



The

A Publication Of, By and For The Members

DISPATCH

May/June 2023



- New: "Restoration Station"
- From Gilbert to YouTube
- B&O Class L-2 0-8-0 Switcher
- Freight Car Farm Buildings



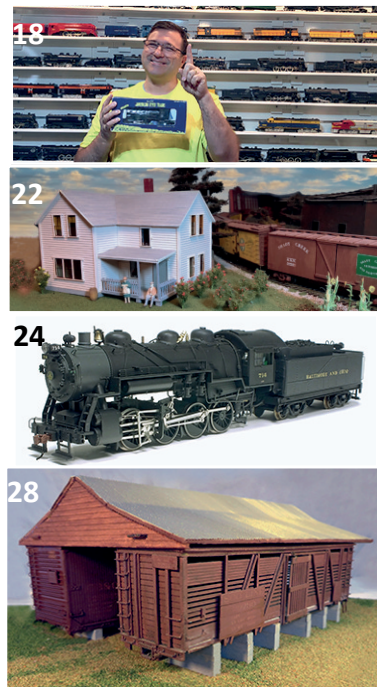


The DISPATCH

May/June 2023

MANIFEST FEATURES

- 18** From Gilbert to YouTube
By **Austin Birkey**
- 22** Sixty Years Building with Wood
By **Steve Monson**
- 24** B&O Class L-2 0-8-0 SWITCHER
By **Brooks Stover**
- 28** Freight Car Farm Buildings
By **Steve Monson**



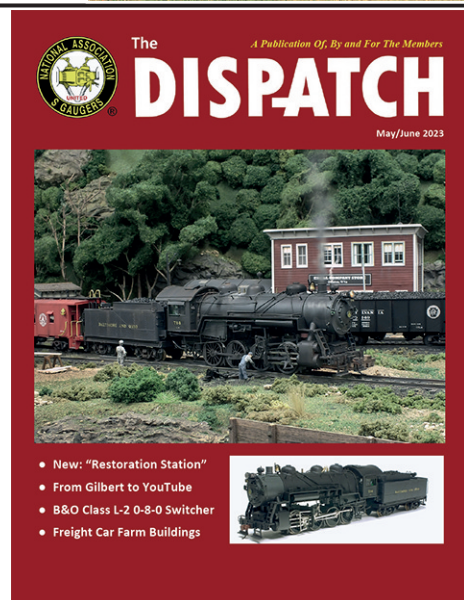
DEPARTMENTS

- 3** Pop Valve
4 From the Yard Office
7 Meet Bill Clark
8 So Here's What I Do...
9 New Products
11 NASG Website
14 Down at the Depot
14 Restoration Station
30 Calendar of Events
30 Classifieds

The COVER

B&O Class L-2 0-8-0 switcher Number 714 in front of the BC&G's Dundon company store working the interchange. Photo by Brooks Stover.

Recognize the red on our cover? We did our best to match the red American Flyer used on its boxes in the 40's and 50's. We use CMYK for publishing so we used 24-100-100-19 or RGB of 162-26-27, which is a close match to American Flyer's red.



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, membership@nasg.org.

NOTICE TO READERS: All warranties and claims made by advertisers in *The DISPATCH* are the sole responsibility of the advertiser. The NASG reserves the right to refuse any advertising material for any reason. The selection and/or use of the products or services, and the application or results obtained from these advertisers, is the sole responsibility of the purchaser.

POP VALVE



A Smoky Issue

Dear Editor,

There are times when the smoke fluid from my steam locomotives mingles with the smoke from my cigar, and I have trouble reading the signals on my pike. So far, I've not been called on the carpet for running a red block or consigned to yard service for smashing into the end of a caboose, but I have had some close calls. People close to me point out that maybe I should stick to one or the other, but I like them both, and I see no real reason why I can't enjoy both at the same time. Similarly, it seems to me that the division between American Flyer and scale S is not a choice anyone should be forced to make. Why choose? I like both, have both, and will continue to run both even if the pilots of my locomotives are at risk with all the smoke in my eyes.

I've been watching the changes occurring in the NASG this past year with acute interest, and I understand how hard it must be to balance the demands between American Flyer, Hi-rail, and Scale enthusiasts. However, I would say that we are like Thomas the Tank engine in a roundhouse full of Big Boys and Challengers. The only organization that can represent our interests with one voice to manufacturers, multi-scale organizations like the NMRA and TCA, and any potential converts to S remains the NASG. We may have only four drivers compared to a 4-8-8-4, but those drivers are pulling all of us together, not apart.

Leroy Alistaire Maximillian, IV



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NASG Membership Secretary

Dick Kramer

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CHANGES

Must be reported to Dick Kramer at the addresses above and received 30 days prior to publication of *The Dispatch*. No replacement issues sent after that.

DEADLINES

For time sensitive articles and advertising are:

November 15th for the January/February issue

January 15th for the March/April issue,

March 15th for the May/June issue,

May 15th for the July/August issue,

July 15th for the September/October issue and

October 15th for the November/December issue.

These dates are because of supply chain issues with coated paper used in publishing *The Dispatch*. We hope to shorten these deadlines in the future.



Welcome to the NASG Facebook Group. This Group is being designed with the goal of making S Scalpers aware of the NASG and the benefits it offers its members. You do not need to be a NASG member to join this group, but we hope once you see some of the benefits of the NASG, you will want to become a member.

Simply go to Facebook and search for NASG.

The DISPATCH

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and For The members*

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From the YARD OFFICE

NASG BOT Meeting - Wednesday, November 16th, 2022

Call to Order 8:380pm EST. Members Present: Jim Whipple, President; Andrew Malette, Secretary; Mike Ferraro, Treasurer; Darby Marriott, Eastern/North Eastern Vice President; Brian Jackson, Central/South Eastern Vice President; Peter Gehret, Western Vice President; James McAuliffe, Promotions Chair; Guest, Merlyn Jarman

1. At the call to order we suspended the usual meeting order to discuss Promotions Committee business with James McAuliffe, Chair, and guest, Merlyn Jarman.

American Models wants to offset their ad bill with the American Models products that have been purchased by the NASG for promotional display models at shows where the NASG has a table. The models include a BNSF GP35, a D&H RS11, a New haven Boxcar, an IC Hopper Car, a LHV caboose and a NH dome car. The list price for these models is \$756 but we were charged dealer cost at \$534.50.

Pete moved that we use the \$534.50 to offset the AM American Models ad bill.

It was seconded.

It was unanimously passed.

There is a Polar Express Berkshire that was found in the storage locker that could be used in the same context as the AM models for S promotion. It is necessary to track where all the NASG promotional equipment is.

The storage locker was supposed to be billed directly to the NASG but the Chicagoland S Scalpers have been handling it.

A decision has to be made about the NASG booth as to how it can be transported to the shows. It is quite heavy to transport.

Brian brought up the fact that this is too heavy to haul and that it is inconvenient to pick up and perhaps we should scrap it.

Mike moved that the former S Helper Service display be scrapped and that we come up with a light weight, portable display that can be used when we promote the NASG.

It was seconded.

We discussed how a light weight, portable display could be done and that we need to clean out the remainder of the storage unit. We also need to negotiate getting the storage locker contract terminated.

It was passed unanimously.

2. Promotions Committee.

James McAuliffe discussed how the trifolds and other promotional materials are distributed. At present the trifolds are in the hands of the VP's for distribution. James asked if the VP's are comfortable with having that responsibility or have the trifolds be distributed centrally.

Business cards were discussed as was having a QR code on the display and the business card.

The out-of-date promotional material will be disposed of since it is no longer relevant and will only confuse any possible S convert who reads it.

If the request goes to James McAuliffe, he will send out the trifolds and inform the appropriate VP. If the VP's get the request, they will send out the trifolds and will inform Jim.

Brian moved that we get new business cards with QR codes that will direct the person to the website.

It was seconded.

It was passed unanimously.

Merlyn Jarman:

Merlyn is a Public Relations expert. He attended the meeting to give his thoughts about promoting the NASG and S. He quoted the latest articles by Brooks Stover, Jim Martin and Dick Karnes. As an observer of S scale, he stated that we have our fair share of S gauge articles. Promotion of S with reference to farm toys was discussed. At the NMRA Indie Junction event, a handout for 2 rail O was distributed. It covered how, when and where to model in O scale. Merlyn said that we need to get stuff into the hands of the people. We need Ambassador Kits for S gauge. Put our information on thumb drives. Merlyn has a tee shirt, saying 'Ask me about S scale Trains' with the NASG crest on it. We could have rear car window decals for all the members. There could be a bi-annual reach out to manufacturers letting them know that we are trying to promote S and how we are doing it. We can ask our members what they want to do with S promotion and use the top 5 comments. Communication is the key between the NASG and the various manufacturers.

It was discussed that farm modelers like dioramas. Dioramas can also include S trains.

Brian asked Merlyn about the new RMC ads and Merlyn was very positive in his response. James was also positive about the new ad.

3. Approval of minutes from October 23, 2022

Pete moved that the minutes from October 23, 2022 be approved.

It was seconded.

The motion was passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer report.

Mike did not give a report.

5. Other committee reports

None

6. Old business

a. Next *RMC* ad

The next ad has been approved.

b. Appointment of new Executive VP to fill out Jim Whipple's term

An American Flyer Modeller candidate has been approached to fill out the Exec VP position.

c. Upcoming Election

Filled ballots have to be mailed by April 15 and received by May 30. We need an election notice for the next *Dispatch*. We need the March issue to have the ballots. There was a question as to whether we mail out the ballots.

