



Vice President's Message



Dan Pawling

Congratulations Ron & Carolyn!!!! Best wishes & happiness to you both. You went on your Honeymoon by train right??? Between President & the Vice President the Presidential staff is really tied up with projects of our own. I have been working on a vertical train for my house and I expect that this will keep me busy well into December. I apologize for not being able to put my fullest attention on the Ntrak projects this fall.

I am shooting to get a shirt order from Lands End as soon as I can and would like to know what the interest level is. If it is good I will get some orders off earlier than the deadline that follows. I have been trying to finish a logo that I can send off to Lands End to get an estimate of how many stitches there are in the logo. The price for the logo set up cost is calculated on how many stitches there are. I am planning to make the logo slightly larger than the last one so more detail will show. The logo will be red with a dark blue out line around each letter. I am getting that cleared by the art department and will know soon. I chose Lands End because the products mentioned below seems reasonably priced and there many other products that the logo can be put on. I think it would be good if we could stick to the light blue for a constant look.

The minimum order for the logo is 6 Shirts. I am assuming that the club will cover the cost of the logo set up. Lands End said I could set up an order number that everyone could call in and pay separately for the items they order. I

should have this information by October 25. I suggest that everyone consider the Blue Oxford Shirt in cotton or cotton 60% polyester 40% Blend. The cotton polyester blend is the most care free of the two. The cotton shirt order number is 0025-5299 for \$19.50. The cotton/polyester Blend order number is 0025-4223 is also \$19.50. Take a look on Landsend.com or call them and ask for a catalog 1-800-356-4444. If you need a new shirt now is the time. Let me know if you plan to order before November 5th. The best way to let me know would be to send me an email at dfppjg@rcn.com or call my number on the member sheet.

I am planning to have an End Loop meeting on the 5th of November at 7:00PM. The plan is to work on completing the second end loop, which is very close to being complete. I would also like to make plans for the next projects related to the End Loops. I am willing to host new member module construction. Please come and enjoy a work session with us.

Another order of business that should be mentioned is that in the annual meeting we talked about having a dinner meeting the Saturday after November 16th Greenberg show for fun. I understand that the last time we had it at the Papa Gino's any other suggestions?

Athearn in N by Bob Gatland

Many of us have been wondering when and if Athearn, one of the largest HO scale manufacturers, would ever take a plunge in the N scale market. Now we know.

Athearn ran a four-page ad in the October issue of "Model Railroad Craftsman" to announce their entry into N. They showed the locomotive and passenger cars for a modern passenger train set such as used by Metrolink. They also showed a line of Ford cars and trucks and John Deere tractors.

They claim that they will offer locomotives, freight and passenger cars, and other accessories. This could be interesting to say the least.

Two questions came to mind as I read the ad. First, how will they handle the coupler situation? I was relieved to read that they are going with Micro-Train couplers. Rapido style couplers should be put to rest on all new offerings. I also wonder if they will offer the N scale version of their HO 40' box car with the inverted frame. Countless eons ago Athearn started producing plastic box cars by the thousands. When I bought my first one (yes, I was once into HO scale before I saw the light), I noticed that the brake wheel at the end of the car didn't line up with the brake cylinder on the bottom of the car. This was due to the fact that the die cutter had misread the floor plan of the car as a top-down view instead of a looking up from the bottom view.

Forty years have passed, and they have never cut a new die for that particular car. I wonder if they will misread the plans once again if and when they offer the N scale version.

Perhaps the most exciting thing about Athearn's announcement is the fact that they have studied the N scale market for trains and decided it is strong enough to warrant their entry into it. Of course, I could have told them that.

Schedule of Shows for Coming Year

Date	Set-up	Show Time	Show	Place	Show Coordinator
Nov 10	7am	10am to 4pm	Hub Division NE Region	Marlboro High School, Rt 85, Marlboro, MA	Peter Wisniewski, 978-658-0866
Nov 16	8am	10am to 5pm	Greenberg Show	Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA	Ernie Poole, 978-658-9563
	17 9am	10am to 4pm			
Dec 28			National Heritage Museum	Museum of our National Heritage	Ron Wood, 603-889-0741
	29				
Jan 31	1pm		Amherst Railway Society	Big "E" Exposition Center, Springfield, MA	Frank Dignan, 781-294-1925
Feb 1	7am	10am to 5pm	(Winterfest 2003)		
	2	10am to 5pm			
Mar 29	8am	10am to 5pm	Greenberg Show	Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA	Ernie Poole, 978-658-9563
	30 9am	10am to 4pm			
Apr			Hooksett Lions Club	Hooksett Memorial School, Hooksett, NH	Ron Wood, 603-889-0741
May 16	7am	9am - 3pm	Children's Hospital	300 Longwood Dr., Boston, MA	Robert Pawlak, 781-862-2485

Letter to the Editor

I have been honored to be the recipient of your newsletter these many past months. Every time one comes in I determine to reply but a dozen distractions keep coming up to the point where another newsletter comes in before I realize how the time gets away from me. Does that sound like the ramblings of an old goat? So be it. I am one.

I see so many new names I hardly recognize your group. Many of you wonder, "Who the devil is this guy we carry as an honorary member?" I thought therefore I should take you back to your beginnings.

