



The

A Publication Of, By and For The Members

DISPATCH

November/December 2024



- Christmas and American Flyer Trains
- BC&G Consolidation #4
- Building a Helium Car
- Christmas Guests on the B&C
- ...and much more



The DISPATCH

November/December 2024

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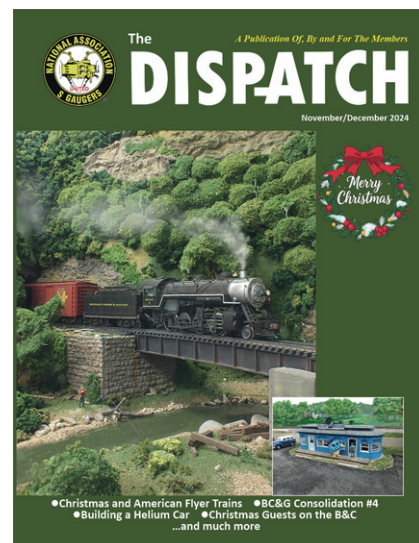


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The COVER

Brooks Stover's BC&G Consolidation engine #4, is crossing the 142' Sand Fork Bridge on the author's current 12'x 25' layout. This photo by Brooks appeared on the cover of the November 2020 issue of Model Railroader.



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.

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From the YARD OFFICE

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has voted to discontinue publication of its meeting minutes in *The Dispatch* while continuing to publish them on the NASG web site. The rationale behind this decision is that space within *The Dispatch* is at a premium--32

pages--and could be put to better use by publishing articles instead of minutes. NASG members without internet access can request for printed versions of the minutes to be mailed to them by contacting the NASG Secretary.

IMPORTANT ADDRESS CHANGE

The address for our Membership Secretary has changed as the Post Office box will be closed shortly.

Please send all mail to:

Dick Kramer

NASG Membership Secretary

12 Dogwood Court

Middlebury, CT 06762

The DISPATCH

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and For The members*

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CREW LIST

EDITOR

Dan Dawdy

dispatch@nasg.org

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Scale: Phil Scandura

pascandura@suddenlink.net

AF/Hi-Rail: Terry O'Kelly

okellys@msn.com

Advertising Manager

Merlyn Jarman

mjarman1@comcast.net

CONTRIBUTORS

Bill Clark

Dick Karnes

Jeff Madden

Jim Martin

Carl Rudolph

Peter Vanvliet

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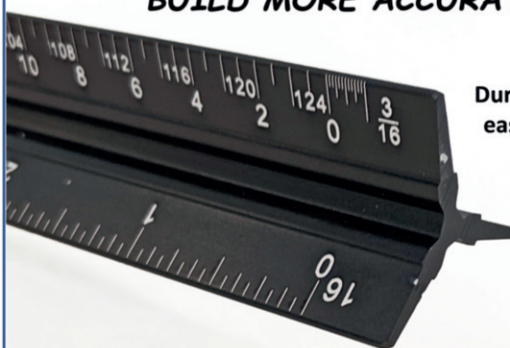
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POP VALVE



Hello – In the July/Aug *Dispatch* there is an article by Rich Gajnak. On p. 24, he says his new layout will operate both scale and Flyer and Hi-rail. What kind of track is he using to operate on both? Won't Flyer switches derail Scale wheels?

Carl Barna

Rich Gajnak responded: I'm going to use Fox Valley track with their HiRail turnouts.?? I was lucky enough to come across someone who had a stash and was willing to part with it.?? There's a modification to add shims to the frog and guardrails (attached) that allows operation of scale and HiRail/Flyer.

I'll admit, at this point I've only modified one turnout so far, as building the railroad

has taken a back seat to other activities.?? But the modified turnout works fine on the bench

Currently, I'm temporarily using SHS/MTH S-Trax. I can run everything through the straight route, but there's a gauge issue on the diverging route point rail that derails scale wheeled equipment.

Follow up from Chuck Kemper: On another S scale forum, I came across a technique from Roger Zuerlein for modifying Fox Valley Models' hi-rail turnouts so that they can accommodate both scale and hi-rail wheels. Roger says he has done this for over 20 turnouts on his layout and does not have issues with them. Intrigued, I tried it myself and ran

tests with several scale wheeled locos from Overland, River Raisin, American Model and Lionel as well as some hi-rail locos with big flanges such as the Lionel American Flyer Challenger. It worked from me too. Here is Roger's technique:

"When using the FVM turnouts with more scale flanged wheelsets there are two areas of concern:

1. The cast frog assembly will not allow these wheelsets to run through the turnout. The wheelsets will drop into the space between the points and the closure rails. To address this issue, I added 0.020 X 0.060" spacers attached with JB Weld. This

allowed the scale wheelsets to ride over the space in the cast frog assembly (see illustration).

2. The guard rails allowed the tread of the scale wheelsets (Code 110 and 125) to be misdirected through the turnout causing them to derail. To address this issue, I decreased the width of the guard rail opening by attaching a 0.30 X 0.100 spacer to the original guard rail. I roughed up the guard rail with 100 grit sandpaper to increase the bite for the adhesive (I used Aleene's "The Ultimate"). I painted the spacer with American Accents by Rust-Oleum. Color: Espresso, a perfect match for the original FV guard rail. The spacer is difficult to see in the illustration as it has already been painted."

Classic Advertising

Dear Editor,

Is someone spiking the watercooler at NASG's World Headquarters? Are the fellows who sit on the Board indulging in some wacky tobacco or quality wet goods? I've been waiting 30 years, which is practically a lifetime out in the woods where I live, for the NASG to get on with marketing S scale by employing good, old-fashioned print advertising in *Classic Toy Trains* and *Model Railroader*. Now they went and done it. The increased website traffic is bound to result in more folks recognizing the Goldilocks principle of "just right." Heck, it might even lead them to abandon the tweezer-and-OptiVISOR scales for 1/64. Keep it going, Boys!

Pappy Clinker

Cowden, IL



In Memoriam, Bill Young (1941- 2024)

By Dick Karnes



Here's Bill Young himself enjoying running his Espee along with Joe Visintine (left rear) and Lee Johnson (second from left, deceased).

Bill (William Pier Young) earned his civil engineering degree from Stanford University in 1963 and was a general engineering contractor until he retired.



Here's something you don't see every day on anyone's layout. Bill scratchbuilt this prize-winning operating bascule bridge piece by piece, starting with sheet brass that he cut and soldered together to make all the structural members. Bridge opening and closing sounds, recorded next to a real-life bascule bridge, are automatically played as the bridge operates. Additionally, Bill built all of his signal bridges by hand, piece by piece, including the two in this shot.



These SP F's prepare to lead a train north out of Dunsmuir Yard. The Dunsmuir business district is in the background. Local artist friend Diana Woods painted Bill's backdrop.

He wintered in St. Helena, CA, and summered in Mt. Shasta, where he had his layout. It's not really a surprise, given his background, that Bill's first love is bridges. His layout was designed as a showcase for bridges. In the winter he built equipment for his layout; in summer he installed it.

Bill's work has been published many times, including the NASG *Dispatch*, *S Gaugian*, *Model Railroader*, and two BASS (Bay Area S Scalpers) calendars. His three-track bascule bridge, with sound, won first place at Sacramento's 2011 NASG National Convention.

Bill passed peacefully in St. Helena, California, on July 25, 2024. He leaves his wife Paula, two daughters, and four grandchildren.



Three Geeps lead a time freight north across a beautiful scratchbuilt trestle toward Dunsmuir. Joe Visintine photo.



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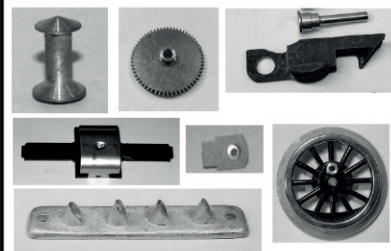
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VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR PRODUCT CATEGORIES & INVENTORIES !

MONTHLY "FLASH-SALES"

Watch our website or FaceBook page each month for our 10-day selection of special sale items, as we work on inventory liquidation during 2024-2025.

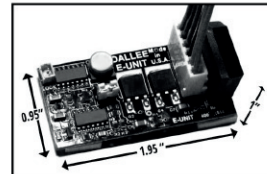
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So Here's What I Do ...

By Dick Karnes

Cattle Pen Sludge

My layout height averages about five feet, just below one's line of sight. Additionally, I have some scenes that are right next to an aisle. My cattle pen is one of those scenes, so I had to make it as realistic as possible.

Two things came to mind as I pondered what to do:

1. Do something about the fact that my cattle models are sexless. Generally, only steers are brought to slaughter in stock cars.

2. Make the "ground" look like it has been stomped and pooped upon for decades. While I did address No. 1 above, that's a topic for some other article in some other magazine. So I addressed No. 2. I mixed plaster of Paris with just enough water to create a dough-like consistency.

(No Hydrocal. It sets too rapidly.) Then I added brown dye until I got the color I wanted.

I spread the mixture within the pen, then took one of my steers and repeatedly pushed its feet into the sludge until I got the mish-mashed look I wanted. Then I placed every steer destined for slaughter in the pen while the sludge was still malleable. By the next morning, the entire scene had solidified.



ATTENTION...

Your advertisement could be here!

Contact Merlyn Jarman at mjarman1@comcast.net for information

NEW PRODUCTS

By Jeff Madden

American Models: Now back in stock are 33" and 36" scale or hi-rail wheels. Also, the Budd car interiors are available again, plus some other items.

www.americanmodels.com

B.T.S.: Has a new single car garage to match up with the 2nd Street house series for \$29.95. The other new S items include oil columns for \$23.95 each (2 different ones). Bill rumors a single stall enginehouse in S.



www.btsrr.com

McCarville Studios: Has a Conoco moderate size bulk oil depot and tanks using laser cut materials and 3D printed ones. The footprints for the main building is 5"x 4" for the smaller one and 6.5"x 6" for the larger one. Also included is a tank and small outbuildings. See website for pricing.