7. New Business

a. *Dispatch* materials. We have been granted permission by Otto Vondrak to run his column from the September *RMC* which was about S.

b. Dick Kramer and Peter Vanvliet have requested that we review the new membership categories that Will Holt added to the most recent revision of the bylaws.

c. We need Yard Office authors for the January *The Dispatch* issue. There should be a different VP every issue. Darby will do this one and Andy will do the next one. Jim Whipple is slated for the following one.

d. We would like to add a "Call Board" to *The Dispatch* for volunteers that are needed. Ads are necessary for the following four positions. Mike currently needs an assistant treasurer, Jim mentioned we need a Service Committee Chairperson; Brian is *The Dispatch* ad manager. There will be vacancies for the secretary and Western VP.

e. We need an ad manager. We discussed whether the BOT should form ad hoc committee to determine new ad rates?

f. Will Holt did the soliciting to fill positions that became vacant. We need to

find out where the responsibility lies for filling positions now.

8. Announcements and Other Issues of Concern

a. There will be a NMRA regional convention in Pittsburgh May 4-7, 2023; includes an open house at Penn Creek Valley (built by the late Sam Powell) on May 7.

b. 2024 NASG Convention Host We need an NASG Convention host.

9. Next meeting date: December 20, 2022 at 8:30pm EST

10. Adjournment

Andy moved that we adjourn the meeting.

It was seconded. The vote was unanimous. Meeting ended 11:07pm

NASG BOT Meeting - Tuesday, December 20th, 2022

Call to Order 8:41 pm EST

Members Present: Jim Whipple, President; Andrew Malette, Secretary; Mike Ferraro, Treasurer; Lou Templeton, Executive Vice President; Darby Marriott, Eastern/North Eastern Vice President; Brian Jackson, Central/South Eastern Vice President; Peter Gehret, Western Vice President

Treasurer's report: There was no Treasurer's Report

Secretary's report: The Secretary's Minutes from November 16, 2022 were read.

A discussion was made about what BOT officers needed to write in their columns for *The Dispatch*.

Peter moved that we accept the minutes as read.

It was seconded.

It was passed unanimously.

President's report: We welcomed Lou Templeton to the meeting. Lou has a great Flyer layout and is building a hi-rail layout. He

spent last winter scratch building a mining town. He has taken on the role of our new Executive Vice President.

There was a fraud attempt using Jim's NASG email to try to get Mike to deliver an amount of money in an account in Utah. Mike contacted Jim and it was stopped.

Committee Reports:

The Dispatch

Dan needs more space. Some things like the minutes were left out. Johnson Press was approached to see if we could add more pages. If an ad manager were to approach more of the advertisers to commit, more pages would be necessary. Brian is hoping to find the former authors for *The S Gaugian* to contribute to *The Dispatch*. We need a reviewer for new Lionel products.

Minutes that are to be put in *The Dispatch* will be limited to only the motions that were passed. Ad rates need to be re-examined. The charges need to be consistent.

Elections

January 31 is the cut-off for nominations. We are considering a mass email calling for nominations. Darby will approach Jamie Bothwell, the Election Chair about informing people using mass emails. Bios are necessary for nominees. As long as the ballots make the March/April issue, we are okay. The website could be a place where we have a call for nominees.

Annual Car Project

The 2022 cars are sold out. The chair will be approached to see what is next.

Convention

There is no convention site for 2024 yet.

Promotions – We discussed the website, our Facebook page and train conventions

Greg Klein needs to be approached to see what items are still valid for promotion.

Company Store

There was no report from the company store chair, but Brian mentioned that there are now laser etched NASG glasses available. There will be an article written about the history of the company store.

Old Business

Darby gave out the numbers for the 2022 Convention.

New Business

Brian suggested we change the ad in *The S Scale Resource*.

Brian asked if the changes to the constitution in the past few years were legal. All changes that were done to the constitution were done correctly through polling the membership. We should collect all the things that need to be acted on and get them done. Entire BOT will amend and vote on these in January. Then we have an organized plan to announce to the membership.

The next dates selected for BOT Zoom Meetings are as follows.

Monday, January 23, 2023 for next meeting at 8:30 pm.

Monday, February 20, 2023 for the next meeting at 8:30 pm.

Monday, March 20, 2023 for the next meeting at 8:30 pm.

Andy moved we end the meeting.

I was seconded and passed and no one was shot!

Meeting ended 10:28pm



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SUPPORT YOUR NASG

**Help out one of our
Committees!**

Veteran American Flyer Writer Joins *The Dispatch*

Bill Clark Introduces Himself and his New Column on Flyer Repair: “Restoration Station”



My toy train story began on Christmas Day of 1948, when Santa brought me a K5 Pacific. I was only three, so my father played with the K5 more than I did for several years. Over the years my collection grew, and eventually my brother and then my son also played with the trains. The love of American Flyer never left me, however, and in 1981 I bought the Southern Pacific Daylight and B&O freight sets when Lionel started reissuing Flyer. My passion continues to this day, when I purchase new S gauge products and find Gilbert Flyer items for my collection.

My Flyer layout was featured in the March/April 2010 *S Gaugian*, and in the November 2021 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. It is a toy train layout that has every accessory Gilbert ever made on it, as well as some accessories by Marx and Lionel. I have done nothing to make the layout look more “realistic”. It has the classic Gilbert track on green outdoor carpet; the goal was to make a layout that any ten-year-old would love.

I joined the TCA in 1992, and went to many of their shows through the years including the wonderful York show. I am also a member of the NASG, as it is an important forum for information about the S gauge world.

When I moved to the Dallas/Ft. Worth area in 1997, I joined the Lone Star Flyer Club. We have a clubhouse where our 40 ft. X 12 ft. layout resides, except twice a year when we take it to the North Texas Association of Railroad Clubs shows. You can read about us in the “Down at the Depot” column in *The Dispatch*. We currently have 28 members, and all of them own and run Flyer and other Hi-rail S gauge trains. I have been president of the club for the last eight years.

In 2010 I started writing “The Roundhouse” column in *The S Gaugian* magazine, and continued that column until the magazine went out of print. I also wrote feature articles and product reviews for Don Heimbürger. “The Roundhouse” was essentially about repairing American Flyer and other related toy train items.

When *The S Gaugian* was discontinued I looked for another publication to write for, and was fortunate to work with *Classic Toy Trains*. I have written feature articles on a number of Flyer topics in the last several years.

To get more Flyer into *The S Gaugian*, Don Heimbürger and I approached Hal Miller, the magazine’s editor, about writing a column we named “S Gauge Now & Then”. Hal approved and the column started with

the September 2021 issue. The column features stories about the Flyer of the past and more current topics. Since Don has passed, I am now writing and coordinating articles that will go into the column for future issues of the magazine.

My enjoyment of the toy train hobby has always focused on the revitalization and repair of trains; buying Flyer items that don’t work right – and repairing them – can be a lot more satisfying than finding something that runs perfectly. I have a ready stock of parts to fix anything that I need to repair, and I enjoy helping others repair the trains they may have purchased. I am looking forward to writing the new “Restoration Station” column for *The Dispatch*.



You there! Yes, you! Don’t forget to renew your membership in the NASG. Go to: <https://nasg.org/>

So Here's What I Do

By Dick Karnes



Avoiding Backdrop Anomalies

I like my layout height. My visible trackage is a minimum of 57 inches above the floor and as high as 70 inches at the end of a branch line. This has two major advantages:

- No need for anything on the backdrop except sky.

- No need for roofs on flat-roofed buildings whose tops are taller than eye level, and therefore no need for interior lighting of same.

For scenes below eye level, I use mirrors to create the illusion of continuity from the physical layout to the backdrop. The primary requirement for effective mirror placement is to avoid any possibility of

seeing yourself in the mirror! There are two ways to do this, as follows...

Angle your view into the backdrop. Place your mirror flush on the backdrop, hiding the top of the mirror with overhanging tree branches. For example, a road angled into the mirrored backdrop will appear to disappear around a corner behind the nearest building. I place diagonally-sliced buildings (two adjacent walls as a single unit) against the back wall overlapping the mirror to create an image of a rectangular building on the virtual street corner.

If you cannot angle your sight line, you can get away with a ninety-degree sight line provided you can place a view block directly between your line of sight and the mirror. I have one such situation on my layout with an interlocking tower providing the direct sight-line view block. For better realism you can use structures like store and restaurant fronts with partial sides abutting the mirror to provide apparent visual depth. Avoid flats pasted directly on the backdrop!

One more feature will help immensely to enhance the mirrored scene, and that is signage. Create a sign hanging 90 degrees from the building's partial side. Using your computer, develop a different store name for the backside of the sign, flip your image 180 degrees so it is backwards, and print it. Glue the backwards sign to the rear of the overhanging sign and presto! You have two different stores next to each other.

The photos may inspire you.



NEW PRODUCTS

By Jeff Madden

Atlas shows a new viaduct structure that should work for S under "HO accessories."

www.atlasrr.com

B.T.S. has a new company house listed for the Cabin Creek Coal Co. It's a laser wood kit that includes piles for slope location. Lists for \$49.95.



www.btsrr.com

Central and Western has a new website listing the Homaroad Supply- Homasote subroadbed in different angles in S. It comes in 4.5mm height and 7mm height. Besides roadbed, they show turnout pads, crossings, wye pads, and crossovers. Prices range from \$11 to \$12.50.

