating back to 1900. Steam was still around in 1959 and even then, steam excursions were extremely popular. Some railroads had an operable steamer or two lurking in their roundhouses – the Reading Rambles for example.

Encroaching diesels were colorful and new. Caboosees still hung on the rear of almost all freights. The same 40' boxcars and reefers of the last 20 years still plied the rails. There were still turntables, coaling towers, depots, switch towers to see as we grew into the hobby. Passenger train networks, run by the railroads themselves, were still a part of everyday life, although declining in numbers. The skeletonized Amtrak network didn't start until 1971, years into most of our modeling beginnings.

The layouts we visited in the '50s and '60s, and into the '70s, were built by modelers older than us who had their modeling baptism in the '30s, '40s and early '50s. Thus we younger modelers automatically backdated our perspectives to an earlier time. The products available as well reflected earlier eras.

What I'm saying here is that we modelers who cut our teeth in the 1950s and 1960s could associate the models available with HISTORIC eras of even earlier decades. We developed the great love of what most of us called the Transition Era — 1945-1971. In those days the modeler and the manufacturers had a over-riding interest in steam, early diesel, pre-Amtrak railroad passenger cars, cabooses, shorter freight cars. The 40' freight cars were ideal for tight radius curves.

Just like other trends with the Boomer population, we model railroaders dragged our transition era modeling even to current times – we kept our history alive.

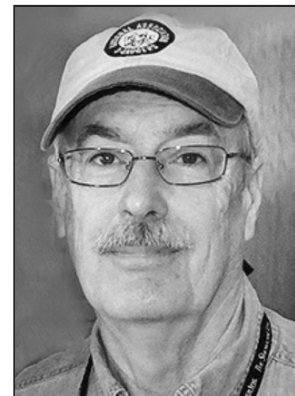
But younger generation modelers are creeping gradually away from the popularity of the transition era for obvious reasons. They didn't grow up when we did. They have seen only diesels, Amtrak, right of ways barren of many lineside railroad structures, Freds instead of cabooses, longer freight cars, container trains, etc. We older modelers never saw RoadRailers, Amtrak, stack trains or ditch lights when we started out.

Thus, the younger generation often models what they see, what they experience. Of course, this is great for the hobby as it spurs interest younger folks and stimulates manufacturers to come out with new items.

As a result, the younger modeler, ages 20-50, have so many more choices of what era to model than we did. The products offered, especially in the most popular scales (HO, N and 3-Rail), are almost limitless. This then brings about the need for the younger generations to learn some railroading HISTORY! I think the younger folks will welcome lessons in historic perspective in order to be able to better make logical choices as to what "historic" era to model. I'm sure they are confused by

all the rolling stock available, even in S, in the catalogs and hobby shops. Heck, most of these newer modelers never saw any passenger trains except for Amtrak or VIA.

In my opinion all model railroaders model History — they can't help it, even if they don't know it! For example, if a person in his thirties started a layout in 2000 modeling only with the newest rolling stock available at the time — by the time he gets a layout well underway his rolling stock is already dated. And, there's usually a time lapse before the newest real railroad rolling stock finds its way into model form. Ah, the unintended consequences. He's now modeling a historical period, if only a decade behind.



Education is the key! Younger guys or newcomers need to pick an era of interest and stick to it. More experienced modelers need to educate the historical perspective via articles, clinics, websites on what each era has to offer and what the manufacturers provide for each. The best model railroad layouts keep history in mind whether modeling a prototype or free-lancing.

While I'm at it, a philosophy of mine: I believe that any model railroad, whether it be a home layout, club layout or traveling modular, looks better to the viewer when a historic period is adhered to. A UP 4-6-6-4 Challenger just doesn't look right hauling a modern stack train. An SD70 looks a little strange pulling a train of 40' billboard reefers trailing a caboose. Clubs, especially, can present a better historical perspective by running just one era at a time. We can educate ourselves and the public about historic railroading.

CONTACTING THE WEBMASTER *continued*

When you press the **Send** button, the text will change to **Uploading** to let you know that the web site is now receiving the file. How long it takes to upload the file you have selected depends on the file size and your Internet connection speed. The larger the file or the slower your Internet connection speed, the longer it is going to take. Be patient, and you may just want to walk away from it. Do not close your browser or go to another web site, because then the transfer will be terminated or fail to complete.

Once the upload has completed, you will be notified with a confirmation page. I will then receive an e-mail message that notifies me of the file you have uploaded. The file is actually stored in a directory on the NASG web site server that is not accessible via the public web site, so it is safe and secure. I will then download the file from the server to my computer for further processing and possible inclusion on the NASG web site.

You can always contact me via e-mail, but I hope that these extra options make it even easier for you. I really appreciate all the contributions that you have been sending me. Please keep them coming. We have lots of space on our web site server, so don't be shy! Web site tidbit: we have 3GB (3,000MB) available, with just under 1GB being used right now.

Jim Bezek's Christmas Layout

Jim Bezek, of west central Pennsylvania, has a very unique Christmas layout. It is about equal parts S hi-rail and 3-rail O gauge. The S is primarily American Flyer and the O is a mixture of American Flyer, Lionel, and Ives. Although this layout is quite large, 13'8" x 13'8", Jim only puts it up for the Christmas season. During this time he welcomes many local visitors. Youngsters are given the throttle of the train of their choice, closely supervised by Jim. M&Ms, plain and peanut, are provided for guests. One of the original visitors stated, "Can't watch trains without M&Ms." The following is the story of his layout, in his own words. — *Bill Pyper*

In 1998 the 2-train platform went up in the living room, around the tree. Every year the platform got bigger and the tree got smaller. Eventually, no tree, all trains. A living room full of 7 trains and a trolley. The trains all run in 40-foot loops. No switches, all constant flow and a lot of noise.



All 8 run at one time . . . 6 to 10 hours run time per day, depending on the number of visitors.

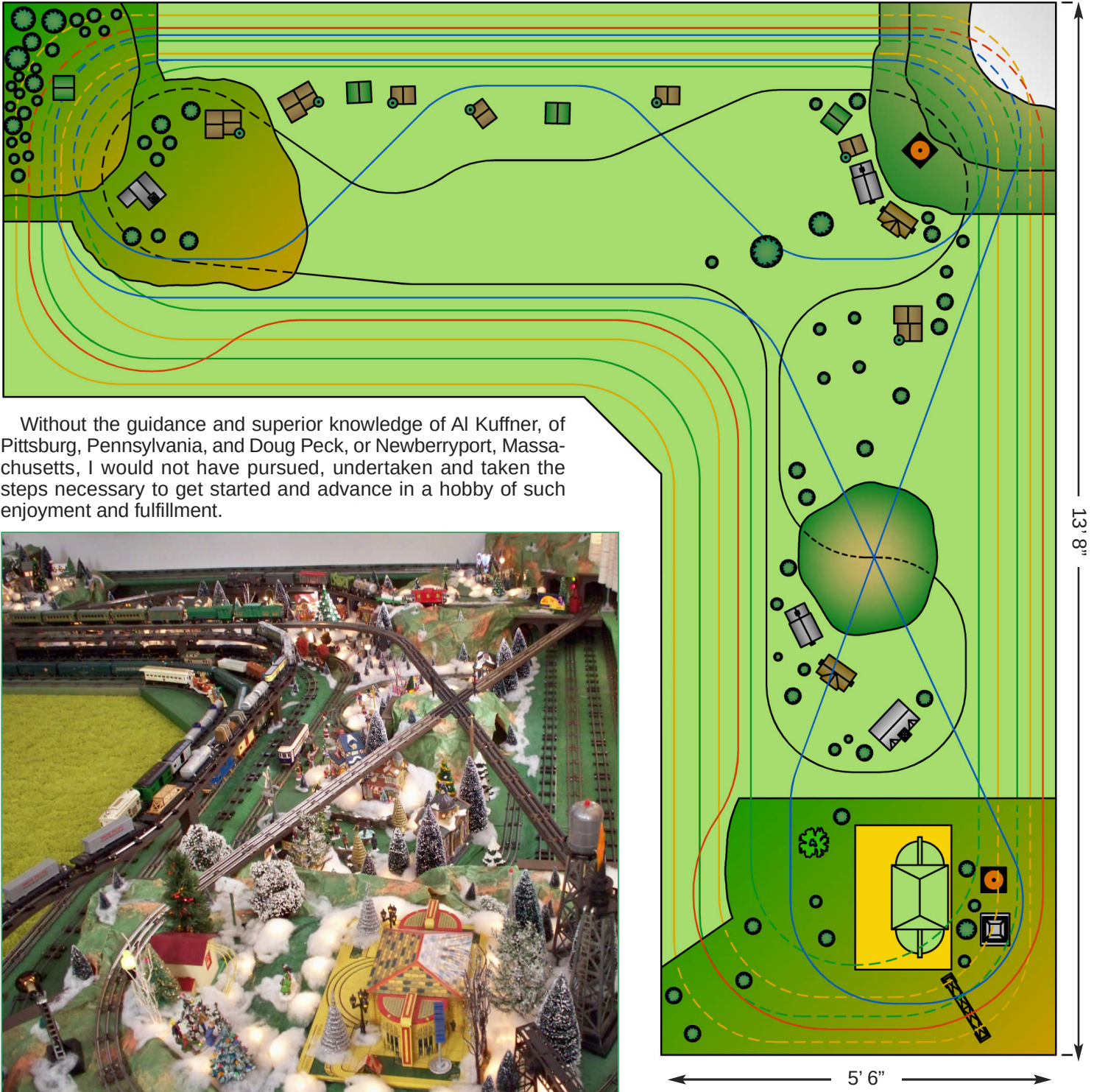
A poll is taken among the visitors to see which is the most popular or favorite for that season.



The entire lighting system of the display is remote controlled. The button is offered to a volunteer of the visiting group who has the honors to "light it up." This opening segment has become very popular over time.