Also in S is a small post office building for \$80.



www.mccarvillestudios.com

Modelu: See NASG website as this is a UK product. They always seem to be coming up with new figures and details that are 3D printed and unpainted.

Print Station 3D: Their website shows a bungalow for \$22.99, a barn for \$23.99 plus other buildings and flats.

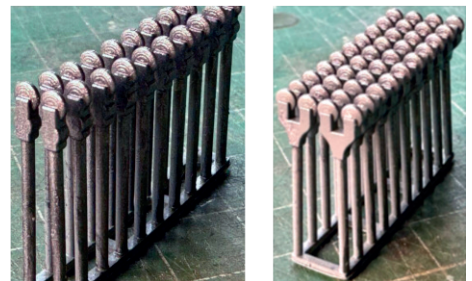


www.printstation3d.com

Smoky Mountain Modelworks: Jim is thinking of re-running the GE 44 and 70 ton diesels sans drive units.

www.smokymountainmodelworks.com

Miniprints: Single and double 3D printed parking meters in packs of 20. Also, 3D printed vehicle trailers (open or closed). And too some Oliver tractors with decal sets available also. These all come unpainted.



www.miniprints.com

Trainz Places 17th in Fortune Best Workplaces in Retail 2024.

Trainz, an e-commerce model train company headquartered in Buford, GA has placed 17th in the Best Small/Medium Business category in Fortune's Best Workplaces in Retail? 2024. 99% of employees at Trainz say it is a great place to work compared to 57% of employees at a typical U.S.-based company.

Trainz.com is the largest ecommerce retailer of new and collectible model trains in the United States, and employs over 90 amazing and diverse people at our warehouses in Georgia. Trainz buys pre-owned trains from all over the country and ships our inventory worldwide.

Trainz Founder Rides in Big Boy's Cab

Trainz founder and Chief Engineer Scott Griggs rode in the cab of Union Pacific Big Boy #4014 for two hours outbound from Omaha on September 4th. Comedian Jay Leno, another charity auction winner, took over from Scott for the next segment. The locomotive will feature in a future episode of "Jay Leno's Garage" viewable on YouTube.

Union Pacific Museum Association and Union Pacific's Friend-to-Friend Network held a charity auction fundraiser. Winners received cab rides in Union Pacific's Big Boy #4014, the world's largest operating steam locomotive.

Restoration Station

By Bill Clark

Now it is the holiday season and trains come out to go around the Christmas tree. The season can give us time to bring our Flyer up to speed because the weather outside keeps us inside. I hope that one of the gifts you receive is some item of Flyer you don't have in your collection.

This column will be about the #740 and #742 AF handcar. I decided to select this topic when I had to repair a handcar that was donated to our train club. The handcars in my collection were acquired a long time ago and tuned up then. This means I had not tuned up a handcar in many years. I had to learn all over again how they were put together and functioned.

The Flyer handcar had a pretty long life. It was made in 1952 through 1956 in various forms. Lionel has produced several versions including one for the Polar Express. Gilbert versions cannot be repaired, but Lionel versions cannot. The Lionel versions are operated by a chip and a can motor while the Gilbert versions are old-style motors with mechanical operation. If your Lionel version goes down, it is an item to discard.

I took the handcar apart and cleaned, adjusted, lubricated, and then tested the unit with the body off. It ran great. Then I put the body on, and it wouldn't move. After again removing the body, it ran fine. What I found out was that time and conditions must have made the body of the two men so stiff that they were restricting the movement of the motor. The simple solution was to detach the arms of the two men on the handcar from the rocker arm that simulates their making the handcar move. Once the arms were off the rocker arm, the handcar moved great.

I have broken the rest of the article into sections:

Motor

Various motor problems bedevil this unit. If you want to fix up a bunch of handcars as I did, plan to use parts from some to



make others work. I generally get about five good runners out of every seven clunkers.

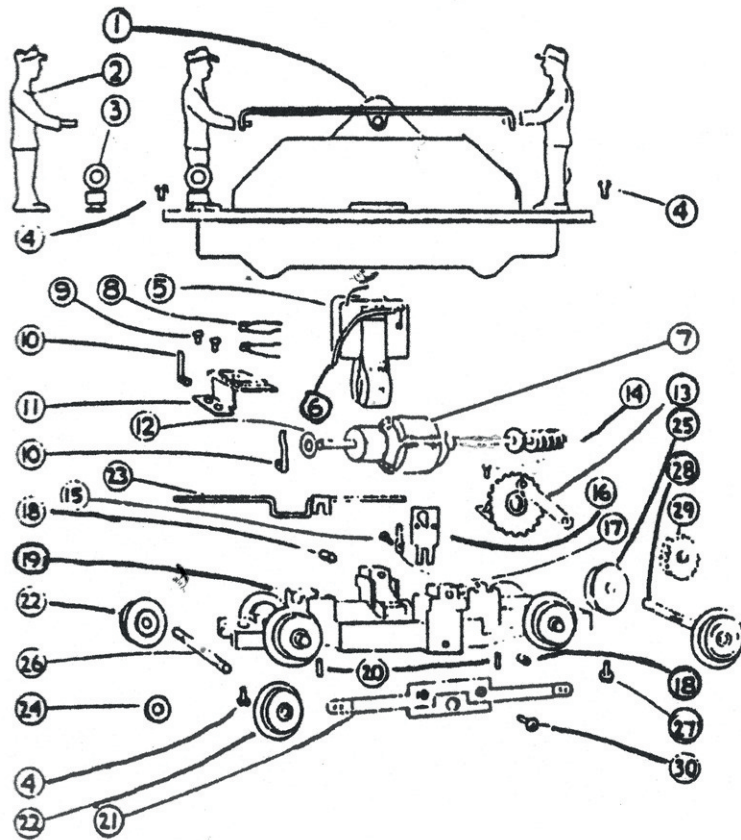
The armature shaft may have enlarged its channels in the soft chassis. If it is moving around so freely that the gears won't mesh, you might shim the armature at the front (worm gear end) bearing with a thin brass shim stock. Work out the best location and shape for the shim by careful observation plus trial and error. Cut, bend, and file a little piece that will make the channel smaller and hold the armature in proper alignment with the worm gear.

Each handcar is different. Brass shim stock is available at good art supply stores and from hobby suppliers. Unfortunately, this process is uncertain and a lot of work, too. Avoid it by not using a badly worn chassis. Some later handcars, especially #742, have a U-shaped bronze busing, probably factory installed. However, these are likely to have suffered from excess wear too, because the

oil wicks didn't deliver the necessary lubrication. The armature is held down by the gear holder in front and the brush holder in the rear. Check the underside of these parts for wear and replace them if necessary. Shims can also be attached with an adhesive or solder to force the armature into a downward direction.

Take a close look at the brush assembly and fix any flaws. Most handcars will run better with new brush springs. I've done well with reproduction springs, and they are the same as with the diesel motors. To change the springs, remove the bracket from the car and push the brush holder bars down and out of the fiber board. Rotate the top panel 45 degrees with a curved forceps so that one of its little holes is over the edge, then work out the spring. Repeat for the other spring. If the fiber panel, which holds the brush holder bar, is torn, replace the bracket. Reproduction brush holder brackets are available from parts dealers.

Handcar 740 & 742



Dia#	Part Number	Description
1	XA12C196ARP	Body Assembly
2	PA11610	Man
3	PA12A217	Lantern
4	S230	Screw
5	XA12A218	Field Assembly
6	PA10190B	Yellow Sleeve
7	XA12B213	Armature Assembly
8	P11000R & L	Brush Spring
9	S171	Screw
10	XA11684	Brush Holder Assembly
11	XA12A206RP	Brush Bracket Support
12	PA1067A	Fibre Washer
13	XA12A202	Link & Gear Assembly
14	S172	Screw
15	S98	Screw
16	XA13A359	Switch Assembly for 742
17	PA13A352	Short Contact for 742
18	S165	Screw
19	XA12C197BRP	Chassi & Wheel Assembly
20	PA11464	Oil Wick
21	XA12A200	Contact Assembly
22	PA10140	Solid Wheel
23	XA13A356	Rod & Plate Assy for 742
24	W79	Washer
25	XA13A251	Insulated Wheel Assembly
26	PA12A215	Plain Axle
27	S3A61	Screw
28	XA12A211RP	Drive Wheel & Axle Assy
29	PA12A212	Drive Gear
30	S183	Screw
##	DE0123	AFL w/Stripes
##	ST0654	AFL w/o Stripes

To replace a brush on a holder bar, unsolder the wire and the remains of the old brush, if any. Clean the site on the bar to shiny metal with a file or sandpaper. Use a third hand tool to hold the brush and bar in proper position during the soldering. Remembering when soldering wires to the brush holder to use a hemostat or other heat sink in the middle of the bar so that the heat from soldering the wire doesn't unsolder the brush from the bar.

Armatures and fields can be tested with a VOM, although this is not foolproof. A reading of infinite resistance means there is a break in the winding. A reading of zero means there is a short circuit or burned out winding. Continuity between the commutator and its shaft or field coil and its yoke indicates a short circuit. The proper resistance for a handcar field is about 3 1/2 ohms. The meter should read about 3 ohms between any two commutator plates on the armature.

Other Repairs

Sometimes you will find other parts that are bent, damaged, or simply worn out. The

contact plate, which picks up electricity from both insulated wheels, may be bent so that it no longer contacts them. Simply remove the screw and plate and reshape the arms and put it back together. It will usually give good service.

