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### President's Message Bob Fallier

**From the Office of the President.... Otherwise known as my basement office.**

As I noted back in June, summer is not the season for model railroading when there is so much else that we can, and maybe should be doing. But there really is no excuse to ignore your trains, modules, or layout when time permits. So I hope everyone took advantage of your time to go play.

A busy summer at the Fallier house this year. The annual picnic and business meeting in June is the beginning of summer for me and a lot has been done since then. For example, just a month after our picnic I had several very large logging machines parked on the property right behind us. Cutting and grinding and loading and by the time they were done, my neighbors had cleared over 10 acres of trees. I'd be happy if their plan was to build a large garden railroad in the cleared area, but that I'm afraid is not the case. Oh well. And for those who were here for the picnic, you may recall my weed-patch back yard. Well new grass is coming up very nicely. Certainly no one can forget my driveway. That 380 foot long country road full of dips and holes. Surprise. All nicely paved from end to end. No more bottoming out or bouncing parts loose from my modules on the way to or from the street.

Then we busied ourselves and had solar panels installed. This is a good thing. Green is good. Providing my own power to run my trains is even better. I've also changed most of the lighting in the train room and rest of the basement to LEDs. "Daylight" 5000K for the train room, and traditional "warm white" elsewhere. Yet to be seen what my electric bill will be like. (FYI: the NTSC standard for "daylight" is 6500°K, which is what is used for photography and movie lighting. However indoors 6500K tends to look a little blue so the manufacturers call 5000K "daylight".)

If you've seen my layout you may have noted the very long down grade from the service area, below the waterfall and back up to "grade level". My Bachmann EM-1 was easily hauling 20 cars up, down, and around completing the end-to-end loop at 19-20 mph (scale) in

about 15 minutes. That is until it stopped half in a "blocked" section and half out. The Peco turnout failed to provide continual track power to the engine wheels and the tender was sitting on a live track. Unbeknownst to me, there was a problem. Later on I had to pry the melted tender truck off the tracks. Not a good thing. Now I'm thinking about repowering some of those switched tracks. This is interesting: The Bachmann EM-1 could haul those 20 cars up and down, but my nice new Big-Boy doesn't do quite as well and I found the lead truck tends to pick switches and derail somewhat unpredictably. It also stalled at the same place as the EM-1 and the front tender truck had a slight melt down. New parts on order. None of my other engines have had a problem there. Hmmm? Why only 20 cars? Because there is a loop with 30 degree crossing at the start and finish of the loop. Any more than 20 cars and it will be like a snake biting its own tail.

Out with the old in with the new. Then in with the new again. I decided to take advantage of the 30% deal at Hobby Emporium, Tyngsboro, Ma., and bought a Walthers/Heljan turntable. My good old Arnold-Rapido turntable still works, although very noisy and lining up tracks was never very precise. Thus it was little used except for turning engines around. So I pulled it out and opened the hole for the longer Walthers (made by Heljan) turntable. Hmm? Why did it not rotate all the way around? Ah-Ha! Slightly pinched on one side and that forced the drive gear to lift off the track. Adjusting the small screws and washers under the baseboard was not going to solve the problem, which was a bit of seasonal warping. Particularly given that the Arnold turntable and roundhouse had been mounted on that section of Homasote in 1984, two layouts ago. The new turntable was removed, a nice flat, solid square of plywood was cut to use as a new base for the turntable, and then fitted into an even larger hole in the old Homasote. The plywood was sealed with sanding sealer on all surfaces and then painted on all sides/surfaces. Hopefully seasonal changes of humidity won't be as much of a problem. The turntable operates very smoothly and very quietly! The controller is DC/DCC enabled and easy to align and program to the several service tracks. I have not programmed it to work from Digitrax yet, but that should be no more difficult than operating turnouts through the LOCONET. It is powered through the DCC track buss. Not much for train watching outside the basement.

