



BANTRAK Newsletter

Volume 24
Issue 2
February 2011

The Engineer's Cab

Martin Myers



I'll begin by thanking Alan for his dedicated service over the last two years. He made my job easy by only asking me to take the reins for one meeting. Much business was discussed at the January meeting. For those that could not attend, we designated funds for contribution to charity and discussed upcoming shows. Most importantly, Denise Clyde was elected as Second Vice President. Thanks to Dave for getting the changes up so quickly. Again, thanks to Arthur for hosting us.

The usual array of shows is coming up this year as well as a few additions. Next week's Timonium show gets the year started. Paul and Eric are coordinating the layout this year. Set up begins at 12:00 noon at the cow palace on Friday, Feb. 4th. With our normal level of participation, the layout should be ready to roll by dinnertime. ONETRAK is not planned for this show. Please try to attend set up if even for a portion of the afternoon. There's always something to do for everyone. Get requested run times in but don't be shy to just show up over the weekend. A decent representation for tear down on Sunday afternoon will get us all home for kick-off.

Next show will be the April Great Scale Model Train show at Timonium. Alan is coordinating.

All but our recent members will remember Bruce Tharpe. Bruce is rejoining the club. Bruce and I co-conspired to bring the first successful DCC installation to a BANTRAK layout way back in 2004. His present location in Oakland will probably limit his attendance at meetings but he has already proposed a layout set up in the Oakland Train station. Bruce is working with their train station Committee and the Mayor to help develop a train festival/show in Oakland. We discussed this at the January meeting. A date in mid to late May was proposed. John Darlington and Dave Clyde have volunteered to coordinate. Details will follow as they develop.

(Continued)

Inside this issue...

The Engineer's Cab	1
Feb. Great Scale Show Preview	2
Ballast Hoppers	3
New and Notable	5
DCC Corner.....	7
Website of the Month.....	8
BANTRAK Company Store	8
BANTRAK Time Machine	9
BANTRAK Call Board	10
BANTRAK Calendar	10

Next meeting...

Sunday, February 20th, 2011
2pm - 5pm
Host: Jack Walsh

On the web...

News, information, & forums are all at
<http://bantrak.net/>

Great Scale Model Train Show Preview (Feb. 2011)

Paul Diley (Coordinator)



The Layout for this coming weekend will be a little smaller than normal. The layout will be shaped like the letter "T" versus our regular "U" shaped set-up. Coordination has been a team effort, with lots of willing participants and assistance. The weather looks to be cold and maybe a little snow on Saturday, but Superbowl Sunday looks ok.

We will need lots of help setting up and breaking down. Set up is at noon on Friday while breakdown will probably start around 4pm on Sunday. Run slots will be available for sign up on Friday with preference going to those who are present and participating. If you are unable to help set-up on Friday, please call me (443-370-6653) with your request.

List of Members bring modules:

Tom H. 2'

Alan 8' + 3' corner

Tim 4' + 3' corner

Dave/Denise 8'

Skip 4'

Martin 8' + (2) 2' modules

Mark 4'

Al P. 4'

See you all Friday!

Paul



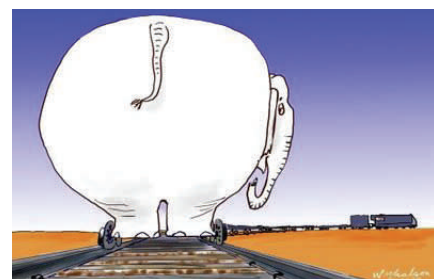
SPECIAL FEATURES Feb. 5-6

Don Reed of Micro-Scale, located just to the left inside the main entrance, will be demonstrating laser technology as applied to model railroading and offers **FREE OF CHARGE** to cut out any parts you may bring with you!

New! Scenery and tree-making clinics by Bob Geldmacher of Four County Society -

11 am Scenery from start to finish

1 pm Trees, Trees, Trees



Don't Forget about the White Elephant (consignment) table. It is easy to put things up for sale and you can always find items there on your "bucket list".

