

President's Message



The new season is upon us. We are doing a few more shows this year and a few new ones. At the annual meeting we discussed the show schedule. There were a few conflicts with other shows, so we chose the show that would give us the most exposure. We cannot do every show, but we try. Last year there were a few shows that we did not do. Usually the Concord, NH show is our first show of the year, but the information on the show was not available at the time of our meeting. The first show of the year will be Northshore Model Railroad Club in Wakefield. There are new dates for some of the shows. A list of the shows will be in this newsletter.

What do you do if you have a 40 thousand feet of a hall to use? Build the World Record Layout in it! The layout was 144ft by 288ft. 520 modules in it. The convention in Chantilly was great. Ernie, Roland, John, Frank, Bob and myself had a great time. The layout made the Springfield layout look like a postage stamp. The layout was divided into 8 sections. Half the layout was run on the Aristocraft Throttles while the other half was on DCC. The convention had over a thousand registered attendees. This was the first time that a national convention was combined by NTRAK and the N Scale Collector. Everyone had a great time. On Saturday night John had a small stroke, he flew home to Boston on Sunday. We all hope he will be fine. At the convention we had a few discussions about the club. WE NEED MORE ACTIVE MEMBERS! And we will be going back to the basics, I know some of you will not like it. At shows

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Northeast Ntrak, 41 Easy Street, Lowell, MA 01850-1731, Web Site - www.northeastntrak.org

Annual Business Meeting

by Bob Pawlak

About seventeen people attended the annual meeting at the Waushakum Live Steamers facility in Holliston, MA on June 27, 2004. The business meeting was chaired by club president, Mark Ferracane. The first item on the agenda was to discuss the show schedule for the coming season. Several dates and coordinator names needed to be resolved during the summer. The resulting schedule of shows and coordinators appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

There was considerable discussion about Winterfest 2005. In summary, collectively, the club would like Winterfest to continue, but realizes it may never be the same without Jim Whitehead as Chairman. Functions or quality may have to be sacrificed. We are committed to have a layout at the show. Mark has negotiated with the same hotel for a reduced rate of \$79 and has a guest speaker in mind. The key questions that need to be resolved are: which other people besides Jim Whitehead that have played key roles in past Winterfests will be willing to serve the club in the same capacity again in 2005; which roles will require substitute people; can we define and delegate numerous jobs that Jim did such that they might get accomplished by other people; which functions can be simplified or cut back because of lack of qualified volunteers; will other club members volunteer to fill the required roles; and how can it all mesh together to happen.

Chuck Tremblay submitted a written treasurers report that was read and accepted. Other old business included a formal thank you and round of applause to: Roland Kelley for doing a great job on producing the Newsletter and transitioning to e-newsletters this year; Ed Smith and Ernie Poole for a great job building seven starter modules this year; Ed Smith for maintaining the Club's web site and initiating e-registration for Winterfest this year; all show coordinators for their effort this year.

A few members had the new summer club shirts on (they looked great!) and Dan Pawling passed out order forms for those who wanted shirts.

Election of officers took about 45 seconds. Someone motioned to nominate the existing slate of all officers. The motion was seconded. No one nominated anyone else and no one volunteered to nominate himself for any

office. Therefore, the club officers for next year will be the same as they were this year. Someone made the side comment that if an officer didn't really want his job, it was up to him to find someone to take his place in advance of the meeting.

After the business meeting people bought and ate hot dogs, burgers, etc. and then took a train ride.

Schedule of Shows

Oct 23 Northshore Model RR Club,
American Civic Ctr., 467 Main St.,
Wakefield, MA
(Normal Layout)
Set-up 7am Show 9:30am to 3:30pm
Dan Pawling, 617-244-5261

Nov 7 Bedford Boomers, Bedford, NH
(type layout)
Set-up Show
Ron Wood, 603-889-0741

Nov 21 Mystic Valley RR Show,
Foxboro, MA
(Point to point w/end loops)
Set-up Show
?Coordinator?

Dec 11 & 12 Hub Division,
Marlboro HSchool, Rt 85, Marlboro, MA
(Normal Layout)
Set-up Show
?Coordinator?

Dec 18 & 19 Greenberg Show, Shriners
Auditorium, Wilmington, MA
(Normal Layout)
Set-up Sat 8am Show 10am to 4pm
Sun 9am 10am to 4pm
Dan Pawling, 617-244-5261

**Jan 28 to 30 Winterfest, Amherst
Railway Society,** Big "E" Exposition
Center, Springfield, MA
(Normal layout)
Set-up Fri Noon to 5pm, Sat 7am
Show 10am to 5pm on Sat and Sun
?Coordinator?

Re: Rich Old Farts: by Neal Camaby

I also notice a significant problem with younger members entering the hobby. However, I don't feel that the cost of the product is necessarily the issue. If you look at the clothes, computers, etc. that young people have, most of them appear to have enough money to start in this hobby.

