



The

A Publication Of, By and For The Members

DISPATCH

March/April 2025



- 2025 NASG Election Information and Ballot
- Mike Swederska Builds a Mountain
- Some Northeastern Cabooses
- Kit-bashing MTH Structures





The DISPATCH

March/April 2025

MANIFEST FEATURES

- 6** 2025 NASG Elections Bios
- 15** Mike Swederska Builds a Mountain
By **Brooks Stover**
- 19** My Life Story of American Flyer Trains
By **Robbie Tonneberger**
- 23** Kit-bashing MTH Structures
By **Stephen Law**
- 26** Some Northeastern Cabooses
By **John Mann**

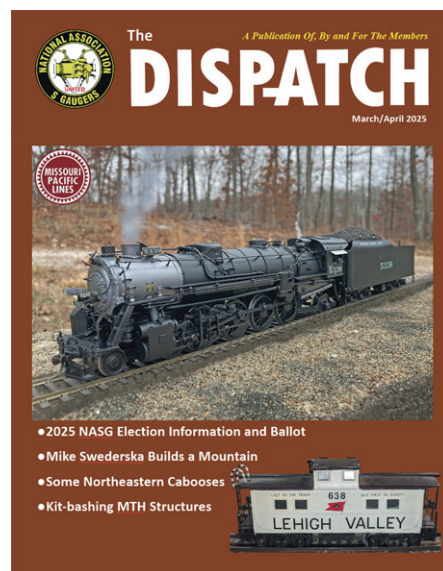


DEPARTMENTS

- 3 From the Yard Office
- 4 Pop Valve
- 8 So Here's What I Do...
- 9 New Products
- 11 Down at the Depot
- 13 Restoration Station
- 29 Out Along The Line
- 30 Classifieds
- 31 Calendar of Events

The COVER

Brooks Stover tells us about the builder, Mike Swederska, and his beautiful scratchbuilt MoPac 4-8-4 in brass.



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

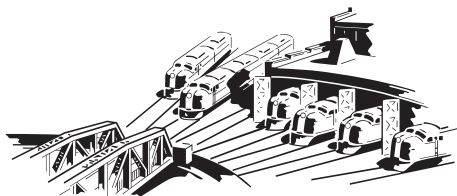
Reminder: Minutes of the Board of Trustees

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.

No More S Scale

I recently viewed Lionel's 2025 catalog and saw there was no Flyer listed. So, at the Springfield, MA, train show yesterday, I asked a rep at the Lionel both about that omission. He stated that, due to lack of sales, that Lionel will no longer be making any Flyer items. Well, we say goodbye to another S manufacturer!

Dick Kramer



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.

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NASG Membership Secretary

Dick Kramer

12 Dogwood Court, Middlebury, CT 06762

e-mail: membership@nasg.org

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:

December 15th for the January/February issue

February 15th for the March/April issue,

April 15th for the May/June issue,

June 15th for the July/August issue,

August 15th for the September/October issue,

October 15th for the November/December issue.

The DISPATCH

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POP VALVE



Soapbox Time

I have enjoyed “Pop Valve” and the Board of Trustees minutes since they first appeared in *The Dispatch*. The BOT minutes have included a reference to a comment by Brian Jackson that *The Dispatch* should try to pick up some of the advertisers of the old *S Gaugian*.

I was tasked with that assignment by Will Holt in 2019 just prior to the last issue of the *S Gaugian*. Both he and I thought the advertising clients of the *S Gaugian* would eagerly sign on with *The Dispatch*.

I prepared a very professional mailing to each advertiser, including a personalized letter, an information sheet explain advertising costs and submission dates and a recent copy of *The Dispatch*, to demonstrate the quality of the publication. Each packet was sent in a large envelope with Golden Spike 150th anniversary postage stamps affixed (continuing the railroad theme).

And the result? Nothing, nada, nichts. No replies at all and, of course, no new advertising clients. There must be a better way than formal solicitation. And I think there is.

I think if we could make one-on-one contact with a vendor, the vendor would be more comfortable purchasing advertising. But how to do that? I think the answer lies in our annual convention. Many members enjoy not only the camaraderie of the convention, but the shopping in the vendor hall. If we were to invite every vendor who has products of 1/64 scale and NOT charge them for a display table, we shoppers would have a far wider experience (I live in the S Scale desert), and be able to purchase items not normally available to us except through the Internet. We could inspect, handle and imagine the items on our layout. Plus, we

(the customers, the *The Dispatch* staff and the NASG leadership) could strike up a relationship with the vendor. If his convention experience was financially profitable and his contacts and recognition sincere, the vendor would realize money is to be made with the NASG membership. I believe the vendor would be more inclined to advertise in *The Dispatch*.

I tried the one-on-one approach when I worked with *The Dispatch*. I visited with two vendors, one who actually advertised in the *S Gaugian* and one who did not. The advertiser wanted to retire, and had too much work already and refused to advertise. The non-advertiser did not think advertising worked and refused to spend the money. His was a very limited niche business.

I know advertising works to attract customers and reveal new products. If this were not so, then why do we see advertising everywhere and on every available form of media? But the potential advertisers may be timid and reluctant to outlay money. If a warm relationship could be forged with the NASG, this timidity would vanish!

Before I get off my soapbox, I would like to express a few additional observations.

The membership of the NASG is numerically fairly static at about 1600. We have been urged to invite our friends and contacts to join in the fun of 1/64 railroading and the NASG. But most model railroaders do not know that 1/64 railroading even exists. How to fix that deficiency?

Through the convention, of course! Our conventions have heretofore been closed affairs with us selling our wares to only each other. Not a good way to grow an organization.

Rather than close out the public, invite the public! Advertise in the local media, including inviting TV crews to run a brief segment on a news broadcast. Set aside an afternoon or evening for the public. Show them a Hi-Rail layout and a scale layout. Open the vendor hall to the public. Think how excited the vendors would be to know that fresh buyers are coming!

Model railroaders would visit out of curiosity, if not genuine desire to change scales. O gaugers who are downsizing at home would not need to give up model railroading by switching to S. HO scalers would find a lot to love in S. More than enough available equipment and projects in the ideal size. N and Z scalers would actually be able to see the fine points of their equipment.

Let's not keep S and the NASG a secret! Lets invite and open up!!

Norman Bos
Star Valley Ranch, Wyoming
Annual Car Committee

New Tracks Mentoring, Inc. To Offer Three \$2,000.00 Scholarships For 2025-2026

New Tracks Mentoring, Inc., a 501(c)(3) registered non-profit, will once again be offering three \$2,000.00 scholarships through the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship program for the 2025-2026 academic year. This will bring the total amount of scholarships given to \$13,000.00 since 2023. New Tracks Mentoring, Inc. is the only non-profit company offering scholarships throughout the U.S.

The scholarships are available to any U.S. high-school senior or undergraduate student in a college, university or trade school who

POP VALVE

are model railroaders or other modelers and are, or will be, enrolled in a STEAM program of study.

The application period is now open. All applications must be received no later than June 1, 2025. Awards will be made on or about July 1, 2025.

More information and applications are available at www.newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship

Please contact Bob Davidson for any additional information at NTMMS@newtracksmodeling.com or y2kflstf@twcnv.rr.com



2025 NASG Convention

The Connecticut S Gaugers, in conjunction with the Bristol S Gaugers and the NASG Convention Committee, are pleased to announce the 2025 National Convention to be held in Norwich, Connecticut.

When?

From Wednesday August 6, 2025 through Saturday August 9, 2025.

Venue

All of the activities will be held at, or originate from, the Holiday Inn Norwich hotel: 10 Laura Boulevard Norwich, Connecticut 06360

More information will be made public as it becomes available on the NASG Website: nasg.org.



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SUPPORT YOUR NASG

**Help out one of our
Committees!**

2025 NASG Elections Bios

R. James Whipple: President

I have been in S scale my entire life, having received my first American Flyer train set as a Christmas present when I was 25 days old! With the demise of Gilbert while I was in high school, I was incredibly lucky in that someone I knew introduced me to the *S Gauge Herald*. I started ordering car kits and quickly became a modeler, attending my first NASG convention in 1973.

I have been President for three years, was contest chair for 19 years, and chaired the S part of the combined 1990 NASG/NMRA national convention in Pittsburgh. I belong to the Pittsburgh S-Gaugers and the NMRA.

A professional chamber music performer (bassoonist), composer, arts administrator, and college professor, I'm also the fundraising chair for the historic preservation group that supports the Stewartstown Railroad in Pennsylvania.

I did not intend to run in this election, but no one else stepped forward to volunteer. The NASG performs important work on behalf of S scale, which I passionately believe should continue. The current board is an outstanding group of people, and I look forward to again working with them as well as the new faces expected to join.

Roger Gerhart: Treasurer

Roger's parents gave him an American Flyer train set on his first Christmas. He inherited his love of trains from his father.

Roger has been a TCA member since 1994. He was also a member of the North Penn S Gaugers where he held office as Vice President and assisted the Treasurer. He is also a member of the Lehigh Valley S Gaugers. Roger has been a member of NSAG since 2013. Previously he was in a partnership of a Train Store that specialized in O & S Gauge. He worked for Lockheed Martin for over 20 years overseeing multimillion dollar projects until he made the decision to work full time as a self-employed professional sharpener. Roger currently lives in Eastern PA.

Mike Byle: Eastern Region Vice President

Mike has been a train enthusiast his whole life. He was born into a family where his father was a Trainmaster, his grandfather was a brakeman, and uncles and cousins worked on the railroad. He worked on track gang as a college student and later professionally as a civil engineer designing railroad bridges and track.