Dedicated returning visitors can come from as far as 100 miles away. This display and information is for the enjoyment and benefit of the people who visit. The important reason for this display, and the true meaning of this effort is for people to witness within their lifetime an era which is unique and exciting for all ages, past, present and future. I do not own these trains, the trains own me as the caretaker of their future.

13' 8"



Without the guidance and superior knowledge of Al Kuffner, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and Doug Peck, of Newberryport, Massachusetts, I would not have pursued, undertaken and taken the steps necessary to get started and advance in a hobby of such enjoyment and fulfillment.



Assembly begins the last week of October and is usually completed one week before Christmas. The display is shown and operated through the month of January.

LEGEND:

- S GAUGE—UPPER
- S GAUGE—LOWER
- O GAUGE—UPPER
- O GAUGE—LOWER
- TROLLEY

HIDDEN TRACK IS DOTTED

Drawing by Joe Kimber

Continued on next page

I ain't got no time to write an article!

An editorial by Jeff Madden, Editor Emeritus

I'm sure most of you have considered writing an article for our S magazines or other model publications. But, you whine, "If I only had the time I would."

Well, you probably do have the time and don't really know it!

What I do is to have a 6" x 8" steno pad in my car and one or two around the house. Here are some ideas for you to "find" the time to write that Meet an S Gauger for the Dispatch, that layout feature for the S Gaugian or whatever S based article for the non-S pubs. The Dispatch can always use a Meet an S Gauger, how-to or layout feature type article. Don Heimburger is always open for articles as well. And there's always Model Railroader, Classic Toy Trains, the NMRA Magazine, the Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette as well as some on-line pubs including our own S Sig.

Here's what to do: First, get a couple of steno pads, keep one at work (if not retired), keep one or two in the house, and keep one in your car. Of course, some of you folks savvy with

electronics will want to use your iPads, Lap Tops or whatever the current gadget is instead of steno pads. That's fine too, and it eliminates retyping, yet there still is something to just jotting down ideas using plain old pen and paper.

When I was working I used to find a little time here and there to at least jot down article ideas, but more often I wrote many of my Dispatch editorials and articles while sitting in my car at lunch time or when railfanning on the weekends. At home you can eliminate the bathroom as a good quiet location to write articles – why? Well, the "library", as I call it, should be reserved for the latest model magazines or S catalog.

The best time to write at home is to do so while watching TV. There are so many commercials during movies, sports programming, etc., that gives you plenty of time to write. The other prime location for writing articles is in your car, especially if you're alone at lunch time or out railfanning. I do this often, having left my wife at a mall to do some shopping, especially if she's clothes shopping!!

When trackside, I just turn the scanner on, have cameras ready, and just sit back and scribble away on the steno pad. I use just one side at a time reserving the flip side for additions to the article I figure out later on. Since you're often away from reference material for spellings, names, dates, etc., just leave a blank for these. You want to keep the flow going, so with blanks you can go back and fill in later.

Later you can fill in the details, do a little re-write and then pull out the pages of an article and staple them together. What I do is then file in folders for future use. When you actually get around to sending it to a publication, re-read it, and then just type it in Word or some program, save it to your computer (these usually have Spell Check too), then email it to the editor. Of course, with any article unless it's a straight editorial or letter to the editor, you'll need to send along some photos and drawings to illustrate it. Digital cameras and computer scanners have really made this task much easier.

Most publications will take slides or prints, but digital is the most convenient for editors these days. The February, 2014 Dispatch has a very good article by Brooks Stover on using a digital camera for model layout photos. Tips for preparing an article for the Dispatch are also available on the web site at nasg.org/Dispatch/Guidelines.

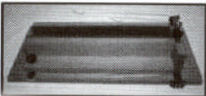
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Jim Bezek's Christmas Layout *continued* . . .

To achieve the maximum amount of tracks and trains in the available space took alot of planning and work. All aspects of this Christmas layout were done in house. Radii were hand bent to maintain equal distribution and clearance of 1 1/2" between tracks. All continuous straight sections were laid to a mason line or a plumb rule. Trains will run smoother and more efficiently with this method. All clearances were checked and double-checked for safety. My motto is: "they all run, or not at all." Believe me, they all run at one time. No switches, just alot of continuous motion for the guests. All track is held down with screws. All track is cleaned and treated before being installed. All track is tested with a voltmeter before proceeding to the next loop. Below is a roster of what is run on this layout.

Track #1: American Flyer Pre War Electric/Freight 7 car consist
Track #2: American Flyer S Gauge Northern Passenger Set . 8 car consist
Track #3: American Flyer Pre War Electric/Freight 6 car consist
Track #4: American Flyer S Gauge 312 Pennsy Coal Train . . 8 car consist
Track #5: American Flyer S Gauge 370/371 Freight 11 car consist
Track #6: American Flyer Pre War Electric/Passenger 5 car consist
Track #7: Lionel Pre War 259E Freight 5 car consist
Track #8: Town Trolley

Of the above list, The American Flyer Northern and the Lionel 259E are originals. All the others are eBay orphans, restored and modified.

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Piedmont S Gaugers Holiday Display

By Adria Focht,
Director and Curator,
Kings Mountain Historical Museum,
Kings Mountain, North Carolina

After eleven consecutive years, the annual model train display put on by the **Piedmont S Gaugers** at Kings Mountain Historical Museum has become a not-to-be-missed holiday tradition for many families throughout the region and the highlight of the year for the local train enthusiasts, young and old. For many folks, it just wouldn't be the holidays without the trains.



By October, a buzz arises in our community as we begin to hear a popular question, "When are the trains coming?" The Museum presents several other exhibits throughout the year in addition to the trains display, but the trains consistently bring in our highest daily visitation, and markedly the most children we see all year. The exhibit opens the weekend before Thanksgiving and typically runs Tuesday through Saturday 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday from 1 to 4 pm, closing the first week of January. This is the longest run of the eight or so setups the Piedmont S Gaugers display throughout the year, and it requires a tremendous amount of commitment from the club members to setup and to maintain over the seven weeks it's open. Bill Ware, a local member of the club and the Coordinator for this display, is faithfully present for every moment of this lengthy run, and is affectionately known to the local children as "Mr. Bill." Many of the kids will tell you that the "train men" are their favorite part of the exhibit, and when you see them playing with the trains together, it's easy to see why.

Every year, the Museum clears the main exhibit floor, and over the course of one Saturday ten members of the Piedmont S Gaugers completely transform the space, carefully adding details of the scenery around the track over the following week until we open the exhibit. The Museum then adds a variety of exhibit material that changes annually around a theme. Last year, the exhibit was titled **Toys, Games & TRAINS**; while the emphasis is definitely on the trains, we also included antique toys and games such as classic cowboy memorabilia, doll houses, marbles, and board games. Several static model train displays were also on exhibit, including a train wreck scene that was very popular with the little ones. Most of the material we exhibit is either loaned or donated to us from local folks, which really makes this a community exhibit. We then top off this annual exhibit by adding holiday decorations such as Christmas trees and a fireplace vignette to add a holiday backdrop for capturing photos and videos of the whole family as they tour the train display.

Visitors of all ages are delighted as they explore the miniature snow-covered scenes lining the tracks, and discover the interactive features. Each year the layout is a little different, with some recurring highlights that folks come back for year after year. Of course the most quintessential feature of this setup are the two S Gauge model trains that zoom past each other along the large oval track, switched out regularly with various models from the club members' collections, including original American Flyer, S-Helper, and American Models.

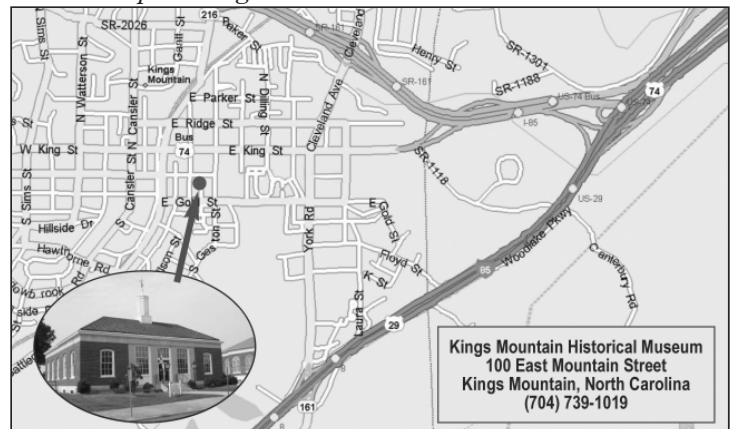
Our "regulars" who come day after day are excited to see what's new on the tracks: steam engines that chug out puffs of cedar-scented smoke, sleek diesel designs, and train cars running the gamut from passenger cars to freight cars to "Christmas cars" hauling things like wrapped presents, reindeer, Christmas trees, and candy canes.

Next to the trains, the most indispensable feature of this set up is arguably the mailbag pickup, shown on page 12. In addition to instantly enchanting viewers with the quick exchange of one miniature mailbag for another, this part of the display allows us to draw the connection to Kings Mountain's rich railroad history. Our Museum's main exhibit space is located in a 1939 Post Office building, so the history of mail service is also important to our narrative. Located next to the mailbag pickup feature is an historic photograph of a real mailbag hanging on a catcher arm by the railroad tracks. Many folks can still describe the experience of watching the trains whisk away the mailbags in downtown Kings Mountain. The Museum also honors the instrumental role of rail transit in the development of our region by displaying local historic railroad memorabilia with this exhibit. Last year it included a collection of railroad lanterns, a railroad switch marker and switch key, and railway uniform effects from B. M. Ormand, a local Conductor for the Southern Railway.