I think it is more likely due to 3 other factors:

1). The prototype presence is far less obvious, which means that far fewer of us grow up near the tracks and, consequently, fall in love with a certain steam engine, diesel, paint scheme, etc. Also, as a hobby, model railroading in general is much less obvious than it used to be. I think the large shows with an N Trak presence and the World's Greatest Hobby campaign do a lot to offset that, but model railroading just isn't as wide spread. How many times at a show does someone come up to you and tell you about their parents' Lionel up in the attic? At one time, nearly everyone was exposed to trains, both through the prototype and the model.

To some extent, the vast popularity with Thomas may begin to have a positive result as those folks "graduate" to scale models.

2). The average youngster grows up on computer games, game bots, etc. Model railroading is largely perceived as boring in comparison. It tends not to provide instant gratification to a generation which has grown up hooked on that idea. This probably explains why r-t-r has exploded and kits have dropped. Super detailing has almost completely disappeared.

3). This is not an original idea, but rather one I think I saw in Model Railroader several years ago. The average person coming into this hobby does so as a child, but then "fades out" until after cars, family, career, and other needs are addressed. As time and disposable income become more available, many modelers become reacquainted with the hobby.

Many of us on the train show circuit have spent many hours discussing this over Saturday night suppers, and none of us are certain what the exact cause(s) is/are, but we are all agreed that this trend is a problem. Many of us also feel that without the introduction of DCC and much better quality models, this trend would be far worse than it is.

Annual Financial Report Northeast Ntrak

Period ending May 30, 2004

Income

Conventions (net of expenses)	\$635.71
Donation- Shows, Individuals	120.00
Annual dues	254.50
Interest	27.17
Uncategorized Inflows	<u>5.00</u>
Total Income	\$1,042.38

Expenses

Newsletter (Printing & Postage)	\$196.59
Office Expenses	379.20
P.O. Box and Mailings	148.00
Supplies	342.22
Uncategorized Outflows	<u>58.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$1,124.01

Loss for year <**\$81.63**>

Net Worth Statement as of May 30, 2004

Assets

Checking Account	\$ 97.03
Savings Account	<u>8,972.05</u>
Total Assets	\$9,069.08

Liabilities & Equity

Liabilities	\$ 0.00
Equity	<u>9,069.08</u>
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$9,069.08

Report submitted by **Chuck Tremblay**,
Treasurer.

Pop Quiz

From Ken Allen (and an old math text book)
Northern Virginia Ntrak

From 1912 to 1971, the **Milwaukee Road** had a train stop every 15 days in Dubuque, Iowa. Turing the same period, the same train also stopped in Des Moines every 9 days.

If on April 18, 1964, the train made a stop in Dubuque and also a stop in Des Moines, how many days would pass before the train again stopped in both cities on the same day?(Answer on page 4)

DCC Standards by Bob Gatland

I've gotten used to installing any brand of decoder I wish in my locomotives. I shop for the appropriate functions needed for the particular locomotive. It makes no sense to spend a lot of money for a decoder with functions that will never be used.

Recently I purchased an Atlas Baldwin VO-1000 diesel with a built in decoder. When I tried to program it with a four digit address, I was in for an unpleasant surprise. I couldn't do it with my Digitrax DT 400 throttle.

I assumed that the decoder would be one hundred percent compatible with any and all DCC systems as required by NMRA standards. That was not the case.

As Arthur Papayanopoulos pointed out, only basic decoders functions are required to meet these standards for compatibility. After a bit of experimenting on my program track, I found that I could assign two digit numbers, but my attempts to assign a four-digit address failed every time.

An e-mail to Atlas tech support came back with a reply telling me that I should use a Lenz system to set a four-digit address. Perhaps I will be able to get my desired address if I bring my loco to either the Atlas booth or the Lenz booth at the Chantilly convention.

By the way, I learned from Debbie Ames who handles Lenz products in this country that Lenz provides some of the components for the decoders used in this diesel, but somebody else is building the actual decoders.



This is getting started at a young age. Here Neil's son Norman is checking out the train before taking it out of the yard. No N Scale for him only the big ones he can ride on.



Annual Business Meeting



Report on the N Scale Convention Chantilly, VA



Neal working hard at the show, he did have some help from his son Norman.

First Place Award Winner for Mountain Modules



Bob Pawlak did it again with his great Bridge Module winning first place at the Chantilly, VA Convention.

scattered among the 9 different "Divisions" (multiple loops connected to a linear spine with transition modules). There were 479 modules with 78 scale miles of Red Line track! It took at least 2 hours to drive a train around the entire Red Line Route through all the modules. Half the Red Line Route was DCC Digitrax and the other half used Aristo throttles. There was also a separate 14'x18' Ntrak layout in the hotel lobby that served as a gathering place. In total there were 526 modules with 2336 feet. The United States record for "T" track layout was set.

John Dunne and Frank Dignan checking out the modules at the show.