He received his first American Flyer train at the age of 3, although he has had forays into other scales, and has stayed with S scale for his whole life. He is a published author on railroad modeling and has been an active member of the National Association of S Gaugers and the NMRA. He has conducted clinics on many topics and has won modeling awards. He has published articles in the *Dispatch*, *S Gaugian*, *S Scale Resource*, and *New York Central Modeler*.

In 2023, he opened CB Train Junction, a model train store in Colonial beach, Virginia with the hope of sharing his passion with others, relating the history of railroading and model railroading and providing memorabilia and supplies for those who enjoy trains whether model train enthusiasts, or just having a casual interest.

Brian Jackson: Central/Southeastern Region Vice President

The last three years have been a time of change and renewal for the NASG. Working with my fellow board members, committee chairmen, and life-member, Brooks Stover, I have sought to reinvigorate and rethink how the NASG might move the promotion of S forward. Accordingly, I have promoted advertising S in leading publications such as *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *Model Railroader*, and *Classic Toy Trains*, which has brought unprecedented traffic to the NASG's website and resulted in stabilizing the NASG's membership. In addition to continuing our advertising efforts, I would like to see the NASG figure out ways to develop a closer relationship to regional S clubs.

There is no formal connection between the national and regional organizations, and hence, no formal means of accomplishing routine communication or developing a promotional strategy. Although the NASG has created a survey seeking input from the regional clubs

on how to create a closer relationship, this is only a first step. In the next year, I will propose formal meetings, conducted via Zoom, between the NASG's Board of Trustees and the officers of regional clubs to consider how to foster greater cooperation and mutual support in our goal of promoting S.

Larry Shughart: Central/Southeastern Region Vice President

Larry Shughart was born into S gauge. His father, Emory, was a life-long S gauge collector, operator, and promoter. Emory took Larry to monthly meetings of the Central Pennsylvania S Gaugers, an active club in the Central Pennsylvania region in the 1960's through the 1980's. Some of our closest family friends were from that club, including Bill & Mary Fraley, Len & Esther Holler, and Don Bowers. Larry is a life-long member and supporter of TCA, attending most of the York train meets since it started there in 1968.

Larry co-founded the North Florida Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers, an active club with monthly meetings averaging 10 attendees rotating among the 35 registered members representing AF, Hi-Rail, and Scale. Larry's 35'x65' Hi Rail layout was featured in *CTT* and he has written several articles for *The Dispatch*. Larry is a professional railroad consultant specializing in performance improvement, economics, operations, engineering, and strategy. He has worked on railway projects in over 25 different countries. Mr. Shughart worked for 14 years for CSX Corporation. He holds a Masters Degree in Railroad Management from M.I.T.

Clay Buckage: Western Region Vice President

Clay has been a member since 1995. For more than 35 years, Clay and his Dad have provided service to the community through Dave's Twacks & Twains, offering parts/service and promoted S and the history of the Gilbert company through portable displays at train shows, conventions, senior homes and children's hospitals.

He has served as the Western Vice President since 2023. Clay has also contributed to the NASG as the last steward of the defunct AF Car Program. Clay previously served the TCA under Clem Clement and chaired the Rules & Regulations Committee. Clay is well-versed in Robert's Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedures. A long-time Gilbert collector and operator, Clay has also enjoyed modeling in scale and specifically narrow gauge.



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So Here's What I Do ...

By Dick Karnes

Taking Up the Slack|

When I was a child in Teaneck NJ, I spent a lot of time in a park that bordered the NYC's River Division ("West Shore" line). Even then, I was an chronic train-watcher. During WWII, there were lots of trains on that four-track line! In particular, I loved it when a 100-car freight train, invariably pulled by a Mohawk, stopped at the standpipe to take on water. When the locomotive would gradually start moving, it would take up the draft gear slack one car at a time: "clunk—clunk—clunk—..." until the caboose began moving.

I wanted to replicate this auditory phenomenon on my layout, but experience had shown that the Kadee 802/808 draft gear springs were too stiff to leave any slack in a stopped train. So I replaced all the draft gear springs in my freight cars with much lighter Kadee knuckle springs to see what would happen.

And voila! When I started up a stopped freight train, edging the throttle up ever so slowly, there it was: "clunk—clunk—clunk—," car by car, until the caboose began moving!

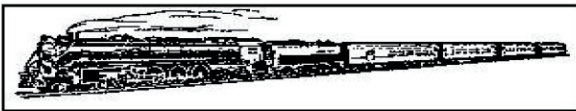
Thereafter, each new car added to the layout was built with knuckle springs in place of the furnished draft-gear springs.

Also, substituting knuckle springs for draft gear springs has two additional advantages:

1. Much more reliable delayed-action uncoupling.
2. No more caboose bobbing/yoyo-ing as the freight train moves on down the line. The lighter draft springs remain fully compressed when the locomotive is accelerating or moving steadily. Only when the train begins slowing down do the springs relax – and stay relaxed.



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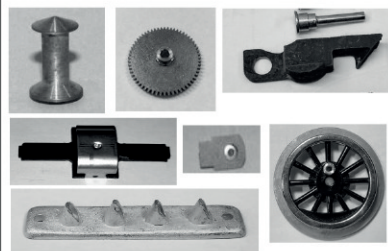
6 Storeybrooke Drive; Newburyport, MA 01950 (978)-888-0782

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.

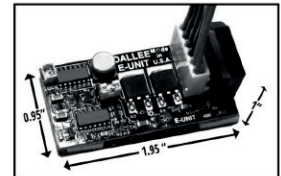
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NEW PRODUCTS

By Jeff Madden

Benn Central has 3D printed pilot and draft gear for an AM SD60. \$25 a set. He also has 3D printed parts and truck bolster for the Lionel (AF) cylindrical hopper. \$8 a pair.

www.3dcentraltrains.com or also see the NASG website or Facebook

Empire Trackwork lists S scale, S hi-rail and Sn3 track components (turnouts mostly). See article in the last *Dispatch* for details.

www.empire-trackworks.com

Iron Horse Modeling is showing 3D printed structures. For example, AMY's Place Diner is a \$24.99 kit. An assembled Log cabin is \$39.99.

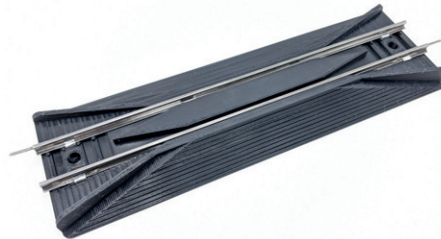
See NASG website.

Leopard Arch Models showed another 3D printed B&O interlocking tower – the Grosvenor one that was at the level crossing of the NYC and B&O just west of Athens, Ohio. Since I went to college there, I actually have a pix of this tower. The B&O line is gone, the tower is gone, but the ex-NYC line is still there running down to Charleston, WV. The tower kit is a 3D printed one that includes a coal shed and lists for \$95. They also list an S model of the Berea, Ohio, brick tower for \$110 and a Berea stone depot for \$200.



www.leopardarchmodels.com

Milwaukee Flyer is a new outfit that is offering a Flyer repro of #728 or 26748 uncoupler for \$24.99. Also, a half-length is available for \$19.99. Other items include a 45 degree crossing.



www.mkeflyer.com

NH Modelworks is showing a wood laser cut kit for Tom's Tile Works – a rustic two-story wood-side industry. There are other quaint New England buildings listed too. Prices range from \$46 to \$80.



www.nhmodelworks.com

Pennsy S Models seems to be re-emerging with progress being made on producing code 100 turnouts. Stay tuned.

www.lanestrains.com

Scale Signs has S scale modern and older signs that are built and painted. \$6.99 each. Check the NASG website or theirs.

www.scalesigns.com



Trainz.com purchases Ted Nyerges Inventory from Lenny Carparelli
Trainz has purchased the inventory of screws, bolts, springs, rivets and fasteners from Lenny Carparelli, acquired from Ted Nyerges who created his replacement screw business for postwar Lionel trains. Look for a major increase in the availability of screws, fasteners and other small parts at Trainz.com. To aid in finding the right part, we've produced over 420 exploded view parts diagrams for easy ordering.

Trainz.com purchases Glenn Snyder Display Systems/RailRax
Trainz has purchased the existing inventory and rights to manufacture the famous aluminum Train Display shelving from Glenn Snyder Display Systems. Trainz will warehouse and ship the shelving from its new Oakwood, GA facility. Trainz will continue the tradition of delivering orders to the York TCA show, and we have expanded to include the Amherst Railway Show as well.

Trainz.com purchases American Flyer Parts Business from Ron Stanczyk
Trainz has purchased the existing American Flyer reproduction parts inventory, originally manufactured by Rick and Vi Stillmank, from Ron Stanczyk. Trainz will be adding over five hundred parts to its website in the coming months.

Great Decals has a new decal. Union Starch & Refining Co, based in Granite City, Illinois, owned approximately 90, 8,000

gallon tank cars under their own reporting marks of USTX. In addition, Union Starch leased 9 tank cars from builder GATX. These cars went under GATX reporting marks. Shippers Car Company leased tank cars from builder AC&F, and then released approximately 65 cars to Union Starch under SHPX reporting marks. These made up the Union Starch tank car fleet which distributed corn starch, corn syrup, corn oil and caramel coloring to Coke Cola and Pepsi, Kraft Foods, etc. throughout the US. Special thanks to Norm Buckhart of Protocraft for making this offering possible. Bill Mosteller, Great Decals!, 3306 Parkside Terrace, Fairfax, VA 22031 <https://greatdecals.com/>



News from Tomalco Track: Today I can finally announce that Micro Engineering has agreed to purchase the Flex Track mold from Tomalco Track. The transfer will occur once all paperwork is completed. All existing inventory will be transferred to Shane Lambert for future projects and is not available for purchase. I cannot say with any certainty when Micro Engineering will have track available.