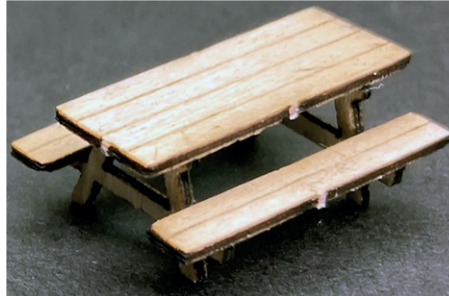
www.cwhomaroad.com

Innovative Hobby Supply lists 1/64 paper building kits. An example is a barn and silo for \$19.99.



www.innovativehobbysupply.com

Mine Mount Models has some 3-D printed items such as a 4 pack of picnic tables for \$11 and a storage rack for \$13.



www.minemountmodels.com

Narrow Gauge Modeling may be re-introducing some Poly Scale paints in railroad colors.

www.narrowgaugemodeling.com

Outland Models has many 3-D printed building kits. Parking lot booth, \$11.99; city restaurant, \$20.99; 3-story building, \$18.99; convenience store, \$20.99; truck garage, \$17.99; large factory, \$99.99. Plus – many figures – say 12 for \$8.97.



An old west stagecoach for \$10.99.

www.outlandmodels.com

Pre-Size is producing a TTX type modern flat cars with 1 short (20') and one long (40') container. The flat is a 60-footer built in 1964. The flat could also hold 3 20' containers. Price is \$99 with no T or C. The flat car only is \$65. Separate trucks with code 110 wheels are available for \$32.50 a pair.

www.pre-size.com

Scalecoat Paints Their website is inactive, but stay tuned.



Scale Trains just announced roadnames for the ex-SHS rebuilt boxcars: undecs, Frisco, EJ&E (green), DT&I, DT&I (auto), RI, C&NW, ATSF, C&WC, ATSF (Grand Canyon), ACL. All are boxcar red except the EJ&E. List price is \$54.99.

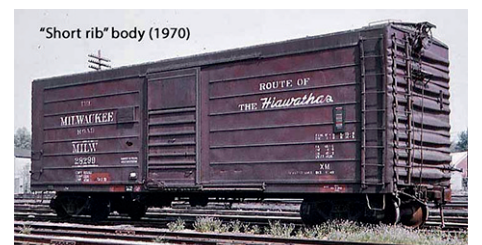
www.scalettrains.com

Sceniking now has backdrops specifically for S. The size for each is 16.5" high by 72" long. \$41.95 plus shipping from Canada.

www.sceniking.com

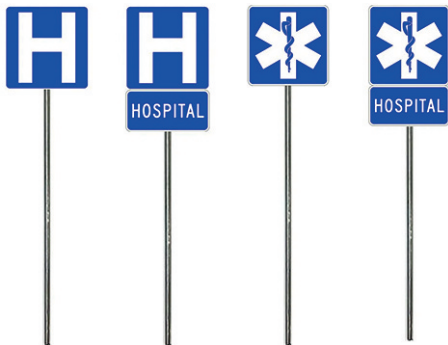


Shiloh Models (Check the NASG website) lists searchlight and color position signals with LED bulbs. An example is a B&O color position light for \$25-\$35.



Smoky Mountain is now offering new short-rib 40' Milwaukee Road boxcars for \$90 plus shipping. Long-rib versions are available too.
Smokymountainmodelworks.com

Tennessee Valley Models lists many highway road signs in various sets. Prices range from \$8 to \$12.



www.tennesseevalleycustoms.com

Yelton Models has a 2-story brick house for \$75, a TH&B wood caboose kit for \$120 (no T or C), a CP/CN speeder and trailer for \$25 (kit), and transformer flat car loads for \$25 ea. These are 3-D printed.



www.yeltonmodels.com



Help support the NASG by advertising in *The Dispatch*.
 Contact Merlyn Jarman
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Dave Blum
PIKESVILLE MODELS
 3315 Timberfield Lane
 Pikesville, MD 21208-4425
 410-653-2440

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In this column, I would like to cover a number of changes related to the NASG's Annual Convention web site.

The NASG owns the “nasgconvention.com” web site address. It doesn't actually contain a web site, but it is used to re-direct the visitor to the actual web site where the next NASG Convention web site is located. The idea is that all you have to do is remember or make a bookmark or link to that address, and it is always referencing the most current site that actually contains the Convention site.

As you have probably noticed, we, as a group, are struggling a bit to get clubs to host NASG Conventions. The reality is that we are all getting older, and we are reaching the end-of-life for the “Baby Boomer” generation (in general). My personal interpretation is that it is not that the hobby is dying, but rather that fewer people are participating in it (because we are at the other end of the bell curve, so to say). It is therefore a bit of a challenge for clubs to have the manpower to volunteer to put on an NASG Convention.

From when I became the NASG webmaster in late 2011, I have created 7 out of the 10 NASG Convention web sites. Doing those, I have gained a bit of an insight into what the Convention organizers go through to pull off such an event. The guys and gals working in the background are definitely to be commended for doing so, and we should all support them by attending the Conventions if at all possible; their reward is to see your happy smiling faces!

But, in light of this reality, there have been some discussions, ideas, and proposals about the possibility of me doing the NASG Convention web site each year. This would lighten the burden on a club that wants to host a Convention but doesn't have the technical know-how to pull off a full-featured, online registration, online payment web site.

I really like that idea. On the one hand, one might argue that this increases my workload (which is significant for the main

NASG web site), but on the other hand, I seem to be doing that anyway in the past 7 out of 10 years. Each of those 7 years, I started with a blank sheet of paper and built the site from scratch. When the Convention was over, I would throw away the code and just replace it with a nice summary page of photos and highlights, for posterity's sake. I didn't know that I was going to do the next year's web site, so there was no real reason to keep the code.

What this idea of me doing each Convention web site from now on does for me, is it allows me to take a much more long-term view. Each Convention is fairly similar in format, and so the site can have these same categories of content, such as the venue description, the Convention car, the registration page, the online payment process, the listing of clinics, and the event's schedule, to name but a few. Only the year-to-year specifics would change.

The most time-consuming part of each Convention web site is the online registration page. Web site forms are not trivial to develop. But, since each Convention is fairly similar, I would be able to code the site in such a manner that only the specifics need to be changed each year, while the overall form stays the same. This would actually significantly reduce my workload each year, while still offering a full-function web site.

There is also the behind-the-scenes information gathering to consider. We had some issues with the 2022 Convention, in that there were problems with the receiving of a handful of registrations. I am addressing this issue as well. Knowing that I'll be doing the annual Convention web sites, allows me to justify the time and energy it takes to build a much more robust system for processing registrations, and make that information available to that year's Convention team in a reliable manner.

So, for the 2023 NASG Convention in Harrisburg, PA, we are going to make this the first year where we put this into practice. We have also, in the background, discussed the idea that the NASG

Convention web site should be more integrated into the main NASG web site to make it look more cohesive, rather than a stand-alone, unrelated effort. So, the 2023 NASG Convention web site is now directly on the NASG web site, and the links to that portion of the web site are now fully integrated and active. The “nasgconvention.com” web site address takes you to that portion of the NASG's web site. The 2023 Convention site looks fairly similar to the NASG main web site, with the buttons along the left and right sides (on larger-screen devices; top, on small-screen devices), but the buttons take you to the different sections of the Convention.

To complete the discussion related to the Convention web site, I want to bring up one additional thought I have had and have proposed, which is to consider getting rid of the PDF version of the registration form. In the past, we have offered the ability to register for the Convention via the Convention's web site, or to download a PDF file that you could either fill in on the screen (using the appropriate PDF viewing software, such as Adobe's Acrobat Reader), or to print out and you fill it in on the printed page directly.

The problem with that approach is that we now, effectively, have two completely different forms of registration. Someone (I don't have the know-how nor the time) has to create and then maintain that PDF registration form. My experience has been that between the PDF form and the online registration form, we go through several iterations back and forth during the Convention lead-up time. Also, if the person attending the Convention downloads a PDF file that is an older version, and then doesn't get around to filling it in and mailing it until several months later, the form may be outdated. This may cause the Convention team to have to contact the member to resolve issues, the worst of which might include adjusting the registration cost.

So, my proposal is that we eliminate the PDF form all together. Members must register via the NASG Convention web site.

Once the registration has been recorded, he/she can then print the summary page that will be shown, and then postal-mail that printed page with his/her payment to the appropriate person. By doing this, we can maintain a record of all registrations on the NASG web server for the Convention team to see them all together. This would also eliminate the need for the Convention team to manually type in the mailed-in registration form (or e-mailed PDF form file) into whatever system they are using (Excel spreadsheet, Access database, etc.),

which can lead to typos, plus it is time-consuming.

There are a number of people who might not have (or the ability to) access to a computer or the Internet. For those, someone else could do the online registration on their behalf by either filling it out online, or printing off the online registration form and physically taking it to the person, to then be postal mailed to the appropriate person with their payment, as normal.

So, let me know what you think of these ideas. Feel free to contact me at webmaster@nasg.org with your comments about the content of this column. We currently do not have a Convention chairman, so I am willing to receive your feedback and pass it on to the right people. It is my hope that these changes will in some small part help keep the NASG Conventions coming each year, while reducing the workload on the teams that put the Conventions together.



