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President's Message Mark Ferracane



Well, Winterfest 2009 is in the books. We had another fantastic show. This is the 3rd year in a row that we have not had SNOW during the 3 days we were out there. (Thank God). The layout ran flawlessly and we all had a great time. My thanks go out to Bob Pawlak, Chuck Tremblay and Ed Smith for their work at Winterfest. My observation as far as the show this year was "What Recession". People were spending money on the hobby. The other thing I noticed is that the crowds were more controlled than previous years.

In July I will be coordinating the layout for the NMRA Hartford Convention. The Convention runs from July 5th to 11th. I am asking all members to try to attend. The area they have given us for the layout is 140x70. If you are able to attend please contact me and let me know what you can bring. I need as many modules as I can get. I have to have a finished plan for the layout by May 9th. Registration for the Convention is NOT NECESSARY. Registration cost for NMRA Members is \$175. This will allow you to go on the tours and other activities at the Convention. A bit steep considering that the N-Scale Collector Convention registration is only \$75. The layout will be open from Monday to Sunday for the Conventioneers and Saturday and Sunday for the public show. So far I have had 4 clubs contact me that they can bring stuff to the Convention. To fill the area I will need at least 20 clubs to participate.

Our next show is at the Museum of Our National Heritage on the 14th and 15th. Bob Pawlak is the Show Coordinator. This is one of our best shows. The show runs from 10-5 on Saturday and Noon to 5pm on Sunday.

Til next month,
Mark

P.S. Steve and Linda Cappers, Dan Pawling and myself attended the Memorial Service For Christopher Spampinato on the 31st of January. His mother is setting up a fund to help the victims of Domestic Violence in his memory. More information will be available at a later time.

It is with a sad heart that I report that a member of our club, Christopher Spampinato has passed away. He was critically burned in an apartment fire last week. His Wife is charged with Arson and Murder. I met Chris while the two of us were working at the Great Train Store in Natick, Massachusetts. I remember the first time I brought him to Winterfest, we entered the Better Living center and his jaw dropped. He had never seen so many trains in one place, I told him that there were 2 more buildings. I did not see him again for 4 hours. We became good friends and business partners. We did train shows selling N and HO Scale trains and wooden toy trains. Our friendship lasted 15 years. People who met him and knew him will miss him greatly. Mark Ferracane

Show Schedule for 2008 – 2009

Mar 28 & 29, 2009 Great Train Expo, Wilmington, MA

Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM - Sun 10PM to 4PM

Coordinator: Dan Pawling - 617-244-5261

Apr ??, 2009, Billerica Train Show,

NEW SHOW

Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Peter Matthews - 978-667-7906

Apr ??, 2009, Hooksett Lyons Club, Hooksett, NH

Cawley Middle School, Hooksett, NH

Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Ron Wood - 603-206-5572

July 5-11, 2009, Hartford NMRA Convention

Start planning now. Need many modules

Coordinator: Mark Ferracane - 781-245-3886

Winterfest 2009



Pictures by Roland Kelley & Dan Pawling, Sr.

Winterfest Wrap-Up by Bob Pawlak

Attendance of the Amherst show was 11,307 on Saturday and 7,866 on Sunday for a total of 19,173 for the weekend. Both days were clear but quite cold. Last year's attendance was 20,673 and the year before it was 20,799. Winterfest 2009 had 90 primary registrants and 91 meals at the banquet. Last year we had 75 primary registrants and 92 meals. In 2007 we had 79 registrants and 102 meals.

The layout this year consisted of two 30' x 18' loops of standard Ntrak modules and a 16' x 16' loop of MaiNe Trak modules (1' x 4' with two mainline tracks and 2' corners) connected together with two pairs of standard transition corner modules. This configuration was proposed by Chris Oliva of Brooklyn N-Trak based on Brooklyn's experience with their Hangar Show arrangement. The result filled our 30' x 80' space allocation with the help of two tables in the "empty" corner used for display of model and photo contest participants.