Ballast Hoppers (From the Scratch & Dent Bin)

Ralph Grutzmacher



I have recently taken an interest in maintenance of way and wreck equipment. Some modelers refer to MOW equipment as “eye candy” because it doesn’t fit in with legitimate model railroad operational environments. To some extent I have to agree, but MOW equipment is usually unique and interesting and out of the ordinary. Since most MOW equipment is adapted to purpose former revenue equipment, it provides at least a one generation backward glance at the railroad’s rolling stock roster. As eye candy, some old MOW equipment can be parked on a siding awaiting its call into service. For public display layouts, a short MOW train can add some operating interest and educational/discussion value. Best of all, since MOW equipment is old and dirty, it can provide new life to all of that old junk with the wrong road names that you don’t really know what to do with.

My first project is a set of ballast hoppers. Ballast hoppers come in many configurations, but they are basically two bay hoppers with some sort of longitudinal/side discharge gates to drop ballast on the rails to be dressed by spreaders.

Walthers makes a very nice ballast hopper (photo) and I found several 4-bay hoppers in my pile of dollar cars that were the same length and height



and had a similar framing pattern. Atlas and others make a 90 ton hopper that is similar, but it is higher and longer the ballast hopper. The one I found best suited were made by AHM and old Atlas (Austrian.)

This photo shows one lettered for the Soo Line that has had its wheels and bottom weight removed and ready



for cutting. I used a razor saw to cut the 8 hopper doors off of the bottom and flush with the side sills of the car. I tried a cutting wheel, but that made an uneven mess of things. Use a grinding or sanding wheel to dress up the bottom.

This photo shows the car from the bottom after the hopper doors have been removed.



The 8 rectangular holes in the car bottom need to be dealt with and the discharge chutes need a place to be attached. My solution was to glue a piece of 0.020 inch styrene directly to the bottom of the car from the outside.

Ballast Hoppers (*continued*)

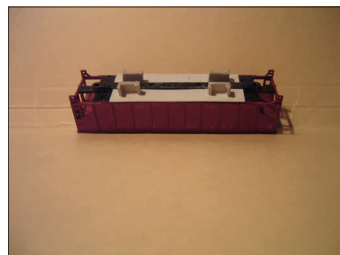
Ralph Grutzmacher



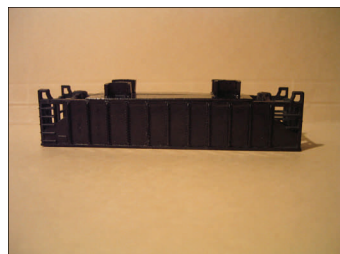
These photo's show the result from the inside and the outside. Styrene H channels ¼ of an inch long were glued in line with the wheels and tracks.



This photo shows the discharge hoppers prior to painting.



Finally, the car is painted (in my case Northern Pacific grime black) and is ready for decals and new wheelsets.



I had a few mishaps along the way, but this project was well within my abilities and produced a set of 4 ballast hoppers that can be used by themselves or in conjunction with a few cars carrying ties to rebuild a section of track somewhere, or in conjunction with a wreck recovery train to build a temporary track around a wreck site. I am still trying to figure out how deep I will be going into the MOW end of the pool, but the idea is to have a set of cars that can mixed together into different kinds of MOW trains with the same color schemes. My NP equipment will be black, but my generic equipment will be silver because it just shows the details better from a distance.

Ralph

Engineer's Cab *(continued)*

Martin Myers



The first half of this year will end with what I believe to be a huge endeavor. Along with N Scale Enthusiast and Capital PenNScalers, we will be presenting this year's National N Scale Convention located in Hershey, Pa. June 22-26, 2011. Skip is this year's Convention Chairperson. Information can be found on the convention [web site](#).

