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President's Message Dan Pawling

Power Pole Connectors: We have completed installing the new power pole wire harnesses on two of Mark Ferracane's four foot straight modules and one three foot corner module. We need to remember that the reason that we are doing this is to improve the consistency of the signal that each DCC powered engine is receiving. It is important to have no cuts in the wire harness from one end of the module to the other. The best way to tap off power from the new harness is to strip a small section of insulation without cutting the wire and solder in the leads for the connections to the module. This method helps to remove additional points where the power could disconnect and cause inconsistent power delivery to the rest of the layout.

Other projects completed: The track work on the 3' corner transition modules have been checked to make sure the connections to the track from below the module are working. The DCC came back from Winterfest not working and has been reconfigured from booster status by Jim Whitehead, Pete Wisniewski and some of the other engineers.

Projects short term: Schedule the annual meeting and find a place to have the meeting. Any volunteers for a location? Equipment inventory needs to be done so we know what the club owns. Showing module Inventory list & current module status rating. Power pole wire harnesses & repairs for the yard, transition corner modules, DCC equipment needs power poles connectors as well.

Long term projects: These projects need to be listed & discussed at the annual meeting and some of my thoughts are as follows: Club bylaws & rules for 2010 and beyond, list of the Club goals, module that need to be built, show schedule & coordinators for them. I have also been working on a list of active members that show modules, help out at shows, contribute to the news letter and would like to recognize this group in some special way. I would like to hear from you on your ideas.

National shows: is any one going? Let me know
Milwaukee NTS July 16 – 18 2010 Call for modules.
The National Train show will be held in conjunction with the NMRA's 75th Anniversary Convention
For info: <http://www.nmra.org/convention/>
The 2010 National N Scale Convention.
Everything is Big N Texas! Houston, Texas June 22-26, 2010
<http://www.nationalscaleconvention.com/>

Danville, VA September 24–26, 2010
<http://trainweb.org/nrmrc/2010>

Museum Train Show Wrap Up by Bob Pawlak

A train show was held at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, MA on February 13 –14, 2010. The layout design this year was very similar to last year with one less 4' straight on the longer peninsula. It consisted of an 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), and the coal loader/crushed stone end loop. The result was a 80' long Blue Line and Yellow Line loop, a 150' long Red Line route (DCC), and a 47' long Mountain-Division-down-to-Yellow-Line run on the longer peninsula.

The 17 modules (112') were brought by just 8 different people (an average of about 14' of module per person). Even with new member Bob Fallier's 12' straight and Boy Scout Scott Goldberg's 4' straight, I felt I had to borrow Larry Keil's 12' straight module (he was in Florida during the show) to have a full size layout. Some people came Friday afternoon from 1:00 -4:30 P.M. to set up which helped a lot. Three members without modules, Mike Walker, Ron Wood, and new member Toshiyuki Abe, came at 8:00 A.M. to help set up on Saturday which was very much appreciated. Although set up went pretty well with the extra help, the full set of trains weren't running until about 30 minutes after the scheduled 10:00 AM start time for the show. We have been able to get into the museum at 7:30 A.M. in previous years and we had some trouble connecting Power-Pole equipped modules to the layout and getting White Line power to the throttles.

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

Advanced Consists on the MRL
(Great for NTRAKers too)
by Ernie Poole

Over the years of operation on my N scale MRL, I've often heard the operations fanatics complain about the way the head and rear lights operate on my locomotives in consist. They don't change direction properly, or the rear headlights should not be on, etc. So began the quest for the "perfect" solution. Well, I have yet to arrive at perfect, but I am a lot closer to a really good answer. Since Roland is always looking for articles, I decided to publish what we learned. What follows is the result of Peter Wisniewski and I tweaking back and forth on it for a year or more. The deal went on so long that we actually solved the same problem twice because we forgot to document the first time. I share only the highlights, because eyes tend to glaze over.

This approach is based on Digitrax decoders, because I long ago standardized to keep maintenance as simple as possible. Lets consider two locomotives, coupled back to back, since that's the most common consist configuration.

By now, we all know how to consist locos using the two most common methods. Either make them all the same address (Basic consist) or let the command station handle it by sending throttle data to all the consisted locos using their own individual addresses. (Standard consist) The newest method is called Advanced consist, and it's decoder based. The load on the command station is much reduced, and for NTRAKers, the big benefit is a "portable" consist. Since the decoders "know" the consist address, (it must be between 1 and 99) you use the same address at home that you do at the NTRAK show. Dial up a two-digit address at the show, and presto, the whole consist is online.

So, what CV's do this magic for us? CV 19 is the key. When you setup an Advanced consist, a two-digit address is written into this CV. The loco's individual address is not changed. If CV 19 contains any data except "00", the decoder uses this value as its loco address. Direction of travel is established as the consist is built.

Proper control of the lights, and sound if so equipped, is the next challenge. Here it matters how old the decoder is. CV19 support has been available for many years, but support for CV's 21 and 22 is newer. As a broad statement, the DN163 series decoders are to considered "newer", and DN140, DN144, DN146, etc are "older". I did not research every decoder ever made, so no darts please.