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## T-TRAK Train Show Schedule 2017 & 2018

If you wish to be part of the T-Trak layout contact  
Fay Chin Show Coordinator at e-mail

[nttrak@gmail.com](mailto:nttrak@gmail.com)

**August 20, 2017, Concord Model Railroad Club, Everett  
Arena, Loudon Road, Concord NH**

Show 10:00 am to 3:30 pm

**September 27, 2017, Old Colony Model Railroad Club,  
Taunton Holiday Inn, Taunton MA**

Show 10:00 am to 3:30 pm

**October 1, 2017, Peperell Siding Model Railroad,  
Varnum Brook Elem. School, 10 Hollis St., Pepperell MA**

Show 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

**October 21, 2017, North Shore Model Railroad Club,  
American Civic Center, Main St., Wakefield MA**

Show 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

**October 28-29, 2017, Southshore Model Railroad Club,  
19 Fort Hill St., Hingham, MA**

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

**November ?, 2017, Wellesley Community Train Show,  
219 Washington St., Wellesley, MA**

Show 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

**November ?, 2017, Metro South Train Show, Temple  
Beth, 671 North Main St., Randolph, MA**

Show 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

**November 18-19, 2017, Greenberg's Train and Toy  
Show, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington MA**

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

**December 2-3, 2017, NMRA HUB Div Model Train Show,  
Best Western Royal Plaza Trade Center, Marlboro, MA**

Show Sat & Sun 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

**January 6-7, 2018, Greenberg's Train and Toy Show,  
Hanover Mall, Hanover, MA**

Show Sat & Sun 10:00 am to 4pm

**January 27-28, 2018, 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 17-18, 2018, American Heritage Museum, 33  
Marrett Rd., Lexington MA**

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

**March ??-??, 2018, Southshore, 19 Fort Hill St.,  
Hingham, MA**

Show

**March 17-18, 2018, 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 ??, 2018, Hooksett Lions Model Train Show,  
Crawley Middle School, Hooksett NH**

Show 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

## 2017-2018 NENTRak SHOW PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE

**Sept. 30 Oct. 1, 2017 Pepperell Siding Show, Varnum  
Brook Elementary School, Pepperell, MA**

Set-up: Sat 7:00am - Show 9:00am to 4:00pm

Show Sun 10:00 to 4:00 pm

Coordinator: **John Doehing - 978-433-6337**

**November 18-19, 2017 Great Train Expo, Shriners  
Auditorium, Wilmington, MA**

Set-up: Fri 1:00pm - 5:00pm - Sat 7:30am

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

Coordinator: **Frank Dignan - 508-866-9660**

**December 2-3, 2017 - NMRA HUB Division Model Train  
Show, Best Western Royal Plaza Trade Center,  
Marlborough, MA**

Coordinator: Rob Selberg (MaiNetrak)

**Jan 26-28, 2018 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 17-18, 2018 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 24,25, 2018 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 22, 2018 Hooksett Lions Club, Cawley Middle  
School, Hooksett, NH**

Set-up: 8:00am - Show 10:00am to 4:00pm

Coordinator: **Russell Putnam - 603-835-6952**

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

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with the various inventory acquired during the bankruptcy. Currently, Modelleisenbahn GmbH owns the Roco brand name, but bankruptcies can be complex, and the older Roco inventory might have ended up just about anywhere (perhaps Roco owed their lunch caterer some Euros?). Micro-Trains got in contact with whomever took ownership of this model and bought the inventory of unpainted bodies. It was one of Eric's minions who negotiated the deal and he was a little fuzzy on the details, but if I got it right, MTL acquired a pallet of these cars (but not the tooling) and will release them periodically as special and/or regular releases. I neglected to ask how many MTL acquired, so I cannot predict how many more we will see.

## Roco Helium Cars by GDM



Prototype: The 13 NASA helium cars were some of the heaviest cars ever made, weighing in at 240,300 pounds empty and had a 28,000 pound load limit. Built in 1961, these cars were initially used by the BLM (Bureau of Land Management) to transport helium from mines in Texas. Later, they found their niche servicing NASA Titan rockets and the Space Shuttle up until the last Shuttle flight in 2011. A few cars have been re-purposed for use in the Space X engine test complex outside McGregor, Texas. Eight other cars were transferred to California and are on lease to support the Space X Falcon 9 Launch Complex at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Model: This body style was created for Atlas by Roco in the late 1960s. Atlas released a series of four cars using this tooling in 1969. Atlas never did a second production run - presumably because it did not sell that well. 26 years later, E-R models contracted with Roco to produce a second run of these cars with the same road names as the Atlas run but with three new road numbers. For some reason, E-R did not re-run the Department of Mines paint scheme.