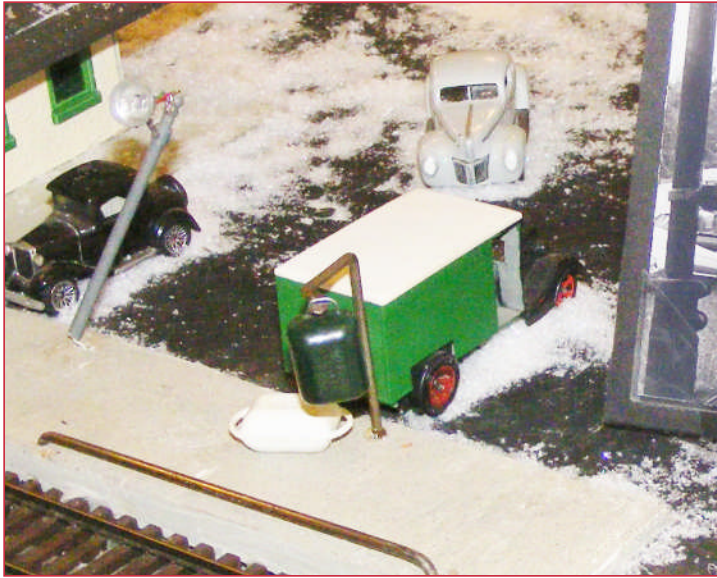


Above: "Mr. Bill," Bill Ware, Piedmont S-gaugers coordinator for the holiday display.

Below: Map to Kings Mountain Historical Museum.



Piedmont S Gaugers Holiday Display



Above and Below: The mailbag pickup attracts viewers with its quick exchange of one miniature mailbag for another.

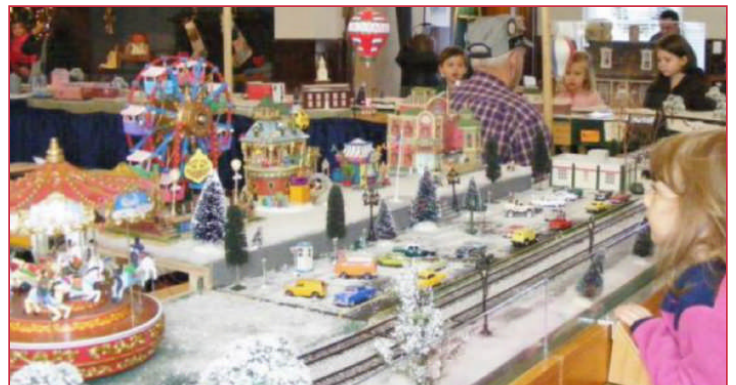


Another popular feature of the model train display last year was the carnival scene, below right, where visitors could operate a carousel, a Ferris wheel, a balloon ride with Santa, a toy shop, and my personal favorite, a chocolate factory, each supplying its own whimsical music. There was also a miniature winter wonderland where visitors could start a snowball fight, make ice skaters skate around a rink, and push sledders down a snowy hill. Added to that were some hot air balloons, a farm scene, several streetscapes, a church and cemetery, a bike shop, a scene of fire fighters extinguishing a house fire, and of course, a couple of bells and whistles. The setup is so detailed, there was something new to discover every time I looked at it.

A signature event that's become tradition with this exhibit is a special night run of the trains presented after the town's annual Christmas parade, with the Museum's lights turned low so that the lights on the display really pop. We pair this with candlelight tours by costumed interpreters of our early 1800s log house on the Museum Commons, and the stage is set for Christmas nostalgia.

The exhibit offers many opportunities for cross-generational connections to be made. Parents and grandparents reminisce with the kids about by-gone Christmas mornings and the toys, games, and trains that characterized their childhood.

Then there is the connection being made that will draw the next generation into the model trains hobby as the younger visitors play "Junior Conductor" with the train club members. When you see a little boy wearing his "plays with trains" shirt interacting with a train club member wearing his "still plays with trains" shirt, it's easy to imagine that the boy will one day carry on this tradition for future generations.





Seeing the faces of the little ones light up as they explore the train display brings a special kind of magic to this time of year, and the exhibit has a way of making children of us all.

If you're in the area, we invite you to visit this annual exhibit at the Kings Mountain Historical Museum, 100 East Mountain Street, in Kings Mountain, North Carolina, just a short drive from Charlotte. You can also check out our Facebook page to see more photos of all the fun that we had last year.



DCC DECODERS

Where do I find out about DCC decoders suitable for S? By Dick Karnes

I was asked this question at the 2014 NASG Convention last July. The question sort of surprised me because:

1. Decoders are scale-less.
2. This subject has been covered countless times in the general model railroad press.

Nonetheless, given many S people's relative insularity, it's perhaps a good idea to present the only two things you really need to know in order to select a decoder.

All you need are two numbers: wheel-slip current and stall current. For these measurements you will need a short length of track separate from your layout, a 12-volt DC power supply, and an ammeter.

Hook up both the power supply and the ammeter to your track, place your locomotive on the track, grab the locomotive by its rear coupler (being careful not to lift up or press down), and turn on the full 12 volts. Your drivers should slip. Observe the ammeter reading, turn off the power, and record the driver-slip ammeter reading.

If the drivers stall instead of slipping, you either have traction tires or you have too much weight in your locomotive. More on these possible outcomes shortly.

Now repeat the test, but this time press down on the locomotive so as to prevent the drivers from moving. Quickly note the ammeter reading, turn off the power as soon as possible, and record the ammeter reading.

All decoders are rated for continuous operation as well as for spike amperage. Choose a decoder whose continuous rating equals or exceeds your driver-slip amps, and whose spike amperage equals or exceeds your stall amps. That's all there is to it.

If your locomotive drivers stall instead of slipping when you do your first test, select a decoder whose continuous amperage rating exceeds your stall amps. However, if your loco does not have traction tires, you should really reduce the loco weight until your drivers slip instead of stalling. The extra weight you will have removed contributes nothing to pulling power. In fact this excess weight has reduced the loco's pulling power. Once you do this, then you should use the two-step process described above to select your decoder.

Where to find decoder specs? Any of the reputable DCC dealers, whether hobby shop or online, have this information independent of scale. Some decoders come with plugs for specific model locos (mostly HO and N), but you can choose one of these and simply cut off the plug. The dealer I always consult is Litchfield Station, www.litchfieldstation.com/1412 North Central Avenue, Avondale, Arizona 85323, (623) 298-7355. All the decoders on their website, and there are lots of them, are accompanied by the two amperage numbers that you will need.

Note that I have not covered sound. If you are interested in a single decoder that supports sound as well as motor control, choose one that replicates the sound that you want while still conforming to the two amperage criteria. If you want to use a sound-only decoder, separate from your motor-control decoder, choose one without any regard for the motor-control amperage criteria.

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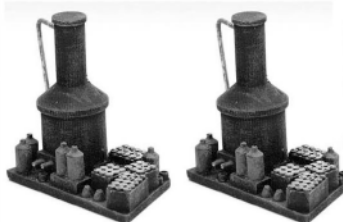
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PRODUCT REVIEW

EVEREST COUNTRY STORE

By Gerry Evans, NASG Central Vice President

The Everest Country Store was originally produced by **Banta Modelworks**. It is now produced by **The Building & Structure Co. by Commercial Scale Models**.

The **EVEREST COUNTRY STORE** kit includes laser-cut plywood sheets; laser-cut basswood clapboard sheets; various pieces of basswood dimension lumber; laser-cut doors, windows and dormer trim; pre-cut window glazing; metal roofing; silkspan roofing, front door screen; rivets for doorknobs; plastic tube for a chimney and a set of paper signs. Also included is a convenient template for laying out the basswood carport roof supports. The numerous white metal castings include but are not limited to a park bench, finials, brooms, shovels, milk cans, trash cans, miscellaneous containers, gas pump, water pump, a pallet, tires and other assorted items. The footprint is 5 1/2" x 6 1/2" not including the gas pump.

The directions are well written and follow in a logical order of assembly. They also contain some helpful hints concerning construction and decoration. All the laser-cut pieces are crisp and fit together quite well. The model-builder has some discretion during construction. I made several such departures.

I substituted the upper front façade signs to align with how I intend to use the store. I used the metal roofing on the main, dormer and front porch roofs though I didn't follow the suggested paint method for aging the corrugated aluminum roofing. Instead, I used ferric chloride in a very well ventilated area for aging. I also didn't cantilever the façade trim as I didn't care for the look. In addition, I abandon the silkspan roofing in favor of construction paper on the shed and three-tab shingles for the carport. I also added two **Artista** figures and a **Scenery Unlimited** cat on the front porch.

As with all wooden kits, I used enamel paint for all the clapboard and trim. Where required, I subsequently covered the paint with a dulling spray. After weighting each strip to minimize warping, I used a water-based staining solution for the exterior shed and staircase boards. I used the same on the front porch floor. I painted or stained each part prior to assembly. With the exception of the metal parts, where I used Cyanoacrolate (CA), I made all bonds using **Aleene's Tacky Glue**. I used sandpaper to roughen the backside of all the paper signs and attached them with a very light coat of spray adhesive.

This is not a one-nighter kit. I found construction to be somewhat of a challenge. This was particularly true when applying the exterior boards to the staircase and while gluing the metal roofing, especially the gutters along the dormer and staircase. I added a floor made from a piece of scrap basswood to the top of the staircase to prevent seeing the first floor through the upper staircase window. The kit makes an allowance for installing a front porch light. Alas, I waited too long to consider this and was unable to fish a light fixture from the interior.



EVEREST COUNTRY STORE. The Building & Structure Co. by Commercial Scale Models, 155 Amaral Street, East Providence, RI 02915 (401) 640-7878, www.commercialscalemodels.com cs2@netsense.net Kit #CSM 4134-S, \$120 plus shipping and handling.

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Happy



Above: Rick Evans Flyer circles his tree.



Above: Chris Burger's Christmas Village layout. Chris also has a video on youtube. You can view it at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IvT7_N_6UM



Left: Tom Stoltz of Tom's Turnouts & Trackwork has this Christmas Village around his tree.



