

## President's Message



Well, another season of train shows is past. How the time flies! Looking back over the past year, I can honestly say that I think our club is headed in the right direction. Member participation is up at shows. The end loops have continued to work well at shows. The Hooksett, NH show in April was a great success utilizing both end loops and seven straight modules for a forty-foot layout, which was larger than last years. That show seems to be a good fit for us and I think we should continue to support it.

I have been looking into locations where we can meet and have found some in our local area. The Nashua meeting is just a start. I have also been in contact with the Pepperell Siding Model Railroad Club in Pepperell, Mass and the Bay State Club in Roslindale, Mass. Both have offered their clubhouses as a meeting place for Northeast Ntrak. I'm sure there are other areas where we can meet as well. The next logical question then is, do we want to try and find a "home"? It would be nice to have a place to set up modules in between shows for the purpose of working on modules and even having an operating session.

I think that with the right encouragement and mentoring, we will see a new wave of modules from our newer members. Periodic work sessions at various members' homes will help in this regard.

The annual meeting and cookout will be on Saturday June 28<sup>th</sup> at Rand Hoven's house. I encourage all members and spouses to attend. It should be a great time! Also, I'd like to request that we all try to have our dues renewals with us to give to Chuck Tremblay at the meeting. It really is a lot easier to get it taken care of early so we can send the info into National. We don't want to have to track everyone down in September!

I want to thank everyone for their support and ideas over the past couple of years. I think the club is back on track and we're headed in the right direction now! Lets keep the momentum going and help new members with building their modules and helping them in general. Thanks! Ron.

## Membership Dues

**\$20.00 due by August 1st, 2003**

**Let's try to have our  
membership dues renewal  
check with us at the annual  
meeting or sent into Chuck on  
time so we won' have to chase  
straggler's or have problems  
with your renewal at National.**

## NEW ENGLAND RAILFAN TIMETABLE: CSX

TRANSPORTATION: Eastern New York and New England Routes, Timetable #1, Effective June 1, 2002. Oxford Junction Press, Oxford, MA, 2002. *Review by D. Pawling, Sr.*

Here is a real service to rail fans ... and to modeler who on occasion get out on PUBLIC PROPERTY to observe rail activity firsthand (notebook, camera and scanner recommended).

I have just begun exploring this 240-page "spiral-bound" book. Its contents include the system map, radio frequencies, condensed loco roster, interchange points, description of major routes, trackage rights, train symbols and routes by service types, an index to and description of railfanning locations, Subdivision station and schedule tables and illustrated NORAC signal rules.

CSX owns 39 Subdivisions (SD's) and Industrial Trackage and has trackage rights on 11 passenger (AMTRAK and commuter) railroads in the area reported. Station lists and schedules are provided for each listed

## ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The annual meeting/picnic will be held at Rand Hoven's house at 103 North Street, Tewksbury on Saturday June 28th, and **noon**. We will have the business meeting and election of officers followed by a cookout. Please bring any thoughts on how to improve the club, to the meeting. Directions on page two.

Subdivision or Industrial Trackage.

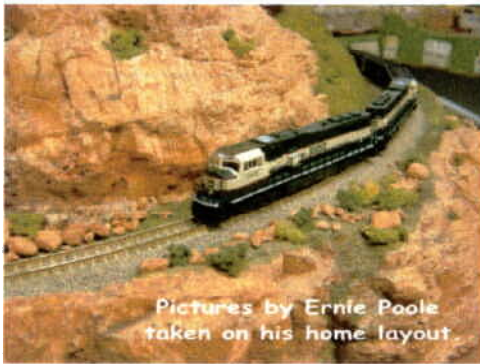
The station lists show track schematics, numbers of tracks, sidings and junctions; mile posts for road, river, etc. crossings, stations, train control points (CP's), signals and detection equipment; maximum speed zones for passenger and freight trains; general and specific/local operating rules, and radio frequencies. Corresponding tables for each opposing direction show train numbers and scheduled times.

If you are interested in the number of trains and their type that pass a certain location, it is all here. You don't have to cross-reference commuter and AMTRAK schedules and guess about CSX. There is an exception: to find the train number for the North Shore Limited, I had to look it up on the AMTRAK schedule, which I happened to have. This brings up another point -- ALL schedules are subject to change, forget delays and mishaps.

I have taken AMTRAK from Boston via Springfield to NYC several times with various rail, road and topographic maps to enhance my pleasures as a riding rail fan. Once, while passing at a height above the Quabog (River) Wildlife Management Area, I could see beaver-felled trees with the chips scattered about, two such trees on the ground and a third hung-up on another tree (Do beavers get frustrated, I wondered?). Another time, the cafe car attendant wondered aloud why anyone would spend an extra two hours on a train to NYC when the shore route got there faster. My answer -- "It's a scenic route." And one could hear the engine struggling up-grade and see the train making meets with opposing trains. It is a tough, winding cross-mountain route.

This book has already increased my pleasures, enhanced my memories and challenged me to explore further. The Boston (to Springfield) SD is part of the late-lamented Boston and Albany (B&A) RR. At Newtonville (near Dan, Jr's home) the maximum speed for passenger trains is 60 mph and for freights, 50 mph. Headlights must be dimmed day and night on all trains and lead engines between MP0.5 (South Station) and MP10.75 (Mass. Turnpike Bridge) except when visibility is poor. The Sudbury River is crossed twice and the Quabog 6 times.