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Pic from 2017 NASG Timonium Display

Pushbuttons allow public to start trains
James Ingram, vms 570-322-7597

Down at the Depot

By Carl Rudolph

Well, the calendar on the wall says it is well into Spring as this column is being written but don't you believe it. Here in the Sierra Nevada, it is still snowing and no sign of a warm-up yet! The good part of this is that outdoor activities are minimal and indoor activities, such as toy and model trains, are going full swing. Since S clubs are right in the thick of that, here's what we've heard through the grapevine:

The Pioneer Valley Model Railroad Club (Western Massachusetts) report that the Amherst Train Show was a huge success. As correspondent Steven Allen stated, they assisted the **Bristol S Gaugers** with the setup of that club's layout at the show and the attendance count at the door was 21,869 plus about 3,500 vendors, exhibitors and volunteers! No wonder that show is famous! Meanwhile, at the last meeting held at **Harry Ruddock's**, the club discussed plans to celebrate their 20th anniversary (a year late). Needed repairs at Look Park (for Santa's Trains) were also discussed. Harry's layout is very fine and wonderfully detailed – a joy to look at and it also operates "flawlessly". Sounds like a good meeting!

The South Jersey S Gaugers have been really busy. We now have a report on the Holiday Dinner which was great with members bringing all the food, which sounded very enticing, and all of it was eaten! An auction of items donated by members to fund the Layout Maintenance budget was also a resounding success with lots of items that were custom built by the donors. Prior to the dinner, the club had the layout at the Ocean City Music Pier show and also at the Haddon Heights Library show. The latter always has the layouts in the basement and the elevator was broken....so the members shlepped the modules and 180 lb power center down two flights of stairs...free Bengay was handed out to participants! At least the elevator was repaired before they had to go back upstairs! The club is pleased that they have been invited back for next year, so clearly it is a favored event.

The Baltimore Area American Flyer Club had a fine outing at the Great Scale Show, followed by a meeting at **Dave Whitworth's**. The meeting was well

attended and very productive with new ideas for the layout. **Walt Westerfield** gave a presentation on track protection (using 1x2 lumber and cardboard) to protect delicate scale track "so your track doesn't look like it's had a bad session with a hair curler." The most joyous news is that the club is planning a summer picnic at Leakin Park after a three year hiatus! Right on! Lastly, **Kyle Russell** has advised your scribe that Broom's Blooms, which we guessed to be a plant nursery, is actually an ice cream dairy with sandwiches!

The North Florida Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers has had a busy time since the last column. Meetings at **Larry Shugart's**, **Lloyd Lippert's** and **Fred Gorbell's** homes have all been fun-filled with lots of operation of great layouts. Meetings tend to have themes – one was "Chestnut Night" and "Windup Night" with AF chestnut strip passenger cars (and Silver Flash Alcos) and pre-war windup trains. Another meeting was "New England" since that is the theme of Fred's layout. Here are links to three videos of recent meetings – the first https://youtu.be/7QIOc_1DVKY ("Trolley Night") is at Larry's home; the second <https://youtu.be/67xlBpOov6A> at Lloyd's; and the third <https://youtu.be/9x34bFnav90> at Fred's. I know these are difficult to copy – send me an email if you want the links the easy way. The videos really show the layouts.

The Pittsburgh S Gaugers have been discussing the future with respect to improvement of the club and recruitment of new members. As a result it appears that clinics might be introduced as a part of meetings (certainly popular elsewhere) and running of trains. To that end they are discussing the possibility of creating a very portable temporary layout for setup at meetings just for the purpose of running trains. Yours truly finds that intriguing. With regard to the recruitment, they are weighing the pros and cons of having the club's involvement in social media. That is surely the way to reach younger people but requires club members' attention in new ways. All clubs need to consider this avenue of communication to survive.

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Association (Cleveland area) have

confirmed that they will host the 2024 Spring S Spree in Mayfield at the Hilton Garden Inn on the 3rd and 4th of May 2024. The 2024 Snow Dogs show, which the club traditionally hosts in January at the local UAW hall, may find a new venue. Meanwhile, they are slated to have the layout at the NMRA show at Lakeland Community College.

The Miami Valley S Gaugers (Dayton area) had a meeting at **John Clifford's** home, just about the last meeting prior to their hosting of the 2023 Spring S Spree, which will be over by the time you read this. Hope to have a glowing report next column. At John's home the club had dinner with spouses (spice?) present and then had a final business meeting before the Spree. As a reward, they operated trains on John's layout and **Jay Reese** brought and ran a complete Wabash Cannonball that he had created.

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (Columbus area) met recently at a work session to make repairs and improvements to the club layout. The session went well and a lot was accomplished. This was in preparation for the layout's appearance at the Spring Spree in Dayton. The meeting at **Harvey Grawe's** home that was announced in the previous column was postponed due to heavy snow in the Columbus area, and it has (presumably) just occurred as this is written, so we are still awaiting a report!

The Central Ohio S Gaugers – Northern Division (Toledo area) met at Mike Kowalec's home with a show-and-tell followed by running trains on Mike's layout. Next up were meetings at **Jim Zare's** and then **John Donnersbach's**. Jim has several layouts in different scales, so there was plenty of train running. John's layout is "progressing," so we are awaiting a report on that!

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers held a meeting at Ken Snyder's home at which **Gaylord Gill** showed a 1/64 scale Greenlight diecast 1949 Buick that looks really nice. **Mark Charles** showed some scale license plates for application on model cars (no one had eyes sharp enough to read them!) and **Gordy Michaels** showed a small NWSL Stanton drive for installation on a flatcar. Those Stanton

drives are pretty neat – we hope Gordy shows off the finished product.

The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers are well into the planning for this year's Fall S Fest with venue, budget, and logo all approved and commemorative cars selected. The first ad has been submitted as of the writing of the newsletter – probably well beyond that status now. Before the Fest, though, are a couple of events that are certainly of interest – one is a field trip to Rochelle Railroad Park in June and the other is a picnic at the Fox River Trolley Museum in August. Your scribe would enjoy both of those!

The Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop (Twin Cities area) held a Modelers Meet which apparently went quite well. There were lots of items on display, at least some of which were S scale. A fine presentation on 3-D printing by an experienced modeler and printer was enthusiastically received. **Tom Lennon** and correspondent **Ken Zieska** made billboards at the make-and-take, but Ken says Tom went over the top by adding scenery to his! Sounds like all had a very good time.

The Kansas City S Gaugers are planning to have several tables, and perhaps a small layout, at the Heart of America Chapter of TCA meet in Independence, Missouri in June with hopes of swinging by member **Dave Young's** nearby home, afterward, to view his layout. **Bill Hutton** has discovered several items in his basement that will be featured at the next meeting's show and tell. Bill also reports that their S gauge portion of the big layout at Union Station is still up and operating and that a donation has been made at that layout of some prewar AF standard gauge trains, which may either become part of the Holiday Display or be sold to fund other parts of the display. We will stay tuned.

The Lone Star Flyers Club (Dallas area) sent this news in via **Larry Yurcho**: "The Lone Star Flyers are recovering from a very, very successful Winter show in January. We had great fun and success with the racetrack, missile launcher cars and staged train wrecks. All of the new additions to our layout were well received as discussed in the last [column]. We are grateful to have added a brand new, young member, **Dan Hollingsworth**, who lives

only a few blocks from the Plano Event Center. He was officially made a new member in our recent meeting. We are so grateful to have Dan. He's been showing off his 1957 Flyer trains, a gift from his dad, at our meetings. Conversely, we are disappointed to lose **Scott Young** as a full-time member. He is a founder of the Club and is retiring and moving back to his home state of Michigan. He plans to attend the shows, so it will not be farewell. He has been a centerpiece of our Club's success! We will be spending the next few months prior to the Fall show completing our downtown module to the layout, fixing various issues with the layout and repairing any damages to the layout caused by the two trips to the Plano shows."

And this time around we have heard from a new (to this column) club! **The Houston S Gaugers** "participated in the annual all-scales Greater Houston Train Show at the Pasadena Convention Center. Our S-Mod layout was located alongside of G, HO, and N scale layouts, plus toy train exhibitors. Members **Chuck Kemper**, **Rusty Paulus**, **Steve King**, **Don Hand** and **Asher Murray** operated their scale trains, and interacted with the show's attendees. Also, we appreciate the help provided by younger adults among our family members, who took the places of two 'old timers', in setting-up and breaking-down the heavy 10 ft. x 28 ft. layout! At GHST, we distributed the new NASG tri-folds in response to attendee inquiries about AF, hi-rail, and S scale standard and narrow gauge. These colorful new hand-outs were a noteworthy improvement over several earlier ones that we have offered!"

The quote, slightly edited, is from **Don Hand**, who asked that we add "To learn more about HSG's activities, visit <http://www.HoustonSGaugers.org>." Thanks for the news, Don!

In the San Francisco Bay area, the **Golden Gate American Flyer Club** met again at **Bill Riechmann's** home in Walnut Creek. Member Dale Smith was given a collection of AF trains, which apparently are pretty rough (for the most part), but he brought them to the meeting either to be auctioned, donated, or "just take what you can use." Now there's motivation to go to a meeting if you are an AF person!

The Southern California S Gaugers Club met at **Steve Cole's** home where several members assisted each other in building additional modules for the layout. There was good attendance and they are happy that the club now has an additional 28 lineal feet of modules to use. Their layout is already quite large – maybe at the Tulare show next Fall there will be enough room to have all of it assembled! The next meeting was at **Jeff Kruger's** in San Dimas where it was ascertained that the only sure show for the layout was the Ventura County Fairgrounds Great Train Show last February. Others are pending.

The Carolinas Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers (members from NC, SC, and VA) had their own version of "March Madness" doing two trains shows on the first two weekends in March. The first weekend of March 4th & 5th a large modular layout was set up for the Carolina Coastal Railroaders Train Show at the Riverfront Convention Center in New Bern, NC. On the second weekend on March 11th, the Super Eight modular layout was set up for a one-day Mebane Train Show and Sale sponsored by the Mebane Train Group in Mebane, NC.

