



## President's Message Geof Smith

Now arriving, the final stop . . .

Normally this would be my time to sing thanks to those who attended the Marlboro train show and set up with our N scale brothers from Maine and Montreal (it's always a treat to work with them!), but I'm going to claim presidential privilege this month to deliver a personal message:

As many of you already know, I am resigning as President of Northeast Ntrak, and moving to New York City. Now before you start fitting me for a straightjacket, please understand I've accepted an incredible opportunity to serve as the Chief Operating Officer of the Episcopal Church, and fulfil a twenty year dream of using my business skills and experience to further the mission of my church. I am in the same moment proud, excited, and deeply humbled to be taking this role, but it comes with a heavy cost: my wife and I will have to move to New York (and I'm really *not* a Yankees or Giants fan). Where we'll live is a good question: now that our kids are grown we're considering at least for the first year getting an apartment in the City where I can walk or have a short subway ride to work. It would be exciting to try out the Big Apple! Then again, we have a lovely home here with furniture – and trains - that'll never fit into a two-bedroom apartment, so maybe buying in a close-in suburb and riding Metro North into Grand Central station is the way to go. That makes sense, too.

Either way, this wonderful hobby we share is going to have to go into hiatus for the time being. Waaa!!!

So this will be my last newsletter article. Before I go, I just want to say thank you to all of you for your friendship, support, advice and guidance as I've learned about Ntrak and more about model railroading than I knew prior to joining our club. I think we tend to let that go unrecognized: we not only share a hobby with one another, we learn from each other all sorts of happy stuff that makes our hobby even more fun. So special thanks to Dan Pawling for getting me involved in the club in the first place; to Bob Pawlak for helping me get settled into serving as President, for inspiring me with that awesome canyon module, and for all the wonderful Christmas cards showing his family over the years; to Roland for reminding (Continued on page 2)

## Sad, but true. Our President is leaving us and you're stuck with Bob.

Well I said a long time ago, *if I was President... I would make a few changes.* Different president.

It is official. **Geof Smith** is vacating the office of President and I am obligated to step in and assume the responsibilities as the *temporary* president of Northeast NTrak. I suppose there are worse jobs. Winterfest Chairman, for example. I don't know how Bob Pawlak did it (or why). But he did and I offered to take over. I'm still trying to figure out why I did that or how to do it right.

Geof I wish you every success in your new job. Just remember, you are only a few hours away and you always have a home with NENT.

So being President of Northeast NTrak can't be that hard. Write a few articles each year for the newsletter, make a few suggestions, answer a few questions now and then. How hard can it be? Publicly compliment everyone on a great job at the shows, assign tasks now and then, make a few suggestions. Changes I plan to make... None. At least none that I can foresee.

I would like to make just one comment and it is certainly nothing new. *Please volunteer.* Step up to the plate and do your fair share plus a little more. That doesn't mean you always have to bring a module to every show, but when you are there, when you have your own things in order, stick around to help the next guy for a little while. It costs you nothing, but gains much. Thank the guys who always seem to be doing 80% of the work.

Helpfulness, friendliness (both of which Geof excels at), and generosity go a long way in any organization. It helps build confidence in each other so that each member knows that he can rely on everyone else. Yes, we are a team. A very flexible team with different players on the field at different events. And like any other team, there are a core of first string players that everyone knows they can rely on. But when you lose one, everyone else has to pitch in and work just a little more, not a lot, but enough to make up the difference. As we've seen before, when Dan Pawling had to take time away from NTrak, or the year when Geof couldn't make it to Winterfest, one person can make a big difference!

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## 2016-2017 NENTrak SHOW PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE

### Jan 28-29, 2017 Winterfest, Springfield, MA Amherst Railway Society - Big Railroad Hobby Show

Big "E" Exposition Center, West Springfield, MA  
**Set-up:** Fri noon to 5:00pm & Sat 7:00am to 9:00am  
 Show Sat 9:00am to 5:00pm - Sun 10:00am to 5:00pm  
**Layout Coordinator:** Dan Pawling Jr., 617-244-5261  
**Winterfest Chairman:** Bob Fallier - 603-465-3785

### Feb 18-19, 2017 National Heritage Museum, Lexington, MA

**Set-up:** Fri 1:00pm - 4:30pm & Sat 7:30am to 10:00am  
 Show Sat 10:00am to 4:30pm - Sun noon to 4:00pm  
**Coordinator:** Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

