

President - Mark Ferracane Vice Pres - Dan Pawling  
Treasurer - Chuck Tremblay Editor - Roland Kelley

Editor - Northeast Ntrak, 41 Easy Street, Lowell, MA 01850-1731, or  
e-mail: [NortheastNtrak@msn.com](mailto:NortheastNtrak@msn.com) Web Site - [www.northeastntrak.org](http://www.northeastntrak.org)



### President's Message Mark Ferracane

Well our Season is almost over. The Hooksett show was the last local show we will do this season and it was held on April 19th. We will close this season with the annual business meeting. In July we have the NMRA Show in Hartford, Roland Kelley, John Dunne and myself will be attending the show. The final layout plan must be submitted by May 8th. So let me know if you can attend. Also you have to be an NMRA Member to attend the show.

As far as the annual meeting, do we have any volunteers who can host it? In the past Bob Pawlak, Rand Hoven and Fay Chin have hosted the meeting, and I pass along a big thanks for having us. Also, Dues are due in June, send your check to Chuck or bring it to the Annual Meeting. The cost is \$20.00 and it is a great value. It gets you the Newsletter and The National NTRAK Newsletter. I hope to see some new members at the Meeting.

In the May Issue of [MODEL RAILROADER](#), Ernie Poole's MRL Layout is featured and the pictures are great. Lou Sassi took the pictures for the magazine and he does fantastic work. The June Issue will feature The N-Scale Railroad at the Bay State Model Railroad Museum. And if the pictures are as good as Ernie's it will be a great article. It will be the Second time the N-Scale Layout has been featured. The photos were shot 2 years ago and there has been some improvements to the layout.



### An April Puzzler - An Answer??? by D. Pawling, Sr.

In the last issue of the Newsletter there was a picture of an ancient 4-4-0 locomotive surrounded by a field of varied and most colorful flowers. I believe that the picture has a secret message and asked readers for

their opinions. I have received NO, ZERO, responses as of 4:30 PM Friday, April 10, 2009 and therefore declare that the contest is over. There will be NO awards given.

My own thought is that the picture reminds gardeners that "To have an abundance of pretty flowers, one must have and use a lot of old number 2 (the number on the engine!!). If that's what you knew and did not say, too late, NO Prize.

### Spurge, Sedum, or Snowy Stonecrop? by Ray Houlihan

For those of you who were polite enough to sit through our Winterfest clinic on tree making, you may remember the heated controversy concerning these plants. Which one is best? Which one is which? Well, the snow has melted here in Maine and while cleaning out the garden I came across a very old plant label. I have 'Cushion Spurge - Polychroma (g. Euphorbia epithymoides). A very attractive perennial across 3 seasons, it does well in partial sun and dry conditions. Harvest for tree making around Veteran's Day, dry thoroughly, and you are ready to make some very nice, very inexpensive trees in several scales.



THE NATIONAL  
MODEL RAILROAD  
CONVENTION

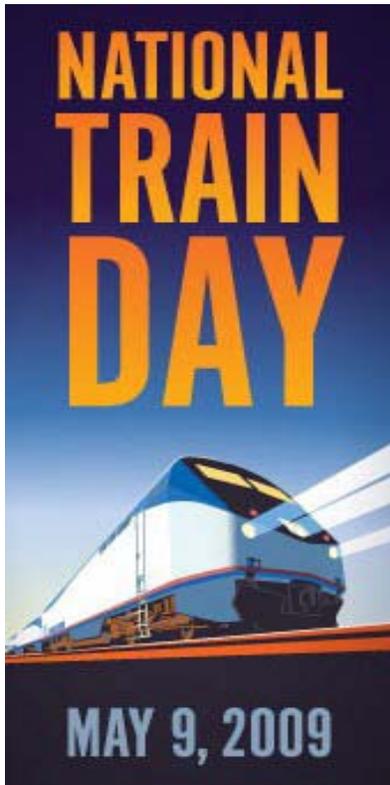


National Model Railroad Association

Hartford National 2009, July 5 - July 12, 2009, Hartford, Connecticut

Start your planning to enjoy the convention. It is not far away in Hartford, CT. Go to there convention web site for more details:

[www.hn2009.org](http://www.hn2009.org)



### Discover the Rail Way

That's right, it's back - and better than ever. Once again America will have the opportunity to show its love for trains. And what's not to love? Wherever you're going, the train is the nicer way to get there.

So mark May 9, 2009, on your calendar for a coast-to-coast celebration of the way trains connect people and places. In Washington, DC, Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles there will be simultaneous National Train Day festivities that are sure to be a treat for all ages.

Check [NationalTrainDay.com](http://NationalTrainDay.com) often for updates on this year's activities, promotions and entertainment events.