For the New Bern Show, members brought modules to form a figure eight modular layout 32 X 26 with a "yard" connecting the two inside circle layout and one outside oval traveling the entire layout.

For the Mebane train show, the club set up the Super Eight Layout which has three trains traveling on a figure eight track plan.

Then the Super Eight traveled to Hickory, NC for the 21st Annual NC Railroad expo at the Hickory Metro Convention Center on March 31st and April 1st.

We will catch our breath and jump into "May Madness" with three shows: The Fifth Annual Spring into Trains Show, May 6th and 7th sponsored by the Neuse River Model Railroad Club being held at the Kerr Scott Building on the N. C. State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, NC.

The Super Eight will be set up for the Shenandoah Model Trains and Railroading Show in Fishersville, VA on May 7th. The following Saturday, march

13th, the Super Eight will be at the SE TCA Train Show and Sale held at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Goldsboro, NC.

On May 20th and 21st the club will participate with a large modular layout for the Historic Spencer Shop train show at

the N.C. Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC

So, S gauge clubs continue to be alive and well. Here's hoping for a fine end of Spring and a reasonably warm Summer! Keep trackin'!



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Restoration Station

By Bill Clark

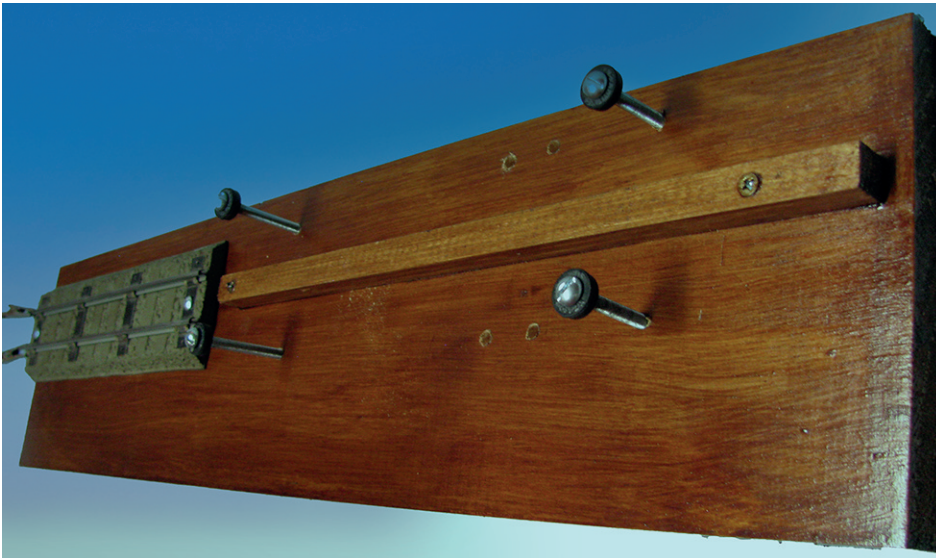


Photo of my finished test station, so you can use it as a model to build yours.

The Dispatch Editorial Board was looking for someone to write an American Flyer repair column for the magazine. I was contacted and after some thought I decided to give it a whirl. I wrote "The Roundhouse" column in *The S Gaugian* from 2010 till the magazine ceased publication, which was also about Flyer repair, and now I write the column, "S Gauge Now & Then" for *Classic Toy Trains*.

For the first column I decided to write about something to make it easier for doing repairs, a test station. I hope that you find it helpful if you build one.

Building a Locomotive Test Station

Now let me turn to the subject of this issue's first repair column in *The Dispatch*. A good friend of mine and a member of our Lone Star Flyer train club, Scott Young, developed a locomotive test station for his home workstation, and I thought it was such a great idea that made one for me. I use it often and think you will too if you decide to make one.

When you go to shows or look on parts dealers' websites you can see that there are test stations that allow you to put your

engine on a device with small rollers so the engine can run but stay stationary. I always wanted to get one of these, but I felt they were more costly than I wanted to pay. This meant that I always had to find an awkward way to test my engines. Scott's test station has relatively no expense and most items to make it you probably already have.

Here is the bill of materials:

One 1"x 6" board 2' Long

- One 1/2" square piece of wood 13" long (Available at Home Depot & Lowes)
- One piece of straight AF track with track pins removed
- One piece of AF rubber roadbed
- Four 3/4" wood screws
- Two 2" machine screws with a 3/16" diameter
- Two 1 1/2" inch machine screws with a 3/16" diameter
- Four 0 size faucet neoprene washers

The tools needed are an electric drill with bit for the wood screws and a 3/16" bit for the machine screws plus a screw driver.

Construction Process

1. Starting with the 1" x 6" board, place the 1/2" square, 13" long strip of wood on the 1" x 6" board closer to one of the long sides, so that it is near one end and 1 1/2" from that side running lengthwise with the larger board. Drill holes toward the ends of the 1/2" square piece of wood and screw it to the larger board. Putting it closer to one side of the 1" x 6" board gives you space for tools or parts.
2. At this point, I decided to modify Scott's plan and use a coating of polyurethane with stain to seal the wood. I did this because testing engines with oiled bearings and surfaces would cause splattering that would stain the wood. This step seals the wood surface and surplus oil can be cleaned away.
3. Next, place the track in the rubber roadbed and set it on the end of the larger board lengthwise so that the other end is centered with the end of the 1/2" wood strip. The purpose of the rubber roadbed is to raise the track to be as high as the 1/2" wood strip. Drill holes in the tie at the ends of the track and use the other two wood screws to fasten them to the 1" x 6".

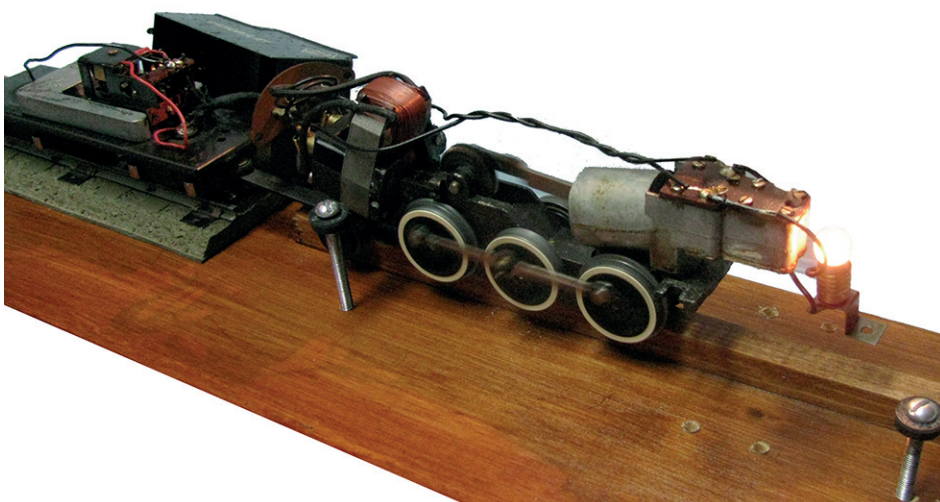
When you look at what you have completed, you can understand that the track with roadbed is for the tender of a steam engine and the 1/2" strip will be to hold the engine chassis so that the wheels can spin, but the engine is stationary. You can also use the 1/2" strip for a diesel engine chassis with its shell off for testing.

Now you probably want to know what the 3/16" machine screws are to be used for. Well, these are stabilizers for steam engines with their boiler castings on. The engines sitting on the 1/2" strip are top heavy and when you apply power, they won't stay on the strip.

What I learned was that these stabilizers need to be arranged according to which Flyer steam locomotive you are testing. Since the tender will be on the test station



Northern on test station shell on.



Pacific on test station shell off.

on the track near the $\frac{1}{2}$ " square strip of wood, the cab of the steam engine is near to the tender. Drill two $\frac{3}{16}$ " screw holes on opposite sides of the engine cab. Since the cab is in the same place for every steam engine, these holes for the stabilizers can be used by all of them. These holes are about 1" from the sides of the $\frac{1}{2}$ " square strip and $2\frac{5}{8}$ " from the end of the rubber roadbed.

I drilled the holes for the stabilizers about $\frac{1}{2}$ " inch deep. The reason is that the machine screws must be able to slide in and out of these holes, but be firm when they are in place.

Now, the comparable length of the various steam engines means that the stabilizers at the other end of the $\frac{1}{2}$ " strip will vary. For Atlantics, those holes are $5\frac{1}{4}$ " from the

cab holes. For Pacifics the distance is $6\frac{1}{4}$ ". Last for Northerns it is 8". These stabilizers rest against the steam chest below the smoke stack. These holes are the same distance from the $\frac{1}{2}$ " strip as the ones for the cab.

I am sure that you are looking at those four faucet washers and wondering what they

are for. These are what actually hold the steam engine stable. Placing a drop of oil on the $\frac{3}{16}$ " screw's end, insert it into the hole on the faucet washer and turn the washer till it is next to the screw head. The longer screws are for use at the cab end and the shorter ones at the steam chest end of the locomotive.

