

President's Message



Another season has closed. We had our annual meeting at Bob Pawlaks home on May 22. We had a good turn-out. At the meeting we discussed a number of topics. First we discussed the shows for the upcoming season. We did 12 shows last year, we are going to do the same number this year. We have dropped the Wakefield show and picked up 3 NEW shows. The new shows are : August 27th and 28th at the Shriners Auditorium , September 28th the Perrereil Siding show and October 16th in York, Maine. A schedule of the shows will be in this newsletter. We would like to get feedback on what shows members can do. Please look at list and let me know what shows you would be interested in doing. It will be just a gauge to see what we can get for a particular show. This **IS NOT a FIRM** commitment. We would also like people to **volunteer for show coordinators**. Also, Show coordinators will be responsible for the success of the show. Another project in the works is a club car. Which we have been talking about for a while. We are thinking of doing a **3 bay ACF Hopper**. The cars will be sold in **2 packs**. **Club members will get them at our cost**. There is a committee working on getting these cars done. The cars will retail for about \$50.00 for a 2 pack. If sales do not go well we will sell them in singles. Lets all hope we can sell them out and do a 2nd run. The cars will have the **Winterfest** logo and the **Northeast NTRAK** logos. If anyone has ideas for these cars please let me know. We would be looking at a delivery of the cars around March. The cars will be **Micro-Trains**, since **they are the most collectable**. The N-Scale Collector And Micro-Trains will give us **FREE** advertising for the month after the cars are shipped. More details to follow. We had our election of club officers, the only change is for the Vice-President, Dan Pawling has stepped down and Dennis Yip is now Vice President. **Congratulations Dennis**. We will be asking for more participation of club members. For the club to grow we need new members and modules. There were a few members last year who got burned out, I was one of them. If you have not paid your dues yet, **PLEASE DO IT NOW!**
Have a great and safe summer!!!

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

Editors Note

Two things I would like to bring to your attention. The first is that we need articles for the Newsletter. For a few years it was working well with articles coming in from Bob Gatland, Bob Pawlak, Dan Pawling, Sr and some of the Show Coordinators. In the past few months it seems everyone has stopped submitting articles at the same time. Some members even submitted one time articles about train trips taken. We need articles to keep the Newsletter going. Please work on some articles this summer and send them in to me so we can have a good start to the Newsletter in September.

Need the articles for the June issue submitted by May 20. The issue will be late as I will be in China return May 23rd. I will try to mail it out by June 2nd. The June issue will be the last issue until September.

Work Night at Dan Pawlings



On April 17th pictured above is John Consigli, Mark Ferracane and Dan Pawling in Dan's basement. The module is John and Steven Consigli's. We laid roadbed and track on the module. We also did some wiring. Dan has been a big help in providing a place for club members to come and work on modules. Thanks Dan for your generosity and hospitality in offering your basement for this use. A potential new member David Denton showed up at the workshop with his wife. Thanks. Ron

BITES FROM BIG APPLE

by D. Pawling, Sr.

Sometimes it would be great if things "dumbed-down" for while. Not so in NYC - never happen. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), the umbrella agency for NYC Transit, Bridges and Tunnels, the Long Island RR (LIRR) and MetroNorth Commuter lines owns the sub-surface, open-air railyards west of Penn Station. This is where Amtrak and NJ Transit run through to the Hudson River tunnels and where the LIRR reverses and stores its commuter trains. 13 Acres in mid-town Manhattan---air rights should fetch a good price (\$950 million was one estimate). The NY Jets, presently sharing a stadium with the NY Giants in the NJ Meadowlands, want to build a stadium over the yards.

The governor and the mayor state that the stadium is crucial for the City's bid for an NYC 2012 Olympics. The gov and the mayor each appoint members of the MTA Board. Guess what? The Board voted to accept the low bid of \$250 million for the air rights, the balance of development to be assumed by the citizenry, but not without outcry and multiple lawsuits filed from different quarters. This in a climate of recent increases in fares and tolls and decreased services and funding for transportation from the city and the state. And, the gov and the mayor support the extension (I almost said improvement) of the 42d St cross-town subway to serve the Javitts Civic Center and the new stadium.