A bent rocker arm can cause the car to jam, but this can be corrected with a pair of long-nosed pliers without disassembling anything. Fortunately, original and reproduction parts are available; and any defective part can be replaced. To remove a man take out the screw at his feet and spread open the tabs on the rocker arm that holds his hands with a screwdriver. To remove the rocker arm, unpeen one end of the pin that holds it to the car body and yank the pin out with a pair of long-nosed pliers.

The body of the handcar may need a little work, too. The screw holes are subject to a lot of stress and may be shattered. Although it's possible to build them back up, I like to implant 4-40 hex nuts where the screw holes were and use short 4-40 screws to hold the body in place. This allows the body to be removed often for

lubricating the handcar. File out an opening for each nut that is a tight fit and epoxy it in place. Cover the repair with black paint.

The little tabs at the corners of the body are not hard to replace if they have broken off. File and sand down pieces of Evergreen styrene strip to the right configuration. Copy an existing tab. Leave a stem on each that you don't cut off until the shaping is finished.

Drill 1/32" holes in the car body and new tab with a pin vise and insert a piece of 1/32" diameter brass wire to hold the tab to the body. This will make the tab stronger than the original. Glue the new tab in place with an adhesive applied with a toothpick. Then sand and paint the joint. Mix drops of flat red and flat yellow paint paint thinner, and perhaps a little flat white to match the flat orange color of the car.

The Reversing Handcar

The #742 reversing handcar does work, although it always goes faster in one direction than the other, and the reversing action is not reliable.



The reversing switch is two very thin pieces of Bakelite. One piece holds three bronze fingers. The other piece has two contacts that connect the fingers to reverse the position of the field in the motor circuit. There is also one free contact that is connected to the chassis by the pin that

holds the switch. A quick spray of contact cleaner will often improve its performance.

This switch is not really robust enough to withstand the banging it gets, and it is often found broken. Fortunately, it doesn't often break in the same place; so sometimes you can cobble together one good switch out of two broken ones. You can also repair

shattered Bakelite by gluing small pieces of plastic sheet where needed to hold together the break or replace a broken off area.

The switch has a pin near the bottom of its rocking arm that fits into the reversing rod plate. If the pin is missing, you can fabricate a new one by chucking in a small screw into an electric drill and filing or grinding it down to size. It must have a very flat head. Try to copy an intact switch. The shape of any new parts must follow the original pretty closely because it uses just about all of the available space.

The single finger contact is often found mangled. It is easy to replace with a finger from an AF four-step E-unit. Just replace it with one of those.

The AF handcar will delight almost anyone who sees it. I hope that this article and some careful work will soon get a lot more of them running again. I'm sure many readers will improve on and adapt the methods outline above. I hope you find this article helpful in making your handcars run like new.

Please send me your questions and ideas for future Restoration Stations at billstrains@aol.com.



Empire Trackworks

Switch Over to the RIGHT Track!

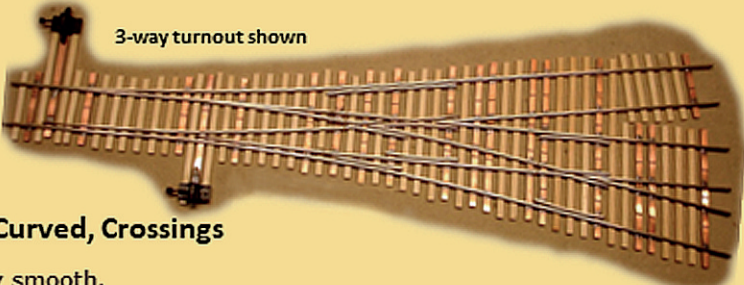
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3-way turnout shown

"EMPIRE does fantastic work! The turnouts are really smooth. Very well detailed instructions are provided, and I totally appreciate the work. They look as good as, if not better than, Tomalco turnouts." - Michael Osweiler (S-scale #6 & #8)

LET US BUILD SOME FOR YOU!

Write to: Empire-Trackworks @ Outlook.com

Down at the Depot

By Carl Rudolph

It is finally cooling off a bit around here, and the days are getting noticeably shorter. Helene is down to lingering rain as this is written and has caused a lot of devastation in the Southeast. We hope that S gaugers are doing ok in those parts. On a lighter note, there is news to be published:

The Connecticut S Gaugers have displayed the club layout at a new train show in the area; and the inaugural event had a good turnout of vendors, layouts, and attendance. They hope that the show will continue, which would give them three shows in the state. In any case the October repair clinic is nearly upon them, another show and then elections and the holidays! The elections, of course, refer to club elections. Longtime president **Larry Halley** is not running for reelection; so according to correspondent **Bob Jordan**, the polls are indicating no clear frontrunner; and the election will go down to the wire! And that's all the politics you will get here!

The South Jersey S-Gaugers have decided to delay their celebration of 35 years of club existence until the October meeting so as not to conflict with members' vacations. They are to be congratulated for reaching this milestone! At the September meeting the presentation was provided by several members bringing their collections of Downs Model Railroad and Mannheim Machine Tools rolling stock for display and discussion. Members of this club may have the largest and best collections of these manufacturers with many rare, maybe even unique, items that are probably seen nowhere else. Yours truly hopes that one or more member(s) will draft an article for publication in *The Dispatch* regarding these gems.

The Baltimore Area American Flyer Club had the club layout at Strasburg again with the layout parked right in front of the museum's 1:1 scale GG1. Attendance was reported to be good on Friday and Sunday but light on Saturday. **Nick Mellonas** brought a family inside the layout, and they were allowed to run some trains and operate the coal loader. The family was thrilled, and the club members were pleased too.

The layout needs some TLC now, so a two-weekend work party was scheduled at **Charlie Kranz's** in Aberdeen with lunch provided!

In the Jacksonville area, the **North Florida Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers** met at **Larry Shughart's** barn again for a work session. They were cutting Styrofoam to make hills to hold trees for their new winter scene. Then they took the layout to the Jacksonville Beaches Museum for the Train Day display. The layout, of course, had a Christmas theme!

The North Penn S Gaugers have extensively modified their layout by adding about 90 feet of track and turnouts to the rail yards that provide room for about 95 pieces of rolling stock and a siding that can hold three diesel road switchers or two steamers. Sounds like quite an accomplishment! The club will take the layout in its largest configuration (24' by 34') to the Allentown (PA) "First Frost" Train Show in early November followed by an Open House at the club's meeting place in early December.

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Association (Cleveland area) will have had both the hi-rail and tinplate layouts at the Berea Train Show by the time you read this and will have the tinplate layout at the Akron Train Show in November. Of course planning is well along for the club's Snow Dogs show in January. Work on the tinplate layout is progressing nicely, with the middle panel being redone with new features; and an extension for accessories to be operated by show attendees is in the works.

The Miami Valley S Gaugers (Dayton area) had their summer picnic at **Larry Beam's** home where fried chicken was provided along with plenty of trains and fun for members and their families. **Keith Wagner** brought some plastic buildings for sale, and **Conner Gehle** brought a "truckload" of AF to sell. In the newsletter **Ray Garbee** presented a clever fix for attaching trucks to rolling stock using threaded rivets and screws. Meanwhile,

Walt Schnee did quite a bit of layout work in his workshop, which the club greatly appreciated. The layout is scheduled to be on display at the Cincinnati Model Train and Trade Show and at the Cleves Christmas Walk in Cleves (OH).

The Central Ohio S Gaugers also had a summer picnic, but they had hot dogs and hamburgers! They must have been coordinating with the Miami Valley folks! The picnic was at **Lowell Henthom's** in Howard (OH). Lowell's home is on the shore of a large lake, and he took picnickers out on the lake in his large pontoon boat. He also has a large S gauge collection. The club had such a good time they threatened to come back next year! The club held a meeting in October hosted by **Mary Day Fewlass** and **Trenton Helmer** to work on plans for the 2025 S Spree and several train shows at which they plan on displaying the layout. Busy!

The Central Ohio S Gaugers – Northern Division met at **John Frankforter's** home in Maumee. The meeting had to be rescheduled because John fell ill but then recovered and had the meeting anyway! Good for him! No report as yet as to what transpired. More, we hope, in the next issue.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers report that they got a lot of work done on the layout at the American Models facility, but there is more to be done. Pizza was enjoyed by club members and AM staff alike! The club met at **Gaylord Gill's** home. Show-and-tell time there included a photo of **Ryan Krengle's** 3D printed 35-ton locomotive, some S scale figures that Gaylord found on Etsy, and a 3D Central hopper kit. **Tom Hawley** brought a boxcar custom painted by the late Dr. Richard Fleming, and **Jeff Jundt** reported on a clinic he attended at the National Narrow Gauge Convention at which he was provided a diorama that was used to teach scenery techniques. His diorama is quite well done! And photos show that Gaylord's home layout is awesome!

The Badgerland S Gaugers (Milwaukee area) had an open house at the club location

that resulted in members discussing possible modifications to the layout. Sounds like they came up with some good ideas that will enhance the display quite a bit. After being given **Jeff Young's** and **Don Goeke's** modules, they have a fantastic opportunity to create more loops so more members can run trains simultaneously. Work is already in progress! They also have nailed down several important details for the 2025 Fall S Fest they will host, and that is exciting!

The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers met at the home of **Bruce and Sheila Lorence** for an extravaganza of a meeting! First was a few hours of food and fellowship (and presumably train running) followed by a business meeting that was followed by pizza (and presumably more train running)! And G gauge running in the back yard. I bet they had a good time! The summer club outing was a trip to the Illinois Railroad Museum. It was really hot that day, but they had a great time. Lastly, they had a small layout at DuPage. The photos show that the layout is maybe two feet off the floor so preschoolers can look at it easily. They were clearly enjoying it.

