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President's Message



It has come time to raise our dues. We will have to pay \$200 next time you pay dues. (You may pay monthly). We need the extra money to be able to purchase the motor home and trailer to go to the shows in style. The motor home will sleep 12 and will have a Jacuzzi and Tennis court. By the way, April Fool!!!!

Since I am now working at a new job, I am not able to get to all the shows. I hope to be able to get the weekend off for the Wilmington show. Our next two show after this is Hooksett , NH and Children's Hospital. Note that the **Hooksett** show is on the **30th**, not the **23rd**.

The annual meeting date and location will be announced in the next newsletter.

We are invited to participate a number of shows each year, we only choose shows that are beneficial to us. The weekend of 11th and 12th there was a 2 day show in New Hampshire. Ron Wood and Mike Walker attended the show and it was a G-Gauge show. It was nice for someone to check out the show before we committed to it. Last year I attended a show and it was decided to not do this show. It is advisable for us to check out shows before we put them on our schedule. If you have any suggestions for a show, let us know at the meeting,

Til next month
Mark

Show Schedule for 2005 – 2006

April 1 & 2 Greenberg Show, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA
Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM
Sun 10PM to 4PM

Coordinator: **Dan Pawling - 617-244-5261**

April 12 Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Dr, Boston, MA
Set-up before 7am Show 9am to 3pm
Coordinator: **Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485**

April 30 Hooksett Lyons Club, Hooksett Memorial School, Hooksett, NH
Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm
Coordinator: **Ron Wood - 603-206-5572**

Schedule Change for Children's Hospital Show by Bob Pawlak

The Children's Hospital show will take place on **Wednesday, April 12, 2006 from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.** The hospital likes to have us finish unloading for set up before 7 A.M. and out and gone before 4 P.M. to minimize traffic congestion at the front door.

The planned layout will consist of at least Bridges Canyon (12' straight) and the two end loops (each 6') on short legs (30" to rail heads). Hopefully, we will also have another two 4' straights and one 3' corner all with Mountain Division track on short legs to make an "L" shaped layout. Early Wednesday in town is a difficult show time and place for many members so we will need all the help we can muster for set up, take down, and running trains at this show. If you can help for even a few hours, please call Bob Pawlak, show coordinator, at 781-862-2485.

June 24th & 25th, 2006 Invitational Show with Brooklyn Ntrak

Northeast Ntrak members are invited to Brooklyn Ntrak's annual Hangar Show at the historic Floyd Bennett Field.

Bring your trains, Bring your modules, Bring your family & have some fun **Great Trains, Vintage Planes, & Bus Road-ee** Also Vintage City Busses on display courtesy of the New York Transit Museum.

For information call 718 646 6509 or email Charlie D'Avanzo at kahluadee@msn.com

Dan Pawling, JR. is planning to take an end loop and transition corner and possibly more. John Dunne thought he could do it I am not sure what he will bring. Daniel F Pawling, SR. is going to bring his trains and help. Is there any one else out there who would like a change of scenery? Please give **Dan Pawling, JR.**, a call on his cell phone at **781-801-6480** and let's coordinate travel plans, rooms and eating together.

Shanghai's Maglev Train *by Roland Kelley*



This year in place of going to Winterfest I went to Shanghai, China for a week and visited with friends. One of the highlights of the trip was a ride on Shanghai's Maglev (magnetic levitation) train, the world's fastest, most futuristic passenger line. It takes eight minutes to take you from the airport to a terminal for the Metro. It was a very smooth ride and you could not tell you were traveling at 301 kph.

Here are is some backround on the train from an article in the Wall Street Journal, Asian Edition. It's been an astonishing seven decades since the invention of the process that was finally put to a test. The inaugural run was in February 2003, when Premier Zhu Rongji took an inaugural ride with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, which helped fund and build this line.

Local media called them "joyrides," these series of trial runs to the international airport in [Pudong](#), across the river from Shanghai proper.