Tom Galloway's table top layout.

Holidays



*Left:
Richard Grabryszewski is an
NASG and a TCA member. He
received his first American Flyer
set from his father in 1959.*

*He created the Christmas train
gardens as a way to have a tempo-
rary layout for a month as he was
an apartment dweller at the time.
He discovered the Christmas
ceramic buildings at the same time
and now has over fifty of them.*

*Rich is now a home owner and is
working on an "S-Scale Empire"
in his basement.*



*Roy Inman shot this picture and the
picture on the cover of Bill Hutton's
Christmas layout. They are both mem-
bers of the Kansas City S Gaugers.
There are very few structures available
of Kansas City landmarks and Bill is
a fan of all things Chicago, so his
Christmas layout reflects that.*

TALES FROM THE RAILS

THE NEW MAN By Bob Nicholson



I hired out on the Santa Fe Railroad on November 27, 1964. It was a proud time for me, since working on the railroad had been a dream of mine since the day I slammed a cast iron locomotive into the table legs on my grandmother's expensive antique dining room table when I was about three years old. It was a dream postponed several times since I had graduated from high school in 1959, but now, in

1964, five years after failing to live up to the expectations of others, I was about to realize my dream.

All the preliminaries were out of the way and I was off to the General Motors Yard at McCook, Illinois. GM Fisher Body had a body stamping plant there, and the first stop for Santa Fe new hires was three-hour qualifying trips on the 3 pm yard engine and on the 11 pm job, then three hours on the day switch engine and three hours on the 9 pm engine at Joliet before marking up on the switchman's extra board at Joliet to wait for the first call to duty. No two weeks of virtually worthless "expert instruction," such as learning to see an egg in the switchpoints, in those days. Santa Fe at that time wanted new employees to get practical instruction from the employees they worked with.

Well, I showed up at the GM yard and went out with the 3 pm crew, riding around and taking in initial information from everyone from the pin puller to the engineer. My previous short-time Illinois Central experience came in handy as I helped line up cars to spot in the plant when we pulled the loads, then waited as a plant employee unlocked and opened the gate so we could begin switching the plant.

We began working the tracks one by one, pulling loaded box cars out and spotting empty box cars in their place. At each of the first three tracks, we would pull up to the building and stop while the switch foreman went inside to check that the track was ready to pull, after which he opened the door so we could couple onto the cars and pull them out. We would pull them out to the yard and shove them into a clear track where the 4 pm "billing job" could grab them, then grab the empty cars we had previously lined up and shove them back in and spot them. The field man rode at the top of the ladder on the lead car and passed hand signals to the foreman, who was doing the same about half way back, and then the pin puller, who rode high on the first car next to the engine to pass signals from the foreman to the engineer. Since I was extra, I rode on the front of the engine to, relay signals to the engineer.

This worked for the first three tracks, then the next two tracks, where we pulled loaded cars of scrap steel and spotted empties, but then we went around back to work the steel tracks, where we would pull empties that had been loaded with coiled steel that would soon become new fenders, roofs, trunk lids and whatever for new GM cars, and spot more loads in their place. Once, later on, as I walked through the plant with the foreman, I saw a rack of 1963 Chevrolet trunk lids which were parts for cars needing body repairs.

Anyway, when we were shoving back to spot the steel. I was riding on the front platform of the engine again, to pass signals from other members of the crew. We spotted the loads on #1

Track, and the foreman had me take the engine #2 Track and wait. As soon as it was ready, we pulled the empties. As we pulled out, the engineer hailed me into the cab. "When we shove back into the plant," he said, "come up here in the cab and sit on the Fireman's seat so you can see what's going on, and I can see you better."

I protested that I heard that since the firemen had been cut off, no one sat in the fireman's seat in an attempt to prove that removing them was a mistake. He came back with, "No matter what these bozo's think, the fireman's never coming back, and I want you up here with me."

As we shoved back in to spot #2 track, everything was going well, until we shoved around and entered track 2, and I saw we were on a collision course with a flatbed truck trying to back out of the building. Apparently, a trucker with a load of steel thought he had time to unload his truck and back out before we came back. I hollered at the engineer to Stop! and he immediately put the cut of cars into emergency and we scrunched to a stop. As soon as the brakes were pumped off, the engineer pulled them back so the truck could back out, and no damage was done. However that was not the end of the story.

As soon as we cut away from the cars and began to run back out to the yard, the field man hi-tailed it up to the cab and began ripping me up and down for sitting in the fireman's seat to pass signals. He appeared to think that seat belonged to him, since he had been a fireman before being cut of through Award 282, which had allowed the railroads to eliminate a certain number of firemen, and if he couldn't sit there, then nobody should. When he told me I could have got him killed if he hadn't dumped the air on the cars and stopped the move because I was out of position, I was sure I had done something seriously wrong.

That's when the engineer came unglued. He raised out of his seat and told the field man that he had told me to sit there and pass signals, and I had seen what was going on so he could dump the air. First, he told the field man that he had dumped the air as a result of my alertness, and that all he heard was a sizzle of air going through the air line after we stopped, and I had probably saved his life. The field man then went into a rampage and said that no one should sit in that seat except a qualified fireman. The engineer shot back that nothing he did would ever bring back the fireman. They argued back and forth for a while, then it was time to make our next move. As I went out the cab door, the engineer let me know I had done nothing wrong and don't get on a guilt trip over it. A few years down the road, that advice served me well when the field man, who was back working as a fireman service by then, tried to raise the issue again, but I didn't have to say a thing; this engineer didn't believe him, either.

Anyway, we went back to work, and everything was going well and we went in the yard office to take a break while the yardmaster and the switch foreman discussed the next series of moves. Then the telephone rang. To this day, I don't know who was on the other end, but when he hung up, the yardmaster told me I was going to work on the 9PM engine at Joliet that night. I explained that I hadn't finished my qualifying trips, yet, but he said that I had learned enough to get by, and besides, the best qualifying trips were the ones you get paid for.

So it was that my seniority date on Santa Fe Railroad began on November 27, 1964, at Joliet, Illinois, on the 9 pm switch engine.

SUPER DETAILING A COVERED HOPPER

By Edwin C. Kirstatter
Northern Ohio S Gaugers

S Helper Service PS-2 covered hoppers are very nice models but they can be improved upon. I found an unlettered one to work on.

Besides changing some details and adding a few, I will letter it for the Baltimore and Ohio. SHS only had one of these decorated for the B&O. They B&O had 580 of these 70 ton 2003 cubic capacity cars, now I will have two. I have a picture of one of these B&O class N-43 numbered 631576 to work from to detail and letter my model. I also have a B&O Mechanical Department diagram to get data from. These were built by Pullman-Standard from 1955 to 1957 in three groups for the B&O. I am modeling one from the last group because the SHS model is like one of those that had the bulb type post as the last one at either end instead of a channel type as on the earlier production. The B&O had some of both in the N-43 class.

To start on this I used a saw to remove the six long flat dirt collector hand rails on sides at left and ends a saw and the four Roping staples under the sides because my photo shows them in different locations. The color of the plastic is a little darker grey than the covered hopper grey color but I may not touch it up with Scalecoat MOW Grey paint. I just filed these areas smooth. Holes were drilled #79 under the remaining dimples to use .014" black iron wire for replacement railings. The replacement Roping staples were made from .025" brass wire bent around a small round nose pliers then blackened and forced up into new #72 holes drilled under sides for them nearly in line with the truck bolsters.

Some details that were added are Tack boards on the left sill extensions made from .015" black plastic measuring 6"x12" cemented on here with ACC. A retainer valve was put up beside the hand brake wheel with a pipe going down to the brake valve sitting on top of the center sill at its middle. This was made from .015" brass wire blackened. An air release rod from side to side from under the brake valve out through the sill extensions and bent down to make handles. This was made from .006" blackened brass wire. Cut levers were also added at the ends for the couplers. These were made from .016" brass wire attached to one of the Kadee's draft gear pockets mounting screws under there. To the pad provided by SHS on the end sill at left were a Detail Associates #2222 eye bolt was put in a #80 hole drilled for it to use as the pivot there for our lever. I blackened these levers too.

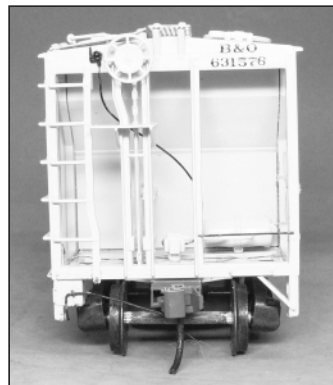
I decaled right over the grey paint on this unlettered model using a John Hall set #112 originally made for the B&O N-31 and N-34 Wagon Top covered hoppers which I adapted as no other decals are available. They worked very well. Then I put a paper car tag on the Tack boards.