The end result was 88' x 2 loops = 176' of Blue and Yellow line operation, 60' of single track operation on the MaiNe Trak loop and 176' + 60' + 48' = 284' of Red Line Route around the whole layout. Four DC throttles were used for each of the two sets of Blue and Yellow Line loops. One Ntrak loop had a yard and the other had a lift bridge for entry. We needed a yard and a lift bridge in each loop. We also needed the two large loops to be 4' wider to have more room inside the loops. Perhaps the biggest problem of the layout design was that the three loops broke the total set of registrants into 3 groups which cut down on the social interchange and camaraderie. All in all it was an interesting experiment.

For the last two years I have offered to raffle off about 10 "better" prizes to those who bring modules in order to encourage people to help fill our 30' x 80' layout space. Perhaps I have gone too far since we had several people on "wait list" to have their module in the layout this year.

I wish to thank our sponsors for the excellent set of prizes they donated again this year. I hope everyone will join me in thanking them by purchasing their fine products and services. You will notice we have three new web-based sponsors this year.

Winterfest 2009 Sponsors

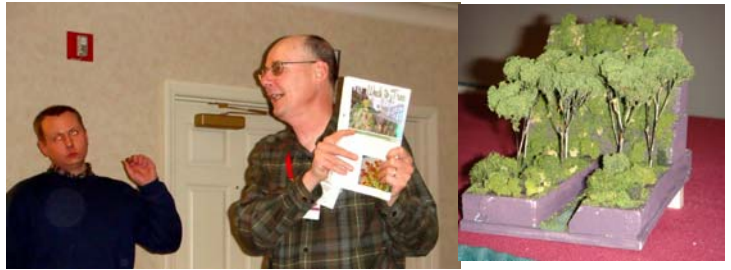
Athearn, Inc
Atlas Model Railroad Company
Aztec Manufacturing Company
Blair Line
Brooklyn Locomotive Works
Classic Metal Works, Inc.
Deluxe Innovations
Digital Plus by Lenz
Digitrax
Evergreen Scale Models
InterMountain Railway Company
Kato U.S.A.
Ken's Trains
Logic Rail Technologies
Micro Engineering Company
Micro-Trains Line Company
Microscale Industries, Inc.
N Scale Collector
Neal's N-Gauging Trains
Northeastern Scale Lumber Company
Platinum Rail Publications (N-Scale Mag.)
Squeak N Products
TexNrails
The N-Scale Architect
Tomar Industries
TopHobbyTrains.com
Tucker's Hobbies
Wm. K. Walthers
Woodland Scenics

I wish to thank the following people for their special help with Winterfest this year:

Ed Smith – web pages, on-line registration, registration desk, Contest Chairman, awards presentation
Chuck Tremblay – Registrar (Treasurer), registration desk, model and photo contest, awards presentation
John Dunne – Layout Coordinator, arranged for T-Shirts, Mugs and module plaques
Chris Oliva (and helpers) – DCC Master, DCC Red Line loop set up
Doug Lawson – DC power and throttles set up
Harry Leifer (and others) who brought spare DC and DCC equipment, boosters, throttles, etc.
John Becker – Orchestration of Parade of Trains contest
Those who acted as judges for the Parade of Trains
Roland Kelley and Dan Pawling Sr. – photograph and list modules for module contest
Roland Kelley – help with distribution of certificates and prizes
Rick Spano – Guest Speaker
Clinicians – Bob Gatland, Shelley Norcott, Bill Pontin, Chris Oliva, Rob Selberg, and Ray Houlihan
Mark Ferracane – digital projector
Bob Gatland – brought lift bridge module

Winterfest 2009 Clinics
by Dan Pawling, Sr.

Our thanks to the good folks who gave the excellent clinics summarized below.