There were many interested parties but in the end I felt the best place for this was with a company long established in the Model Railroad Track industry. They already provide track and accessories for N, HO and O Scales. I know that ownership of Micro Engineering changed recently, but I am confident that the new owners will be able to provide better customer service going forward than I am currently able to provide.

I wish Micro Engineering the best of luck entering into the S Scale community and I encourage all of you to support them and

all other manufacturers supporting S Scale Model Railroaders.

Scale Trains has announced new wood reefers. The S-Helper Service™ S Scale model of the ACF Wood Reefer was designed for value-conscious modelers and features a common body type, detailed plastic body, opening doors, metal handrails, and grab irons. Thousands of these ACF Wood Reefers served railroads across the country beginning in the late 1920s well into the 1960s.



www.scaletrains.com

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Down at the Depot

By Carl Rudolph

Here in the West it has been dangerously dry and windy, causing disastrous fires in Southern California, while much of the rest of the country has been in the deep freeze. The latter conditions are prime weather for working on train layouts so here's the news for this issue:

The Connecticut S Gaugers report that they plan to participate with the layout at up to four shows this year and are looking forward to this year's NASG convention. Connecticut and Bristol S Gaugers are hosting this convention along with NASG national assistance. Correspondent **Bob Jordan** reports an error in the last missive – the new club president is **Paul Krause**, not Bill Krause! Yours truly should have caught that.

The South Jersey S-Gaugers once again have created a couple of static displays at the West Deptford Library with interesting examples of American Flyer trains. This is the 17th year that the club has installed these displays, and people come to the library specifically to see the displays. The club's calendar project, which we mentioned in a previous column, has been a huge success with both printing runs being sold out! We don't know if they were able to increase their coffers any or not, but obviously everybody likes it. The club also had a wonderful December dinner and auction where everybody spent money. Isn't that the point? They took the layout to Haddon Heights as usual, but this time the "elevator from Hell" fried its electrical board so they had to abandon the layout in the room until the elevator was fixed. Otherwise it would have been 16 modules at about 100 lb each and a power board up two flights of stairs. **Michael McConnell** says a whole new language would have to be invented to accomplish that, and none of it would be fit for family consumption!

The Baltimore Area American Flyer Club had the newly shortened layout at two shows (Westminster and Greenberg) and received many positive comments from show goers as a result. People like not having to lift their children to see the layout, and people in wheelchairs can enjoy it too.

Big win, it looks like. Then, even with big snow outside, attendance at the Marley Station Mall layout that **Russ and Paul Love** created was outstanding. Pictures of the O gauge layout show why. The club is discussing a possible outing, perhaps on the Western Maryland or the Northern Central Railway of York. Either sounds like fun to yours truly!

In the Jacksonville area, the **North Florida Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers** held their promised holiday meeting at **Larry Shughart's** barn just before Christmas. They ran trains, had some eggnog, and exchanged white elephant gifts. Sounds good to me! At the January meeting they planned their first time ever layout display at the Prime Osborn Convention Center. Hope to see a report on that!

The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Association (Cleveland area) had a wonderful holiday dinner at the home of **Jim and Maryann Sima**. The Simas provided the dinner, and the members brought desserts. The event was very well attended, and afterwards the attendees went over final details of January's Snow Dogs show. We have no report on how that show went as yet so hope the weather cooperated! The club expects to have the layout at several upcoming shows including Great Lakes TCA, NMRA Railfest, and the March Akron train show. Pretty busy!

The Miami Valley S Gaugers (Dayton area) reported that the Cleves Christmas Walk went very well. They had a newly enlarged space that gave plenty of room for the layout and people to walk around it; (see photo below).



Miami Valley layout at Cleves Christmas Walk.

The Pittsburgh S Gaugers enjoyed their holiday dinner at the same restaurant they used last year. Members brought cookies for dessert that were much appreciated. The venue for next year's Spring S Spree is very close to being selected and probably is finalized by the time you read this. Of interest is member **Chris Eddy's** idea to create a small, light-weight portable layout that can be taken to shows in a car (no trailer) and quickly set up to promote S gauge trains. Hope that works out and we get reports!

The Cleves Walk is a great, innovative event in which the town closes the main street to vehicular traffic so people can amble around. There are different activities and displays up and down the street in various venues and businesses with Elvis, reindeer, and other personalities in attendance in addition to a parade. It has to be a lot of fun! Their holiday dinner was also a big success with a very large attendance and also a lot of fun!

The Central Ohio S Gaugers had the layout at two shows – the Great Train Show and the Buckeye Train Show, both in Columbus. Both were quite successful with

lots of people in attendance. Several members visited the Fairfield County fairgrounds at which the club will host this year's Spring S Spree since the space is new to the club. More on this next issue!

The Central Ohio S Gaugers – Northern Division were to have a very interesting outing with a meeting at the Lakeside Train Station, a restored depot in Lakeside (OH) that was reserved for the club. The meeting was to be hosted by **Denis and Encie Super** with lunch provided and a program presented by Denis. But medical issues intervened, and the meeting was canceled. We hope the issues are resolved and the event is rescheduled!

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers met at **Gregg and Anne Wujcik's** home where quite a few fine models were shown at show-and-tell, including a Bar Mills boarding house by **Earl Carlsen** and **John Racey's** Lehigh Valley Models mill. Jeff Jundt showed six small structures done by various members of his family, and correspondent **Ken Garber** showed a Lionel water tower being decorated for the prototype Packard Proving Grounds tower that still exists. **Culver Anderson** hosted the next meeting at the Ann Arbor Train Station at which it was announced that the club officially will host the 2026 NASG convention!

The Badgerland S Gaugers (Milwaukee area) had an informal Christmas gathering with snacks. **Jeff Madden** provided a slide show presentation depicting early (mid-1970s) Badgerland events and members; everyone enjoyed seeing pictures of the "old days." Meanwhile, the clubhouse layout continues to improve; and planning for this year's Fall S Fest is on schedule.

The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers report that Trainfest (in Milwaukee) was a success with lots of members present to help set up, operate, and tear down. Sounds like it was a really big show (shew, per Ed Sullivan!). Later, several members visited **Loran Chritchett's** home and operated his layout so Loran could enjoy all the activity, which he much appreciated. Then, in early January, the club had the traditional "Unboxing Day" at which members bring Holiday acquisitions to the modular layout

and run trains and have lunch. What a great tradition!

The Kansas City S Gaugers report that the Holiday Train Display at the Kansas City Union Station was a big success. The Station's General Manager told **Bill Hutton** that 1000 tickets had been sold for every hour that the Holiday Experience, of which the S gauge layout forms a part, was open! In addition to the Holiday display, the club operates and maintains the S gauge portion of the permanent train display. The club layout set up at Sol's Jewelry was also well received, and plans are already afoot for next year! Both temporary layouts were taken down at the end of January and put in storage.

The Arizona S Gaugers sent in this notice again via correspondent **Phil Scandura**: "The Arizona S Gaugers began several years ago as a gathering of American Flyer guys. Round-robin meetings would occur at members' homes, typically during the "less hot" months of the year in the Valley of the Sun (i.e., the Phoenix area). The original name of the group was the 'Valley of the Sun S Gaugers,' as one might expect.

"Sadly, many of the original members passed on or moved away, but fortunately the group pressed on. Around 2013, **Bill Winans** was invited to attend a meeting, which spelled the beginning of an S group covering all variants of the S hobby: AF, Scale, and Narrow Gauge. Eventually it became apparent a new name was needed, one that reflected the wider range of S interests and territory; so it became the "Arizona S Gaugers" in 2020.

"Our group is looking to increase participation and extends this invitation to AF, Scale, and Narrow Gauge modelers in the Arizona area to attend our gatherings. They are generally held on the second Saturday of the month, typically October through May. We meet at members' homes, with lunch afterward at a local restaurant. We are primarily a social group; spouses are welcome, as are winter visitors to Arizona.

"There are no dues, no officers, no club layout - just a fun bunch of guys and gals who like to play with S trains. Obviously, everything is done by volunteering one's home and time to coordinate these

gatherings. No one will twist your arm to do this. If you are interested in finding out more, please visit the NASG club listings, or our website www.arizonaSgaugers.com, or contact:

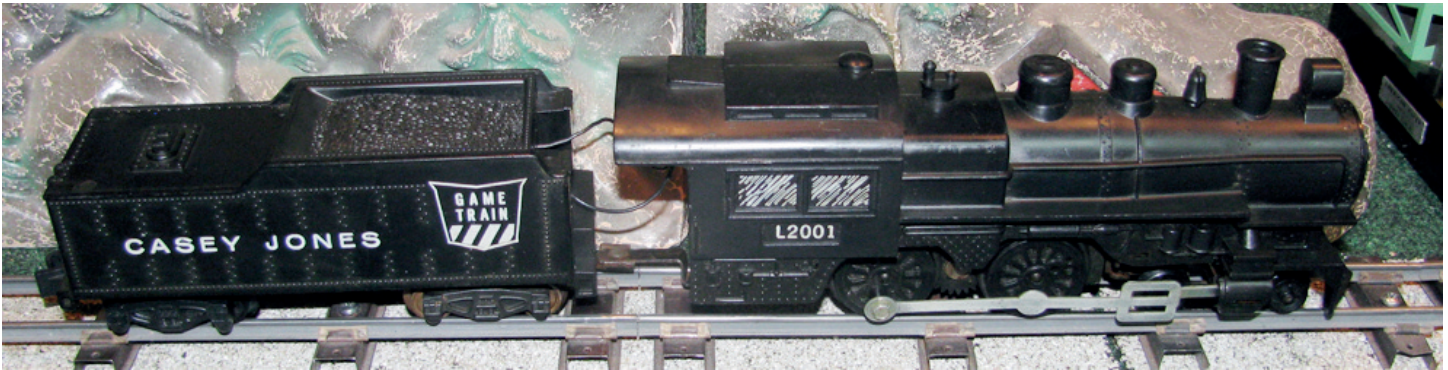
Bill Winans 3w2scalesonly@gmail.com . We look forward to hearing from you!"