References:

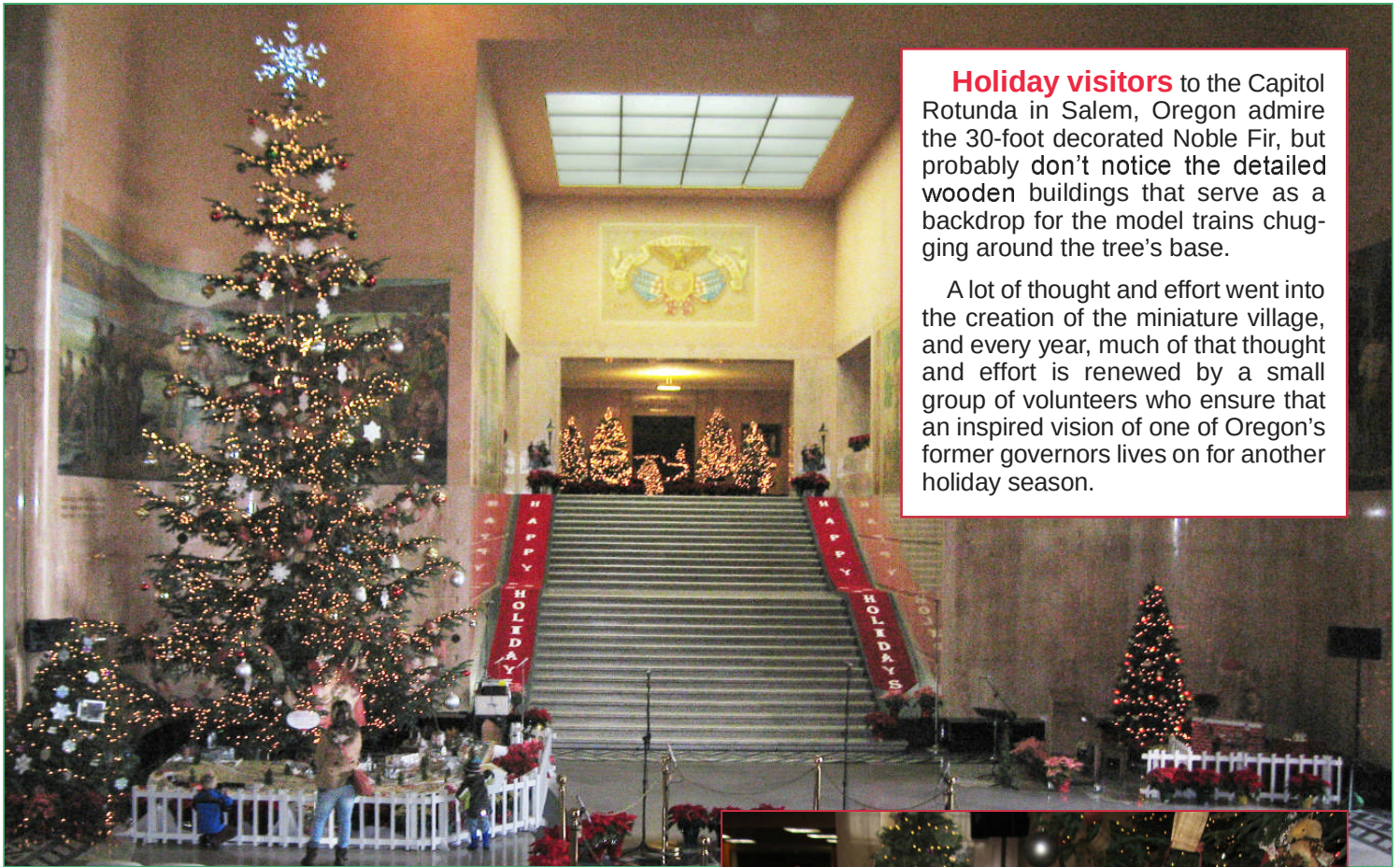
B&O Mechanical Department Equipment Diagram T-85335 C.
B&O Summaries of Equipment.

Official Railway Equipment Register (ORER) April 1957.

United States Safety Appliances Standards, AAR edition 1955.



A Capitol Christmas



Holiday visitors to the Capitol Rotunda in Salem, Oregon admire the 30-foot decorated Noble Fir, but probably don't notice the detailed wooden buildings that serve as a backdrop for the model trains chugging around the tree's base.

A lot of thought and effort went into the creation of the miniature village, and every year, much of that thought and effort is renewed by a small group of volunteers who ensure that an inspired vision of one of Oregon's former governors lives on for another holiday season.

The Capitol Holidays Layout has been an integral part of holiday decorating at the Oregon State Capitol in Salem, Oregon since 1984. The 12'X 12' modular layout features A. C. Gilbert American Flyer and other S gauge trains traveling through an autumn scene with scratch built models of both actual historic homes and buildings and representative Salem and Willamette Valley structures evoking pre-1950 Oregon. A. C. Gilbert was a Salem native, hence the decision to use S gauge American Flyer trains made by the A. C. Gilbert Company.

This layout was originally constructed in 1984 as a project for the inmates of the Oregon State Correctional Institution. Working under the supervision of Industrial Arts Instructor Don Curtis, inmates constructed the initial layout and "the box it comes in." Many of the structures were projects of individual inmates. Don Curtis did the other structures as well as the scenery design and installation. After the first year it was displayed at Christmas, Vic Atiyeh, the Governor of Oregon at the time, commented that he "could not wait to see what historic Salem buildings would be added to the layout the next year." The historic Salem area theme has been carried forward ever since.



Alan Bennett of Keizer, Oregon provided the authentic Gilbert American Flyer track and supplies the vintage American Flyer trains to operate on the layout which is placed under the giant Oregon Christmas tree in the Rotunda of the Oregon State Capitol Building. Celebrities like the Governor of Oregon and Santa Claus throw a switch that lights the tree and starts the trains during an annual ceremony held in early December. The train stays up and operates until the tree comes down, usually the week after Christmas.





Former Governor Atiyeh, who died this year at 91, said he didn't remember asking for the toy trains and village, but he said he could probably guess why he asked for the stately homes rather than businesses in the landscape. "Businesses come and go, but homes stay put. We were right there in Salem, and it seemed like a good idea to feature it."

A couple of years after its debut at the Capitol, Alan and Don decided to take the layout on the road. It was selected as Best in Show at the first train show in which it was entered. Inspired by their initial success, Don and Alan have enjoyed displaying it at local and national conventions and train shows around Oregon and Washington ever since. Venues have included the Oregon State and Polk County Fairs, the 1987 National Model Railroad Association convention in Eugene, Oregon and three World's Greatest Hobby on Tour shows. It is scheduled to be displayed at the 2015 NMRA Convention in Portland, Oregon.

Always a popular attraction at Christmas time, the layout has proven to be a spectator magnet at the train shows. Since 1984, thousands of people have seen and enjoyed the layout at the Capitol during the month of December, and thousands more have seen it at other locations during the three decades that the layout has been on display.



In 2004 the Capitol layout was a snow scene. Five years ago Don Curtis stripped it down to the plywood and recreated it as a fall scene.

Don Curtis has retired from the Oregon State Corrections Department and the layout is no longer a project of the Correctional Institution, but Don and Alan, with the help of volunteers and family members continue to set up and maintain the layout at the State Capitol in Salem during the Holiday Season and at other events through-out the year. In addition to vintage American Flyer equipment, Alan also runs modern S gauge trains from S Helper Service, American Models and American Flyer by Lionel at these events. While operating the layout is a treat, the volunteer operators agree that the fun is meeting the people who come by to reminisce about their old toy trains or about days gone by in Oregon and seeing all the children who simply want to see the trains go.

This story was written by Alan Bennett. The introductory paragraph was borrowed from the December 9, 2013, Salem Oregon Statesman-Journal story written by Carol McAlice Currie. Photos by Bill Pyper and Alan Bennett.

Ghosts of Christmas Past



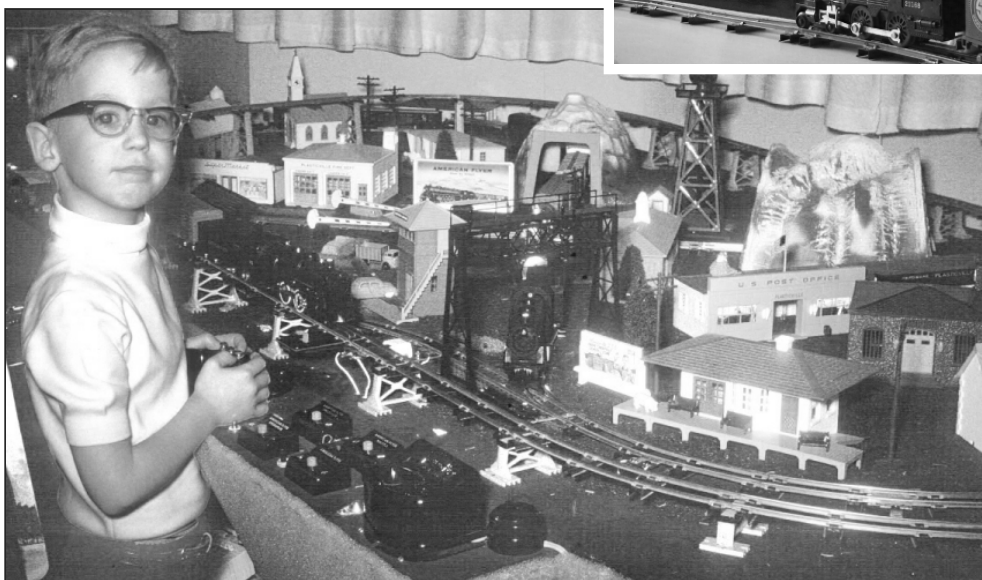
Above left, future S Gauger Brooks Stover, Age 3, with his brother and father, Christmas, 1950.

Far right: David Dewey shot this picture of the Dunsmuir California Chamber of Commerce Christmas layout in 2004.

Below: In 2011 Layden Mitchell supervises his Grandad Roger "Woody" Mitchell servicing the smoke unit on his American Flyer 4-4-0. "Not too much, Grandad!"



Above: In 1977 Brooks Stover's two daughters enjoy his 4' x 8' around the Christmas tree layout.



Above: It's Christmas 1968 and Bill Lane proudly shows off his American Flyer layout.

Right: Boy is mesmerized by trains on David Dewey's friend Mike's Christmas layout in December 2009.



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NEWS FROM THE NORTH with Jim Martin

Making a Friend:

A benefit of this column is its potential for making me new friends. With that in mind, I want to give one more shout-out to Nicholas Deely, waaay up in Fairbanks, Alaska. Nicholas' lay-out, the Athabasca Northern was featured in the August-September issue. We hope you liked his unique subject and approach. Nicholas and I enjoyed considerable correspondence over the course of developing the article. He was also very understanding when I had to savage the delightful copy he provided down to less than half its original length. I thought I might share a line or two that didn't make the original cut:

While there are a modest amount of modelers in Alaska, I think that I am the only S-gauger. However, I am in fellowship with three fine chaps who are retired University of Alaska professors and model railroaders (HO). Collectively, we are known as the "grumpies" because of our outspoken political views. My wife refers to us, however, as the "Viagra Four".