Two NTRAK layouts will be set up. We have room for 20 plus member modules in the current plan. Contact me about module participation and run times. This is our chance to show off our best trains and modeling to N scale enthusiasts from around the world. Setup will begin at 5:00 pm on June 21st. This is the day before the official convention opens on the 22nd. The 21st offers the chance to visit Todd Treaster's home layout as well as tour Standard Steel. Standard steel is a working steel industry manufacturing wheels for trains starting from the raw material to finish.

John is coordinating the Model Contest. Don't miss this chance to show off your work. Alan is scheduling clinics. There's always something new to learn. Tim is handling the public show. He will need members to volunteer some time to sell tickets as well as keep track of conventioners entering during the non-public portions of the convention.

All participants will need to register to participate. Membership in the N Scale Enthusiast is not required. Hershey is about 80 miles from central Baltimore. Information about accommodations, schedules, and extra fare items can be found on the web site.

Martin

New & Notable: Membership

Tim Nixon, Treasurer / Al Palewicz, Membership



It's that time of year again...

Here is your [2011 BANTRAK Dues Invoice](#).

After discussions with the other officers, we have decided to shorten the collection period a bit this year; instead of collecting dues through the April meeting, the cut-off date this year will be the March meeting (Sunday March 20th). Club members can pay by check or cash in person (exact change please); We will collect dues in person at the February and March meetings, and at the February Scale show, or you can mail them in anytime.

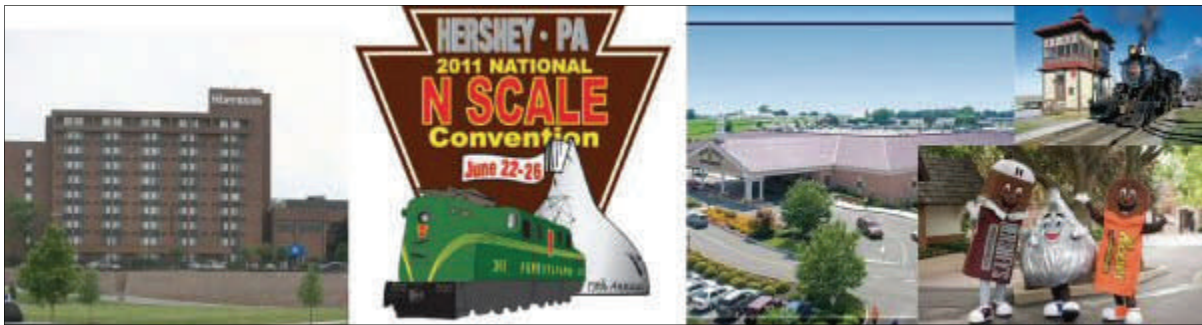
If there are questions, please let us know.

Al & Tim



New & Notable: National N Scale Convention 2011

For more information contact trainbyskip@yahoo.com



Hershey, Pennsylvania, June 22-26 2011

Presented by **Baltimore Area N-Trak "BANTRAK"**, **Capital PenNScalers** and the **N Scale Enthusiast (NSE)**

With a central location in Pennsylvania, the convention hotel is close to one of the greatest selections of railroads and railroad history in all of America.

BANTRAK Members are eligible for a small discount (a Club benefit for assisting with the convention). [Register for the Convention](#) and make plans to attend this summer !!!

New & Notable: 2011 N Scale Weekend (7th Annual)

For more information contact nscaleweekend@yahoo.com

N-Scale Model Trains & Supplies

**TEXNRAILS, HB PETERSON, WINGARD'S TRAINS, MIKE BENCS, THE N-CELLAR,
BOSTON & ALBANY HOBBIES, N&O TRAINS, DETRICH ENTERPRISE,
KENRAY MODELS, ABH MODEL TRAINS FRED-EOT, DELUXE INNOVATIONS**