The sleek train as, with a breathtaking whoosh, it rockets to 300 kilometers per hour in two minutes flat. Overhead, like a giant scoreboard, an LED blinks out our record-breaking progress till it top 430 kph. Indeed, the Maglev is faster than any speeding locomotive precisely because it's as much like a plane as any railroad we've known.

True, the train has no wings, but no wheels or engine, either. Transrapid, the German firm that developed the system, describes the Maglev as "the first fundamental innovation in the field of railway technology since the invention of the railway." Magnets are the attraction. First, powerful magnets lift the entire train about 10 millimeters above the special track, called a guideway, since it mainly directs the passage of the train. Other magnets provide propulsion, and braking, and the speeds - up to 500 kph in test runs; a good 60 percent faster than the renowned Bullet Trains - are attained largely due to the reduction of friction.

Is there a need for such speed? Certainly not on such a short sprint, barely 30 kilometers from the subway in Pudong to the airport. And not at the cost, note critics. The Pudong line, is unlikely to ever recoup its \$1.2 billion investment. A high-speed link between Beijing and Shanghai, among several additional Chinese lines under consideration, might cost \$22-30 billion, or nearly as much as China intends to invest in all rail infrastructure

nationwide in its current five-year plan.

Still, critics miss the point. And the thrill. The Maglev isn't about getting from point A to B in Pudong. Rather, it's the ride, a glorious glide, from the past to the future. And where this new train might take us, not simply San Francisco to Los Angeles, say, in less than two hours, but in a flash, from the mundane motion of nowadays to the hyper-speeds of Tomorrowland.

That's the rush I feel stepping aboard Shanghai's sleekly-contoured train, a feeling of futuristic fervor mixed with nostalgia for all those comics and sci-fi novels from boyhood. There is good reason, since the Maglev's technology is actually rather dated. German inventors patented the basic system way back before World War II. That's another point of critics. In the ensuing seven decades, magnetic levitation trains haven't moved much closer to reality. A test track in northern German was built nearly 20 years ago, but even the Germans have shied away from launching a commercial magnetic levitation line because of the cost. "The huge investment just doesn't make sense in a country like Germany, with a well-developed rail system," concedes Dr. Wolfgang Rohr, German Consul General in Shanghai.

"But for countries like China - or the United States or Australia - they could jump to this new technology which has huge potential." He points out that the Maglev is pollution-free, with no exhaust. "In Germany, we've been having endless discussions about this," notes Eckhard Schneider, a German tourist riding the Shanghai Maglev over the holidays. "Here, in China, they just do it!" Adds companion Ulli Schonart: "They built this all in less than two years. Amazing! In two years in Germany, we'd just have a plan for the evacuation of the birds along the way."

Long hopelessly ahead-of-its time, the Maglev could finally come-a-time. Germany may soon commit to its own line, possibly from Dortmund to Düsseldorf in time for the 2006 World Cup, or a Munich airport express. Meanwhile, in the United States, a \$1 billion-funded US pilot project has settled on two finalists: a 47-mile Pittsburgh system and a 40-mile track linking Baltimore and Washington, DC. On the other side of the country, Maglev-backers are lobbying congress to fund a 92-mile circuit between three Southern California airports that could be expanded to a 273-mile web designed to relieve the region's gridlock. The US proposals would all utilize independently-patented American Maglev technology.

All that is a big if, though. For now, Shanghai is the first out of the tracks and I give it two humbs-up .

Ringling Transformed

By Tony Kiss, Citizen Times, Entertainment Editor

published: February 3, 2006 6:00 am

GREENVILLE, S.C. - Nothing is forever, and that includes one of America's most beloved entertainment icons. So expect some stunning changes at the 136th annual Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey show, playing through Sunday at the Bi-Lo Center in Greenville, S.C.

The beloved Ringling has been given a major makeover. Gone are the fabled three rings, the traditional ringmaster, some of the classic acts long associated with the show and much of the razzle dazzle that came with having a trio of acts performing at the same time.