During the 1970's I was living in Topsham, ME while engaged in the telecommunications business out of Lewiston, ME. I joined a railroad club in Brunswick which dabbled in many RR interests, mostly historical. They proposed to sponsor a RR Show in Brunswick to further their interests and were looking for ideas to spark public interest. I had just gotten started in N Scale modeling and had build 2 or 3 modules to Ntrak specs after communicating with Jim Fitzgerald. Realizing I was the only Ntraker in Maine he got a club in Ottawa to invite me to one of their meets, where I got bitten good by the Ntrak bug. Still I was the only one for miles around. I heard about your group in Mass. and volunteered to put together a layout for a show if I could get your guys interested. You came through in spades and I think that was one of the first show experiences of Northeast Ntrak. We learned a lot. Some of the participants I remember best are Fay Chin, Larry Hough, Bruce Alcock and I think Ernie Poole although I may have made his acquaintance later along with Tom Hoover and Chuck Laman. My wife, Velma, remembers preparing a turkey dinner for your group. It was an enjoyable and fun time.

We moved to Florida soon after that where I worked until Vel and I retired and returned here to New England in the early 1990's. We were in the book business there and had to travel extensively and lived in three different places as our business required. Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Lake Wales. I was involved in starting several Ntrak Clubs in several locations. One of my friends in Ottawa, Canada, Robin Adair, developed a hand held throttle that took in 12 to 16 volts AC and put out 12 volts DC pulse power to the track. I took a booth at many RR shows through out the states and sold many of these INTRAKIT throttles. Of course I partici-

pated in many Ntrak meets. I was a regular correspondent of Jim FitzGerald's and contributed a number of designs and plans for modules and module jigs.

In 1988 Boston hosted the Annual NMRA convention. I came up with 3 4' modules that made up a 12' display of the Lime Rock Railroad in Rockland, ME. I joined with your club in the Ntrak layout and enjoyed working with Jim Whitehead, Ernie Poole, Tom Hoover and several others. I won 2nd place in the module contest even though it was not completed. I had done extensive research on it and got some notoriety in the September 1988 issue of Model Railroader. Robert Schieicher got caught up in it and did quite a story.

When I returned to Florida I had space problems and time problems as well so I put it in the hands of a Model Train Store in Winter Haven on consignment expecting it would sell to one of the members of the new Ntrak Club just forming up.

Unbeknownst to me a large model train dealer in Texas bought the store and before I know it had trashed my modules and all supplies. I'd have donated the outfit to the Boy Scout Troop just getting interested in our Lake Wales Club if I'd known in time to save it.

You can imagine my surprise when I got a call, last week, from a fellow in Rockland, ME who had a copy of that old magazine. He had been the President of the Limerock Railroad when they went out of business. The city is planning to build a large layout as part of a public display. They want to pick my brains for ideas as the interest in the history is at a peak right now. MBNA, a major employer in the area now, would be a sponsor. Of course I agreed to be a consultant and will join their next meeting when advised. Thanks for keeping me on your mailing list. I'm feeling my age these days and don't get out to many shows anymore, but I'll try to make one of yours soon.

Keep up the good work in Ntrak.

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Green Mountain Railroad by Roland Kelley

On October 9th I took the Green Mountain Flyer. It was a nine car train observation car "Vermont" on the tale out of Bellows Falls. They did a run around at Chester. It was a great view sitting at the rear of the observation car. Talking with the conductor it has been a slow year for the railroad, both passenger and freight.

An Interesting Web Site

Check out this web site for interesting predictions of new releases and for lively product reviews.

<http://challenger-n-scale.com>

PRR Rood Antennas by Grouchy Bob Gatland

I purchased the new antenna kit made by Bowser. It's designed to fit onto their PRR cabooses. Now I have to figure out how to put it on the roof.

The underside of the roof is marked for drilling out holes, but I'm not sure how to run the wire. A simple diagram would be sooo useful. Instead, I'll have to dig through Pennsy Railroad books in an effort to see exactly how the parts should be placed on the roof.

Early on in the introduction of radio communications on railroads, the Pennsylvania used a communications system that required long antennas to pick up the signals. They were mounted on the roofs of locomotives and cabooses.

Hey guys, how about a diagram next time.

Amtrak's Auto Train by Roland Kelley

On the way to Richmond, VA Ernie and I took time out to visit the new Auto Train terminal at Lorton, VA. The train was loaded and waiting to be put together when we arrived. About two years ago they totally rebuilt the station and all the tracks. The train was lead by two Genesis engines, diner, lounge, 4 couches, 3 sleepers, diner, skylounge, 2 sleepers and a transition car, then 5 bi-level auto racks then the tri-levels. Didn't get a count of the tri-levels as we didn't wait for the train to leave. It takes over half hour for the train to be put together and depart. It had been a long trip and we wanted to get to Richmond and relax.

Feedback to October Thoughts by Dan Pawling, Sr.

Here are some notes for the "Executive Committee":

(1) Ron Wood's Editorial questioned putting a "Membership Open" notice in Model Railroader -- I am for it. The same should be done in Model RR Craftsman and any other RR modeling publication.

(2) An educational area at a "museum show" is an excellent idea. Kalmbach, and maybe other publishers, could supply some printed materials. Also there are RR safety material available. State DOT, Amtrak, CSX, MBTA -- may have programs and published stuff. I occasionally see a display at train shows. A TV running a safety, or other type, film is another thought... the sound of steam engines, whistles and bells is a real stimulator.