15+ Large Operating N-Scale Train Layouts

**BALTIMORE AREA N-TRAK, NORTHERN VIRGINIA NTRAK, TWIN TIERS N-TRAK,
JERSEY CENTRAL N-TRACK
CAPITOL PENNSCALERS N-TRAK, CENTRAL OHIO N-TRAK. STEEL CITY N-SCALE,
ROCK SPRING STATION,
THREE RIVERS ASSOCIATES N-TRAK, KEYSTONE N-TRAK, NEW JERSEY SOUTHERN N-TRAK,
CANTINGTON N-TRAK
GENESEE & ONTARIO MODEL N-GINEERS, PITTSBURGH LITE TRAK,
& BEDFORD MODEL RAILROADERS**



New & Notable: Bantrak.org

Dave Clyde, Webmaster



Email the [webmaster](#) today !!!

during the past 4-6 weeks, several new updates have been made to the website. I'd like to pass along a brief note of each.

1. 01/15/2011 - Updated the Festival of Trains Show Review.
2. 01/15/2011 - The January Newsletter is now available.
3. 01/13/2011 - Updated the Recent History section.
4. 01/13/2011 - Updated the club officers contact us page.
5. 01/03/2011 - Added the Raffle Layout winner information.
6. 01/02/2011 - Added 2011 Upcoming Events.
7. 01/01/2011 - Added Picture Gallery of the B&O Festival of Trains 2011.
8. 01/01/2011 - Added Skip's Wild West Topper to the Club Modules Page.
9. 12/15/2010 - Modifications for new year (2011).
10. 12/13/2010 - The December Newsletter is now available.

DCC Corner: (Exploring Digital Command Control)



Email the [editor](#) and suggest a DCC topic !!!

Troubleshooting DCC: [6 Categories of DCC Problems](#)

- Track Problems
- Command Station / Booster Problems
- LocoNet Problems
- Throttle Problems
- Radio Problems
- Status Editing Issues



Website of the Month: **Micro-Mark**

Email the editor and recommend a site !!!

Do you need hard to find mini-tools and model building supplies? Then you're in luck this month! Be sure to click on the link and check out Micro-Mark to find what you're looking for: [Micro-Mark](#).

Requesting a **FREE** catalogue is easy, simply click [here](#).



BANTRAK: **Company Store**

For more information contact treasurer@bantrak.net

Baltimore Area N-Trak presents a special run of a 40' standard box car with a single Youngstown door. Road #466008 has the B&O logo, and road #52008 has the BANTRAK logo. We are pleased to commemorate our 25 years in modular N-scale railroading by offering this commemorative two-pack.



Building a module or rescuing an old one? Get your wire harness. It doesn't get easier than this. Color coded / pre-installed power poles included.





*Here is a copy of the Oct 1984 newsletter - the major item here is the paragraph on the Greenberg corners and our participation in the Dec Greenberg Show. This is the group's **FIRST** venture into N-TRAK. Notice in the paragraph that there is no actual mention of N-TRAK. Jack*

GREATER BALTIMORE N-SCALE ROUND ROBIN GROUP October 6, 1984

Dear N-Friends:

There was quite a turnout (12 people) for the June 3 meeting at the home of Fred and Polly Valley. Since then they have purchased and moved to a promising train room **surrounded** and protected by a pleasant ranch house at 5802 Hanna Road, Eldersburg., Md. 21784; phone number 795-6774. Don't forget to make this change on your copy of the roster. Jerry Mulford has also moved. He is now at 3516 Wagon Train Road, Baltimore, Md. 21220; phone number 335-7748.

Plans are firming up for our participation in the Greenberg meet at Timonium on Dec. 8 and 9. I have sent off for prefabricated module benchwork and wiring harnesses for two 2'x4' modules. Ralph Grutzmacher has pledged his two modules, so that with Greenberg's four corner modules we should have a respectable layout for the meet. I am going to visit the surplus Sykesville firehouse—bought by Bruce Greenberg for storage—this week so as to inspect the four corners and generally get the feel of things. You are invited to join in the undertaking with or without a module...it certainly is a great opportunity to display favorite trains to the public, and you will be given a special badge guaranteeing you free admission.