The new Ringling features a "songstress" as the central figure, a storyline about a family living out its circus dreams, a huge circular TV screen, more audience interactivity and the feeling that there are fewer performers in this fast-paced and shorter show.

This is either brilliance on the part of owners Feld Entertainment, a bid to remake the show for a 21st century audience hooked on video games and the Internet. Or it's a jumbo-sized blunder (think New Coke). It's probably really too early to say, as Ringling 136 only opened its two-year tour Jan. 4 in Tampa, Fla.

It's worth noting that Feld saved the fading Ringling circus, purchasing the production in 1967. These are the biggest change since Ringling moved from tents to arenas in the mid-1950s.

Opening night at Bi-Lo was not sold out, even with some of the arena draped to create a more theater-like atmosphere. And many prime seats were empty, being extremely pricey. Other tickets are less expensive.

The curious: Ringling has provided almost no media publicity materials, making it difficult to report on the show. And there were no programs for purchase on Wednesday.

The good: Young circus songstress Jennifer Fuentes (an "American Idol" contestant) is a terrific singer and beautiful to behold. That big circular TV provides a great view even for the most distant seats. Best acts including the thundering Cossack horsemen, an Asian swing team, a cute animal routine with cats, dogs and birds, a foot-looping routine (an aerialist walks upside down across a suspended wire in one of the few really risky elements), and the Wheel of Death in which up to seven mini-motorcycles roar around a globe cage in a dizzying frenzy.

The bad: Too often the floor looked empty with no rings to fill it up. The storyline is lame for grown-ups. There was no lion or tiger taming, true flying trapeze, and the eight elephants didn't do much. The TV screen played silly pre-recorded bits. Bottom line: adding the fictional "circus family" and the TV bits made it hard to say how much of the show was real, and what is just well-rehearsed performance.

Bottom line: It's not your father's circus anymore. But the show isn't really for adults or traditionalists. Children will enjoy it, never knowing what it used to be.

Coming & Going Story & Photos by Dan Pawling, Sr.



Freight train approaching Windsor Locks, CT, Amtrak Station. Station platform & shelter on right, looking south. 9/6/2005

Many times traveling between NYC and Boston by car I will get off the Interstate to search for RR facilities and sometimes find -- ACTION !!! Once I got off I-91 north of Hartford, CT, and onto state route 159 along the west side of the Connecticut River hoping to see some of the old New Haven line to Springfield, MA. That line is now owned by Amtrak; Connecticut Southern (CSO) and Guilford Rail Systems (GRS) have trackage rights, so there could be some activity to be seen here. Only when that line gets to the south part of Windsor Locks is it visible from the road and there I spotted the Amtrak station - a glass-sided shelter and short platform up at track level with the parking area a few steps below. I was on the platform looking for the Amtrak schedule when I noticed a train approaching from the south.. Readied the camera -got it - but she went by too fast to "read the label" -- but I did get the tail end -- and there she goes under the I-91 overpass on the way to Springfield; the Connecticut River out-of-sight to the right; exit from the parking lot onto Rte 159 on the left. This is not a "hot spot" - maybe lukewarm -- with up to ten Amtrak shuttles each way and several freights in between. This is tangent track in both directions almost as far as the eye can see so spotting an approaching train should be easy. It has to be visual because there is only one grade crossing to be whistled for to the north and none for many miles to the south.

Modelers, note how the vegetation here is bushy in some places and tends to creep up the ballast in this low trafficked and still somewhat rural area. I do not recognize the cars on the end of the train - ballast cars, maybe? Feedback, please!!



Freight train moving north on Amtrak Connecticut River Line (former New Haven RR). Owner mark on last car is NHRX. Taken at Windsor Locks, CT on 9/6/2005

National Heritage Museum Show, Feb 18-19 by Bob Pawlak



Bob Pawlak gets them into training early. Here is his daughter Julie Carney with her two girls (l to r) Saphia, and Mary. Sorry Bob but in this picture they are looking at the Carnival and not your bridges.