### March 25,26, 2017 Great Train Expo, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

**Set-up:** Fri 1:00pm to 5:00 pm - Sat 7:30am  
 Show Sat 10:00am to 4:00pm - Sun 10:00am to 4:00pm  
**Coordinator:** Frank Dignan - 508-866-9660

### April 23, 2017 Hooksett Lions Club, Cawley Middle School, Hooksett, NH

**Set-up:** 8:00am - Show 10:00am to 4:00pm  
**Coordinator:** Geof Smith - 603-762-1874

Show Dates **Subject to Change**...Check Newsletters for Updates. Please check schedule for errors and send up dates to Roland at: [northeastntrak@msn.com](mailto:northeastntrak@msn.com) Thanks for your help.

## T-TRAK Train Show Schedule - 2016 & 2017

If you wish to be part of the T-Trak layout contact Fay Chin Show Coordinator at e-mail [faywchin@gmail.com](mailto:faywchin@gmail.com)

**January 28-29, 2017, Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show,** Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds, West Springfield MA

Show Sat 9:00am to 5:00pm - Sun 10:00am to 5:00pm

**February 18-19, 2017, American Heritage Museum, 33 Marrett Rd., Lexington MA**

Show Sat 10:00am to 4:30pm - Sun noon to 4:00pm

**March 11-12, 2017, Southshore, 19 Fort Hill St., Hingham, MA Show**

**March 25-26, 2017, Greenberg's Train and Toy Show, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington MA**

Show Sat & Sun 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

**April 2017, NMRA Spring Training, TBD**

**April 23, 2017, Hooksett Lions Model Train Show, Crawley Middle School, Hooksett NH**

Show 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

## MaiNe TRACK

**Jan 29-31, 2016 Winterfest** at the Big E (details depending on Layout coordinators needs)

**Apr 23, 2016** Mount Ararat High School, 73 Eagles Way, Topsham, ME Set-up 8am Layout 12x20 ft.

\*\*\*For the 2 Maine shows contact us ahead of time as we try to meet for breakfast. Times and locations of that may change.

## Annual Dues are Due by Bob Pawlak

The anniversary date for renewal of membership in NTRAK, Inc. is March 1 for everyone in Northeast Ntrak. That is now also the anniversary date for renewal of Northeast Ntrak membership. Dues for Northeast Ntrak are \$6 per year. Renewal of membership in NTRAK, Inc. is \$25 for continuing receipt of their hard copy bimonthly newsletter and \$5 for continuing to receive the electronic version of their newsletter. Therefore, if you currently receive only the **hard copy** NTRAK, Inc. newsletter, your dues are \$6 + \$25 = **\$31**. If you currently receive only the **electronic version**, your dues are \$6 + \$5 = **\$11**. If you receive **both the hard copy and electronic versions**, your dues are \$6 + \$25 + \$5 = **\$36**. If you are not receiving the hard copy now, you cannot change to receive it in the future. If you want to change from hard copy to electronic version, just include a note to that effect along with your check.

Dues are due **no later than February 15, 2017**, to allow time to forward information to NTRAK, Inc. before March 1 so as not to miss an issue of their newsletter. Dues received between February 15 and April 1, 2017 will be subject to a **\$5 late fee**. If dues are not received by April 1, 2017, membership in Northeast Ntrak will be terminated. Rejoining Northeast Ntrak after April 1, 2017, will cost \$20 the same as for new members.

The majority of our membership receives the electronic version of the NTRAK, Inc. newsletter so their dues are only \$11. Why procrastinate? Please consider paying an additional \$11 now to not be bothered next year. Please pay now while you are thinking about it. Please make checks payable to **Northeast Ntrak** and mail them to Bob Pawlak, 18 Burroughs Road, Lexington, MA 02420-1908.

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me of newsletter deadlines; to George Michaels for all the help with DCC (you *will* be on my speed call list); to Frank Dignan for his sage advice; to Carl "the camel" Mesrobian for schlepping all that equipment to shows; and to everyone else for your friendship and encouragement (I'd name you all but Roland would rightly complain about the length of this column this month).

Northeast Ntrak can be a very special club, and for those of you on the sidelines just sort of wondering – jump in! Volunteer to help with something – anything – and become part of the fun!

My journey here is ending, but I'm sure another train will be along soon . . .