Our first-of-the-season meeting will be at Phil Peters' on Sunday, October 21. The Ellicott City Scale Model RR Assn. show will take place at the Howard County fairgrounds off 270 'Vest on that same weekend—October 20-21, 10 to 4 both days. This is only 15 minutes from Phil's place, very convenient as our event won't start before 2 pm. Please bring a show-and-tell and—if you can—a book to add to the Grutzmacher Revolving Library. Map enclosed.

Wayne Morrow has laid 'his entire new pike with Peco, and reports the turnouts are doing fine. However, he has not yet undertaken the rigors of the under-the-table switch machines, and is operating the turnouts manually. Peco, I find, does make a Code 80 turnout which matches satisfactorily with the Atlas Code 83 track, thus eliminating one of the standard objections to Peco.

It was with great sadness that I learned from Bob Mohr that Ed Goldie, one of the group's founding members, has passed away. Bright and cheerful, interested and interesting, he will be remembered for his contributions.

I did a bit of--rail-fanning, this summer. Did you know that if you follow Route 40 west out of Baltimore, pass under the Beltway and down the long hill to the Patapsco River, just beyond the river as the road rises to do battle with the 200-foot hill on the west side, you will pass directly over a tunnel... It's worth seeing. Pull into the Patapsco State Park, and, shod with sturdy shoes, make the descent on the yellow ribbon trail to track level. Unlike the tunnel at Ilchester this one is on a curve and is highly photogenic.

Uncle Pep is one of a rare and dying breed. Relative of one of my fellow teachers, this imposing yet retiring personage was one of the legendary heroes who drove B&O's "Big Sixes" (2-10-2's) up and down the famous Sand Patch Grade on the Pittsburgh Division. Armed with a battery of questions and my tape recorder, I made a pilgrimage to his home in Connelsville, Pa. You'll hear some of his anecdotes on Oct. 2!!!!

GENE



BANTRAK Call Board

(Activities & Events of BANTRAK Club Members)

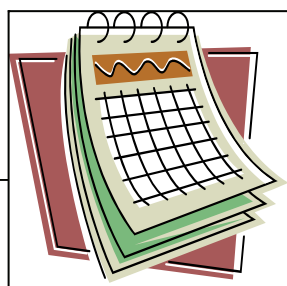
Email the [editor](#) with your info !!!

● Run Session
February 20th, Noon-2pm
RSVP Contact [Jack Walsh](#)

● PRRT&HS D.C. Chapter Meeting
March 6th, afternoon
RSVP Contact [Jack Walsh](#)

● NMRA Ches. Div. Meeting
February 27th, 2pm-4pm
RSVP Contact [Arthur Boyd](#)

● OP's Session
March 20th, 9am-Noon
RSVP Contact [Eric Payne](#)



BANTRAK Calendar



2/4~2/6/2011.....[Great Scale Model Train Show](#), Timonium, MD.

4/9~4/10/2011.....[Great Scale Model Train Show](#), Timonium, MD.

.....(May / TBD)Train Festival, Oakland, MD.

6/21~6/26/2011.....[N-Scale Convention](#), Harrisburg/Hershey, PA.

8/26~8/28/2011.....[Bedford N-Scale Weekend](#), Everett, PA.

10/28~10/30/2011.....[Great Scale Model Train Show](#), Timonium, MD.

.....(TBD)Turf Valley Model Train Show, Ellicott City, MD.

.....(TBD)[B&O Museum Festival of Trains](#), Baltimore, MD.

BANTRAK was founded in 1983 as the Greater Baltimore N-Scale Associates. Begun as a "round robin" group to share skills and experiences, we have expanded our focus to include participation in many diverse activities to promote model railroading in general and N-Scale model railroading in particular. Activities include participation in local, regional and national shows, meets and conventions. BANTRAK membership includes membership in the national NTRAK organization.



The BANTRAK Newsletter is the official publication of the Baltimore Area N-TRAK organization.

This is your newsletter! Please send articles, photos, and suggestions to newsletter@bantrak.net.

Editor: Eric Payne