Use in operation

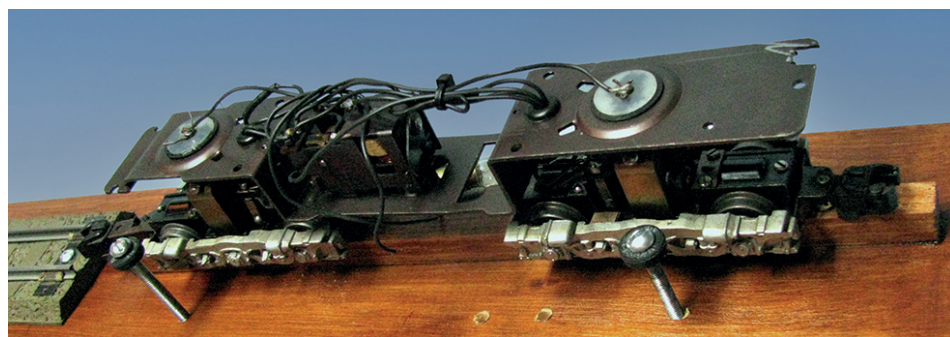
You have now completed the test station so let me make some comments about what I found in using mine:

- To apply power to test an engine I used two wires of appropriate length from my test transformer with a small alligator clip on each. This way I could apply power to the track for testing a steam engine or to the locations necessary on a diesel with its shell off.
- I found that steam engines with cast iron shells need the stabilizers more than the engines with plastic shells because of their weight.
- Steam engines with their shells off were stable without stabilizers. If you find it better to use stabilizers all you have to do is drill holes in the right locations for the machine screws with their faucet washers.

I took a number of photos of the test station so that you can visualize the engine testing process.

Summary

I want to thank my friend, Scott Young, for letting me use his idea. I hope that a number of the readers of *The Dispatch* will decide to give his test station a try. Please send your ideas, suggestions, and questions for this column to me at billstrains@aol.com.



Powered Alco on test station shell off.

From Gilbert to YouTube

The Journey of an American Flyer Fan

By Austin Birkey – Photos by the author



Austin's American Flyer



Greetings. My name is Austin Birkey and I have a “train problem”. Occasionally this problem borders on an addiction, but this train problem is a fun one to have! Here's a bit about my train story and how the YouTube channel, “Austin's American Flyer,” came to be.

When I was only three, my father purchased a small HO train set. He, with my “help”, worked on our little pike; but even at this young age, I was consumed with wanting to know how the engine worked. To solve this mystery, I did something for the first time: I took the Santa Fe engine apart. My father, less enthused with my curiosity, was not happy that I had dismantled the engine, and he sold the rest of the set. I can still

Austin Birkey admits he has a “train problem”. In this article, the new-to-the-NASG member explains how his love for Flyer evolved and led to a successful YouTube channel and AF repair business. Here, two of Austin's prized AF locomotives pause at Mystic on his Flyer layout.

replay the scene of a stranger coming up to the front porch, and being handed a paper sack full of trains that I thought were mine. But this moment proved to be transformative: trains became all I thought about, dreamed about, or even wanted to play with. I became totally addicted to trains.

Father's American Flyer

To my astonishment, at the age of 5, I found another present under the Christmas tree. I opened it to find a TRAIN ... but not just any train, it was

my own father's childhood American Flyer, 'Arrow' train set, consisting of a #21005 Atlantic steam engine, a rare blue (with yellow lettering) L&N boxcar #24066, and a bright red, Santa Fe #24225 coal car. He had also acquired an orange Illinois Central 800 series boxcar, a 924 series, gray Central NJ cement car, the ever-present T&P gondola, and an additional 930 Tuscan Red lit caboose. I was absolutely amazed, and I never even imagined that a toy train could make smoke and chuff sounds, have working knuckle couplers and include a trestle set that allowed a

figure eight. My young world was now filled with the hum of an A/C transformer and the smell of ozone from sparking tender wheels.

A few years later, I was again surprised by yet another Christmas gift of Flyer trains. This group included a #300 diecast Atlantic that ran superfast, several more gondolas, a flat car, and another caboose. Included with this second set was additional track, 4 switches, a 90 degree crossover, and a train station. My 4x8 table soon doubled in size. I wore out the little Flyer book I had, dreaming of layouts, cars, engines, and other accessories pictured between the covers. Could there really be more American Flyer stuff than I had? My dad told me Flyer was not made any more, so over time I came to accept that what I had would be all I would ever have.

But there was much to be found in the world of HO. At the age of eleven I began acquiring HO, and for the next three decades my equipment improved with DCC, sound cards and decoders, and trackside accessories. While there was much to admire with the fine details and prototypical operation, HO had downsides as well. So occasionally, I took out my treasured American Flyer and made a temporary layout on the floor.



Austin's layout measures 6 1/2' x 18' and is regularly featured in his YouTube episodes. It has all the charm that draws fans to American Flyer.



American Flyer is number one in Austin's book! Here the author and YouTube host shows off a new-in-the box AF 0-6-0. Behind him is part of his impressive collection of original Gilbert American Flyer locomotives and rolling stock.

First Train Show

Then another unexpected thing occurred: a train show appeared just a few miles from my house. I had never been to a train show before – and there amidst the large volume of HO and Lionel – were a few people selling American Flyer trains! I came home with a 1947 American Flyer #322 Hudson with smoke in tender. I had dreamed of a steam engine with more than 4 drive wheels. My Flyer book had a picture of a Hudson flying down the track, with smoke streaming out of the stack; I now owned what was once a dream. The next year a #370 Diesel joined my fleet, and a year later, an 18-B transformer and a #342 0-8-0 switcher were added. Additionally, I began finding Flyer other places, like flea markets and auctions.

And then came another “cosmic moment”: we moved. After days spent dismantling and packing up the HO layout, I made a decision to return to my S scale roots. Our new house had a large basement with potential. For starters, there was a long shelf beckoning for my American Flyer collection. With my Flyer collection in full view, I planned a new layout. As I had a YouTube account, I thought I might post a video of my layout progress, in case anyone might care to watch. Little did I know, back in 2016, that “Austin's American Flyer” would become what it is today.

Austin's American Flyer

I wish I could say I had a business plan or clearly defined agenda for what I wanted my YouTube channel to become, but truthfully, it has merely been a reflection of my own journey. I began with simple repairs, building the layout, and running trains. Then I added videos about engine and car repairs, as well as videos on broader general interest train topics, such as the Whyte system for naming steam engine wheel arrangements. As I attended train shows and began to develop relationships with other Flyer collectors, I began to use YouTube to showcase other layouts or interviews with other collectors. The more I learned about American Flyer, the more I began to promote the hobby. I almost feel ashamed to admit this, but initially, I had no idea that American Flyer and other S scale groups like the NASG existed, let alone dedicated clubs, S Sprees and Conventions, and the availability of newer S scale products.

Austin's American Flyer is continuing to develop. As I enjoy networking and collaborating with people, repairing and running trains, and developing new products to support the hobby, the YouTube channel will continue to reflect all these interests. And to a degree, I hope the channel will continue to be a type of cyber front porch to attract others to 1:64 trains: a digital venue where conversations



Austin covers a wide variety of topics on his growing "Austin's American Flyer" YouTube channel, including visits to premier AF layouts and discussions of collecting and repairing AF trains. In this episode, he describes the warping issues associated with the early plastics Gilbert used in their beloved trains.

happen and relationships can grow. It has also become a place where I share new products that I make for American Flyer, such as 30, 45, and 60 degree crossovers, roadbed (including for the wide radius curves), road crossings in straight and radius curves, end of track bumpers, and such.

What does the future hold for Austin's American Flyer? Instagram, Tiktok, and Facebook have joined the platforms where Austin's American Flyer is promoted. I hope the additional social media channels will continue to connect with an ever-expanding group. The message will continue to invite both young and old to



Austin offers several AF-related products of his own design and manufacture including this 30 degree crossing which are available on his website.

join the hobby of American Flyer and S gauge trains. But the best part of this adventure has always been meeting others in our hobby and making some amazing friendships. It's nice to know I am not the only one with a "train problem"!



Tom Hurd

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Modeling and photo Bob Frascella

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For Info Write: Promotion Chairman, 6707 Cottage Hill Ln, Cedar Rapids, IA 52411 or Email: promotions@nasg.org

This ad featuring the modeling of Bob Frascella appeared in the January 2023 RMC

What We're Looking For

Images should feature a scale train or trains and include other rolling stock vehicles and figures, all in an interesting setting with plenty of color and texture. Layouts must use code 125 or smaller rail, scale wheel profiles, and scale couplers. We will also consider photos of individual scale models and photos of modules or dioramas. The theme of the campaign is ***"Look What's Being Done In S Today!"***.

Images must be crisply focused and well-lit. We can provide assistance adjusting lighting to some extent. Images that are slightly wider than they are tall (about 3 x 5 proportion) will work the best and files should be 2MB or larger in size.

How To Participate

To contribute photos, simply email them to Brooks Stover at bcstover@comcast.net. He will be glad to answer any questions you might have.

Sixty Years Building with Wood

By Steve Monson



Steve's latest model of a traditional looking farmhouse.

I grew up in the country with only small towns nearby. I was never in a hobby shop until I went off to college at 18. But my small-town drug store carried both *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman*. I studied these looking for ideas that I could use on my small AF layout.

The first railroad model I constructed was a coaling station built from plans in *Model Railroader*. It was made out of balsa wood with an emery cloth roof. I was just 12. Soon after, I built an icing platform. I remember being quite proud of them, and I kept them on my layout for many years.

When I received my first freight car kit, I was truly hooked. Such precision pieces of wood! Laser cut wood of today is not all that finer than the pieces in an Ambroid snow plow kit of 60 years ago.

I have built nearly a hundred models of wood. While other modelers "graduated" to styrene, I stayed with basswood. I just never could love that plastic. I dabbled with brass but it just wasn't for me. Lots of work with not necessarily any more detail.

But wood was nice. I didn't need a lot of tools and it assembled easily. Lots of sheathing and shapes were available commercially. Tees, zeos, angles and siding of all descriptions. I built everything on a small piece of plywood at the dining room table. Just big enough for a few small hand tools and paint. Near my family and not isolated in the basement.