Up in the Twin Cities area, the **Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop** had summer doings too. Because **Dick Karnes** was visiting, **Dave Jasper** had a "banquet" on Saturday; and **Ken Zieska** invited everyone over for grilled hamburgers and train

running on Monday. Then **Ben Trousdale** invited everybody over on Wednesday for train running and goodies to eat. Good thing yours truly wasn't there—would have gained at least ten pounds!

The Kansas City S Gaugers are busy bees. **Roy Inman** and **Bob Agne** are back at work on the holiday layout at Union Station. The S gauge portion of the display is this club's responsibility. There are three loops of track, and this year features **Fred Hauser's** Gilbert Ferris Wheel, and all the accessories are Gilbert and new to the layout. Many members are heading across the state to St. Louis for this year's Fall S Fest. The new Missouri Model Railroad Museum in Independence is now open on Saturdays; the club hopes to at least have a static display of S gauge if not an operating setup. Lastly, a local jewelry shop is donating space for the holidays so the club can set up a Christmas theme layout through the end of the year. Neat!

The Southern California S Gaugers Club (Los Angeles area) had a good showing at the NMRA National Convention in Long Beach. Not only did lots of club members come out to help in setup, operation, and teardown, but public attendance was good too (although they thought it could have been better). **Steve Stallings** presented a clinic on how to represent a forest fire. He uses water vapor, LEDs, and scratch-built scenery to represent smoke and fire in a

forest. His clinics were so well attended that the club thought they should sell tickets! The club is planning on displaying the layout in Del Mar, Costa Mesa, and Bakersfield in the next few months. Of course planning is in full swing for the 2025 S Fest West that they will host.

In the San Francisco Bay area, the **Golden Gate American Flyer Club** held a very successful Flyer Fest West in San Mateo, just south of San Francisco. There was plenty of AF available for sale, some of which was quite unusual. **Clay Buckage** had a knockoff of a Lionel factory test bench that was interesting; and **Tracy Towne**, the late **Jake Jacobsen's** daughter, had several of her father's unusual items to sell. The banquet was very good, and **Dale Smith** provided an illuminating presentation on Gilbert Halls of Science. On display at the banquet were many original AF Circus set items, some of which were quite rare, mostly from **Paul Guaraglia's** collection. Well done!

A few regular contributors are missing this issue of the column. We hope and trust it is because it is summer and other things are taking precedence and not that the world has caused real trouble in S land. Have a good Fall and keep trackin'!





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American Flyer Christmas Memories

There Were Many!

By Ed Claypoole



The year is 1951. At least I think it's 1951. My parents are unfortunately no longer around to verify this, but memories of this day have clung to my aging brain tenaciously. I can still visualize flashes, fleeting moments of the trip over to Havertown, PA, where this photo was taken. It was a Sunday just after Christmas. I clearly remember that, for some reason. We were at my Uncle Carl's for the day to have dinner, and this train repair shop was just down the block. How lucky!! As you can see, I'm in seventh heaven, my nascent love

affair with electric trains quite obvious. It's the beginning of an era for me.

The actual picture, most likely taken by an old Kodak Brownie, is small and obviously does not surrender too many details to the naked eye. Yet, thanks to the miracle of modern technology, I was recently able to enlarge this picture and see more details spring to life. There in the window are Lionel, AF engines, and rolling stock. A Lionel GG-1, a Flyer K-5, a Flyer Pacific, a Flyer Royal Blue, and what appears to be a Gilbert HO 0-6-0 on the lower shelf. You can

imagine how excited I was to finally be able to really see the details for the first time. This photo is significant to me because I believe that 1951 was the first year I had an American Flyer train set. It was your standard starter set: 302 Atlantic, with smoke and choo-choo, plus the always present 639/640/625 and 638 freight cars. I do not recall, of course, whether my dad bought it as a set or piecemeal. I do, however, remember the little 25-watt transformer that came with it. And more than anything, I remember those incredibly great-smelling little smoke pellets. Man, to have a few of those now.....

But this is merely my first Flyer memory. With each Christmas thereafter, my childhood Flyer empire began to expand, little by little. Each year around Christmas, my sister, Eileen, and I would board a Public Service bus and ride over to Center City Philadelphia, where my dad would meet us in front of Gimbels or Lit Brothers at 8th and Market Streets. We'd go to someplace like Dewey's or Horn & Hardarts for a quick dinner and then head up to the great Christmas displays. For Eileen, it was the dolls; but for me, it was the trains. I recall seeing my first Northern on display, as well as the 0-8-0 Yard King set. So impressive! And then we'd get that FREE American Flyer consumer catalog. Can you imagine? FREE! Oh, to go back intime! At any rate, this is how my little Flyer empire grew. From the displays and catalogs I would pick out the items I wanted. But trying to explain to the store Santa was frustrating, to say the least. I don't think the man knew what I was talking about when I described the particular rolling stock pieces I wanted that year. Luckily, the REAL Santa was right nearby and knew exactly what I was talking about.

Now the year 1954 stands out in my memories. It was the year of the

Army/McCarthy hearings, and it was my only year in Catholic school. I had 72 kids in my class, and I remember being in the class play "The Nutcracker." I recall all the days practicing and getting through the ordeal of the thing. Christmas break finally arrived. On that day, I walked up to the railroad tracks about four blocks from home and waited, like I did on many other occasions, for the awesome G3 Pacific to thunder past my little spot on the hill by the tracks. I don't recall if I saw it that day or not, but the sight of that steam engine and the sound of its whistle remain with me to this day. I used to be able to hear it when I lay in bed at night. Again, to go back in time.....

When I got home, I was met by the sight of the Page Brothers lumber truck. My dad was going upstairs with handfuls of lumber. My instructions were clear: stay out. Santa is up there working on something. Well, at seven years of age, you just don't question Waybill August '11 - September '11 7 something like that. I remember being overwhelmed on Christmas Eve, with unbridled anticipation regarding the secret in that upstairs bedroom. But, on Christmas morning, it all became clear. I had a new Flyer layout and new accessories, Flasher, Crossing Gate, Whistle, and a couple new pieces of rolling stock.

One of the great things about that era was that every one of your friends seemed to have either Lionel or American Flyer trains. My father always grumbled about Lionel, about that "damned 3-rail track." "It just isn't realistic," he stated. (So that's where I got it!)

At any rate, on any given Christmas Day, you were certain to head over to your buddies' houses to see what new trains they got. One of my friends had five ovals up in his attic, on the floor, each with a train running. But he had no platform or scenery. I do remember that one of his engines was an 0-8-0. It also seemed like many of my friends had erector sets. I could make a little truck with mine, but my next door neighbor could make a large amusement ride. Yeah, I admit, I was jealous!

Somewhere between 1954 and 1955, a Log Loader and Cattle Yard were added to my little empire, as was the Comet Passenger Set with those beautiful blue and silver illuminated cars. My father also replaced

the tiny 25-watt transformer with a new 15B, but it didn't work. My dad was in a panic. How was he ever going to get another transformer this late on Christmas Eve? Not having a car, he rushed back over to Philly on the bus to get a replacement. Of course, I was unaware of all this at the time, being a starry-eyed kid. However, the planets were aligned well; and he got another transformer just before closing, rushed home, and hooked it up. As a kid, you have no idea what a parent goes through sometimes. In the end, it was a wonderful operating layout and another great Christmas.

Another year, another Christmas season. It is now 1956 and I'm in 4th grade. The G3 Pacific engines no longer run on the P.R.S.L. They have been replaced by Baldwin diesels. Still, walking home from a new school on the other side of town, I have occasion to see the trains roar through Barrington every so often. Right after Thanksgiving, my dad tells me I'm going to be moving from the upstairs bedroom to the downstairs bedroom. The upstairs will be off-limits until Christmas. Every night, my father disappears into the upstairs room and shuts the door. I'm dying to know what he's doing up there, but I know the rules. Another trip into Philly to the department stores. Another free catalog. More train envy. This year my train lust is for the new

"Moe and Joe" action car number 971. I'm sitting on Santa's lap for the last time—this would be the year of the great discovery of who the REAL Santa was. But I digress....

The days dragged on....Christmas seemed to take forever to arrive. Sleeping downstairs was tolerable, but the suspense surrounding the project upstairs was killing me. Finally, Christmas Eve rolled around. We watched the annual Christmas shows, "The Night Before Christmas" and "The Nativity." After that, we marched up to bed. I'm sure I slept fitfully. Somewhere around 4 AM, I awoke and sat up in the dark room, realizing it was finally Christmas morning. The suspense would finally be over! I put on my slippers and crept upstairs, opened the door and turned on the light. I couldn't believe what lay before me! A spectacular L-shaped layout andMoe and Joe!

I turned on the power, started up the trains and was starting the Moe and Joe when my parents, suddenly jolted out of a dead sleep, entered the room. My father, laughing out loud, snapped this picture at the moment of my spontaneous bliss. The resulting photograph is without a doubt my all-time favorite. When I blew up this photo on the computer, I saw details that brought back memories of this 11 x 6 layout that make this my best Christmas memory. It is rare to capture such a moment, unstaged, on



film. What makes it even more special is that it is the **ONLY** photo taken of any of my childhood layouts. I struggle to picture those early layouts in my mind. Only fragments of memories remain. The 1956 layout stood until early March, and then it was packed away for another year.

In 1957 or 1958, my father put up the layout himself for the last time. I don't remember why the trains stayed packed away for the next six or seven years. Perhaps with the arrival of another sister and twin brothers, my father just didn't have the time. Maybe it became too much for him. I don't really remember. Maybe I had lost some interest as well. The trains and the fold-up layout remained stashed in a space in the attic, all but forgotten. However, in 1964, when I was a senior in high school, I decided to put

up the layout myself for the first time. My twin brothers were seven, and I figured they would really love to see the trains in action. I had a great time doing this and was able to construct a great little layout identical to the last one put together by my father. And everything worked! It was, at that time, the biggest undertaking of my young life.