So once more a tip of the hat to Nicholas . . . at north latitude 64' 50". . . by himself in S Scale . . . building stuff.

Losing a friend . . . for a while:

We held our breath for a week in August when Railroad Model Craftsman locked the doors and shuttered the windows. Then came the news that White River Productions was purchasing RMC and Railfan & Railroad. White River will no

doubt want to put their own mark on the mag. I hope it's not at the expense of its family feel and the way they let the contributors write in their own words. It was far more literary in its approach than Model Railroader for example. My first scale model magazine was the February, 1957 issue of RMC. My dad found it for me when I was home in bed with the measles. I still have that very magazine

Another falling flag that may have gone largely unnoticed in the S Scale community is another favorite of mine, Westlake Publishing's wonderful series of annuals. Editor Russ Reinberg announced that the winter 2014 edition of The Modelers Annual would be his last. He says if he does anything in the future, it will be digital.

Digital Magazines:

It does absolutely no good for any of us old guys (me included) to moan about digital publishing. If model railroading as a hobby is to be saved and grown, it will be through this new medium. Besides, if we want to clutch onto paper while reading on the deck, most of us old fogies have back issues to last us the rest of our lives. And don't forget, the Dispatch is likely to remain in print form because it belongs to us.

Continued on next page



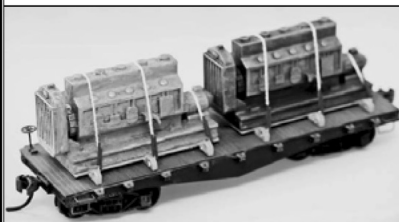
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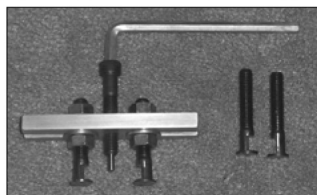
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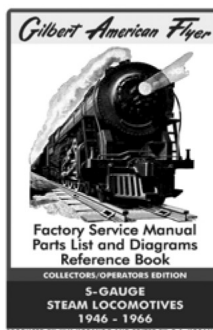


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NEWS FROM THE NORTH *continued*

Brit Bits:

Because of our ties to the United Kingdom as members of the British Commonwealth, we Canadian S-scalers may enjoy a small advantage over our American neighbors when it comes to sourcing detail parts for our layouts.

You may recall a certain unpleasantness between the Americans and the Brits about 240 years ago. It is my belief that because you quarreled and we didn't, we Canadians may enjoy a larger number of British train shops per capita. "So what" you ask, "there's hardly any S scale stuff to be had from Britain anyway." But there is a whole heap of OO scale, their preferred size across the pond. OO comes in at 1/76th scale which is handily close to our 1/64th for a number of useful items.

Larger train shows in Canada almost always have one or two vendors specializing in British products, and I have found all sorts of detail items; steel fencing, sacks and crates, bicycles, lamp posts, industrial fittings, cranes, and architectural bits. Ratio, Wills, and P&D Marsh are some of the more useful brands. There are also building papers and sheet styrene. Slaters is the big name in styrene in Britain. They call their product Plastikard. In addition to the usual offering of scribed and plain architectural sheets, they also offer sheets of embossed rivets in various sizes that I have found extremely useful over the years. Slaters also manufactures various sizes of cast plastic letters for signs.

British automobiles of any era are a tough problem in S scale. There are very few appropriate 1/64th offerings. But Canadian and American servicemen returning from World War II, often did so with a newly-acquired love for the small, nimble, and economical British vehicles. To get its factories rolling again, and get out from under its war debt, England exported virtually every vehicle it made for the next ten years to North America. Add in British ex-pats and it's no accident that many early 50s rail fan photos (in Canada at least) also capture background images of Austin, Hillman, Morris or Singer automobiles. If one is going to model our transition era streets and roads, we really should have some of these little buggies mixed in with our Fords, Chevs and Dodges. The trouble is we can't mix them in. The wide variety of vintage and current British vehicles available in

Below: The OO scale items here are: Austin Car in the background, bicycle from Wills kit 5523, Ratio 422 Station fencing and tractor steering wheel from Ratio Industrial Fittings.



Above: This OO scale Wills Yard Goods Crane (SS51) looks quite at home in this North American S scale setting. It only cost \$12. The stack on the fishing tug is from the Ratio 510 Industrial Fittings package, also OO scale.

Below: Here are the Wills Farmyard Junk and Workshop Sets, both cast metal, alongside the Ratio Industrial fittings package. All items are OO, 1:76 scale.



OO scale, are simply too under-scale to stand beside our 1/64th domestic makes. The best you can do is what I do: move them to the back of the layout, all by themselves, as perspective models.

So why not pick up a British model railway magazine and read the ads. Here are some good websites to get you started:

slatersplastikard.com (plastic building sheets and letters)

peco-uk.com (for Ratio and Wills products)

pdmrshmodels.com (variety of white metal detail items)

Touring these sites will give you an idea of the wide potential for using British detail items to help differentiate your layout from others. And if you come across a British train shop in a large American city, or a vendor of British products at a train show, slow down and take a good look.

Thanks to Steve and Elvera at Model Railway Imports in St. Catharines, Ontario, for their help. Visit them at **modelrailwayimports.com**

Till next time . . . Cheers, eh?

CIRCUS TRAIN VARIATION

By John Eichmann
Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers, Boise, Idaho

I recently picked up a collection of pre-1952 American Flyer, and discovered an uncommon variation in a #643 Circus flatcar. When I initially viewed the collection, it struck me that the holder for the load (tractor, two animal cages) was something with which I was not familiar, but I paid it no heed at the time. It wasn't until I got the collection home and started to inventory everything in the cartons that I realized what I had found.

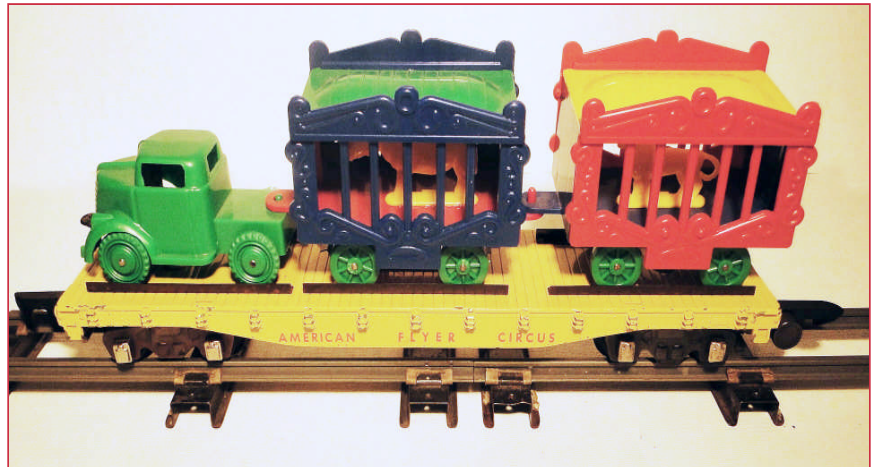
I dug out my AF bible, Greenberg's Guide to American Flyer S Gauge, Volume I (1991, Joe Deger, editor.), and looked up the number 643. The description of the load reads: "Two wagons and one tractor, load positioned on car body with black-painted wood strip which is secured to the body with two removable metal studs, earliest cars have six black metal boxcar door guides secured to the body by rivets."

It turns out that this particular number 643 is what Deger defined as Type (A): "1950, yellow painted die-cast body; tractor and cages positioned by six black metal boxcar door guides fastened by rivets, cages are kept from rolling by U-shaped metal bracket in center of the car, no holes in car body for studs."

None of my reference works have photos of this car, so I'm publishing some here for your edification. The six door guides are designed to contain the entire wheelset and axle between them, as opposed to the common wood strip which fits inside the wheels. My purchase did not include the loads, unfortunately, but it seems that I have an interesting variation of the car. Although it has been played with, it might grade out as "Excellent" (Minute nicks or scratches. No dents or rust, according to Robert Bubeck's guide). If you are a serious collector who must have one of everything, or if you are just interested in owning this piece, it is for sale.



American Flyer Trains 1950 catalog, page 46.