Take care my friends.

Geof

## Random thoughts on module building.

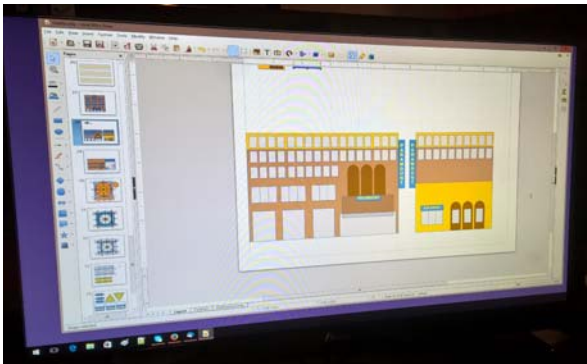
by Jim Pyle

I have been working on a new module that I hope to have ready by Winterfest. Here are some rambling thoughts that have come to mind as I have been working:

### 1) Use Google Maps

I like to make modules based on places I have been. One I have an idea for a location; I use Google Maps to get more detail on the actual tracks, roads, buildings of the location. With street view, I can see what things look like from all angles, including above. The hope is that someone seeing the module will recognize something and say, "I know where that is". I also retain the right to make adjustments. In one case, I had a nice building I want to model, but it was on the wrong side of the tracks. Well, I just turned it around and put it on the side I wanted.

### 2) Use paper mockups.



In order to get a feel for how things are going to look, I created paper mockups of the building that will be going into my module. Next, I downloaded a free drawing tool LibreOffice Draw. Here I created scaled drawings of the walls of the building. I also created a drawing of the base. Next I bought stiff card stock from Staples and printed out the drawings of the walls. With some Scotch tape I now had a 3d model of my building. I repeated this process with the other building. In placing the mockups on the bare module, I could see any problems ahead of time. Out came the scissors. Some were too wide, some too tall, and some



not tall enough. Having the paper mockups also helped me get a feel for placing the streets on the module. When I finally get to building the actual buildings, I can use the paper drawings as a guide.

### 3) PVC as a building material.



My module has a section of elevated track. I needed to create support columns and a surface. I could have used wood, but there is new product available in the lumber section made of vinyl (PVC). It looks like regular dimensional lumber, but is white and more flexible (below). It cuts easily on a table saw or jigsaw. It sands and paints nicely.



Peter working on an engine fixing DCC at the Greenberg Train Show in November. Checkout the white



### NMRA Hub Division Model Train Show by Roland Kelley



(above) Jane Chin explaining to a visitor how to work the model. While (below) Fay plays with his trains. They had a large layout on display.



I was there as a guest of MaiNe Track. They had members from their club and from Montreal displaying. Here are a few of their modules at the show.



### Greenberg Show by Frank Dignan

Hello everyone this was a easy show for me as a coordinator they gave us less space and a new location out in the FEZ room . We had a 32-20 space and it filled up early only made a couple of calls. The only thing I did miss was the use of the lift bridge my back was sore for days on the plus we had a the carpeted floor. With an early setup time on Friday we were 90% there with only two members modules on Saturday we were up and running when the show opening .

Saturday was a well attended show and we had many trains out and running early on all three lines with little or no problems do you think we know what we are doing after all these years. Sunday was a little slow as usual but lots of time to shop and run more trains.

Now let me thank everyone attending bringing modules, running trains and with setup and tear down the most important part. THANK YOU.

We are already registered for the March show date to let everyone know I was contacted last week by Frank Hicks from the Greenberg Shows asking if we would be interested in doing a show on Feb 25-26 in Hanover Mass. I told him we were booked pretty heavy that month or tired. This will be a one time show but not for us hope you agree.

Thanks again everybody Have a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and will see you in Springfield.

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It doesn't take Excellent People to make an excellent organization, but it does take work and recognition of individual effort to build and maintain an excellent organization of any kind. I think we are almost there and I think we have some excellent people in our midst, we just need everyone else to make that small extra effort. We're good. We can be better.

I'll close with this. A number of years ago I was at a Boy Scout Eagle Court of Honor, something which I attend several times a year. What made this particular event memorable was a comment one of the new Eagles said in his closing remarks to the audience. The words of an eighteen year old can teach us all something:

**"When no one else does, I will."** Doug Dion  
Happy holidays, and a joyous new year to all.  
Bob Fallier