To create more discussion, a former colleague has resurrected a plan to turn 42d St into a light rail corridor without motor vehicles from river to river and along the edges to serve any proposed developments. Initial estimate - lower than extending the subway. There may be some federal pork on the way for the badly needed 2nd Ave. subway and for preliminary engineering for a trans-Hudson rail freight tunnel. Other transit plans that were mentioned previously are quiet at the moment. However, in NYC it is a political year 24/7/365 and the many candidates for office are desperate to show their charisma and vision, Stay tuned!

How I won the Master Model Builders Award by Peter Wisniewski



*1:6 scale 1994 Harley Davidson FLSTF Fat Boy. Kit was made by Tamiya.
Time to complete: 4 months.*

I like models of Harley Davidson motorcycles because they are legendary American motorcycles and also because they have lots of chromed parts. I really like their shiny, bright and clean look!

First time I became aware of this model was in classified ads section of a US modeling magazine. That was about 5 years ago. The ad stated that this model was unavailable in the USA, but they would be able to provide this model for a higher than usual price. At that time I did my own research on the Internet and I found it available on the Hobby Link Japan website. So, I ordered it directly from HLJ.

When I received it I was amazed at the high quality of all the parts and of its design. I have built several Harley models (by manufacturers other than Tamiya) but none of them matched the quality and detail of this kit! This is the first Tamiya model motorcycle kit I have ever built.

I really appreciate the fact the frame, kick stand and the handle bars are made of metal. The model is quite large and heavy but the metal parts make it quite strong, so there is no problem with bent or warped parts. That is very important for a model of this size.

One of my other hobbies is electronics. Since this model was so large, I decided to install lights in it. Before I assembled the model I planned the installation of all the wiring, switches lights and a battery. I decided to use various color LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes) instead of light bulbs because

they will never burn out or need to be replaced. They also use less power than light bulbs. Most of my model's wiring is installed just as the wiring is on a real bike, so even the wires look realistic. I also decided that for realism, I would place my batteries (three mini 1.5V watch cells) inside the model's battery, which is placed under the seat. So, the electricity really comes from the model's battery! Also, since the frame is metal, I used it as the electric ground (again, just like on the real bike).

I installed a micro-switch in the model's master cylinder. That is activated by the brake pedal and it illuminates the brake light in the rear of the bike. As for the headlight switch - I had build one as I couldn't find a switch which would work. I used pieces of styrene plastic and brass rod, wire and tubes to make a switch which would activate the lights when it was turned. As it is turned on, it powers the headlight and taillight LED and three warning lights LEDs on the console.

As for the rest of the construction, just like in a typical Tamiya model, most parts fit perfectly. The only correction I had to make was to relocate the fuel shut-off valve which was on the wrong end of the fuel tank. Also, since this model is so heavy, I decided to strengthen the plastic front forks. I did that by gluing brass tubes into the hollow plastic parts of the forks.

While I didn't match the model's paint exactly to a real Harley, I tried to make it close to one of my favorite colors - light metallic turquoise and white. I've been told that it is a very close match.

This model also came with an extensive array of decals, but there were few missing and one inaccuracy. Since I can print my own decals (using an Alps printer), I decided to supplement the kits decals and fix the inaccurate decal.

So, I printed the missing Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) to be applied to the frame. Next was the word "CHOKE" to be placed on the choke pull knob. Next, even though they are almost too small to read, I printed legends for all the switches on the handle bars. And I reprinted the warning lights legends "OIL", "NEUTRAL" and "HI BEAM".

The inaccurate decal was for one of the engine's side covers. I redesigned it to look more accurate and printed it using silver ink on a very shiny (mirror-like) piece of plastic sticker. That almost perfectly simulates the metal cover plate on the real

bike. This model took me 4 months to complete (average of 2 hours per day) was a pleasure to build!