Bubeck's American Flyer S Gauge, Price and Rarity Guide, 1946-2011 (TM Books & Video, 2011) lists it on page 37 as number 643, 1.b. (no loads). It appears to be increasing in desirability. Make me an offer. My address is: John@rockymountainhirailers.com

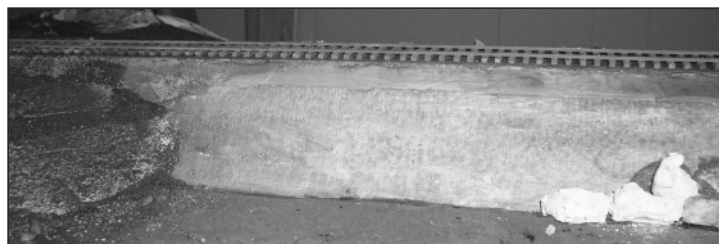
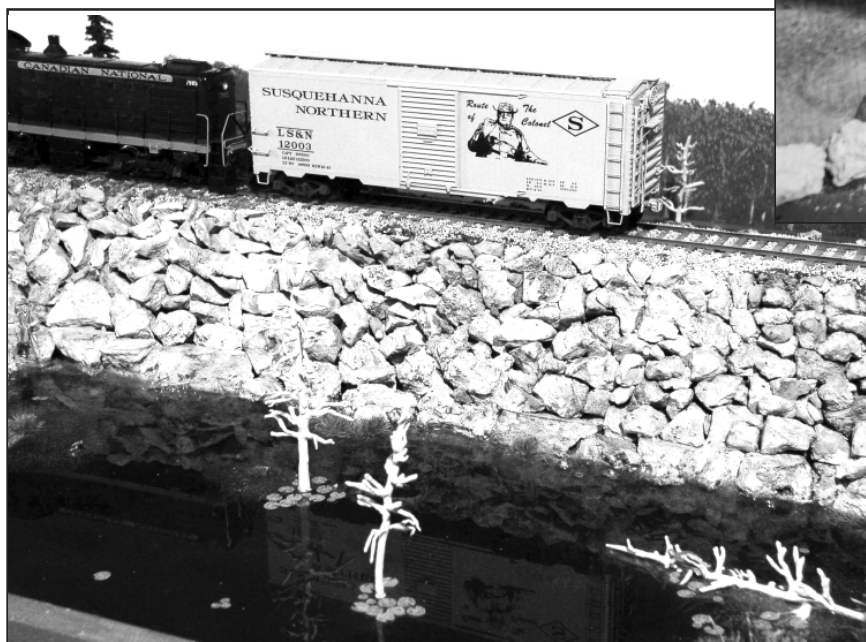


A Causeway for a Good Cause

By Andy Malette, S Scale Workshop

In 2006, I was asked to join a group of modellers which became the modular group called the S Scale Workshop. I was quite flattered and terrified as the modellers were capable of modelling at a very high calibre. I moved into S Scale in 2000 from HO and the HO layout which I built in the past was not very significant. At any rate, after some specs were hammered out by the Workshop members, I started to build my first module as a single piece of track on a 2 foot by 4 foot frame. At the time, there was no code 83 track available in S Scale, so I opted to use etched tie plates which were produced by fellow member Simon Parent. Now, of course, you can get excellent S Scale flex track in codes 70, 83 and 100 from Tomalco. I foolishly live by the credo, "If someone else can do it, how hard can it be?" The tie plates proved to be an exceptional challenge which I finally mastered the night before I was supposed to bring my module to our first show. Unfortunately, I did not have any time to put in a scenery base so all my module had was a T-frame with track on it going from one end to the other. If there had been a derailment, the equipment in question would have taken tragic fall. A Red Green solution came to mind in the form of green garbage bags and duct tape. At each side of the track there was now a rippling sea of dark green plastic bag. Of course most of the other members managed to have fairly complete scenery but they hand laid their track in the traditional fashion. When I was questioned about the garbage bags, I simply said they are a stand in for an eventual wetland.

As time went on, I did manage to put in a scenic base and decided to follow through with my story that I was modelling a wetland. Unfortunately, the T-frame the track was on precluded any use of a bridge so I fell back on memories of my cousin and I hiking along the CPR mainline around Coniston, Ontario when we were young. There were a lot of rock causeways that traversed many marshes. A rock causeway was what I decided on to traverse the wetlands. I recall thinking to myself, "How hard could it be?"



I cut some Styrofoam into long triangular shapes and glued them to the sides of the Tee to form a slope. After which I put grey plaster on. See figure 1, above.

I thought a while about how to do the rocks and decided on Plaster of Paris with black tempura powder mixed in to give a grey colour, not being too fussy about how well mixed it was. I put the mixture into an aluminium cake plate and cured it in my workshop toaster oven. See Figure 2, below left.

Next, I put the grey plaster cake into a thick, sealable plastic bag and bashed it with a hammer to break it up into rocks.



I mixed up some white glue and water with a little detergent and applied this to the slope on the side of the track. Finally, I added the broken pieces of plaster to represent the rocks in a rock causeway. I placed the larger pieces at the bottom and worked my way up to the smaller pieces. See Figure 4, below.



Once finished, I cleaned up the extra pieces of rock from the wetland floor. I also added pieces of wood and a dead tree lying down to the floor on one side of the causeway. Next I poured Envirotex® liquid resin to the floor. It took a couple of coats to get the 1/8" depth I wanted. When all was dry I followed Doug and Jackie Hole's January 1998 RMC article of how to build a swamp. Cutting those little lily pads out of green mottled paper let me watch the entire series of Star Trek Next Generation.

The wetlands, the surrounding area and the causeway were finally finished. I found it to be a lot of fun and really not that hard to produce what I feel is a satisfactory effect. See Figure 5, left.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

This column is for 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.

November 8-9, 2014 — Texas City, Texas

Texas City Model Train Festival

HOUSTON S GAUGERS will set up their layout.

November 15-16, 2014— New Paris, Ohio

National Trail Train Show National Trail High School

MIAMI VALLEY S GAUGERS will display their layout.

November 16, 2014 — Cheektowaga, New York

TTOS Show Leonard Post, 2450 Walden Avenue.

WESTERN NEW YORK S SCALE ASSOCIATION will have a display at this show.

November 22, 2014 to January 4, 2015

Kings Mountain North Carolina Trains, Trains, Trains

Kings Mountain Historical Museum, 100 East Mountain Street

PIEDMONT S GAUGERS will display their layout.

November 23, 2014 — Cheshire, Connecticut

Cheshire High School Fall 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.

December 5-7, 2014 — Baltimore, Maryland

Holiday Festival of Trains B&O Railroad Museum

BALTIMORE AREA AMERICAN FLYER CLUB will run their modular layout.

December 6, 2014 — Rickreal, Oregon

Willamette Valley Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet

Polk County Fairgrounds, Highway 99W just south of Highway 22, 10 miles west of Salem. www.wvmrm.webs.com

December 6, 2014 — Olivette, Missouri

TCA Ozark Division Great St. Louis Christmas Train Show

Immanuel Lutheran School, 9733 Olive Boulevard

AMERICAN FLYER S GAUGERS of the ST. LOUIS AREA will participate in this show.

December 6-7, 2014 — Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

THE CENTRAL OKLAHOMA S GAUGERS will have their layout set up in the Cox Pavillion

December 10-24, 2014 — Florence, Massachusetts

Santa's Trains at Look Park Garden House, 300 Main Street.

PIONEER VALLEY S-GAUGERS will display and run their layout 4 pm to 8 pm and 10 am to 2 pm on the 24th.

December 12-14, 2014 — Baltimore, Maryland

Holiday Festival of Trains B&O Railroad Museum

WASHINGTON & OLD DOMINION DIVISION of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers will operate their layout.

December 13-14, 2014 — Rochester, New York

RIT TIGER TRACKS TRAIN SHOW at the

Rochester Institute of Technology Gordon Field House

ROCHESTER AREA S GAUGERS will set up their modules. More information at <http://ritmrc.org/tigertracks/>

December 27-28, 2014 — Chantilly, Virginia

World's Greatest Hobby on Tour

WASHINGTON & OLD DOMINION S GAUGERS will display their layout.

February 5-7, 2015 — Santa Clara, California

2015 O SCALE WEST & S WEST 9

Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, 5101 Great America Parkway. Reservations: 800-233-1234 Hotel Switchboard: 408-200-1234 Admission: \$30 for registrations postmarked by December 31, 2014. \$35 at the door. Registration includes spouse and all children under 18. Saturday only \$20. Additional information and registration forms available at <http://www.oscalewest.com>

THE BAY AREA S SCALERS will have their modular layout up and running. Bring your equipment to run on the layout. Equipment must meet NASG standards.

May 8-9, 2015 — Dayton, Ohio

2015 S SPREE at the IBEW Union Hall

Hosted by the Miami Valley S Gaugers

August 4-8, 2015 — Kansas City, Missouri

NASG 2015 CONVENTION at the Ramada Kansas City Hotel and Conference Center

August 28-30 — Portland, Oregon

NMRA National Train Show Portland Expo Center

NASG INFORMATION BOOTH

The NASG Board of Trustees has approved the **National and Large Regional Shows Program** as part of an overall effort to promote S model railroading to current model railroaders and the general public.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The **NASG Promotions Committee**, National Show Coordinator, will use the information on the **NASG Booth Sign Up Sheet** to contact NASG members who are interested in helping staff the NASG Information Booth. At this time, the primary shows are The **World's Greatest Hobby on Tour** and the **NMRA National Train Show**. If you are interested, please use the NASG Booth Staff Sign Up Sheet to indicate which shows you can work. The sheet is available at www.nasg.org/events/index.htm#booths

SCHEDULE OF SHOWS

January 10-11, 2015 Hampton, Virginia
January 17-18, 2015 . . . Raleigh, North Carolina
February 7-8, 2015 Columbus, Ohio
February 14-15, 2015 Louisville, Kentucky
March 28-29, 2015 Edison, New Jersey
August 28-30, 2015 . NMRA National Train Show
Portland, Oregon

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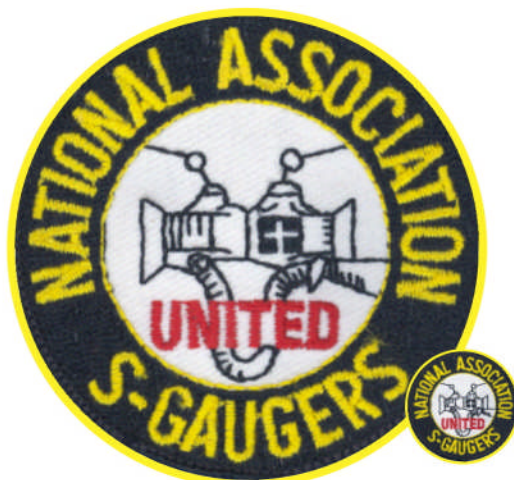
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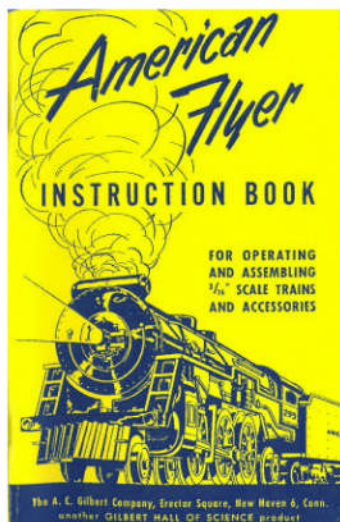
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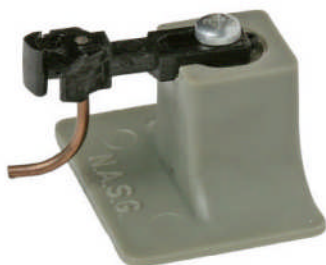
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Put a Commemorative Car Under the Tree

Each year since 1981, the NASG contracts with one of the S manufacturers to produce a limited-run car or engine 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 purchase one or more of these cars. This project is coordinated by NASG Executive Vice President Dave Blum.