In the San Francisco Bay area, the **Golden Gate American Flyer Club** had another meeting at **Bill Riechmann's** in Walnut Creek. The following meeting is to be at **Pat Altieri's** in San Bruno with lunch provided. Correspondent **Rich Lenart** also mentions an upcoming O and S gauge auction for which he recommends members should get a "side hustle" so they can pay for the successful bids! Must be a pretty good auction!

The Southern California S Gaugers Club (Los Angeles area) report that the Holiday luncheon at the Old Spaghetti Factory was quite a success with very good attendance, and people must have enjoyed themselves since the informal gathering lasted until 3 pm. The attendees also enjoyed the distraction of many trains going by outside since the restaurant is the old Southern Pacific depot on what is now known as the BNSF Transcon in Fullerton.

We hope all of you are enjoying your trains and each other. This is the time of year when model trains are a priority occupation (or at least we hope they are!), and enjoyment is to be had by pursuing that endeavor! Keep trackin'!





The Casey Jones Locomotive

I think you will find this Restoration Station Column something out of the ordinary. Most articles about Gilbert American Flyer items are about the ones we had as a kid, bought to collect, and brought to run because they were prototypical like the real thing. I bet however, in a box, under the train board, or buried under a lot of your American Flyer trains there is a Casey Jones 4-4-0 American style locomotive. They are very numerous and cheap not to have several. But, if you look for information about them in print you don't find much.

I have bought them in the past just to get their working two-step E-Unit. These E-Units are hard to fix and you can buy a Casey Jones with one on it for about half what you would pay from a parts supplier or on eBay. The bet you take is that it will work. Lots of times you find these in a parts bin box under sales tables at shows.

My Lone Star Flyer train club uses them at shows to stage a train wreck. Yes, this is fun! Club members will start yelling "Train-Wreck", "Train-Wreck" and kids and adults come to the layout to see one. We stage this by having two of the Casey Jones engines with a few cars facing each other on a 30 foot stretch of straight track. We get the crowd yelling "Train-Wreck" and when the volume is high the engines speed toward each other and "Wham." It is amazing that these engines never break. I know that if we used two Northerns there would be damage.

All this being said, I have decided to do this Roundhouse on the lowly Flyer Casey Jones 4-4-0 American locomotive.

American Flyer Production

When I looked for information about this steam locomotive in my many references there was not much to read about. While there was a good deal of information on the production of Atlantics, Pacifics, Northerns, and switchers very little about this engine was to be found. There wasn't a thing written on why the A.C. Gilbert Company selected it. What is usually said is that it was ugly, not prototypical, and cheaply made. Of course, it was made during the closing days of the golden era for toy trains when cheaper was the dictates of the chain toy stores. No, these engines weren't produced to be collected, they were to be played with by kids. They must have done OK for those kids because there seems to be a never ending supply of these at shows.

The most complete write up about the Casey Jones that I could find was in the book *A.C. Gilbert's Famous American Flyer Trains* written by Paul C. Nelson that was published in 1999 by the Heimburger House Publishing Company. He devotes almost a whole page with three columns to this engine (page 24).

Next, I would like to list the types by product number that were produced according to reference books:

1. #21165 Erie - 1961-62 & 1966 in 2 variations with 1 having Sintered-

trucks and the other Pike Master trucks. Both had two-step E-Units but no smoke or headlight. Current Greenburg value \$10-31 for either version.

2. #21166 Burlington - 1963-65 in 2 variations with Burlington in white in a black box or the rare version with Burlington in black in a white box. It came with a two-step E-Unit, but no smoke or headlight. They came with either Sintered-trucks with knuckle coupler or Pikemaster trucks. Current Greenburg value \$10-32 for standard version or \$85-204 for rare version.
3. #21168 Southern - 1961-63 in 2 variations with one having Sintered-trucks and the other Pike Master trucks. This was the most versatile of all the 4-4-0 engines because it came with a two-step E-Unit, smoke, choo-choo, and headlight plus it had a simplified crosshead guide and a very simple one-piece T-shaped drive rod assembly. . Current Greenburg value \$25-64 for knuckle coupler version or \$10-44 for the Pikemaster version.
4. #L2001 Game Train - 1963 in one basic variation that did not have anything including traction tires, which most had. . Current Greenburg value \$15-42.
5. #L2002 Burlington - 1963 in one basic variation and like the game train had no extras. It was uncatalogued and apparently scarce as the current Greenburg value \$50-135.

Motor and Chassis

I think taking the shells of my Casey Jones locomotives was the most interesting part of my investigation for this column. I have had mine for a while, but it had been years since I looked inside. Currently I have the Game Train, #21168, and several #21165's plus pieces and parts. This was helpful for comparison.

To examine the tender and it's chassis is very simple as one screw and it comes off to show you that one wire is soldered to each truck to provide electricity to the motor. Getting into the locomotive is not nearly as easy. Once you have taken off pilot truck assembly of any of the 4-4-0 types and for the #22268 it's crosshead guide there are four tabs sticking out from the chassis that go into the plastic shell of the locomotive. Getting the tabs pulled out from the shell so you can remove the chassis takes a bit of work and coordination. I wish I could describe how to do it and make it easy, but I haven't found one. I just keep working till I have it out.

The #21168 is an animal to itself compared to the others so I will describe it first. The only two things that are like other Gilbert engines is the two-step E-Unit at one end and the light bulb at the other. First, the smoke unit is not constructed like any other in the Gilbert fleet.

While it is constructed of the same components they are arranged in a different

way. The smoke piston is powered by the spur gear on the front drive wheel and its smoke stack is almost an inch.

The drive wheels are also reversed on this engine from the other Casey Jones types. The wheels with the long screw shanks and are in front and the wheels with the Pull-Mor tire are in the back. Both types have a spur gear between the drive wheels to power both axels.

What I never noticed is that the motor on the #21168 is larger than the other engines. Its field assembly is $\frac{1}{2}$ inch as well as its armature and the others are $\frac{5}{16}$ th for both. Logic says this motor is more powerful, but I can't calculate the difference because I don't have the tool to measure it. I looked at the motors I had of the Gilbert F9 diesel and they are the same as the #21168

The other versions of the 4-4-0 are all built the same except some have no E-Unit and some are without Pull-Mor tires. There appears to be no difference in the chassis. I have taken a photo of the chassis the basis type and #21168 side-by-side so you can visually compare them.

Possible Repair

These motors are simple to repair once you have them out of the shell. All the components are easy to see and if you are used to fine tuning one of the other Gilbert motors it will not be a challenge. Probably the one thing that is not really reparable is

the two-step E-Unit. As I mentioned earlier, I have bought these engines just to pull off their E-Unit to use on other locomotives.

I looked up parts availability and there are a few necessary parts for the motor including brushes and brush springs plus brush plate assemblies. You can also get the metal smoke stacks and the boiler front. I assume you can rebuild the smoke unit with the smoke unit kits available for other Gilbert engines. With the available inexpensive derelict locomotives around there are plenty that you can part out.

Lubrication of these engines is really much easier than other Gilbert models. On the top of the cab of most of the engines is a removable button, which allows the oiling of the top bearing of the motor.

The other key points to lubricate are easily done without taking the engine chassis from the plastic shell.

I have a number of repair manuals including *Greenburg's American Flyer Factory Manual*, the *K-Line Complete Service Manual, Part's & Service for .C. Gilbert's American Flyer Trains* by Thomas Seccia, and Tom Barker's *Gilbert American Flyer S Gauge Operating and Repair Guides* and there is very little about the 4-4-0 engines. Schematic drawings with a parts list is about all.

Summary

Through the years most Flyer people look down on the 4-4-0 engines and probably their outward appearance is the biggest reason as they are toy like and not accurate for the prototype. On the rails, however they actually run pretty well. When you look inside at its running components I think they were engineered well for what they were designed to be, an inexpensive toy that could stand up to a child's play. I enjoyed this journey into examining the Casey Jones engines. I came away with a better impression of what the Gilbert Company did in the waning of its electric train production to sell toy trains.

I look forward to hearing your questions and suggestions for the Restoration Station Column. You can reach out to me at billstrains@aol.com.