In 1970, after being overseas for 14 months, I moved back home. My father and I finished off the attic so I would have a bedroom. Suddenly there was no place to store the trains and fold-up platforms. They would have to go. A summer day in August is one I would like to have back. It was the day I unloaded everything, two engines, ten freight cars, three passenger cars, half a dozen accessories and more, for the grand

sum of ten dollars, to a guy in Camden. It was a move of desperation and one that I've never lived down. My father was flabbergasted by my selling everything so cheap. We all have our horror stories, and this is mine. Now in 2011, at this writing, I've come full circle with a modest American Flyer collection and an operating layout. I guess my return to the hobby is my way of trying to atone for my impulsiveness and stupidity in 1970. Every time I pick up a new piece or power up my layout, I think of that day in August of 1970. American Flyer, to me, is more than a name. It represents the most poignant memories of my childhood, and it is one thing that binds past and present in my life.

Hey, you're only young once, but you can act young forever!



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BC&G CONSOLIDATION #4

Modeling an Engine That Survives Today

By Brooks Stover, MMR



#4 reproduction number plate



One of the factors that led me years ago to select the Buffalo Creek and Gauley Railroad (BC&G) as my prototype subject was the fact that from the early-1950s until the railroad ceased steam operations in 1965, the era of interest to me, the line rostered three husky Consolidations. I've always thought that the 2-8-0 wheel arrangement generally made for a handsome locomotive; and the smaller size of these engines made them perfect for a model railroad, especially in S. Because the BC&G operated so late into the steam era, all three of the BC&G's Consolidations were well photographed; and, in fact, all three survive today.

Of the BC&G's three Consolidations, only Baldwin-built #4 was purchased new. The engine was in service on the BC&G from 1926 until the line closed in 1965 and is the most renowned of the BC&G engines. In this article, Brooks describes how he built a representation of the engine using an S Helper Service Consolidation and also shares some of his experiences with the prototype locomotive. The model is seen here sitting

I have modeled all three of the BC&G's Consolidations. In fact, I have modeled all three of the engines twice. My early efforts at modeling the BC&G were pretty basic, and I converted American Flyer 0-8-0 switchers into 2-8-0 Consolidations by adding a pilot truck. Then in 2006 Don Thompson and S Helper Service introduced their beautifully detailed and smooth-running Consolidation based on the B&O's class E-27 engines. I was ecstatic as there was

finally a very high-quality Consolidation at an affordable price.

In this article I describe how I lightly modified an SHS engine to represent BC&G #4, the Consolidation perhaps most often associated with the BC&G, and some of the fun I've had in the process.

The BC&G's #4

Consolidation #4 was the only engine the BC&G ever bought new.



This classic portrait of #4 at the Dundon yard was taken by Howard Ameling sometime after 1959 when the diamond logo on the cab was reintroduced. The basic elements Brooks incorporated in his model are evident including the bell location, red number plate, the pilot mounted air tank, the light smokebox and the white striping.

Every other BC&G engine was a hand-me-down. Number 4 was acquired from the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1926. The engine was one of a group of 10 built for the National Railroad of Mexico, but BC&G President J.G. Bradley talked Baldwin into converting c/n 59472 from oil to coal and selling it to him instead. The engine was in service until the BC&G closed. In fact, #4 was the engine that pulled the final steam powered train on the BC&G in February 27, 1965.

There was nothing particularly remarkable about #4 as Consolidations go. She had 51" drivers, used 190 pounds of boiler pressure and had a tractive effort of 43,000 pounds. Photos show that during her years of service on the BC&G, she had several tenders; and there are no records of any serious accidents. Like all BC&G engines, she was always well maintained. She often sported white sidewalls on her drivers, white trim on her running boards and along the bottom of the tender and a graphite or grey smokebox. Over the years there were a couple of different styles of lettering under the cab window, and the engine number sometimes appeared on the steam dome.

After the BC&G closed, the engine went into tourist service on several lines, eventually winding up at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in

Spencer, NC where it remained from 2001 to 2015. Currently the engine is awaiting a new boiler and restoration at the Cass Scenic Railway in West Virginia. When completed, the engine will be painted in her original BC&G livery and run from Cass to Durbin. It's a very exciting prospect for BC&G fans!

A Weekend With #4

In 2005 I helped organize a "BC&G Reunion Weekend" at Spencer where the BC&G #4 was re-lettered in her original BC&G livery; and former BC&G employees, their families and interested railfans were invited to ride behind the engine. It was a truly memorable weekend as I was able to spend considerable time in the cab, including during some switching at night. I also was able to meet former BC&G employees and even photographed my AF-based model of #4 on the running board of the real #4. As part of the reunion event, the Spencer shops made duplicates of the #4's headlight-mounted number plate. One of them is now proudly displayed in my layout room. At the reunion we also recreated a photo taken on the day of the final run 30 years earlier, and the photo was taken by the same photographer. The original and the reproduction are now displayed in my layout room. Long-time friend and fellow NASG

member and BC&G fan Frank Criswell also participated in the event.

The Model

My intention with my SHS-based model of #4, as with my models of the two other BC&G Consolidations, was to make a "reasonable, recognizable representation," not a perfect replica. I started with an SHS engine with the center-mounted headlight and then relocated the bell to just behind the stack to match the prototype and added a circular number plate under the headlight. I made a cylindrical air tank and mounted it on the pilot deck as every BC&G Consolidation was so equipped. I also modified the coal bunker on the tender to more closely match photos and added a coal pile. I painted the entire engine Floquil Engine Black, the smoke box silver and the deck of the tender red as the prototype was.



In 2005 Brooks was able to spend a weekend with the prototype engine at the North Carolina Transportation Museum. Besides riding in the locomotive and meeting former employees of the BC&G, he was able to photograph his AF-based model of #4 on the prototype's running board. Frank Criswell photo.



During the 2005 BC&G Reunion Weekend, Brooks, Frank Criswell and several other BC&G fans recreated a photo that was taken of the crew on the final steam run on February 27, 1965. Amazingly, the 2005 photo shown here was taken by Howard Ameling, the same photographer that took the original 30 years earlier. That's Brooks on the far right and Frank with arms folded under the headlight.

I painted the edges of the running boards white, added a white stripe to the bottom of the tender and applied custom road name decals to the tender, cab and steam dome. The engine was lightly weathered with pastels.

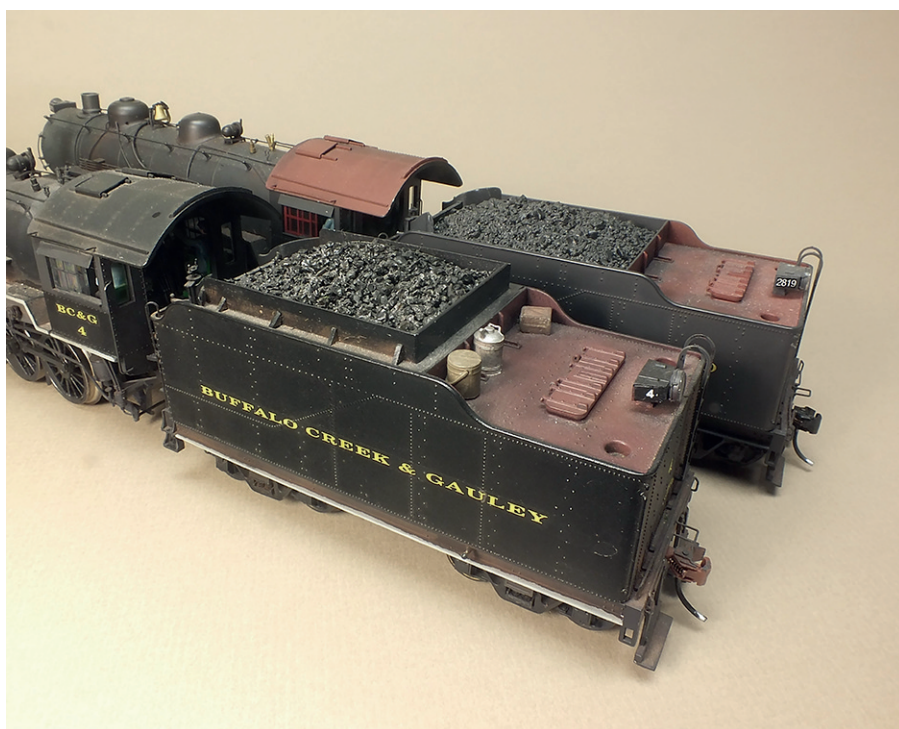
To the best of my ability to discern, BC&G #4 never appeared on the cover of a rail magazine while it was in service on the BC&G, although the other two Consolidations, #13 and #14, both did. My model of #4, on the other hand, has appeared on the cover of *Model Railroader*, *RMC*, *The Dispatch* (twice) and *Railmodel Journal*. On the BC&G, the three engines were on a monthly rotating cycle. One was in service, one kept ready as back-up and the third underwent maintenance. I rotate my three engines similarly with #4 running about 1/3 of the time,

Conclusion

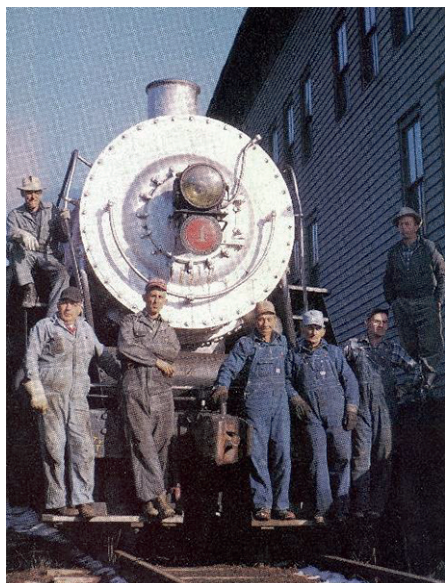
As I've told Don Thompson on numerous occasions, I believe the SHS Consolidation he created is, dollar for dollar, the finest small steam engine ever made in S.