Winterfest attendees have some familiarity with rail facilities in the Springfield area, which is on the east end of the CSX Berkshire SD (old B&A to Selkirk, NY). (cont page 2)



Pictures by Ernie Poole taken on his home layout

### **Putting the Kato SD-70MAC into Service by Ernie Poole**

Kato's new SD-70MAC is a great model, even by today's exacting standards. It is available in several colorful and prototypical color schemes. The plastic shell, walkways, and railings are very well detailed. The body actually snaps into the top of the fuel tank at four locations to secure the shell to the mechanism. The model also features working ditch lights above the front walkway. A bright white LED illuminates the headlight, number boards with pre-printed numbers, as well as the ditch lights.

The mechanism is the now familiar vertical split frame, with a circuit board on top for the headlights. If you're a DCC user, Digitrax makes two different 'drop in' decoders that will work. The DN144K, designed for the C44-9, works fine, but does not have white LED's. The later DN163K1A has more features and white LED's. I did not find a Lenz 'plug and play' decoder for this unit.

The big trick for this model is fitting Micro-Trains couplers. There is no 'right' conversion on a card like we are used to. A very good result though, is readily possible. After some false starts, and after consulting with Joe D'Amato at Micro-trains, here is the answer. Use the coupler box from the 2004 card, and the coupler assembly from the 1015 card. This is a perfect marriage, and the result exactly matches the height gauge and other truck mounted Micro-Trains couplers.

So, here we are, ready to highball. Ease off the service brake, notch up the throttle, and enjoy. In model railroading, this is good as it gets. Hey, I remember rubber band drive loco's, but that, well that's a whole other story.



*As you can see from these two pictures the real trains have the same problems we modelers do when the switch is not fully thrown. Picture below shows the switch condition as the train went through. This could never happen on an Ntrak layout!*



*(Book Review cont from page 1)*

Just west of the Springfield yard and passenger station one leg of a wye connects to the northbound Springfield Terminal RR, the second leg connects to the southbound AMTRAK Hartford line. The base of the wye connects the two north-south lines. CSX? It drives two tracks through the apex of the triangle across the base line and then across the Connecticut River Bridge. You think this is crazy? Way back when the New Haven RR ran trains up the river past Springfield, they would use the wye to back into the station and use the wye to get out. It was confusing to a little kid - weren't trains supposed to go straight ahead all of the time? Crazyness still exists on this line at Palmer, but that's another story.

Maximum speed for freight and passenger through Springfield and across the river is 20 mph; in the yard near the Eastern States area, the maximum speed is 40 mph. Note #12 for the Berkshire SD has rules for the use of pusher engines between MP's 123 and 147; the RR crosses the Westfield River 21 times in that distance.

It's all here and probably more than we need to know. Nonetheless, I suspect that I will be picking this book up from time-to-time to explore another subdivision from my armchair and look for another place to watch trains and perhaps take some pictures.

Author/publisher Joshua A. Moldover has the Guilford System in print; New England Short Lines will follow. His e-mail is [info@oxfordjunction.8m.com](mailto:info@oxfordjunction.8m.com) and the website is [www.oxfordjunction.8m.com](http://www.oxfordjunction.8m.com). Prices are about \$25.00.



**New club shirt: by Dan Pawling**

The new logo for the monogram is larger, clearer from a distance, and visually more exciting. I am hopeful from the audience's point of view that this helps the club to appear more active, more approachable, and more like an exciting club that one would want to consider membership. This does not exclude us from the need to build great modules but at a show it will give a great appearance. I have found enthusiasm for the new Logo.

The shirt I picked with long sleeve has a 5 OZ. fabric and its 60/40 blend of cotton/poly, easy to care for and live a long life. To maintain this kind of shirt for a long life I wash it and remove as soon as it is done and put in on a plastic hanger. After wearing the blue shirt to the Hookset show I realized that it would be good to add a short sleeve of the same version to the order form. This is a lighter shirt with a 4.3 OZ. fabric 60/40 cotton/poly blend.

The polo shirt biggest difference is the color. I would have chosen a light blue but they had nothing. With two types of short sleeve shirts you can choose which you like best. The pricing is based on a minim order of 40 shirts if it drops much below that there may be a slightly extra cost. I am looking to finalize the order by the annual meeting so that we can have the shirts for the new season. So if you intend to order please get your orders in at the meeting or in mail in before that date.

### **Directions to Annual Business Meeting and Cookout:**

**From I-93** - Take the Dascomb Rd exit and head toward Tewksbury. After passing the cemetery on the right take your next right, North Street, at blinking light. It is the first house on the right after you pass Patten Green Condo.

**From Rt 38** -

**(heading east from I-495)**

At the center of Tewksbury, Mobil Gas station on left turn left onto North Street **(heading west from Rt 128)**

At the center of Tewksbury, Mobil Gas station on right turn right onto North Street.

Once on North Street go through blinking light. It is the first house on the right after you pass Patten Green Condo.