### Show Schedule for 2008 – 2009

**July 5-11, 2009, Hartford NMRA Convention**  
**Start planning now. We need your modules**  
**Coordinator: Mark Ferracane - 781-587-3996 (cell 617-938-0385)**

## Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus The Circus Train

**by Robert Stolarik for The New York Times**



*Bryce Griggs, 5, lives year round with his parents in apartments in 33 coach cars on the circus train of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus.*

Leah Christiana Gonzalez's place is more modest, with a cubicle like bedroom, no living room and a shower she shares with seven roommates who keep odd hours. Still, not bad for a 26-year-old's first apartment away from home.

What the two apartments have in common is an extremely exclusive address: on board the [Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus](#) train. "We're basically a city without a ZIP code," Mr. Griggs, a circus manager, said Thursday at his home, which sat in a rail yard in Secaucus, N.J, the sun gleaming off its silver paint. The train's 33 coach cars, he said, are like a 33-story apartment building, only horizontal, with onboard electricians and mechanics in place of a super. About 250 people — performers, train crew members, porters, cooks, stagehands — live year round on the train, one of two that crisscross the country carrying elephants, sequined costumes, stage equipment and the cast and crew of the Greatest Show on Earth. Most train denizens, like Ms. Gonzalez, a gymnast and former Oakland Raiders cheerleader who rides an elephant in the show, live in rooms not much bigger than standard sleeping compartments, eight to a car. But the Griggses' dwelling, which takes up half a coach, is larger than some New York City apartments. With a dinette, beige kitchen cabinets, a full-size refrigerator covered with family photos and a bathroom sink where Bryce keeps his Spider-Man toothbrush, it looks like it could be anywhere in Middle America, and it has been. (Continued next page)

In a nation where long-distance train travel has almost died out, the Griggses and their neighbors get to see places that cross-country drivers never glimpse: remnants of wooden water channels built by gold rush prospectors in California hills; tracks that run along Washington State beaches where sea lions lounge; mountain passes through the Rockies with no highway signs to clutter the view. When the train stops, spending about a week at most destinations, its residents can take a circus bus to town to explore and do errands; a few have cars and motorcycles that are hauled on the train's flatbed freight cars. Between shows at Madison Square Garden this week, the Griggses have been to the Central Park Zoo and the Times Square Toys "R" Us.

In Secaucus, home is a gravel-lined track bed just off the New Jersey Turnpike, hidden away down a dirt road behind a stand of yellow reeds and a warehouse parking lot full of [Goya](#) food delivery trucks. Two strings of coach cars, with the name of the circus painted on their sides, stood with their doors open to the spring morning, wooden footstools placed beneath each car's stepladder. As Bryce snapped together a jigsaw puzzle of jungle animals, a train whistle hooted in the distance.

"I don't want to use the word 'stigma,' " Mr. Griggs said. "But people think, 'Circus people, they're gypsies.' We're normal people with normal lives." We're not carnies," he added, pronouncing the word with a distaste bound to rile fans of Coney Island's freak shows. "This is a business." Still, a few romantically nomadic touches evoke a time when the line between traveling entertainers and hobos was fuzzier. A charcoal grill on the tracks hinted at a barbecue under the stars the night before. A few nights earlier, some acrobats had a cooking fire that ignited the brush, forcing the appearance of local firefighters. Kodak, a 6-year-old Labrador mix that lives with Mike Hickey, the trainmaster, in an apartment with an electric fireplace, trotted up and down the train, then headed to its dinerlike restaurant, the Pie Car, where the cooks give her bacon.

Alex Ramon Gonzalez, 23 — Ms. Gonzalez's brother and the illusionist star of the circus's current Zing Zang Zoom show — said life on the train was far more civilized than hopping from hotel to hotel. No packing and unpacking, and he can keep some of his doves in his apartment. "The train kind of rocks you to sleep," his sister said.

Most of the performers, who come from 18 countries, are between 18 and 26. But some are older, with their own families, including 15 children, who have their own teacher and day care on board. The Lopez family of trapeze artists — two brothers and their wives — between them have five children, whose grandmother rides along to watch them. The Rodriguez family, who perform on steel contraptions that resemble huge hamster wheels, include an 11-year-old acrobat. Ms. Griggs, once a trapeze artist herself, now freelances as a massage therapist for the performers. Like

many of them, she grew up in circuses, where her grandfather walked a tightrope above pacing lions. She met her husband when he joined her and her brother's trapeze troupe, the Flying Rodleighs. Mr. Griggs, who has the brush cut and triangular torso of a cartoon musclemán, went into management after he caught his brother-in-law midair at a performance in Germany and felt his kneecap pop out. Still, the couple's walls are lined with photographs of their old life: husband and wife in sparkling leotards. Mr. Griggs has a GPS unit mounted in a window so he can learn the names of the places he sees outside. Sometimes, the family takes folding chairs out through their screen door onto the vestibule between cars — which, unlike those on [Amtrak](#), can be opened to the air — to watch the scenery. Sometimes people wave. "This is really part of American history," Mr. Griggs said. "It's one of the last trains where you can lean out and feel the fresh air go by."