Pictured is my latest model. A traditional looking farmhouse that I built to fit a specific spot on my layout. It probably took me only 8 hours or so. Not a prize winner, but it still looks pretty nice.



*Steve's first model a coaling station built from plans in *Model Railroader**

Unfortunately, I am getting old and my eyes and hands don't work as well as they did. Perhaps I will never build another model. My layout really has all it needs. But I have a lot of fine models to remind me of a lifetime of working with my hands.

NASG Video - YouTube
The NASG Video channel is an extension of the National Association of S Gaugers (NASG) to facilitate the sharing of model railroading and trains in 1:64 S Scale.

We'll have more on this as it rolls out, but for now, you may search for "NASG Video Presents" on YouTube and see what's happening!



NASG introduces PROMOTIONAL PRINT MATERIAL

NEW!



The NASG is pleased to announce a set of promotional handouts to help clubs and individual NASG members explain and promote S modeling to potential newcomers. The different approaches to modeling in 1:64 scale can be confusing, especially for newcomers to S. These new print materials carefully target information to the interests of the individual in a series of six separate, fully illustrated, full color 8 1/2"x14" tri-fold handouts.

The first tri-fold, titled "An Introduction to S MODEL RAILROADING" is an introduction to 1:64 modeling. It defines the three common approaches of Scale, Hi-Rail and American Flyer in terms of track, wheel profiles and levels of realism. For additional detail, there are also individual tri-fold handouts for Scale, Hi-Rail and American Flyer, which discuss each approach to S in more detail, including primary manufacturers and retailers. A fifth tri-fold covers Narrow Gauge modeling in 1:64, and a sixth tri-fold is a guide to the NASG's excellent website.

OBTAINING COPIES OF THE TRI-FOLDS

To obtain copies of the tri-folds, contact your regional VP or the Promotions Committee.

Darby Marriott: eastern_vp@nasg.org

Brian Jackson: central_vp@nasg.org

Peter Gehret: western_vp@nasg.org

James McAuliffe: promotions@nasg.org

You can view each tri-fold in detail on the NASG website. From the Welcome page, click on the **NASG** button, then click on **Tri-folds** under the **NASG Promotions** heading.



This graphic in 'Introduction to S MODEL RAILROADING' defines AF, Hi-Rail and Scale modeling in terms of rail size and wheel profiles.

B&O Class L-2 0-8-0 SWITCHER

An S Helper Locomotive that might have been

By Brooks Stover / Photos by the author unless noted



More Consolidation (2-8-0) steam locomotives were built in the US than any other type. By the time the last ones were constructed in the 1940s, more than 33,000 had been built. Because of its modest size and versatile performance, the Consolidation was a very successful design. These engines ran until the end of steam on branch and shortlines throughout the country.

The beautiful S scale Consolidation introduced by S Helper Service in 2006 was also a big success. It was a versatile locomotive for modelers that could perform a number of assignments on a layout, and it looked and ran great. SHS went on to sell 1500 of the engines in both scale and hi-rail and with AC, DC and DCC/Sound control systems. The engines were available in nine road names in multiple road numbers.

Just as the prototype Consolidation dramatically impacted railroading in the US, the SHS Consolidation dramatically impacted my modeling of the Buffalo Creek & Gauley (BC&G).

Before the introduction of the SHS engine, I represented the BC&G's three Consolidations with American Flyer

0-8-0's that I converted to 2-8-0's, complete with can motors and Dynatrol control. These conversions were pretty crude and I quickly replaced them with the new SHS engines. My layout took a giant leap forward in appearance and performance with the arrival of the SHS locomotives. I have had 3 SHS Consolidations in service since 2006 and they have performed flawlessly. Even accomplished modelers believe they are brass models

The Prototype

The Consolidation-type was a logical choice for SHS for their first and only steam locomotive project. Further, the B&O's E-27 class 2-8-0 was a perfect choice for a prototype for their model as it was a typical Consolidation and the B&O had a bunch of them! There were 110 E-27's built in 1905-06 and another 114 were built in 1910 for a total of 224 engines.



FIG. 2 - This undated photo of B&O Class L-2c #707 was made by Ralph Dunn. The configuration of this engine was typical of the L-2c class and the locations of appliances closely matches the SHS Consolidation. Even the firebox appears light gray!

It was typical for railroads to modify and rebuild their steam locomotives over time and such was the case with the E-27's. Between 1924 and 1930, the B&O converted 115 E-27's to Class L-2 0-8-0 switchers in L-2, L-2a, L-2b and L-2c subclasses. The class L-2 engines were originally numbered 600-714. They were significantly updated as part of the conversion, but the basic E-27 architecture was unchanged. They retained their original drivers and overall boiler dimensions. As with all B&O steam engines, the L-2's road numbers were changed several times over their lives as the B&O numbering system evolved.

In conversations with Don Thompson over the years, he indicated that while the thought came too late to implement, he realized that it would have been relatively easy for SHS to offer a model of the L-2 0-8-0 engine. Very few new parts would have been needed. From time to time, Don encouraged me to do an L-2 conversion: "It would be easy," he claimed. I realized that one part I'd need would be a second sand dome, and so I acquired one from Don years ago and that sand dome has been in my parts box ever since.

About eight years ago I had the opportunity to acquire a damaged SHS E-27. I bought it thinking it would be a good parts donor should any of my BC&G Consolidations need repairs. Like the extra sand dome, that engine has been in my 'future projects' box for years. I recently hauled the engine and the dome out of storage and decided I'd try the E-27 to L-2 conversion . . . and create the engine Don thought about but never put into production.

The Model

I researched the L-2 locomotives in reference books and the internet. The North East Rails website (www.northeast.railfan.net) has photos of many L-2's, and they show that there were numerous arrangements of the air pumps, air tanks, running boards, and tenders across the sub-classes. I found a photograph of the fireman's side of engine 707 (FIG. 2) which is very close to the SHS E-27 configuration including the straight running board. I chose to letter my engine 714, the last in the L-2c series, since I couldn't find

a photo of 714 and therefore no one can say my model isn't accurate!

There were two areas requiring significant changes to create the L-2. The first was the removal of the pilot truck and the shortening of the pilot deck. I simply cut a section out of the stock pilot deck and used a piece of styrene angle to reinforce the joint (FIGS. 3 and 4). The remnants of the pilot truck pivot is covered with the box seen on the pilots of almost all L-2's. I modified the ladders in what I suspect was the same way the B&O did it, namely cutting off the bottom rung and adding new 'dog leg' side rail sections (FIG. 5).

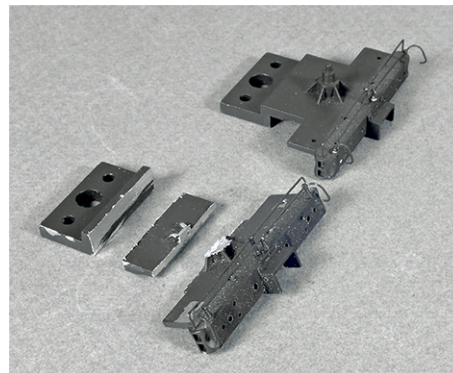


FIG. 3 – The pilot deck was shortened by removing a small section and gridding down the pilot truck pivot.

The second major change was to the tender coal bunker. I carefully cut off the raised portion of the SHS tender and fabricated a new 'clear vision' coal bunker out of styrene (FIG. 6). There were many versions of tenders on L-2's and it appears the 700 series had a simple, relatively low,

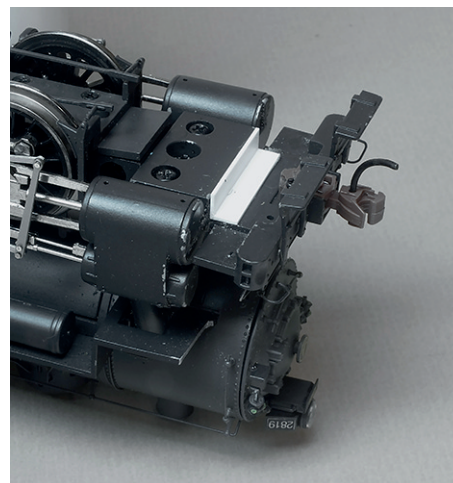


FIG. 4 – A section of styrene angle was used to reinforce the rejoined sections of the pilot deck.

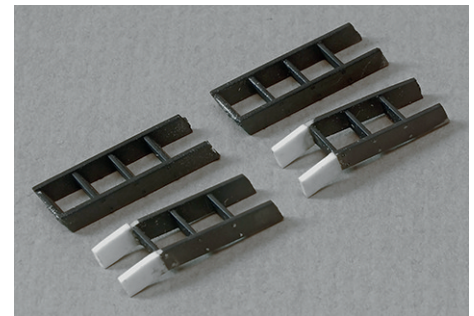


FIG. 5 – From the photos it appears that the E-27 ladders were modified to fit the shortened pilot deck. Brooks made similar changes to the SHS ladders.

coal bunker. To keep the model looking like it was a SHS product, I modified the original molded coal pile and installed it (FIG. 7).

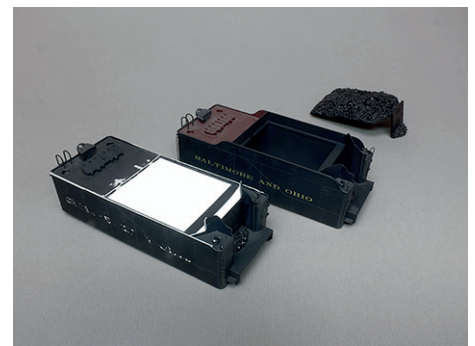


FIG. 6 – The upper portion of the Consolidation's tender was removed and a new 'clear vision' coal bunker was created from styrene.