The BC&G has often been referred to as the standard gauge railroad with a narrow gauge character. It was common for crewmen to ride on the pilot in nice weather. This early-50s photo by Mallory Hope Ferrell from the author's collection shows the cab lettering scheme used on the model.



Brooks modified the coal bunker on the tender to more closely represent the tenders used on BC&G #4. The additional side boards and gussets were fabricated from styrene. A load of loose coal was bonded in place and a few cans and barrels were added to the tender deck which was painted boxcar red. The stock SHS tender is in the background. Brooks Stover photo.



This is the photograph taken of the crew in front of #4 at Swandale on February 27, 1965 just before departing for Dundon on what would be the final steam-powered run on the BC&G. It was this photo that Brooks, Frank and the others recreated at Spencer 30 years later. Howard Ameling photo.

Besides the three I have representing BC&G #4, #13 and #14, I have one that sees service on the B&O interchange as a E-27 and a fifth that I keep "just in case." The #4 has run flawlessly since I acquired it in 200x. And it's really fun to have a model of BC&G #4 on my layout, especially because it's an engine I got to spend the weekend with in 2005. Hopefully, the restoration at Cass will be completed in a reasonable time, and I'll

get to ride in the cab of this well-known and historic locomotive one more time.

For more information about BC&G #4 and a link to an excellent short video on the history of the engine, visit my website at:

www.buffalocreekandgauley.com.

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Effley Falls in Croghan, New York

By Sam Martin Photos by Amy Carey-Martin



The two trains in the photo are the Pierre Marquette number 1223 and the Docksider number 1245 made by Lionel. You can see the operating water tower and the town of Croghan, New York in the background.

There are many childhood memories when I look at this train set above: the Zehr Family Farm four generations, the Beaver River with a reservoir and an electric power plant run by water power from the reservoir. My father, Oliver Martin, was an electrical engineer working at the Central New York Power Corporation hydro power plant. There were six plants on the Beaver River in upstate New York manufacturing electric power for the area. My mom asked me what train I wanted when I was a kid: two-rail track train set or a three rail track set. Well, I did not know very

much about trains, but I never heard of or saw a three-rail track. So you know what train set I picked!

This is a 10' x 11' two-tiered "S" gauge high-rail layout. It is about Effley Falls in Croghan, New York, where my mother and father Martin were brought up. The turnouts are "S" gauge and are made by American Models. The layout was modeled by Sam Martin and Bill Brooks.



The three trains in the photo are the Pere Marquette number 1223, the Docksider train number 1245 and the Erie train number 3360 in the background made by Lionel. In the background, is an American Flyer Log Loader and Coal Loader.



The two trains in the photo are the Royal Blue number 350 made by A C Gilbert, American Flyer. This is the first train I got for Christmas when I was six years old. The second train is the Erie number 3360 made by Lionel. There are many bridges and grades and curves on the layout. I have to adjust the speed on the train so they don't collide. I can run three trains at once if I am careful.



This picture shows American Flyer maintenance car number 23743 made by American Flyer A. C. Gilbert Company. This maintenance car is on the second tier of the 10' x 11' layout.

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Christmas with American Flyer

By Hal Farlow



My restored "Meteor Freight" set from my youth. It is displayed with the 1955 catalog page depicting the set, along with a copy of the catalog.

My first train set was a catalog set number: 5525tbw, "The new meteor freight". It came with a #293 loco and



Hal Farlow shares his restoration techniques with club members at a recent meeting clinic. Hal has been restoring Flyer since the mid 80's and always has a project on his worktable.

tender, #937 box car, #916 container gondola, #930 Tuscan caboose, #566 billboard whistle, and #1&1/2 transformer. The East coast catalog price was \$39.95.

My sister and I received this set for Christmas 1955 from my father. At the time, she wasn't to interested in the train set (at the age of 7years old), and I was only 3 years old at the time. I had this set till I was 9 years old, when my mother decided she was going to sell it and buy me an HO set. She said they were smaller and didn't take up as much room. I was upset, but she told me the Flyer set was already sold and the new owner was coming over the following day to pick it up. When she wasn't looking, I snatched the loco and tender out of the packed up box. I was able to hide this from my mother for 30 years!!

After 30 years I told her what I had done. She laughed, but she would have been furious if she knew this when it was sold. Evidently the lady who purchased my



Hal also acquired a fondness of All Aboard panels and created several Christmas displays using them. His latest creation is a bi-level All Aboard layout.

set didn't realize the engine wasn't in there or didn't know any better.

I was able to recreate the rest of the set in the years following my joining the South Jersey S Gaugers. I went to local shows to purchase the 4-car consist that went with the original set and also replaced the #566 billboard whistle and the #1½ transformer.

I purchased the original snow panels 10 years ago. I paid \$75.00 for all 6. They were filthy and warped. I cleaned them the best that I could, but decided they needed a repaint. To combat the warping I cut 1x3" pine boards and laid them out at 17" apart. I then screwed the panels down on the 1x3" wood. This worked out well. I did the same with upper layout green panels. I then made 1x4" corner brackets and made the double decker layout. It's very strong and not too heavy. The inside dimensions are 34" x 51".

You can see more of Hal's handiwork in our website gallery on the clinics page. <https://southjerseysgaugers.org/Gallery/Clinics>

Christmas and American Flyer Trains

By Ray Farrell



Editors Note: This short article was scheduled for this issue last month. I just learned that Ray Farrell passed away August 8, 2024. From *The Waybill*, the Official Newsletter of the South Jersey S-Gaugers, Ray Farrell joined our club in 1996 and contributed much to the club. He did clinics, helped with layout dis-plays, and ran our December dinner/auction for years. Ray was also into collecting all sorts of items, including military vehicles. His obituary can be found here:

<https://www.healeyfuneralhomes.com/obituary/raymond-farrell>

Before I start let me set the record straight. I owe all my memories to Leonard and Florence Farrell, my parents. It wasn't until I became a parent

that I truly realized how much they influenced my life in so many ways. My parents came from poor families and we were a poor family in a low income section of town. I did not realize this until I attended High School and mixed with the kids from the other side of the tracks. Now don't get your tissues out because this story does not go there. What my parents lacked in finances was out weighed in Love and Dedication. I really liked the Sears AF train display each year at Christmas.

My earliest memories of Christmas and American Flyer Trains would be as a preschooler about three or four years old. On Christmas Eve my sister and I would go up stairs to bed. There would be no sign of any Christmas decorations, tree, etc. inside our house. Out side our house had Christmas lights and

decorations. We did visit Santa at the Sears and Roebuck Store in Camden, NJ and gave him our list, but that was it.

When we woke up Christmas morning we raced down the stairs to the second landing on the stairs and looked into the living room. Our eyes popped out of our heads and our hearts were in our throats. We saw a Christmas Toy Land in our living room, which the night before was just a living room. This included an 8 X 4 train layout with an American Flyer # 290 steam engine with tender, # 651 green baggage car and two # 650 New Haven green coaches, Plasticville buildings, and Tootsie toy cars and trucks. In the center of the train platform was a completely decorated Christmas tree with lights, tinsel and ornaments. In front of the train platform on the floor were all the presents we requested from Santa boxed and gift wrapped. This was how Christmas morning was at our house for the next four years. Always eye popping and taking your breath away.

Our parents would set up this entire Christmas display while we were asleep. We never heard a thing, not the hammering of the platform, train track, the tree, or presents. Before writing this article I did verify with my sisters that this was the way it was done. So for all those early years it was Santa Claus that got the credit.

After the first Christmas that I received the AF #290, the second Christmas I received the # 753 talking station, # 592 rail road crossing gate, and three freight cars, # 639 yellow box car, # 640 gray hopper car, and #638 caboose.

Christmas 1956 I got the Baldwin Diesel Set #5605T and a pair of switches and more track to run two trains at the same time. After Christmas day with the money I was saving, I purchased the 1956 Santa Fe set # 5640TBH with three passenger cars. This was the first year I helped my Dad put up the layout, which now was "L" shaped.

At this point that was my rail road empire at eight years old. I enjoyed the passenger sets the most because you could turn off the room lights and see the head light on the #290 and #472 plus their illuminated passenger coaches.

Yes, I did put my head on the tracks and watched that loco head right for me.

When I was nine my parents' friend came to visit us and told this story. He wanted to switch from American Flyer trains to HO trains. He went to a local hobby shop that sold HO trains and wanted to sell or trade his AF sets for HO. The guy would only give him fifteen dollars for the two AF sets. My Uncle was so mad at that guy that he said he would rather give them away then to sell them to him. He then looked at me and gave me his two AF 6 Waybill October '11 - November '11 sets. This included set #5112T GP7 #370 freight set, and set #5620T plastic Pacific #283 freight set. Also included were switches, track and some more Plasticville buildings.

Starting at eight or nine after I opened and played with my Christmas gifts I would go visit my friends that also received trains for Christmas. Three blocks from my house was Jimmy and his brother Tommy. Their parents would purchase exactly the same gifts for each brother thinking this would prevent fighting or wanting the others' gifts. They had a full basement with a large American Flyer model railroad. Each Christmas they each received the same two AF train sets each. I had to visit them first because these guys were crashers. I'm talking full throttle all the way and you know it won't take the curve. They had more tinsel on the track than on the tree up stairs. Trains made sparks from the tinsel

flew off the curve, and hit the floor. The crashes and sparks were fun, but then the fights would start over just who's train broke. In about three weeks everything was broken or just would not run. When Jimmy and Tommy came over to my house I would run my trains for them!