Capital Limited '04 N Scale East Convention, Chantilly, VA by Bob Pawlak

The Northeast Ntrak Club was well represented at this show. Frank Dignan drove with John Dunne to help him set up his 20' straight cityscape. Roland Kelley drove with Ernie Poole to bring Roland's 8' carnival module and Ernie's one-track corner module. Mark Ferracane brought his 4' module and Bob Pawlak brought his 12' Bridges Canyon module. These modules were

The Northern VA Ntrak club members (yellow shirts) were everywhere like a swarm of worker bees and did a marvelous job: designing the layout, helping the set up, and wiring the Red Line; organizing multiple clinics, home layout tours, registration, model and module contests, the company store, live auction, Manufacturers Breakfast, etc.; and then helping with tear down until everyone was gone. (Continued page 4)



Bob Pawlak & Ernie Poole outside Northern Virginia Model Railroaders. HO Club layout at the refurbished rail road station.

John Dunne & Roland Kelley taken a rest after a busy morning of watching trains.



Newfoundland Railway Narrow Gauge by Roland Kelley

On my trip to Newfoundland in late June this summer I had the chance to visit the Railway Society of Newfoundland Museum in Humbermouth, Newfoundland. The building is a small restored railway station. They have a good selection of rolling stock in great condition. All the equipment is open for the visitor to hop on board. Following are some pictures of the equipment and a little history of the railroad.



Me at the controls of 931

ballast bed is sufficient. However there are drawbacks in the form of slower speeds and more frequent derailments. When the Newfoundland Railway system at Confederation with Canada in 1949, in order to fit the Island's narrow gauge track all rolling stock crossing to and from Newfoundland on the new railcar ferries had to have bogeys replaced on arrival at Port aux Basques.

The A. L. Blackman Syndicate of the USA began construction of the Newfoundland Railway on August 9, 1881 under the engineering direction of Mr. Boland. In 1890 a Scotsman, Robert Gillespie Reid with his partner Mr. Middleton, contracted to extend the line to Hall's Bay. The decision was then made to continue the line across the Island, which was completed in 1897, at a cost of \$11,644,692 or an average of \$21,250 per mile of track. The route followed was approximately that of the present Trans Canada Highway, and segments of the track bed can still be seen from that highway. The first regular express train left St. John's at 7:20 pm on Wednesday, June 29, 1898 on its 548 mile journey to Port aux Basques on the extreme southwest corner of the Island. At 10:45 pm on the night of June 30, 27 hours and 25 minutes after leaving St. John's the train arrived at its destination amid much excitement as the S.S. Bruce waited on the pier for the next leg of the journey, 90 miles across the Gulf of St. Lawrence to North Sydney, Nova Scotia.



Baldwin Steam Locomotive #593 (4-6-2) built Jan 1921 in Philadelphia, PA

The Railway was a critical part of Newfoundland's history from 1882 until 1988. It enabled Newfoundlanders to travel far and wide. It brought freight of all kinds, but most of all it proved that Newfoundland had truly entered an age of prosperity. The railway was originally called the "people's road" and was meant to last forever.



GM 660 C-C, 1200 hp, Model 567, blt 1956

The cost of construction of the Railway had been excessive for the small population of Newfoundland with its very limited resources, even though all possible measures in the interest of economy had been used. One such economy measure which was perhaps to create more problems than it solved was the decision to use narrow gauge track.

Narrow gauge has the advantage of cheapness in construction because it can negotiate sharper turns and maintenance costs are lower because a narrower



Push Plow 3460 one of many plows used to clear the snow sometime higher than the train.

Unfortunately, the high cost of maintaining the service and the slowness of the trains (22 hours from St. John's to Port aux Basques - 12 hours by car) ultimately forced the shutdown of the rail service in 1988. It was replaced by bus service. The last regularly scheduled train made its journey 90 years later, on September 30, 1988, headed by diesel locomotive 917.

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IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A MODULE, you will be required to help out setting up or breaking down the layout if you plan to Run a Train.

Finally, we are looking for help with planning of Winterfest 2005.

Best for a fast recovery for John Dunne.

We want to wish John Dunne a fast recovery for the mild stroke suffered at the Chantilly Convention. It was the low point for everyone from the Northeast Ntrak group at the convention. He is having problems with the use of his right hand and speech. The doctors feel he should regain their use with time. While in the New England Medical Center they found that John had a hole in his heart. They sent him home while they decide what to do. We understand from his wife Alice that he is doing well. If you would like to send him a card his address is:

John Dunne
715 North St,
Bridgewater, MA 02324

(continued from page 3)

The good news is that Bridges Canyon won First Prize in the "mountainous" module category (urban and industrial were the other 2 module categories). The bad news is that John Dunne suffered a stroke. Frank drove him to the airport early Sunday morning and then packed John's van and drove it home. In closing I would like to say that the combined N Scale and N Scale Collectors Convention was a great success. The registered attendance for both was over 1200 N Scalers. The NMRA National Convention has about 2500 attendees. Well done N Scale.

Quiz Answer (page 2) 45 days.