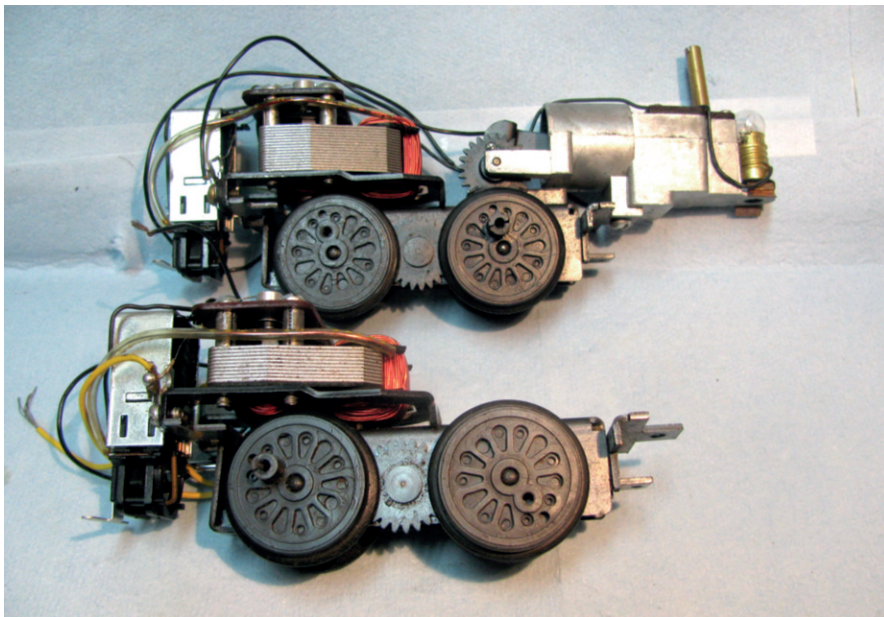


Photo of the chassis the basis type and #21168 side-by-side.

Mike Swederska Builds a Mountain

Building a MoPac Class MT-73 4-8-2 Locomotive

As told to Brooks Stover – photos by Mike Swederska



Mike Swederska has been modeling in S scale for 39 years. In that time he has scratchbuilt a number of steam locomotives from brass, both for himself and others, some in other scales. Mike regularly shares photographs of his modeling on the Group.io site “S Scale Trains”, and he recently posted some of the photos of locomotive seen here. I thought *The Dispatch* readers would enjoy seeing this beautiful model and learning something about how it was built and who built it. Mike graciously answered a long list question I posed to him about his scratchbuilding and it’s my pleasure to share what I learned about Mike and his modeling.

Professional Background

Professionally, Mike was a very successful auto body repairman. He specialized in repairing heavily damaged vehicles and says the skills he learned serve him when building a 1:64 model. His shop, one of the most successful in the Midwest, also pioneered the use of water-base acrylic automotive paints. Mike applies his knowledge of these paints to his models

Mike Swederska scratchbuilt this beautiful MoPac 4-8-4 from brass using skills he developed as an auto body repairman. It is one of several he has built in his 39 years as an S modeler.

as well, applying acrylic automotive finishes to his locomotives.

As expected, Mike has well-equipped shop that includes a table lathe, a vertical mill, a bench grinder, vertical belt sander and a 10” bandsaw. He uses a torch when soldering most of the time. However, he does have a resistance soldering unit that Claud Wade showed

him how to build back in 1984. The key to soldering a complex model, Mike says, is to know the melting points of each solder used. Mike uses solders with 5 different melting points.

The Model

As all of us in S know, you sometimes have to be creative to find the parts you



A smooth-running locomotive depends on a flawless chassis. Mike takes whatever time is required to test each step of the construction. He runs the chassis for hours, if needed, to ensure perfect operation of wheels, running gear and motor. The testing procedure includes pulling and pushing the unpowered chassis around the layout and through

need. Mike scrounges for brass castings by buying up SSL&S parts and half-built or unbuilt kits. He watches for “store bought” engines that are damaged but may have parts he can use. Still, Mike makes most of the parts he uses, although he avoids making drivers and wheels, if possible, as they are the most complex and time consuming. The 75” drivers on this model are from SSL&S Pacific, and the 25/1 gearbox is from NWSL. Interestingly, Mike so enjoys fabricating parts that he sometimes makes a detail part from scratch even if he has a commercial casting of it available!

The locomotive pictured here is a Missouri Pacific Class MT-73 4-8-2 Mountain. Drawings and information about the prototype were obtained from the Missouri Pacific Historical Society, books and the internet. Working 4-5 hours per day most days each week, it took Mike about 6 months to complete. From the outset, Mike’s plan was to use the locomotive, just as the prototype was used, to pull 7-8 heavyweight passenger cars at 70 mph, while traversing 48” radius curves and 2.5% grades. The model weighs 1 lb 13 oz, including 6 oz of traction weight made from

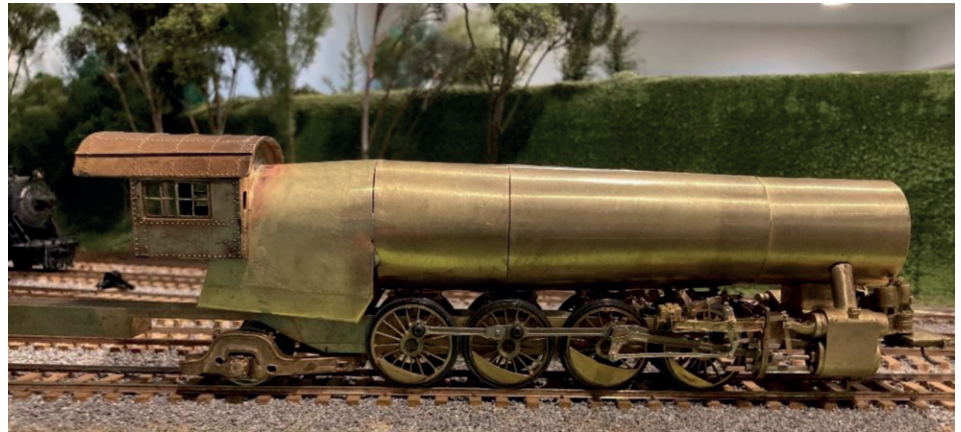
an old battery terminal. The tender weighs another 1 lb.

The Key to a Good Runner

Mike says that the key to a smooth-running engine is to thoroughly perfect the chassis before proceeding, including the wheels, side rods, valve gear, gear box, drive shaft and motor. He likes to pull and push the unmotored chassis around his layout with a diesel for hours looking for any issues. Mike notes that if an engine doesn’t run perfectly when finished, it will wind up on

the shelf. All of Mike’s engines run flawlessly.

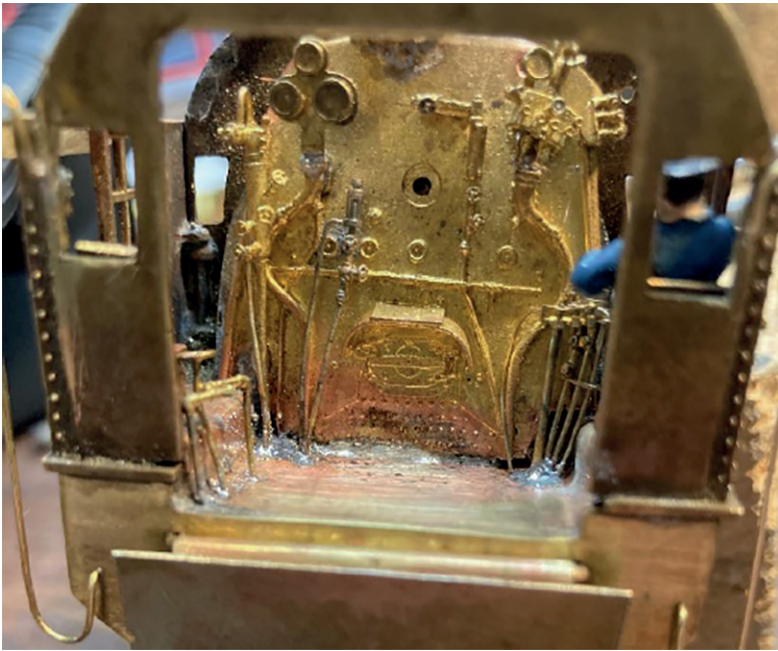
Early testing of the chassis showed that original motor Mike installed overheated after a couple of circuits of the layout pulling its passenger train. Mike found an American Models diesel that could pull the train just fine without overheating, but the motor was one-third longer. Unfortunately, the bigger AM motor wouldn’t fit in the firebox driving the number four axle.



Once the chassis is running perfectly Mike moved on to the boiler and cab. The boiler was formed from sheet brass, and the cab is built from SSL&S investment-cast components that he modified to fit this locomotive.



After this photo was taken, Mike determined that a larger motor was required. In order to fit it inside the firebox, he had to move the gearbox to the number three axle which necessitated remilling the chassis, work Mike was willing to do to get a locomotive that would serve its intended purpose for years.



Mike sets a very high standard when it comes to detailing his models. The Mountain has full backhead detail in the cab and prototypically correct plumbing and appliances from the pilot beam to the tender and everyone in between.

Moving the gearbox to the third axle required milling the frame, swapping the counter weights of the two driver sets, and making a new motor mount, all work Mike was willing to do to get a perfectly running Mountain.

Conclusion

Mike says that the biggest misconception about building in brass is that you have to be a machinist. His feeling is that when you make a part, you just have to figure out how to make it with the tools you have. If it doesn't turn out the way you want, start over and try again until you're happy with the result. To sum up his approach to

scratchbuilding in brass, Mike believes the most important tools are patience and perseverance. He notes that if you don't have those two tools when you begin your journey, you WILL have them when you have completed the model. If not, you'll never get the model done. I'd say the tools of patience and perseverance are necessary whether you're building a Mountain in brass or a structure in styrene or benchwork in pine. But as for scratchbuilding steam locomotives in brass, no one does it any better than Mike Swederska.



ABOVE: Mike thoroughly researches the prototypes that he models. This is a photo of the real MoPac 5339.

BELOW: This is the finished model undergoing final testing before painting and lettering.



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My Life Story of American Flyer Trains

By Robbie Tonneberger



The Flyer layout under the Christmas tree.

My Early Train Experience

When I was 9 years old, I received an American Flyer Royal Blue freight set for Christmas. This train had the engine and tender along with a gondola, two box cars, a rotating boom crane, a red caboose and the small black 25-watt #1 transformer. Also included were curved and straight tracks with two switch machines. This train set was something I hadn't envisioned for Christmas although I had seen the Flyer trains in the Gilbert catalog. But I was now in Christmas Train Heaven !