My second stop would be to Neil's house on Christmas day. He had Lionel trains with no train platform. He would get out his trains and track and place them on the floor. He got the PA. GGI passenger set one year and the New Haven electric locomotive later. I really liked the GGI and New Haven locos and always hoped that AF would make them, but I would not switch to Lionel because the locos and passenger cars were too short in length. Neil was a great guy and he would operate his trains for you, but out the door you go if you touched them. When he was done showing his trains he would re-box them and put them away.

Usually a few days after Christmas my family would visit my grandfather where my sixteen year old Uncle Henry lived. He did not like me to call him Uncle Henry so I just called him Henry. He had the best AF train platform with two Union Pacific locos #332, #336, passenger sets red and green coaches, N.Y.C. J-3A # 322 freight set, Nickel Plate switcher # 342 freight set, talking station, four sets of switches, three crossing gates, Plasticville, etc. The other striking thing about his layout, which he did every year was to have the fake snow on everything including all rolling stock and locos. Every year he would try to talk me into adding the snow to my layout. I did try one year, but it was such a mess I never did it again. Henry said he would save the

fake snow each year to reuse for the following year.

Henry moved out of my grandfather's house when he turned twenty years old. We lost contact with him. About twenty-five years later I was returning from a Spring TCA York meet. I stopped at one of the PA. turnpike restaurants and was eating dinner when I looked up and saw Uncle Henry coming in. When we first locked eyes I said "Hi Henry. He replied "do you still have your AF trains?" I replied "yes". He replied "do you want to sell them?" I replied "no, do you want to sell yours?" He said "no". So we sat and ate dinner together and I told him about TCA and the York train meets. This was about fifteen years ago and I never saw him again.

Now enter my daughter Kristen, born in 1978 and my son Scott born in 1981, the next generation. When they were seven and eight I dusted off my old # 290 and # 263 loco for them for Christmas. I put six gondola cars and one caboose on each loco. My daughter placed her doll house people and furniture in her gondolas and my son placed his toy soldiers and their vehicles his gondolas. I had two loops of track with two transformers on a 4 X 8 foot platform. In the center of the layout was Ideal Toys Motorific slot car racing set. You're right, its not scale but they and their friends love it. I did this for the next four Christmas's.

When my son turned nine I noticed on his Christmas list that year that he listed an AF train set. I talked to him about this. At this time I had my collection of AF trains on shelves in a spare bedroom. I reminded him that all the AF trains on those shelves were both his and mine. He looked me in the eye and said, "yes Dad they are yours and mine, he wanted a set that was just his." I created a monster. So hanging on to those old AF trains paid off after all.

I took a PA Alco A and B unit, with a bunch of freight cars and painted them US Army camouflage for that year's Christmas present. The next Christmas I made a military vehicle freight train for him. I also included Stompers, which military tanks that run in a trench system and could be placed on the AF military flat cars I made up. Now all I need is some grandsons.

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Building a Beaver Models Helium Car

By Norman Bos - Photos by author



I have wanted a helium car for my S scale layout for a long time. I model the Santa Fe and MOPAC, and both of these railroads carried these cars from the helium fields in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. The span of use of helium cars was from before World War II into the 1970's. Helium is still used, but is now transported by truck. Northeastern Scale Models made a wooden car in S years ago, but I have never seen one.

Last year at the Hostlers Model Train Show in Ogden, Utah, I learned that my fellow Hostler, Greg Brubaker, was doing research and planning to 3D print an HO model helium car. I asked him if he could 3D print an S scale car, and he assured me he could. Now less than

one year later, the S car is printed and mine is built.

And what an engineering feat the model is! All of the pieces fit with a level of precision that would make LEGO proud. The 3D printed pieces are smooth, precise and crisp. He cautions in the instructions that the pieces are brittle, but I did not find this to be so.

The kit is complete and only requires paint and glue. My kit contained Kadee 802 couplers and scale wheels.

The car undersurface clearances are enough for truck-mounted couplers. The instruction sheet contains an abbreviated history of shipping helium by rail. Painting and decaling guides for the 40 years of use by three operators are

described. The helium tubes are bundled as one unit, and yet the tubes are prototypically separated. One can see between the tubes! The underframe is fully printed, with all the dual brake lines and tanks in place. The end bulkheads are fully formed and ready to receive the ends of the tube assembly prototypically.





The sideframes and roof walk are also ready without modification.

The assembly sequence is logical and the illustrations very professional. I changed the sequence a little by installing the grab irons before painting the car in order to avoid filling the tiny holes for the grab irons with paint. I painted the grab irons later with a paint pen. This worked very well. I also installed the ladders and brake wheel before assembling the bulkheads to the frame.

Once I selected the era in which the car will operate, the painting was straight forward. The paint patterns for the different users are well described in the instructions.

I chose to make a car for the US Navy during WWII. The instructions called for

aluminum-colored tubes and battleship gray-colored bulkheads and underframe. (I misread the instructions and should have painted the car all battleship gray for the US Navy. Maybe I will re-decal the car into a MHAX or ATMX and correct the error). Battleship gray is not a specific color, and there are a lot of variations. I found Tru-color battleship gray paint to be a good representative shade and matched it as best as possible with a rattle can paint color (I don't use an air brush). I used Rust-Oleum gloss Winter Gray. I really like the results.

The only shortcoming I could find with this kit is that the decals do not fully match the drawings in the instructions. Some creative license was necessary. This is the most precise model kit I have ever constructed! The price for an S kit \$149.95.



S modeling in RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN!

Every month on the inside front cover of RMC is an NASG ad featuring a photo of exemplary S scale modeling with directions to the NASG website for complete information about 1:64 scale modeling.



Modeling and photo by Paul Washburn



Modeling by Jerry Holmes, photo by Michael Holmes

WE NEED YOUR PHOTOS

To contribute photos email to Brian Jackson at central_vp@nasg.org

Christmas Guests on the B&C

By Gaylord Gill Photos by the author



Chef Henri welcomes a customer to the trackside diner in Olean, NY.

Some S gaugers enjoy adding a bit of fantasy to their layouts—maybe a T-Rex lurking in the woods or a Batmobile mixed in among the other vehicles. That's never been allowed on my S scale Buffalo & Chautauqua railroad, but I broke my own rule last Christmas.

Our son and his wife and their two kids were with us for the holidays, visiting from out of state. Granddaughters Morgan and Vivian both enjoy operating Grandpa's trains, and after a while Vivie announced that she had some little people that were the same size as mine. She got them out to show me, and she asked if we could put them temporarily on the layout.

While it's true Viv's characters were about the same height as my S scale figures, they are proportioned very differently. I learned they are part of a large collection called Doorables, marketed by Disney. In the spirit of my granddaughter's play-time, I happily suspended my standards of authenticity. Together we added her figures to various scenes on my B&C and then did a little photo-shoot.



A young railfan joins two adults on the wooden viaduct over the Buffalo mainline.



Another railfan is caught on company property and gets a talking-to by the Olean yard crew.



This young explorer hunts for frogs in the creek down by the tracks.



Here's a famous couple, visiting relatives at their farm southeast of Buffalo.



In the woods of western New York, a trio of adventuresome friends is on safari.



Another case of trespassing, at the Pennsy's freight house on Seneca Street.

Out Along The Line

photos by



NASG members

Alan Balma

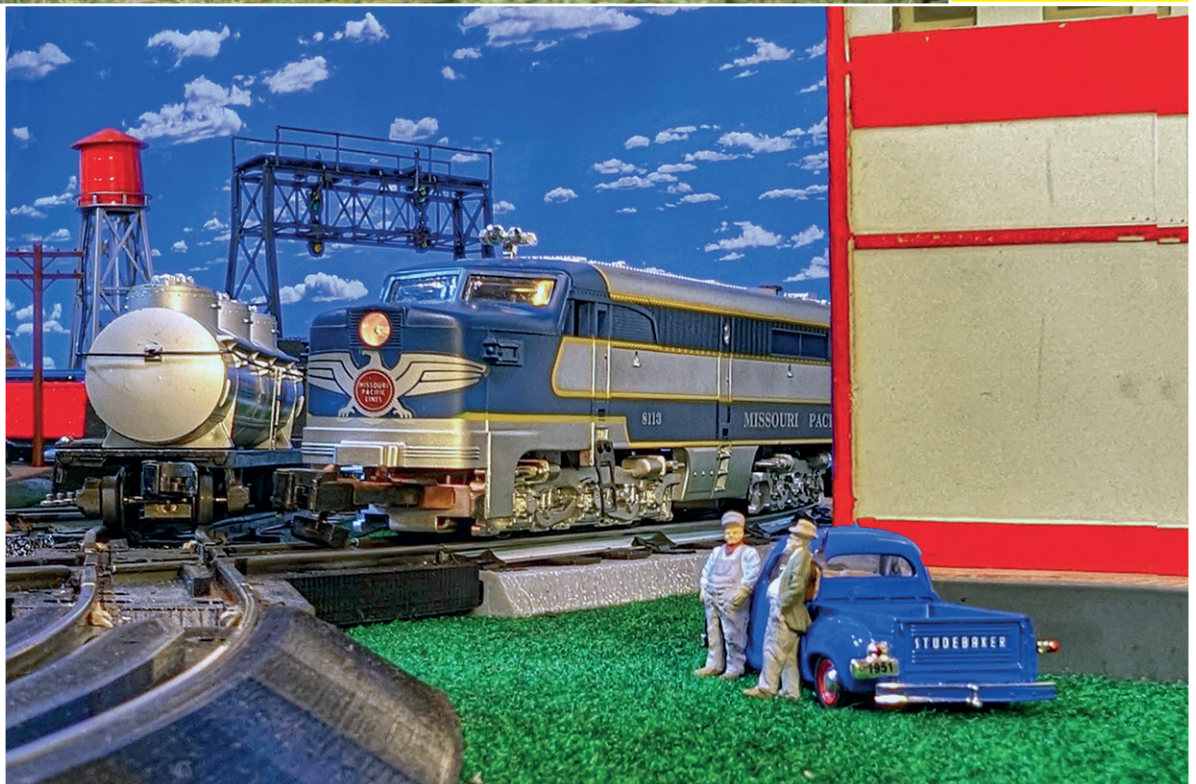
An American Models GP-9 in transit to Algonquin NY on Alan Balma's lovely scale PRR Elmira Branch Layout. The rolling stock are S Helper Service products, and the scenery materials were sourced from scenery Express and Woodland Scenics. Alan shot the photo capturing this modeled moment in the Fall of 1956.