CV's 21 and 22 allow the Advanced consist address to control (or not control) the available functions in each loco. (In a Standard consist, the functions are controlled at the individual loco address)

Setting CV 22, bit 0 (F0) on for instance, allows the headlight function in an advanced consist to act as if the consist was just one unit. In other words, directional headlights for the consist. For three or more units in consist, just turn the lights off (F0) in the center units. (Newer decoders, CV 22 = 00) So the last question I needed to answer was, how to turn off the rear headlights altogether, as they face each other in consist, and should never come on.

For the "older" decoders, I have yet to find a way to do this with CV's. I covered the rear LED with shrink tubing to kill the light. It's easily removed later if you wish.

In the "newer" decoders, the function exists in CV's 33 thru 46 to turn off the rear light. These CV's are used for remapping functions. (Maybe you want the horn on F9 instead of F2) We found that by remapping the rear light function (CV34 from 02 to 32, a non-existent function), it is effectively turned off.

The results have the operators all happy now on the MRL. All smiles and eating more cookies. I think the benefits for NTRAK are pretty obvious, should you choose this approach. Try it, you'll like it!



2009-2010 NENtrak SHOW PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE

March 27-28, 2010 Greenburg Show, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

Set up Sat 7:30am - Show Sat 10am to 4pm - Sun 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: **Fay Chin 978-657-7913**

Web Site: www.GreenbertShows.com

April 18, 2010 Hooksett Lions Club, Cawley Middle School, Route 27, (Whitehall Rd). Hooksett, NH

Set-up 8am - Show 10am to 3pm

Coordinators: **Ron Wood 603-206-5572**

Tim Putnum 603-835-6952

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museum provides a large number of step stools with handrails for the youngsters to climb onto so they can see better. The step stools seem to help the kids stay put longer.

The weather was clear and cold. Attendance was 779 visitors on Saturday and 856 on Sunday for a total of 1,635. This was up significantly from 1,321 for the same weekend last year and 983 in 2008.

We moved a lot of car miles of passengers, coal, automobiles, petroleum products, and whatever Dan Pawling was carrying in his "snow train", the long train of Great Northern blue covered hoppers. Thomas the Tank Engine and his friends ran periodically to the delight of the youngsters. New member Toshiyuki Abe brought and ran at least three different bullet trains, stayed full time through the whole show, and seemed to enjoy himself while learning the ropes at his first show. New member Bob Fallier ran a collection of interesting European trains which added variety to the show. Since Sunday was Valentines Day, I brought some Hersey Kisses 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.

How to install LED's on Your Layout Peter Wisniewski

Have two web sites for you to look at. One shows Roland and Peter's carnival after Peter relite it with LED's. It is a vidio taken by Peter showing the carnival at night. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBmRA1-fbNI>. The second is an article with pictures of how Peter installed the LED's. http://forum.atlasrr.com/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=58447 After reading the article you will be able to light your layout with LED's. At the second site there are many more articles of interest.

Used Equipment to Donate

I have some trains and tracks in HO scale (and some in the very smallest scale) that are almost 20 years old. Also buildings, bridges and other accessories. I know they are not N scale, but do you think anyone in your organization could put them to good use, or could you refer me to another organization?

Contact Richard Taylor
r.taylor9@yahoo.com

The Lexington Show Pictures by Bob Fallier



Penguin family heading for the beach.



Scott's first time at the throttle.



The "horse of a different color" being chased by the seaplane.



(l to r) Linda Cappers & Carolyn Woods



Katherine Pawling & her Mom, Paula Jo (Pawling)



Steve & Linda Cappers

Co-Creators: Some Photos from Winterfest 2010
Pix and Story by D. Pawling, Sr.

At first I thought these pictures should be titled "NTrak Auxiliaries." No, that really does not come close to what these Winterfest pictures express, but "Co-Creators" seems to. There is a closer, more tightly knit relationship at work in these families, among these friends, different for each group of people, but co-creators all. Some photos were seen in last month's newsletter and earlier issues. Here I have tried to show a special group of Co-Creators. I apologize that some are not pictured here: the photo of Ed and Barbara looked good on the camera, but there was a failure in printing that could not be repaired. Scenes not taken; One father reading a book while his young son worked towers and ran trains; another father off with his son to the teenager's layout My thoughts continue to expand beyond Winterfest to other shows, to many other places and years in this hobby.

Then to my aunt who gave me my Lionel set and my father who built a truss bridge from Erector Set parts and hid the transformer in a power house made from a radio cabinet fitted out with a bamboo smokestack. Where does this all lead? I am not sure, but a feeling comes to mind-- "gratitude." Co-creation works in many ways, of course, for example, I hope the re-decorated dining room is gorgeous and warrants many blessings in return. Co-creators -- you know who you are -- Thank you -- and please accept our gratitude.



Alex Pallo & Helane Siguid



Mrs. Cathy Bowler helping set-up Boy Scout Trevor Bowler's Alaska Module.



(left top) Ken Harstine and (left bottom) Sandy Ward



Carolyn & Ron Woods