2014 Milwaukee Road boxcar manufactured by Lionel. Price is \$69. Road number 3314, for the 33rd car in the series and the year 2014.



2010 Jenney Gasoline Triple-dome Tank Car was manufactured by Lionel. Price is \$70. The car number is 2910. The tank colors are white, orange, black and red on a black frame.



2012 Convention Car Dixie Lines boxcar. Price \$50. Road numbers 18872, 18749 or 18850



2012 Marathon Motors boxcar manufactured by Lionel. Price is \$70. This Auto Parts boxcar is lettered for the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway. The car number is 3112 representing the 31st car in the NASG series and the year 2012.



2009 EJ&E Gondola manufactured by Lionel. Price is \$65. Black gondola with removeable orange coil cover. The car number is 2809.



2013 Convention Car Therm Ice Tanker #83507 or 83511. Price \$55.

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EXTRA BOARD

S RELATED STORIES IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

In the **October, 1943** issue of **The Model Railroader**, published by A. C. Kalmbach, the following appeared: Likewise another committee was recommended to deal with the problem of $\frac{3}{16}$ " scale $\frac{7}{8}$ " gauge, for which the N.M.R.A. adopted standards many years ago. Due to the inactivity of this gauge, nothing further was done after the original adoption of standards. By vote of the convention, it was recommended that this size be known by the simplified title of **S Gauge**. S stands for sixteenth, seven-eighths and sixty-fourths, all of which are prominent in the scheme of measurements for the $\frac{3}{16}$ " scale.

Contributed by Carl "Bob" Johnson

The **October, 2014** issue of **Classic Toy Trains** includes a photo of **Gary Ellman's** S layout, a one-page Collectible Classics about the **American Flyer 590 Switch Tower**. An editorial by **Lou Palumbo** about S and an article by **Roger Carp** about a **Ruth Andrews** created American Flyer advertisement.

The **October, 2014** issue of **Model Railroader** has a 5-page article by **Brooks Stover** on building an abandoned mine in S scale. His kitbashed EL-3 2-8-8-0 was also featured in the **Trackside Photos** section.

NEW MEMBERS

As of September 22, 2014, the 37 people have become new members of NASG. WELCOME!

Robert Adrian, Marietta, GA
Jack Bartman, Walden, NY
Steve Blackburn, Boise, ID
John Carter Brooks, Pittsburgh, PA
Bob Bubba, Toronto, ON Canada
Richard G. Caugherty, Penn Hills, PA
Terry DeMarco, W. Bloomfield, MI
Dan DeOrnellas, Castro Valley, CA
Raymond Doyle, Newton, NJ
John P. Farr, Chattanooga, TN
Michael F. Fox, Minneapolis, MN
Thomas Gascoigne, Holland, NY
John Griffin, Frankfort, IL
J. Hackenbracht, Ft. Washington, PA
John E. Harnden, Fairfield, OH
Doug Hodgdon, St. Louis Park, MN
James Kalasinsk, Amsterdam, NY
Patrick M. King, St. Peters, MO
Paul Limone, Branford, CT

Scott Lister, Greenville, SC
Bruce M. Miller, Haymarket, VA
Jim Mitchell, Michigan Center, MI
Clayt Peter, London, ON Canada
Roy Inman Photography, Lenexa, KS
Wm. Monaghan, New Orleans, LA
Joe Dale Morris, Austin, TX
Charles Moyes, Helenville, WI
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CLASSIFIED ADS

ANY ACTIVE MEMBER can place a non-commercial classified ad in the Dispatch at no charge. Ads must be limited to 10 lines +/- E-mail your ad copy to dispatch@nasg.org or mail to Bill Pyper, PO Box 885, Salem, OR 97308-0885. Please be sure to include your member number. Ads may be renewed for three consecutive issues.

WANTED DECALS: S decals for N&W 2-bay hoppers class H8 etc., N&W 52'6" Gondolas class G4, ATSF 52'6" Composite Gondola Class Ga-? Ed Kirstatter, 1130 Taft Ave., Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223-2242. Q1xaMacArthur1@gmail.com

FOR SALE Greenbrier Railroad Models EMD GP-30 phase II #1007 low hood with PRR antenna. Includes factory gearing upgrade plus lost wax detail parts. New in the box \$800. Free Shipping. **River Raisin NYC Bay Window Caboose** #OMI-4018 factory painted Jade Green. New in the box \$250. Free shipping. **WANTED Southwind Models PRR N6B Caboose** painted and lettered. Contact Dick Wachtman at 717-497-5606 or wachtman@verizon.net

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE DON'T FORGET

Nominations for Executive Vice President
Secretary and Regional Vice Presidents are due.

NOVEMBER 30, 2014

Send your nominations to:

Jamie Bothwell, Secretary

1422 West North Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018



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PROMOTIONS

From **Greg Klein, Promotions Chairman**, September 15, 2014. Will Holt, Paul Stevens, and myself are looking forward to building a new relationship with the White River Productions staff regarding the NASG highly successful and long-standing Railroad Model Craftsman Cover 2 Program.

We have an update to provide you about the continuation of the RMC Cover 2 Program. It is a GO! We understand that the rates will remain the same.

The plan is to produce an October issue (which will probably carry a cover date of July, August, September, October, 2014). Since that put us onto the first month of the quarter, we will pick up on the participation schedule (monthly, bi-monthly and quarterly) with the participation schedule as earlier planned for October.

If you have any questions, please feel free to or call my home phone, 540-822-5362 or e-mail me at promotions@nasg.org

Thank you for your patience and continued participation.

Kind regards,

Greg Klein, Promotions Chairman

WHITERIVER PRODUCTIONS

PO Box 48, Bucklin MO 64631 (877) 787-2467

e-mail: info@whiteriverproductions.com

Website: whiteriverproductions.com

White River Productions Acquires Railroad Model Craftsman and Railfan & Railroad magazines from Carstens Publications

(Bucklin, Missouri) — White River Productions has acquired Railroad Model Craftsman and Railfan & Railroad magazines, effective September 1, 2014. The asset purchase agreement between Carstens Publications and White River Productions was completed on Thursday, August 28, 2014.

Carstens Publications' final issues of the two titles are the June issues, and future issues will be produced by White River Productions. Staff assignments for the two publications have not yet been determined. Included in the agreement is the Books Division of Carstens, which will continue under White River Productions. Not included is Flying Models magazine.

"We are excited to welcome these two Carstens titles to our family of White River Productions publications," said Kevin EuDaly, president of White River. "These magazines are an important part of railroad publications and White River Productions looks forward to continuing their legacies."

Subscribers will be pleased to know existing subscriptions are to be honored and fulfilled by the new ownership. Fulfillment will be based on the number of remaining issues in existing subscriptions. Due to the need to get the magazines' cover dates current, a combined issue scenario will likely be em-

ployed, but the number of issues owed to each subscriber will be adjusted accordingly. "If you have six issues left on your subscription, you will receive six issues," EuDaly said.

The magazines' mailing address for all subscriber, reader, and industry communication is the Bucklin address. Advertisers contact Mike Lindsay of White River Productions at 800-282-3291 or via email at ads@railfan.com, ads@modelcraftsman.com or ads@modelrailroadnews.com. Mike will be managing advertising for the new titles.

About the Carstens' Publications

Railroad Model Craftsman magazine was founded in 1933 by Emanuele Stieri as The Model Craftsman, aimed at all areas of scale modeling. Ownership of the publishing company passed in 1934 to Charles Penn. In 1949 the name of the publication was changed to Railroad Model Craftsman, with a focus on the scale model train hobby exclusively. Hal Carstens joined the publishing firm in 1952 and purchased the company in 1963, renaming it Carstens Publications.

Railfan & Railroad in concept goes back to 1968 when future Railroad Model Craftsman editor Tony Koester along with Jim Boyd pitched the idea to Carstens for a "railfan's" magazine. By 1971 Jim Boyd had joined Carstens to work on Flying Models, and in 1974 Railfan was born as a quarterly publication. It went to six times a year in 1977, and monthly in 1987. In 1979 it was merged with the defunct Railroad magazine (which began in 1906 as Railroad Man's Magazine), becoming Railfan & Railroad. The magazine was edited by Jim Boyd from its inception until his retirement in 1998, after which Steve Barry took over as Editor.

Celebrating the Texas & Pacific Railroad



Above: GP9 units 1132, 1133 as delivered.

The T&P may have been the most popular road produced for S gaugers in the 1950s as the Swamp Holley orange engines were made for 4 years running. We are making these available in our new GP9 DX version with added window glass, painted railings and all parts assembled. Also the T&P freight cars shown below enhance the line up. Shipping in November 2014. (Cars are available in multiple number variations).



4436 T&P Gondola



6027 T&P Flat car



6027TOFC Flat w/ Trailer



3277 T&P Coal Hopper



1153 T&P Box car



7533 T&P Wood Caboose



The T&P GP9s 1135 and 1136 are also available in their "as delivered" blue and gray scheme.



We commissioned a world class firm to superbly decorate these locomotives in the original delivered phase 2 paint schemes. (From EMD in 1957).



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

NOTICE before ordering:
Handrails may come loose during shipment be prepared to re-attach.