Close-up of some details of the train layout.

My father then bought me a 4-foot by 8-foot panel of plywood he brought down to the basement for me to construct my first train layout. I didn't do much for the layout except paint the plywood green for grass. After a while, I stored the train and track into a box in the attic.

Having a steady job after collage and renting half a duplex, I decided to build an HO train layout in the basement. It was basically just plywood forming a 4-foot by 12-foot L-shaped layout running just a couple of HO trains I had bought without scenery. This layout didn't really excite me; and shortly thereafter, I decided to sell the trains and layout, then move to Florida. At that point, I had lost my interest in model trains.

Train around the Christmas Tree

After several years really without a hobby, I decided in 1995 to move out to a country setting in New Hampshire. The thought of model trains came back into my head particularly a train around a Christmas Tree. I started subscribing to popular S Scale magazines such as the *S Gaugian*, *SN3*, the *TCA* and the NASG's *Dispatch* to learn about S scale suppliers as well as enjoying the articles.

I created a 4-foot by 4-foot raised panel layout with a water reservoir tree stand in the center. The rear 1/3 of the layout was a hollow mountain with tunnels at each end along with a transformer underneath. I added a cocoa stand with bar stools

and colored LEDs around its roof, along with a house that also had colored LEDs around its roof. I built a small iced-over pond with a river going off the side so that I could have a railroad bridge crossing. The landscape was all snow-covered with skiers down the mountain side, skaters on the pond and a horse-drawn sleigh with several more people. I purchased Gargraves S-scale track that formed a circle around the tree stand and through the mountain. At first, I ran a simple train running at low speed directly from the transformers. Later I came across the perfect one – the North Pole Central railroad with cars decorated for Christmas, including a Christmas tree gondola, three Christmas freight cars, container car, a gondola with presents and a bright red caboose. The train engine uses Lionel's FlyerChief remote control. I still place this layout under the Christmas tree each year.

Imagining an S Scale Train Layout

Having basically an empty basement and only a single train running on Christmas, I began thinking of creating a larger train layout of American Flyer. I discovered that Greenberg Train Shows were scheduled that year for November and March, so I decided to attend these shows. Typically, there was a single small layout running an N scale train, one running Lego trains, then a couple of layouts of the “modular” type that formed a large hollow rectangle with a single train running around the perimeter. I asked some of the train attendees about their train interests and their layout construction. The problem I saw with modular layouts in train shows is that it takes most of the day prior to the show to set up and connect the modules with legs, bolts and wiring. They also must add inter-module train track segments to join each module to another. I wanted, instead, a train layout that could be easily transported and could be setup and operational within an hour.

Concept for the Transportable Train Layout (TTL) in Erector

Having basically an empty basement and only a train running during Christmas, I began thinking of creating a larger train layout with American Flyer. The features of the layout would be:

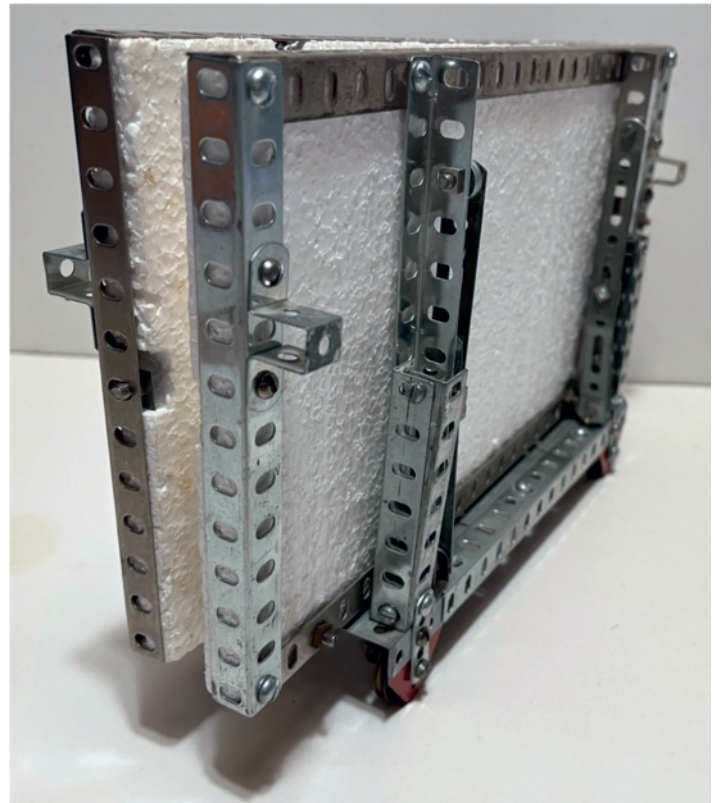
- Quickly and easily transportable to a train show
- Efficiently setup with trains running in minutes
- Multiple trains running at once
- A bunch of train accessories for attendees to play with
- Have a light-weight structure that I could build and move around
- Be of a size that can encompass all these features
- Have a presentation that would attract attendees to American Flyer trains

I decided that the structure and composition of my train layout concepts could be first modeled with my Erector set parts. So, I built an Erector model of what I was going to call the Transportable Train Layout, or TTL. Since my earliest train layout featured 4-foot

by 8-foot plywood, I thought that this dimension would fit my needs. But it then occurred to me that I could have two 4 x 8 panels that fold into a cart for easy mobility.



The prototype TTL made from an Erector set.



Here is my Erector model of the TTL from twelve years ago.

The features of the Erector model were:

- A 4 x 8 ratio of panel dimensions with the two lengths of Erector angles
- A wheeled cart to transport the layout
- Foam panels to build the layout upon
- Handles at the panel ends to lift the panel from a transport to layout position
- Alignment pins between the two panels in the layout position to keep the track aligned

- Latches between the panels to ensure they don't separate in the layout position

Starting to Buy More Flyer Trains

I started scanning through my magazines and new train catalogs looking for what would work well on my layout. Lionel's American Flyer trains came with Legacy remote control, which was a really good feature. My trains could be combinations of steam locomotives and newer diesel engines with both passenger and freight cars. I also settled on S-Helper Service S-Trax for the track and switches because it came with simulated gravel for ballast. One train I really wanted was the movie based Polar Express offered by Lionel in S scale.

Hardly anybody knows the origin of the Polar Express No. 1225 steam engine in the movie. I went to school at Michigan State University for engineering. On my way from the dorm to the engineering building there, sitting along a short piece of track, was a black steam locomotive with "1225" painted below the window of the cab. The movie's animation team modeled The Polar Express locomotive after the Pere Marquette Railway No. 1225, which is 2-8-4 Berkshire wheel arrangement built by the Lima Locomotive Works in October 1941.

As an aside, the Pere Marquette Railway used No. 1225 in regular service from the locomotive's construction until the railroad merged into Chesapeake and Ohio Railway (C&O) in 1947. It remained in use on C&O's Michigan lines until 1951. Avoiding the scrapyard, No. 1225 was acquired by the Michigan State University in 1957 and put on static display. In 1969, a group of students took an interest in No. 1225; and in 1971, the Michigan State University Railroad Club was formed and began work to restore No. 1225 to operational status, an effort that culminated with its first excursion run in 1988. The locomotive, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is now operated by the Steam Railroad Institute for use in excursion service on the Great Lakes Central Railroad based out of Owosso, Michigan. Another engine and tender I bought was the Pere Marquette No. 1225, so I have in essence two No. 1225s that are nearly alike. (compliments of Wikipedia).



Building the First TTL

Since I had a fairly accurate model of the TTL, my next move was to build a TTL. First it would be an 8-foot x 8-foot train display layout composed of two 4-foot by 8-foot panels (a TTL section) made from aluminum angle with 2-inch thick foam board positioned on top of a cart with four 5-inch locking caster wheels. The structure between the cart and the two panels included panel height adjusting spring pins so that the top of the panels could be at 31, 37 or 43 inches. I put this TTL together in my garage over a several days. This layout was really fun as it had two trains running along with a Disney Monorail, some Flyer accessories and a Kenner HydroDynamic set with dual pumps of colored water.

Building the Second TTL



I removed the first TTL amusements along with the foam board and moved the frame back out into the garage. There I built a second TTL that would connect to the first TTL. This was accomplished by adding two alignment pins at the end of each panel of the two sections, thus providing track alignment as before. There was also a lock between the sections to ensure the sections stayed together. This formed an 8-foot by 16-foot layout. I didn't have a layout plan, so I just transferred all the items from the first TTL to the new pair of sections, adding track along with surrounding curtains and American Flyer wall signs.

Promoting S Scale with the TTL

The TTLs in the photo above were constructed to be easily transportable such that I could take the entire layout to train shows in nearby Boston. But the two 8 x 8 sections would mean double trips to and from the show for transport. My solution was to build a third TTL section that would stand alone in train shows and promote S Scale trains and accessories and while traveling only once there and back in my pickup.

The resulting layout pictures above have three loops of different types of track and twelve accessories with perimeter push buttons for show attendees (especially kids) to operate the accessories. The center billboard on one side (top photo) shows six forms of S-Scale track, various train scales with S noted as the perfect scale, along with two pages of Lionel S-Scale catalog covers for American Flyer trains and Lionel's latest Cab 3 remote control system controller.



Front side of the show layout.



Rear side of the show layout.



The three trains use Lionel's FlyerChief remote controllers. The other side of the billboard (upper photo) promotes the National Association of S Gaugers (NASG), Gilbert American Flyer, along with S-Scale magazines and catalog covers. The lower photo shows the 5" high clear plastic perimeter barrier to keep hands off the trains passing by but has holes for fingers to press the accessory buttons.