The boiler modifications involved installing that long-stashed second sand dome and moving the generator, bell, and pop valves. I installed a whistle on the side of the steam dome as they appeared in the photos. I left the classification lights on the boiler front because they appeared in a number of L-2 photos. These engines were sometimes used outside of yards where classification lights were required. The numbers for the number boards were printed on my home printer.

The damaged model was missing a couple of hand railings and I fabricated replacements from .020" wire. I discovered, much to my pleasure, that the black that SHS used on the boiler and tender are very close to Floquil Grimy Black. I used Grimy Black to touch up the boiler details and to paint the tender. The smoke box and the fire box sides are the original SHS dark gray color. The decals were in my stash.

Conclusion

This was fun project. In some ways it was more like a restoration than a build as I wanted to create a model that looked like SHS built it. In some cases, like the turbo generator and head lights, more detailed brass castings might have made a more realistic model but using the SHS items makes it look like a 'stock' SHS model. I left the running gear and driver tires unpainted metal the way all SHS Consolidations were delivered. So, all in all, I'm a happy with #714...as far as I know, the only B&O L-2 'produced' by S Helper Service!

Epilogue

As fun as it was to create an L-2 just as SHS would have made it, after I photographed it for this article, I decided to prepare it for service on my layout. Consequently, I painted the valve gear and driver side walls and weathered the engine with pastels and washes of Vallejo acrylic paints. The era of my current layout is 1964, about 5 years after the L-2's were out of service. However, from time to time I shift the time period to accommodate other locomotives at the B&O interchange. While normally a B&O Q-4 Mikado served the interchange



FIG. 7 – Brooks modified the molded coal load from the Consolidation tender to fit in the new coal bunker. A tool box was added to the tender deck.

with the BC&G, it's possible an L-2 could have done so on occasion. The photo on the cover shows 714 in front of the BC&G's Dundon company store working the interchange.



FIG. 8 - With relatively few changes, the L-2 has a different character than the E-27 and would have been a nice second steam engine for SHS. The engine is ready to sort cars in the yard or handle a local freight on a branch line.

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Freight Car Farm Buildings

By Steve Monson

Photos by the author



For my model, I used an old box and stock car that would have needed a lot of work before I could put them back on my railroad. This project seemed like a good way to put them to use. I painted a light coat of boxcar red over the old lettering, allowing some to show through.

As the railroads phased out their old wooden freight cars, tens of thousands made their way onto farms. They became tool sheds, granaries and machine sheds. A few were turned into houses, others were used as cabins.

Just in my state of Minnesota, I have probably seen several dozen over the years. They usually were nestled in with the other farm buildings. Most people would never notice that they once were railroad cars.

Both outside braced and double sheathed cars were common. Many times, the farmer would build a roof over them, apparently cheaper than trying to keep it up with new roofing, siding and paint.

Featured here is the most unusual and elaborate one I ever saw. It is made up of a double sheathed box car and a stock car. The box car was used as a granary. The stock car with its open slats was used as a corn crib.

I have only seen two of these two-car arrangements. Perhaps there are a lot more, and they are just harder to spot.

Most of us have some old cars that we probably will never put back in service. It would be easy to put a couple together to create a scene like this.



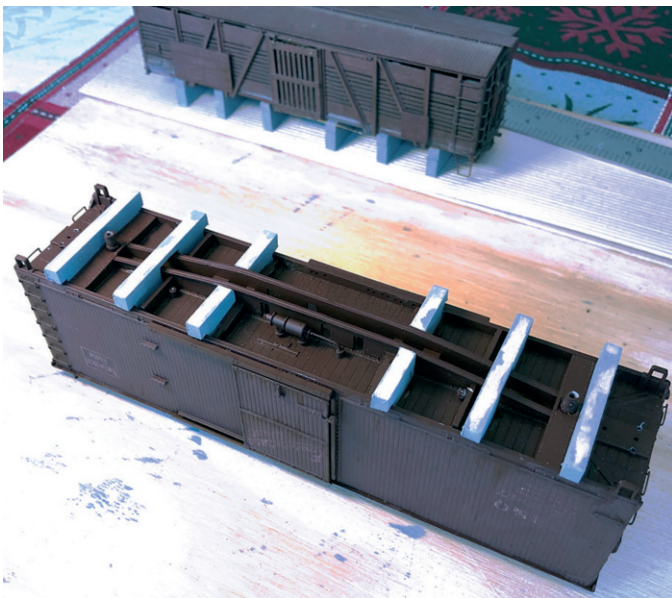
The cars sit on large concrete piers. They are spaced far enough apart to allow a tractor and wagon to drive through. The farmer has very neatly built end gables that sit on top of the cars. Note the roof walks and braces that protrude through. The stock car's outside bracing and ladder are still present. The couplers had some value, so the railroad removed them.



The stock car made a very large corn crib. The concrete foundation beams just sit on top of the ground and have sunk over the years giving the car a pronounced sway. The sliding door could use a little work. The metal roof has taken on some heavy rust. All details that would make a model more interesting.



The box car is made of double sheathed wood with steel ends. With 7 ribs on top and 8 ribs on the bottom this car would have been built in the 1918-1925 period. The large sliding door is still used as the entry.



I fashioned "concrete foundations" out of $\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ " basswood strips and fit them around the center sill. As on the prototype, the stock car is not as high, so I made its foundations taller.



The end gable is made from $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick, $\frac{3}{32}$ " clapboard siding 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long by 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high (from www.northeasternscalelumber.com). If you carefully cut out for the roof walks, they will hold the end gable while its glue dries.



The roof is $\frac{1}{16}$ " basswood sheathing covered with corrugated "metal" from Thomas A. Yorke (www.debenllc.com).



Another two-car arrangement, but without a finished end gable. The two roof hatches allowed filling the cars with grain. Not used anymore, the owner has beautified them with lattices and grass plantings. These two seven panel, outside-braced, single-sheathed box cars with wood ends and doors date from the 1920s.



Without paint or any shelter, this 100-year-old car is showing its age. Before becoming a farm building, it spent some of its life as a maintenance-of-way car.

Classifieds

All NASG members may place non-commercial ads here at no charge. Ads are limited to 750 characters. Email ads to dispatch@nasg or mail to Dan Dawdy, 407 East Chippeawa St., Dwight, IL 60420. Include membership number. Ads will run three consecutive months unless canceled.

FOR SALE Wish to sell collection of S GAUGIAN. July 1973 to November 2019. Missing only 5 issues, still looking. Email me at brownkc@bellsouth.net. 274 issues total. **Cliff Brown, Gastonia, NC. Email for discussion.** (3)

FOR SALE: A. F Crane car Yellow Cab & Red Roof \$12,00
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Bob Hartzell Cell 610-570-7121 1960 Linden Lane Whitehall Pa 18052 (2)

FOR SALE: American Flyer post-war catalogs: 1964 X264-6, Consumer catalog, P-9, \$15; 1965 X165-12 REV, Revised Dealer catalog, P-9, \$10; American Flyer by Lionel 48359 Happy Holiday boxcar, C-10 Mint, \$35 + shipping; American Flyer 934 caboose, C-6, \$2 + shipping, no box; American Flyer 930 caboose, C-6, \$2 each (have 3) + shipping, no box., Email: jshirey1@comcast.net
916-429-2764, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm PST. (2)

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Wanted: A) Pacific Rail Shops "SOO LINE Potato Car", Lake Special 1999 NASG Convention. B) SHS #00478, Reefer Unlettered – Orange. C) Crown Model Products undecorated refrigerator car shells. **Email: tpatterson31@wi.rr.com.** (1)

Advertisers Index

American Models	Pg. 32
Austin's American Flyer	Pg. 10
Auto Controls	Pg. 12
Depot G Hobbies	Pg. 10
Fall S-Fest 2023	Pg. 15
Goldinhands	Pg. 20
Pikesville Models	Pg. 10
Port Line Hobbies	Pg. 31
Pre-Size	Pg. 12
Side Tracks	Pg. 10
S-Fest West 2023	Pg. 15
Spring Spree	Pg. 8
Trains and More	Pg. 20

Calendar of Events

O Scale West - S West and Narrow Gauge West

May 25-27, 2023 Hyatt Regency Santa Clara (San Francisco area)

O Scale - S Scale - Narrow Gauge - West has been the premier two-rail O Scale, S Scale and Narrow Gauge (all scales) show held west of the Mississippi since it's founding by Rod Miller in 1991. Plan to join us over the Memorial Day weekend in sunny California. Website: www.oscalewest.com

2023 NASG Convention

July 26th to July 29th, 2023

Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel

4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111

It is hosted by the Lehigh Valley S Gaugers club.

Check future issues for more updates.

S Fest West 2023

September 16th, 2023

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For more information Email: SoCalSGC@yahoo.com or visit: www.SoCalSGaugers.org

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The Dispatch Closing Dates

May/June:	March 15th
July/August:	May 15th
September/October:	July 15th
November/December:	September 15th
January/February:	November 15th
March/April:	January 15th

Dates are tentative and subject to change.



In Memoriam

Peter Beckerle	Lake Luzerne, NY
Bob Iannacone	Franklin, TN
Kelvin Kramer	Clear Lake, IA
Doug McLaughlin	Kissimmee, FL

The NASG extends sincere condolences to the family and friends of these members.



New Members

January 1, 2023 to February 28, 2023

Carl Barna	Emmaus, PA
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Austin Birkey	Goshen, IN
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Paul DeLaurell	Vista, CA
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