Again, these cars disappeared from the marketplace (other than eBay) for another 20 years. In 2016, Micro-Trains mysteriously produced a new run of this tooling with a Weathered NASA paint scheme as part of their NASA car series. This was followed up by another Micro-Trains Special run in 2017 of two glow-in-the-dark cars commissioned by Fred Hoxsie of the NSE.

These cars are rather unique in both the prototype and the N Scale world. So my curiosity was piqued at how a long-deceased manufacturer (Roco) suddenly started producing cars from a presumed lost tooling. So I asked Fred Hoxsie, "Where did you get these? I thought Roco was long gone and that their older toolings from the 1960s were long-lost." Fred responded "I haven't a clue - ask Eric." So I trotted over to the Micro-Trains booth at the NSE event in Pittsburgh and asked Eric Smith himself, "Hey Eric, where did these cars come from?".

Eric explained that whomever had acquired the assets of Roco when they went belly-up was not not sure what to do with the various inventory acquired during the bankruptcy. Currently, Modelleisenbahn GmbH owns the Roco brand name, but bankruptcies can be complex, and the older Roco inventory might have ended up just about anywhere (perhaps Roco owed their lunch caterer some Euros?). Micro-Trains got in contact with whomever took ownership of this model and bought the inventory of unpainted bodies. It was one of Eric's minions who negotiated the deal and he was a little fuzzy on the details, but if I got it right, MTL acquired a pallet of these cars (but not the tooling) and will release them periodically as special and/or regular releases. I neglected to ask how many MTL acquired, so I cannot predict how many more we will see.

## The Evolution of Rolling Stock Models by GDM



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## Maine Narrow Gauge by Rod Sweeny

The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad is dedicated to the preservation and operation of Maine's two foot gauge railway equipment.



### New Members

Christopher and Julie Franks  
65 Roanoke Road, Springfield, MA 01118  
414-324-3724 email: ducknshover@gmail.com

Both have built TTrak modules and are building a 3 x 6 layout together.

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Taking our scout troop out to Jackson, Wyoming for hiking up in the Tetons, we did see several long unit trains while in the Salt Lake area, but nothing picture worthy.

So what's next? Show season is beginning and only two short months away will be the Tour d' Chooch, and I'm looking forward to setting up an NTrak layout in the basement again, as well as actually being able to run trains on the main layout. Fay Chin has a full schedule with TTrak, and hearty congratulations to Roland and Peter for their big win at the National N Scale Convention.

And a final note on the passing of Bob Gatland. Although I only knew Bob as an occasional acquaintance, he was always friendly and ready to lend a helping hand, and I'm sure he will be missed.

Bob Fallier  
Sept. 2017

## Winterfest 2018 - T-TRAK by Fay Chin

The 4th Annual T-TRAK Convention will be held in conjunction with Northeast NTRAK Winterfest 2018. The T-TRAK Convention will feature a T-TRAK Module Contest along with the NTRAK model contest, photo contest, clinics, parade of train, and a Saturday evening banquet with the NTRAK group. To participate in the NTRAK activities, hotel discount, clinic, awards, door prizes, and banquet, we encourage you to register with Northeast NTRAK Winterfest 2018. T-TRAK participants (non-Winterfest registrant) must have a badge issued by the Amherst Railway Society (ARS) to gain entry to the show. Contact the T-TRAK Coordinator, prior to January 2018, for exhibitor badge and instructions. The T-TRAK activities and schedule will coincide with the NTRAK schedule. The T-TRAK layout will have 15-20 tables (30'x25') layout. For people who are unable to arrive on Friday for module setup, we will reserve space and easily fit your modules in before the show on Saturday. We anticipate the layout will be in the Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds, Young building at location 98. The ARS will post online the T-TRAK layout locations prior to the show.

### T-TRAK Modules

We encourage you to bring your best modules for our module contest. If you are planning to bring modules, please contact the T-TRAK layout Coordinator: Fay Chin at 978-604-0473 or email at ntrak@gmail.com as soon as possible to reserve your space. We plan to run DCC (Digitrax), so bring your DCC equipped motive power and wireless radio throttles. We can set up conventional DC power for those who do not own DCC equipment. Please join us for a fun and memorable time.