It was a crisp, cold weekend at the beginning of February school vacation and more than 2,100 people came to see our layout and trains. This was about 10% more than at the same time last year even though there was a new \$5 per family charge by the museum to see the trains. The end result was that there were lots of youngsters (standing on step stools provided by the museum) and adults standing 2 and 3 deep around the layout for most of the weekend. The show seemed more crowded than last year perhaps because people, on average, may have stayed longer to get more for their money.

We got a head start on set up on Friday afternoon and first built about two thirds of the planned 18' x 22' rectangle. Then we used one transition corner, the Black Hole 4' corner, the 12' straight Bridges Canyon, and one 6' end loop to make a peninsula to extend the Red Line to about 123' and eventually ended up with a 22' x 25' layout. The Yellow Line of the peninsula started at the transition module, ran across Bridges Canyon, ran up and around the end loop to return along the peninsula on the Mountain Division track back to the transition corner. Mountain Division track then continued across a temporary snap-track viaduct and bridge across the transition module (Dan Pawling's new creation) to proceed across 12' of straight modules, around a 3' corner, and across another 4' straight module. This Yellow and Green Line division track was a total of about 68' long and kept one operator busy running a train back and forth and switching the end loop sidings.

Layout set up continued starting at 7:45 A.M. Saturday morning and finished in time for long trains to be running as the first wave of visitors started flowing in when the doors were opened at 10:00 A.M. They were initially greeted by the lights, motion, and sounds of Roland Kelley's carnival module and then distributed themselves around the layout. There were apparently lots of "new" visitors in the crowd because they asked all sorts of questions.

We had a few spectacular "domino" derailments of long trains probably caused by fingers of excited children wanting to touch the trains. We also had a spectacular derailment (cause still under investigation) of a high-speed passenger train which resulted in every car being thrown

completely off the track and on its side. All rail traffic stopped, emergency personnel were dispatched to the scene, and everyone gathered around to take pictures. Miraculously, none of the passengers or crew on the train were injured and the train was on its way again in just a few minutes.

We ran DCC on the Red Line for most of the two days. Jim Whitehead had fun putting 3 Hershey kisses on a flat car near the end of his long grain train and then watching them disappear as the train went around tempting the crowd. Dennis Yip was in good spirits because he was part of the Newton High School gymnastics team which took second place in states the day before (congratulations Dennis!). But he had been up until 3 A.M. partying with his team mates the night before so by noon he was looking for a quiet place under some modules to get some shut eye.

In general, a good time was had by all who participated. The next museum show is scheduled to be at the preferred time between Christmas and New Years on December 30-31, 2006. Save the date!



Foxboro Show Review By Ron Wood

The Mystic Valley "Rail-a-Rama" show was held Sunday February 26th, 2006 at Christina's function facility in Foxboro Mass off route 1. Northeast N-Trak had a 22-foot by 14-foot layout at the show. The show had big crowds most of the day even into the mid afternoon time when the crowds usually thin out. Attendance for the show was 2,100. Northeast N-Trak members in attendance with modules included:

Dan Pawling-Yard, 3 ft corner, 3 4ft straight, club boxes, banner, DCC!
Steve Cappers- 3 4ft straight
John and Steve Consigli- 4 ft straight
John Dunne 3 ft corner, 4 ft straight
Ron Cavanaugh
Mike Walker – 3ft corner
Ron Wood – 3 ft corner

Many thanks to all whom attended especially to Dan Pawling who brought Mark Ferracane's module, Steve Cappers module and Jim Whitehead's corner! Dan are you charging a "storage fee" for modules that are migrating to your basement?

Anyway, this has worked out to be a very positive show for us as it puts us on the map on the "south side" of Boston. We gave out several applications at the show so hopefully we will get some new members from it.

That's it for now. I hope to see lots of folks at Hooksett NH on April 30th! See you then! Ron.