Sitting on top of the cart base is a plywood shelf to hold the two 300-watt and one 175-watt transformers.

Finally, the photo above shows the TTL in transport position. Note that there are 18-inches between the inside of the two panels for the accessories to be placed without interfering with each other.

If you have any comments or questions, please email me at: Robbie@AFTrainClub.org



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Kit-bashing MTH Structures

By Stephen Law / photos by the author



The Row House

One of the ubiquitous structures on many of our layouts is the humble “Row House” formerly made by MTH.

After seeing one of these houses on the traveling S Helper Layout many years ago, I acquired a half-dozen of these ready-made buildings.

Like several of the structures made by MTH, the Row House is actually an S-scale building with O-scale windows and doors. The scale footprint of these dwellings is only 21’ wide x 32’ deep, and the ridgeline is 35’ (including the raised foundation).

The front and rear doors to the house can be easily replaced with Tichy Train Group doors (#3515 works best, with a transom window above the door). The MTH windows are, perhaps, a few too numerous, but a simple piece of Tamiya tape makes a great shade that cuts down on the amount of light emitted. A number 1 Phillips screwdriver is requisite for all MTH buildings, and it

is easy to pop the chimney off so you can mortar the actual S-scale bricks.

If you want to make additional improvements, the staircases can be given some extra treads with bands of Plastruct #7212, and a colored marker can improve the grey stone foundation (which can also be mortared if you want).

Highly recommended are two other improvements that will really emphasize the S-scale changes you’ve made.

The first is to pull off the bottom half of the monochrome white porch, and paint it a different color.

The other “must have” is an attic window, accentuating the space above the second floor (use a Tichy #3512 4x4 double hung window for this).

With these fixes, your humble Row House will take on a new life as a proper S-scale addition.

In addition to the humble Row House, MTH also made two other houses: the Farm House and the Country House.



Like the Row House, these dwellings are actually S-scale, with O-scale windows and doors. Truth be told, the windows are passable as S, but can be retrofitted with windows from the Tichy Train Group, as we will see. The Farm House can be dismantled and rearranged with parts from other MTH houses. But the true gem to work with is the Country House. Here we will show you how amenable this building is to some

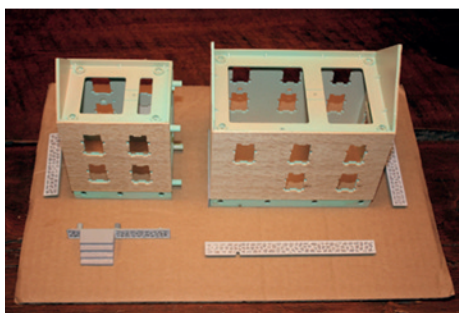


impressive kit-bashing. We are going to make some brick houses!

After completely dismantling the structure, pry off the foundation panels and pop the windows. You begin the real bashing by sanding down the clapboards on the house with an orbital sander. Wear a mask. Make the surfaces of the plastic completely flat, but don't sand away more than just the clapboards. Then comes the new siding: I am a big fan of the laser-etched brick sheets made by Larkspur Laser Art (formerly Monster Model Works).

They come in a variety of thicknesses and brick profiles; most of my work uses their "Aged American Brick," seen in both of these projects. A good tacky glue works fine, but be sure to line up the corners so the brick courses match.

Once you have your veneer in place, you can cut out the window holes with a #11 blade; hint: here is where you can leave some of the numerous windows uncut, to make the structure look more realistic.



Paint your brick work with the colors of your choosing, and add mortar to the joints. There are many mortar methods, but I have had the best success with Robert's Mortar Mix.

Clean the bricks as you see fit with Q-tips. At this point, you can simply reassemble the house ... or make further enhancements.

The Country House

My most recent effort with a Country House conversion was very ambitious: I wanted to make the archetypal "five window brick house", so common in the landscape of Pennsylvania.

This necessitated the cutting and joining of the main sections of two Country Houses, to make a single larger dwelling. Even the shingles on the roofs had to be aligned (a project in itself!).

The modifications, mentioned previously, were all utilized, but the most significant additions were Tichy 12-pane windows throughout—a perfect fit for the MTH openings—and the constructions of major



brick chimneys for each end of the house. These chimneys are easily made, and I can provide anyone with an in-depth set of instructions for the plan and construction of them.

Contact me at:
doctorstephenlaw@gmail.com

I also centered the opening on the porch, so the door would be in the middle of my



structure, and added a “stacked stone foundation”, using another product from Larkspur.



These brick houses will provide you with distinctive “foreground models” that will be a highlight of any S-scale layout. I’m even thinking of making my next kit-bashed house in stone! Next time we will move into town, and show you the MTH urban structures that are also S-scale.



NASG introduces new PROMOTIONAL PRINT MATERIAL

NEW!

The NASG announces a set of promotional handouts to help clubs and NASG members explain and promote S modeling to potential newcomers. These new print materials carefully target information to the interests of the individual in a series of six fully illustrated, full color 8 ½"x14" tri-fold handouts.

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
Clay Buckage: 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.



Some Northeastern Cabooses

By John Mann



1. Cedar Rapids and Iowa City (CRANDIC): CRANDIC is a former interurban line now dieselized that runs from the two named cities in Iowa. At one time CRANDIC had a couple of ex-Reading cabooses that sported a modified UP paint scheme. James McAuliffe secured some HO decals made by Herald King and resized them to S.

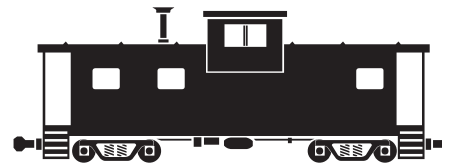
The Reading Railroad designed a steel caboose in the early 1920s that was based on an earlier wood USRA design offered by ACF. This became an extremely popular design being copied by many railroads, most of which connected physically with the Reading. It became known as the “Northeastern” caboose, although this term was coined by railfans and model railroaders and was not a term used by the railroads. Some of the original owners were the Reading, Western Maryland, Lehigh and New England, Lehigh Valley, Pittsburgh & West Virginia, Central of New Jersey, and Lehigh & Hudson Valley. In addition, many were later sold to other railroads including some in the Midwest. Some of these included Rock Island, Davenport, Rock Island and Northwestern, Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, C&NW and GM&O. At least one railroad, the Reading, made wooden

versions during the steel shortage in World War II.

American Flyer picked this caboose to be in their S gauge line in 1946. They made a fairly credible model and continued to make it until the end of production. There are many variations as to coloring and lettering and include several operating brakeman types. There are wide-step and narrow-step variations as well. It’s a good idea to check with a reputable collector before you modify one. I believe Lionel also made several variations. Since they were quite common, most are fairly reasonable, although there are a couple of variations that are scarce.

Since Covid, the Stateline S Gaugers have been running a Zoom meeting on Tuesday mornings. This is open to all interested in any facet of S. We have

tinplate collectors, hi-railers, scale people and a couple of narrow gaugers. We have kit bashers and scratchbuilders. I feel we have been successful in this endeavor as we generally have around 15 attendees from coast to coast. We can all help one another. In October I proposed a project for our group, specifically for 3/16 day. Modify an AF Reading caboose. No rules. No contest. Just fun. Our efforts follow.



2. CRI&P (Rock Island)

The Rock was a regional railroad that ran west out of Chicago. At one time it provided access to Chicago for the Southern Pacific. It was known for its Rocket passenger trains. It also had an ALCO DL 109. The Rock had two ex-LV Northeastern cabooses. Tommy Lennon's efforts include a 3d-printed floor.



3. Reading Wood caboose

As mentioned above, Reading had wood-sheathed Northeastern cabooses made during the steel shortage of WW II. I took a battered and repainted version and ground down the details and applied scratchbuilt sides of >020" thick .050" wide Evergreen siding. I painted it with Krylon rattle-can red and Rust-Oleum 2x black primer. Decals are Microscale alphabets in two sizes. I oversprayed with Krylon Matte. I used a 3d-printed floor I got from Tommy Lennon.

4. ACL (Atlantic Coast Line)

ACL had a number of steel cabooses that were apparently copies of the original ACF cars. George Sorensen volunteers at a Florida Railroad Museum that has an S scale layout. They needed a Florida prototype caboose and this is the result.



5. Reading Yellow and Green

The Reading started painting its cabooses yellow and green to match its new diesel paint scheme in the 60s. Jim Larson came up with this version using a variety of HO decals.



6. LV (Lehigh Valley)

Another striking paint scheme was this LV again by Jim Larson. Also features HO decals



7. CNJ (Central Railroad of New Jersey)

CNJ was under the control of the Reading when it built its first Northeastern caboose early in 1942 right before the WWII steel restrictions took effect. The paint scheme was known as the Coast Guard scheme because of the resemblance to a ship's bow. I'm told the slants could go either way. Another fine effort by Jim Larson.



8. WM (Western Maryland)

The final caboose is yet another one by Jim Larson. The WM had at least three series of the Northeastern caboose. This one features the "Speed Lettering" style that became standard in the late 50s. A very distinctive style.

Most of the prototype info above comes from an article by John Larue that was provided by Bill Morris. Thanks, Bill.



All in all, this was a fun project; and I want to thank all who participated. There are still many more versions that could be done.