I entered my model in 2005 TamiyaCON contest. It was the first time that I've attended this contest. I was very pleased to win the 1st place in the 1:6 motorcycles category. But getting the Master Modeler award was a total surprise to me! I feel very honored to be chosen for this award. My thanks to Mr. Tamiya and all the Tamiya, Inc. employees who made my TamiyaCON experience very pleasant.

Annual Meeting and Cookout, May 22, 2005 by Bob Pawlak

Bob hosted the annual meeting and cookout for the first time at his house for 17 attendees starting at 1:00 P.M. The weather was 53°, overcast, and threatening rain so the event was held mostly indoors except while grilling the marinated chicken and steak tips. Jim Muller volunteered to take over the brunt of the grilling duties (thanks again Jim) while Bob tried to entice people standing around on the patio to have a drink and dig into chips and salsa, chips and dip, crackers and cheese, and a veggies tray. Of course the propane tank went dry half way through the grilling exercise and sent Bob scurrying for a wrench and spare tank. Jim Whitehead began to take some pictures while the prevailing wind and increasing smoke from the grill eventually forced everyone back into the house.

The rest of the main course consisted of two types of potato salad, two types of tossed salad, fruit salad, French bread, and butter. Desserts included homemade chocolate mousse cake, citrus cheesecake, carrot cake, apricot Linzer torte, pecan pie squares, and fruit cookies.

The business meeting was chaired
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club President Mark Ferracane. Chuck Tremblay gave the treasurer's report which was mostly good news. Winterfest 2005 came out a few hundred dollars ahead. There were fewer expenses this year compared with major DCC system purchases during the past few years, and the bottom line was that there were adequate funds to be able to do a special run club car.

The first order of business was extensive discussion of the train show schedule for the coming year. A total of 12 train shows were accomplished in the 2004-2005 season. Some think this is too many and show coordinators have complained that it is difficult to muster enough people to do a show, particularly a rectangular layout requiring 4 corners. In some cases, only a few people are bringing modules and coming to do a small linear layout show. Dan Pawling has been keeping track of who has participated at which shows during the year and discussed these statistics. The various trade offs of trying to do several shows to get exposure to attract new members versus which shows are best for attracting new members versus burnout of senior members who want to cut back their participation versus how best to get new, finished modules out of the pipeline quickly were batted about. The Wakefield show was dropped from the schedule this year primarily because of the poor layout location assignment relative to the rest of the show and the resulting minimal exposure to the public. It was suggested that the proposed list of 12 shows for the 2005-2006 season be listed in the next newsletter and all members be asked to estimate which of these shows they anticipate attending so as to help the planning process.

There was much discussion about doing a special run club car. Mark brought several examples of club cars and much information about doing a Micro-Trains (MT) car

Dennis Yip Elected VP



and various other options. The general consensus seemed to be moving toward a 2-pack of 3-bay MT hopper cars. The minimum run MT will do is 300 cars, but they will do 150 2-packs with 2 different road numbers. This approach tends to reduce the risk of selling all the cars and the smaller run makes the offering more valuable from a collector's point of view. The hard part seems to be to design and then prepare attractive graphics that will entice people to buy the special run offering. A herald such as "Northeast Ntrak Hosts Winterfest" with a touch of graffiti would target four potential markets simultaneously. A committee of Mark Ferracane, Dan Pawling, Peter Wisniewski, and Dennis Yip was formed to push this agenda item toward closure. If you have any ideas that might help, please contact one of the committee members.