Only God Can Make a Tree. Truly spoken by Rob Selberg and Ray Houlihan (Maine Ntrak) as they demonstrated their methods of making trees and forest for their modules. Rob showed how he makes pine trees from air conditioner filter material and bamboo skewers. "A dream tree, straight, tall, fully developed --- perfect for the parlor on Christmas --- and year-round on the layout." Rob also discussed the making of a clump foliage forest. Ray told how he harvests and converts long-stalked sedum/spurge/showy stonecrop stems into tall deciduous trees. These plants can be grown in containers or in the garden, cut and dried in a warm place and enhanced for use on a module. Ray likes the look of tall mature trees with branch-free trunks as seen in fence rows, house lot lines or industrial sites. His samples are quite effective. Copies of their handout are available, as above, with a #10 SASE.



Building Your Own Turnouts. Bob Gatland (Albany Ntrak) is building a layout that will use a large number of No. 8 turnouts. To economize he has bought precision metal jigs and other tools to achieve his goals. He shared the results of his experiments and eventual production with step-by-step samples of the process including the jigs and the built-up turnouts. "

"Fast Tracks" is the supplier of jigs and tools. Copies of Bob's handout, which includes references and resources, are available from Dan F. Pawling, 10 West 58th St., New York, NY 10019 - enclose a # 10 SASE..

Painting Backdrops. Shelley Norcott opened by saying " Be sure to wear an apon when painting," as she flapped here colorful one. She went on to display several different color combinations that might be used on modules or layouts. "It is a rare day that has a bright blue sky, more often it is faded, grey or colored depending on the time, weather, the presence or absence of clouds, air pollution, etc.. we should



try to make the joint between the skyboard and the module disappear."

Model Kit Bashing and Painting. Chris Oliva (Brooklyn Ntrak) showed slides of models he had kitbashed and painted. Some of these were entered into the Ntrak Model Contest.



Making Rubber Latex Molds. The rock outcrops on Bill Pontin's (Valley Ntrak) award winning new module were made using latex rubber molds. Bill found his pet rock at a



neighbors house and used it to make the molds. Bill described the process, showing samples of the mold, some castings and the painting of the rocks. . He showed slides of how he fitted the rocks into the logging camp scenery. Bill also cast the many tree stumps that populated the logged over landscape of his module..



(Bob Pawlak's Winterfest 2009 Wrap-up continued from page 3)

- Peter Mathews – hauled the yard and club boxes
- Dan Pawling Jr. – hauled the model contest display case and photo contest display racks
- All others without modules who helped with set up and tear down
- All others who helped in some way that I forgot to mention

The following 16 groups (and number of participants) were represented at Winterfest this year:

- Albany, NY N-Trak (5)
- Brooklyn N-Trak (8)
- Central Valley (CT) Ntrak (1)
- Genessee-N-Ontario Model N-gineers (7)
- Jersey Central N-Trak (1)
- Long Island Ntrak (5)
- MaiNeTrak (8)
- Montreal N-trak (6)
- Niagra Orleans Model Railroad Engineers (2)
- Northeast N-Trak (17)
- Northern New Jersey N-Trak (8)
- Ottawa Valey Ntrak (1)
- Salt City (Syracuse) NTRAK (1)
- Valley N-Trak (Oxford, CT) (5)

Winterfest 2010 is scheduled to take place January 29- 31, 2010. Save the date. "Lets do it again in 2010!"

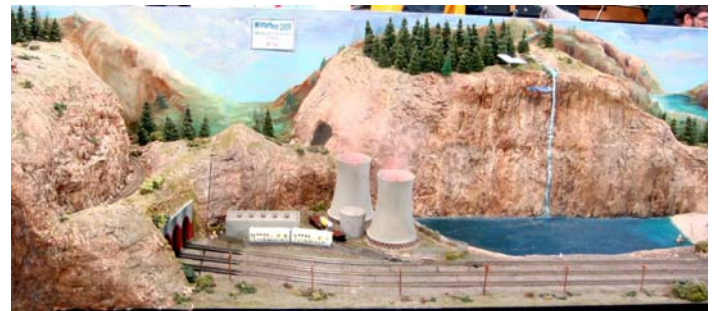
THE PAUL G. OHESYI SCENERY EXCELLENCE AWARD



THE RICHARD MARKO COMMEMORATIVE AWARD



Valley Ntrak of Connecticut created the Award to honor his memory of there member Richard Marko.. The award this year was given to Steve Dale, from the Niagra Orleans Model Railroad Engineers. He had a module of Chernobyl with smoke coming out of the stacks. He also won 3rd place in the popular vote for best module in 2006. See his module below.