### **Need reference pictures to model from?**

Here is a web site that might be of help to you, this site is recommended by Dan Pawling Sr.:

[www.trainweb.org](http://www.trainweb.org)

### **Not from the Editor**

Summer is almost upon us again and I have to say I can't wait. Yes as you get older the warm weather seems much better than the cold winter. With the summer comes my time off from the newsletter. So we will have just one more newsletter before I take the months of July and August off. It would be great if I could receive some articles for some members for the June issue. At this time I have none for that issue. After the June Newsletter the next one will be for September the start of our next year. In the September issue I will cover the annual business meeting and the train show at the NMRA convention in Hartford. If any of you do any traveling this summer that includes train watching would be great if you could send me some pictures and write a short article to go with it. It is not easy to get the articles every month for your newsletter. Any articles you can contribute is a big help.

**DISCOVERED: A SHORT LINE RAILROAD IN NORTH CAROLINA**  
**PHOTOS & NOTES BY RAYMOND DECATUR;**  
**ADDITIONAL NOTES: D. PAWLING, SR.**

“Dear Grandpa---“

My grandson Ray, recently sent me some railroad photos that I would like to share with you all. While a teenager, Ray built an HO shelf layout that ran around his room above the door and window. Ray is a US Navy Reservist serving with the Marines as a medic. He and his wife Kimberly are continuing their medical education at Eastern Carolina State College in Greenville, NC. The photos here were taken on a trip that passed through Clinton, NC. For me they were a puzzle which I tried to solve using the internet. The following adds to his work and research.

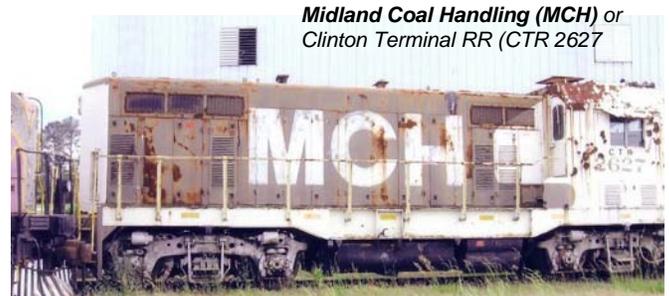


*Caught these cars out of the corner of my eye while driving through Clinton, NC. They were about a quarter mile down a side street in an industrial area.*



**Waccamaw Coast Line.** *Waccamaw is the name of an unrecognized tribe in Southeast NC and the name of a large lake in the area.*

at this time; maybe the paint job will help. The locomotive marked MCH (photo below), for Midland Coal Handling, shows



**Midland Coal Handling (MCH) or Clinton Terminal RR (CTR 2627)**

“Dear Ray---“

The string of three cars (photo above) was seen on the tracks of the Clinton Terminal Railroad (CTR), a 3.5 mile industrial spur, the final leg of the CSX-owned spur which reaches Warsaw, NC to the east. There, it connects via a wye to a CSX branch that runs northeast to Greensboro NC, and once ran southeast all the way to the port of Wilmington, NC. The open platform car (photo below), boldly named “Big Red Express” on the letter board is the former Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific business car and retains its original name, Choctaw, and number 99. With a magnifying glass I read “CESX 99” on the car but presently can not ID that owner. Note the rig on the roof which looks like the “radiophone” used by the Pennsylvania RR at one time (Frank D., can you help here, please?).



**CESX99 Business Car in Clinton, NC**

Photo top right shows a passenger car still "Banner-named" for the Waccamaw Coast Line and car name "Vogue." The Waccamaw Coast Line (WCLR) once ran tourist trains, mainly in South Carolina and these three cars may have been part of that operation. The middle car in the string (1st photo) is a combination Railway Express-Baggage car, ownership unknown

CTR 2627 on the cab. The "purple" colored loco, No. 2480 (photo below) was formerly owned by WCLR.. Both units were built by EMD for ATSF as F9A and F7A respectively and rebuilt as CF7's. Both have retained their original road numbers while the AAR Reporting Marks, now CTR, changed with ownership. (Sources; from internet).

“Thanks, Ray!!--- Your photos became a fun challenge for me. I am sure that more digging can reveal more "gold." Meanwhile, I look forward to seeing what you find in Greenville, where the NS crosses the CSX. Stay on public property, the RR cops are tough! Cheers! Best! Grandpa”



**Waccamaw Coast Line RR (WCLR 2480 on Clinton (NC) Terminal RR Tracks.**