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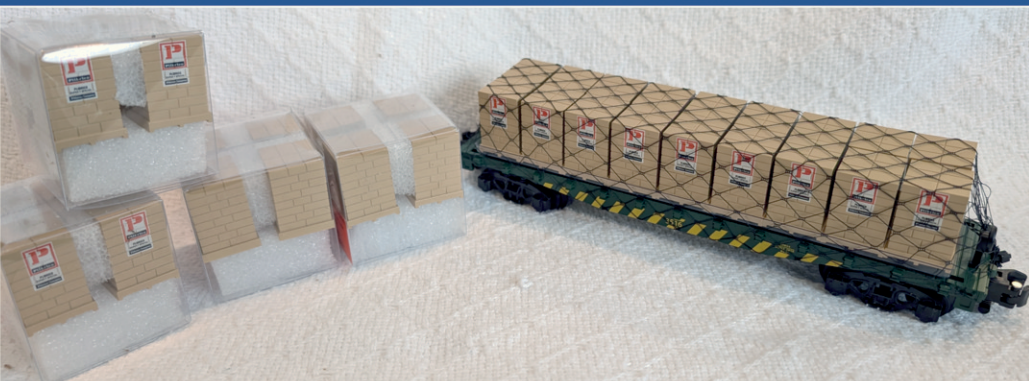
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Click on the Store button

The discounts listed in the Company Store webpage are applicable to these units.



Out Along The Line

photos by



NASG members



More PRR and B&O action on Joe Kimber's pike. The trestle was scratch built by Joe. The 312 AF Pacific has been converted to DCC, as was the REX 0-6-0. The trestle crosses "Oldman's Creek" on Joe's West Jersey Central RR. Photo by Michael McConnell.

An eastbound train heads for the PRR freight house at Seneca Street on Gaylord Gill's Buffalo & Chautauqua layout. The loco is an Oriental Models SW1, custom painted and decaled. The brick structure is a factory kit-bashed from an old Magnuson HO resin kit. Trees and shrubs were created using twigs, lichen and ground foam. Photo by Gaylord Gill.



**We Want To See YOUR
AF, hi-rail or scale
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rbubeck327@aol.com**

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.

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.
Email: tpatterson31@wi.rr.com (3)

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 (3)

WANTED: Putt Trains (Rex) PRR B-6 060 slopped back Tender.
Jim McMinn: gjeanie616@verizon or 814-944-3865 (3)

WANTED: SHS/MTH 70-ton roller bearing freight car trucks and SHS/MTH/Scale Trains 50-ton friction bearing freight car trucks (Bettendorf and Andrews side frames). Scale wheel sets only. ALSO WANTED: TOMALCO rereilers; two hi-rail and one scale. **Email:** tpatterson31@wi.rr.com. (2)

FOR SALE: S Gaugian magazine, 1990-1919 complete with 240 issues in excellent condition. \$120 plus shipping or free pickup if you are in Texas. stephen.terni@yahoo.com (2)

FOR SALE: S-Helper Service Great Northern SW-9 diesel switcher (#00428) and Santa Fe SW-9 diesel switcher (#00120). Both AC/DC hi rail with Talgo mounted American Flyer couplers, DCC compatible with code 110 RP-25 wheel sets included, NMRA DCC socket with DC shorting plug, plus much, much more! Mint in box. \$175 each plus shipping. Also FOR SALE: Two (2) Z-Stuff for Trains DZ-2500 Switch Machines & Remote Controllers and one (1) DZ-2001A Data Line Driver for TMCC Command Base. Mint in packaging. \$95 plus shipping. Also available: New DZ-1008A SPDT Relay Module for use with DZ-1000 Switch Machine. \$15 plus shipping. **Contact Dennis at** desmeage43@gmail.com. (1)

FOR SALE: Santa Fe train set, #360/364 loco., polished aluminum passenger cars #660, 661, 662, 663, recently professionally serviced, C-6, C-7 condition, all new passenger inserts \$175 + shipping **Contact Nick Domiano at** ndom@epix.net for photos. (1)

FOR SALE: American Flyer Christmas box car collection. Complete 35 car collection (1990 through 2024) including 1998 and 1999 cars. All in original boxes, some never opened. All in like new condition or NIB. \$1,800.00 plus shipping. Also Rare CHESSIE SYSTEM SD9 (6-48058) diesel from set break up. Test run only. NIB original box, with foam and instruction booklet. Operates perfectly in all parameters. \$185.00 plus shipping. Also have another CHESSIE SYSTEM SD9 (6-48058) without box like new foam cradle only. Works like new Test run only. \$169.00
Contact Dick, at 609-548-9589 or rfchoke4612@gmail.com (1)



New Members

November 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024

Alan P. Bataille	Stirling, NJ
Greg Brubaker	Layton, UT
David C. Cannon	Pittsburgh, PA
Bruce E. Carr	Eagan, MN
Bruce A. Chaffin	North East, PA
William J. Daughton	Colorado Springs, CO
John J. DiNapoli	Foxboro, MA
David Dorsett	Stowe, VT
Philip Dullinger	Saint Cloud, MN
Jonathan Ely	Grand Junction, CO
Pete Evans	Beaufort, NC
Sam Groce	Lompoc, CA
Jerry Falk	Medway, MA
Russ Harden	Oak Ridge, TN
Pete Henningsen	Miklford, CT
Joseph Jares	Neenah, WI
Robert D. Kamman	Seymour, IN
Robert F. Kline	Sarasota, FL
Jerald V. LaBrake	Harlem, GA
Jeremiah Lighthouse	Columbus, OH
Tim J. Little	Crosswicks, NJ
Gregory B. Lorts	Portland, OR
Donald Macha	Plainview, TX
Albert Marano	Watertown, CT
Harold Marshall, Jr	Guildhall, VT
Wayne T. McKee	Lorton, VA
Harriet Mark	Pleasant Valley, NY
Anthony L. Perry	Egg Harbor Twp, NJ
Protean Polymath	Kingston, NY
Thad Puacz	Brighton, MI
Brad Tutt	Knoxville, TN
Donald J. West, Sr	Lansdale, PA
Jim Woodward	West Newsbury, MA

Calendar of Events

Annual Div. 7 NMRA Spring Model Train Flea Market

Saturday, March 15, 2025

Lakota West Freshman Campus at 5050 Tylersville Rd, West Chester, OH

10 am until 3 pm. All scales of new & used model trains, books, collectibles. Adult admission \$7. Kids 12 and under and Scouts in uniform free with paying adult. No animals allowed except service dogs. Wheelchair accessible. Free parking. Food and refreshments available.

cincy-div7.org

Midwest Narrow Gauge Show

March 20 to March 22, 2025

1028 Jennings Ave, Salem, OH 44460

Sponsored and organized by Portland Locomotive Works. Sn2 modelers are setting up their modular layout at the show.

shop.portlandlocomotiveworks.com/13-31st-annual-narrow-gauge-show

The Barry King Memorial Train Show

April 21-23, 2025

Relance Fire Hall, 1341 W. Market St., York, PA 17404

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Free admission; free parking, rain or shine

For vendor information contact Todd Metcalf, 860-432-2124 or trainsmore@aol.com

The "Flyernut" meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 24, 2025 in the Orange Hall Meeting Room of the York Fairgrounds.

Sn3 Symposium

April 24 to April 26, 2025

10695 Auto Mall Dr, Sandy, UT 84070

Attendee Fares: Spouses are free!

Before March 31st, 2025 – US\$75.00

After April 1st, 2025 – US\$85.00

sn3symposium.com

Spring S Spree

May 16 to May 17, 2025

157 E Fair Ave, Lancaster, Ohio 43130

Central Ohio S Gaugers are proud to host the Spring S Spree 2025. The gathering of S gauge model train enthusiasts will be held at the AAA Multipurpose building on the beautiful grounds of the Fairfield County Fairgrounds in Lancaster, Ohio.

Lancaster is approximately 30 mile southeast of Columbus.

Hosted by the Central Ohio S Gaugers club.

sspre.info

O Scale West

May 23-25, 2025 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Santa Clara, California

The phrases Narrow Gauge West and S West will be dropped from the name; however, narrow gauge and S Scale attendance will continue to be recognized and strongly encouraged.
<https://www.oscalewest.com/>

2025 NASG Convention

August 6 to August 9, 2025

10 Laura Boulevard, Norwich, Connecticut 06360

The Connecticut S Gaugers, in conjunction with the Bristol S Gaugers and the NASG Convention Committee, are pleased to announce the 2025 National Convention to be held in Norwich, Connecticut.

nasg.org/Convention/index.php

See the NASG Website for more upcoming shows.



In Memoriam

Don Rosa
LeRoy Wallace, Jr

Diamond Springs, CA
Fairfield, CA

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

Advertisers Index

2025 Spring Spree	Pg.	7
Annual Member Cars	Pg.	32
Depot G Hobbies	Pg.	28
Empire Trackworks	Pg.	22
Pikesville Models	Pg.	25
NASG Car Discount Sale	Pg.	28
NASG Print Material	Pg.	25
Port Line Hobbies	Pg.	8
Pre-Size	Pg.	28
Trains and More	Pg.	25
Trainz.com	Pg.	10
Tripple 'S' Supplies	Pg.	18

NASG Annual Member Car



American Models 40 foot boxcar one using seven panel Superior doors and the other to use Commonwealth doors.

Superior door cars would be Monon 1. The cars in this production run started with road number 1 and ascended as cars were accepted. Monon 1 is a legend in Monon Railroad history.

Commonwealth door cars would be Monon 907. This car is a standard Monon boxcar without the history of Monon. We are tentatively planning a production run of 100 cars, 50 of each number. The production run would be for 15 scale and 35 hi-rail cars for each car number. Collectors want two car numbers with each annual car, and with this method, they can have two different door styles in addition to two different road numbers. The cars will be painted prototypical oxide red with white lettering.

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Mathieson Chemical Company of Saltville Virginia.*

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