Bob Pawlak (left) received the **Paul G. Ohesyi Scenery Excellence Award** for his Bridge Cayon Module (below). This is the most award winning module in our club. It took many years to build and is a top draw at every show it is displayed. Bob thanks again for your great work.





Museum Train Show Wrap Up **by Bob Pawlak**

A train show was held at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, MA on February 14 –15, 2009. The layout this year consisted of a 18' x 26' loop with two 3' corners and two transition corners leading to two peninsulas with end loops. One peninsula consisted of the paper mill end-loop. The other peninsula consisted of a 4' corner (Black Hole), 12' straight (Bridges Canyon), Mark's 4' straight with Mountain Division and the coal loader/crushed stone end loop. The result was a 80' long Blue Line and Yellow Line loop, a 158' long Red Line route (DCC), and a 55' long Mountain-Division-down-to-Yellow-Line run on the longer peninsula.

The 16 modules (104') were brought by 10 different members (an average of about 10' of module per member). Some members came Friday afternoon from 3:30-5 PM to set up. Others came at 7:30 AM on Saturday morning. Only one member without modules, Mike Walker, came to help set up on Saturday which was very much appreciated. Although set up went well, the full set of trains weren't running until about 20 minutes after the scheduled 10:00 AM start time for the show. My conclusion is that those who start set up on Friday night need to come earlier on Saturday and we need more help with set up from members without modules on Saturday.

The museum show is not a typical train show because it is just our layout in a large room with no dealers or other layouts. The audience is also different, mostly complete families with husband, wife, babies in arms, and young children. It is more of a general family outing at the beginning of school vacation week rather than a typical model railroader bringing a child or grandchild. The museum has free parking and free admission to the museum but charges \$7 per family to see the trains. As a result, people seem to linger longer around the layout to get their money's worth. The museum provides a large number of step stools with handrails for the youngsters to climb onto so they can see better. These seem to help the kids stay put longer.

The weather was clear and cold. Attendance was 490 visitors on Saturday and 598 on Sunday for a total of 1188 for the weekend. This was up slightly from 983 for the same weekend last year.

We moved a lot of car miles of passengers, coal, automobiles, petroleum products, and whatever Dan Pawling was carrying in his long train of blue Great Northern covered hoppers. Thomas the Tank Engine and his friends ran periodically to the delight of the youngsters. John Dunne's new 12' straight Zakim Bridge module appeared at this show for the first time and got a lot of interest. Since Saturday was Valentines Day, Dan Pawling brought some Hersey Kisses and candy hearts to load in a short train of gondolas. Brian and Jack, our young helpers, took turns running the train to distribute the candy to the youngsters in the audience. In general, a good time was had by all.



NMRA
Convention
Hartford, CT
July 5 to 11, 2009

The NMRA Convention is coming to New England. The 2009 Convention will be in Hartford, Connecticut July 5 to 11. I am the Coordinator of the NTRAK layout for the show. The area allocated for us is approximately 140 x60. Therefore I will need participation from ALL CLUBS to fill the area. The cost to exhibit is FREE, but if you want to attend any of the Convention activities you must register. The cost for NMRA Members is \$175.00.

Set-up will start on Sunday and the show opens to the public on Friday. I was the coordinator for the N-Scale Collector show in Hartford in 2007 and had trouble getting modules to fill the space allocated, a few clubs and individuals pulled out at the last minute. I will need Modules and DCC stuff to make the layout work. Please contact me if you are going to attend. Lets show them what NTRAKers can do.

Thank You.
Mark Ferracane
Hartford 2009 NTRAK Layout Coordinator.
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