Mark suggested that some method be devised to inspect new modules after track and wiring is completed and again after scenery is completed. He suggested the inspection process be extended to existing modules to improve their quality and ensure their compliance with N-Trak standards. He suggested possible use of the "Show-Ready Certification" process used at the Chantilly show last July. Ernie Poole reminded everyone that he had custody of the standard N-Trak wiring tester that might be helpful. (*continued page 4*)

Children's Hospital Show by Bob Pawlak

The 7th annual Children's Hospital Train Show was held May 12, 2005 from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Dan Pawling brought the club's pair of end loops, Rand Hoven brought his 4' straight module with Mountain Division, and Bob Pawlak brought his 12' straight Bridges Canyon module to form a 28' linear layout. John Consigli and his son Steven, Mark Ferracane, and Steve Cappers came to help set up, run trains, and interface with the public. Equipment was unloaded through the front door, across the main lobby, and up one floor of the hospital to the Entertainment Center before 7:00 AM and trains were running before 9:00 AM.

The Red Line/Blue Line and Yellow Line/Green Line loops were originally set up using DC power and then transitioned to an all-DCC powered layout using the same DCC unit Bob uses to power the private track of Bridges Canyon. The end loop yards and the Mountain Division passing siding on Bridges Canyon were used to help load and unload trains for operation of the layout. The linear layout on standard height legs seemed less conducive to the kids running their own trains with radio-controlled throttles than the oval layout on shorter legs used last year.

It seemed that there were more children visitors and more adult questions this year as compared with last year. The kids came in a steady stream of wagon-like beds, wheel chairs, crutches, or on the arm of an accompanying adult. The father of one youngster about 5 years old said to me, "He really likes trains." I knew he was right because the youngster had Thomas the Tank Engine with him in his bed.

Steven provided limitless energy and lots of smiles while running trains on the main loops and playing "tricks" for the kids by magically swapping trains using the hidden passing siding on the lower level of Bridges Canyon. Rand Hoven went off for a while to donate a pint of blood to help the cause. Hopefully, the children and adult visitors each had at least a few minutes of pleasure to brighten their day because of the show.

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Vice President Dan Pawling nominated Dennis Yip to be Vice President in the coming season. There were no other nominations or volunteers for the VP job so Dennis was elected. There were no nominations or other volunteers for the offices of President or Treasurer. Mark Ferracane and Chuck Tremblay agreed to serve in these positions for another year, so they were re-elected. Roland Kelley agreed to continue as editor of the newsletter and Bob Pawlak agreed to serve as Chairman of Winterfest 2006 and continue as Membership Chairman again this year.

The meeting was adjourned about 4:20 P.M. and people were invited to take a "doggie bag" home. Those who were not able to attend the meeting this year are strongly encouraged to participate next year, regardless of the date or the weather.

British Railroading By D. Pawling, Sr.

My local news shop carries several hundred domestic and international magazines, including model and prototype railroading magazines from the US and Britain. I have picked up copies of one British modelling magazine for several months now. The different look of UK rail equipment is the first thing that struck my eye. Then, later, the naming of procedures and things. I discovered that there are more differences in names between the UK and the US than there are similarities -- with one great exception -- in both countries the steam engines had a tender behind.

Show Schedule for 2005 - 2006

August 27 & 28 Greenberg Show Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

September 18 Old Colony Show Holiday Inn Taunton, MA

September 28 Pepperell Siding Show Hollis, NH

October 16 York, Maine

November 6 Bedford Boomers Bedford, NH

December 17 & 18 Greenberg Show Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

January 27 to 29 WINTERFEST 2006 Big "E" W.Springfield, MA

February 18 & 19 Museum of Our National Heritage Lexington, MA

February 26 Mystic Valley Show Foxboro, MA

April 1 & 2 Greenberg Show Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

April 23 Hooksett Lyons Club Hooksett, NH

May 11 Children's Hospital Boston, MA

Above is the proposed show schedule of 12 shows for the 2005-2006 season it is requested that all members estimate which of these shows they anticipate attending so as to help the planning process. Please let Mark know so he can plan.

The Annual Business Meeting & Cookout



Jim Muller at the grill cooking while other members look on.



VP Dennis Yip explaining his program as our clubs new Vice President to Dick & Chuck.



This is the annual business meeting in progress, chaired by President Mark Ferracane.



Charlie & Mark enjoying the cookout.

All photo's supplied by Jim Whitehead.