We Want To See YOUR AF, hi-rail or scale photos here!
Send photos and captions to Bob Bubeck at: rbubeck327@aol.com



Austin Birkey

Two railroad employees are chewing the fat by a Studebaker pickup while a Lionel American Flyer MoPac Alco PA is paused at a crossover with a Gilbert No. 926 type three dome Flyer tank car parked on the opposing track on Austin Birkey's Flyer layout. Austin captured the moment and Brooks Stover supplied some graphic blandishments.



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: I am retiring from the hobby at age 83. A 50-year accumulation of S scale equipment is available. Items include engines, freight cars, passenger cars, structures, scenery details, DCC system, wireless DC system, etc. Lots of NYC steam. There is no prepared list and no pre-established prices. Tell me exactly what you seriously want, and I will send photos with description if I have it. While unorthodox, this procedure has already worked well for quite a few folks. No one has complained about the price of anything since you get to specify what you want to pay. If we agree, the item is yours. Email communication works best for me.

Ed Loizeaux Loizeaux@SBCGlobal.net (3)

FOR SALE: Overland Models imported brass diesel with custom NYC authentic half-stripe paint scheme is now a buying opportunity. Engine comes with River Raisin Models improved drive, decoder (silent) installed, crew, couplers and a working diaphragm. Test run only. Effectively brand new. Ask questions or request more photos, but eventually please make your best reasonable offer for my consideration. If it makes me smile, the loco is yours. If not, I get to keep it. Fair enough? With this arrangement, nobody has ever complained about my prices. Think about that. Email communication works best for me. Ed Loizeaux Loizeaux@SBCGlobal.net (2)

FOR SALE: Classic Toy Trains magazine collection, April 1990 to present, P-10, free to NASG member, must pick-up or pay shipping; Racing Champions 1/64 (S scale) 6 die-cast cars ('56 Thunderbird, '69 Cougar, '62 Pontiac, '66 Chevy Nova, '86 Buick, '70 Chevelle), C-10, OB, \$18 + shipping.

Email: jshirey1@comcast.net; 916 429-2764, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm PST. (2)

WANTED: River Raisin 2-8-4 Boston & Albany engine, painted with a green boiler in the box, in good condition. 'S' scale w/scale wheels. RichardHaleybigsticks68@gmail.com (3)

FOR SALE: AF 6-5520: #372 Union Pacific Engine, #924 Cement Car, #911 Pipe Car, #930 Action Caboose, #915 Unloading car \$185.00
Lionel Steam with 602w Tender, 6456 Red Hopper, 6465 tank, 6527 caboose, 6462 gondola, and 3472 milk operating car \$150.00
Lionel 6-52321 TCA Southern Pacific Trainmaster Locomotive and 6-52326 caboose \$325.00
Bob Hartzell Cell 610-570-7121 1960 Linden Lane Whitehall Pa 18052 (3)

WANTED: Des Plaines Hobbies 2010 S Fest Elgin Joliet and Eastern box cars. DPH product no. 2503.1 (EJ&E car no. 609020) and DPH product no. 2503.4 (EJ&E car no. 61398).

Email: tpatterson31@wi.rr.com (2)

WANTED: SHS wood-sided reefers; #00477, unlettered yellow; #00478, unlettered orange; #00690 Carling Black Label (CBL 804); and #02124 Carling Black Label (CBL 812). Prefer SHS reefers with scale trucks or with scale wheel sets included. Also wanted: unbuilt, 40 foot, wood-sided, freight reefer kits by Kinsman, Scenery Unlimited, Ye Olde Huff-n-Puff, Main Line Models. Prefer unbuilt kits without trucks but will consider with trucks.

Email: tpatterson31@wi.rr.com (1)

WANTED: Either running or non-running chasis with wheelsets for a Santa Fe #360 A-unit.

Jim Bender 672 Beechwood Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06605
cell 203-913-8187 (2)

FOR SALE: American Flyer NASG convention cars. Selling as one lot. Complete collection from the 0700 car of 1981 and 1988 to 2003. You get 23 cars in total, most are NIB and most come with their original shipping box. The NKP flat comes with the Ertl trailer, also NIB. 2021 Greenberg has it all at \$2,160. Will take \$1,200. TCA work train set, includes (2) boxcars, combine, gondola and flat car with wheel load. All (5) cars NIB with shipping boxes. List for \$352. Will take \$240. All prices include shipping. Joseph Wozniak Email: FINELINEWP@AOL.COM (1)

WANTED: Putt Trains (Rex) PRR B-6 060 slopped back Tender.

Jim McMinn: gjeanie616@verizon or 814-944-3865 (1)



In Memoriam

Terry Dwyer
Robert F. Marchbank
John Pauly
William P. Young

Owosso, MI
Tulsa, OK
Jackson, WI
St. Helena, CA

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

Calendar of Events

56th Annual Div 7 NMRA Fall Train Show

October 12-13, 2024

Lakota West High School, 8940 Union Centre Blvd.
West Chester, OH 45069.

11 am to 5 pm both days. Many scales & sizes of operating layouts, plus hundreds of sales tables of new & used model trains, books, collectibles. \$10 cash-only admission. Kids 12 and under + scouts in uniform free w. paying adult. No animals allowed except service dogs. Wheelchair accessible. Food and refreshments available. Free parking. Door prizes. On the web at www.cincy-div.7.org

The Barry King Memorial Train Show

Oct. 14-16, 2024 9 am - 5 pm

Reliance Fire Hall, 1341 W. Market St., York PA

Open to the public, free admission. All gauges of trains and vintage toys. 8 ft. tables for all 3 days are \$60 ea. For info contact Todd or Bev Metcalf 860-432-2124 or email trainsmore@aol.com. The "Flyernut Meeting" will be held at 7 pm Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024 in the Orange Hall Meeting Room of the York Fairgrounds.

Alto Model Train Museum Association

Sunday, November 3, 2024 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Blair County Convention Center, One Convention Center Drive Altoona, PA 16602

Admission \$5.00 Children under 12 free Lionel Train Set door prize giveaway Largest show from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg For information, tables or direction contact: Steven Barr 1422 - 20th. Avenue Altoona, Pennsylvania Phone: (814)312-6178 140 +/- tables Scales toy trains and parts Food Available Clean Restrooms Well-lit Display Area Over 800 parking spaces

Breslau Train Show

Sunday, September 29, 2024. by WOD-NMRA. 2 minutes east of Kitchener, Ontario. Manufacturers; vendors; four "free" seminars; operating layouts; large LEGO display. \$300+ in Door Prizes. Preview video: https://youtu.be/sSC-TA_feMM. Ample free parking. Breslau Community Centre, 100 Andover Drive, Breslau, ON. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission: Children under 12 Free; General - \$6.00; NMRA members - \$4.00.

TrainShow@wod-nmra.ca

The Great New York State Model Train Fair

Saturday, Nov. 2: 10AM-5PM

Sunday, Nov. 3: 10AM-4PM

All Adults (16 & over): \$15

All Children (15 & under): Free

Tickets sold at door. Free parking.

New York State Fairgrounds, 581 State Fair Blvd., Syracuse, NY 13209

www.modeltrainfair.com

2024 Danville Indiana O/S Scale Event + CID/NMRA Train Show

Hendricks County Fairgrounds

1900 E Main St

Danville, IN 46122

The Indiana S Scalpers are happy to announce our 3rd Annual O/S Scale Event. In 2023 the O/S Room nearly sold-out so make your vendor reservations early to ensure a sales table. New for 2024 is an S Scale Social Event! Details will be coming. Public Show Date: Saturday, November 23rd. Vendor/Layout Move-in Date: Afternoon of Friday, November 22nd S Scale Social: Evening of Friday, November 22nd. Social Event: To-Be-Determined, occurring immediately after Friday setup. Vendor registrations should be directed to the Central Indiana Division (CID) Show Manager, Dave Mashino: danvilletrainshow@gmail.com



New Members

July 1, 2024 to August 31, 2024

Rick Barton	Pikesville, MD
Robert Beltz	Newport News, VA
Curtis A. Bonville	Woodburn, OR
Robert E. Carter	Herndon, VA
Howard S. Freeman	East New Market, MD
Hisham Hafex	Nashua, NH
Bill Hanslik	Dover, OH
Chris L. Hughes	Elizabeth, CO
Ronald L. King	Garden City, MI
Chuck Little	Indianapolis, IN
William Murry	Pittsburgh, PA
John A. Olenderski	Laurel Fork, VA
Hans Raab	Naperville, IL
Mark Mattison-Shupnick	Petaluma, CA
Matt J. Palada	Wentzville, MO
Melvin D. Readnour	Renton, WA
John P. Stralka	Ellicott City, MD
Neil Strausser	Shillington, PA
Superscale - BLW LLC	Bernville, PA



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