



# BANTRAK Newsletter

Volume 25, Issue 3  
March 2012

## The Engineer's Cab

Eric Payne



Greetings,

And say hello to March! Winter is behind us and Springtime promises some nice weather and opportunities to get out and enjoy the weather (a work session in the driveway or side-porch is always fun). March has us lined up for the Club Meeting as well as the NMRA Mini-Con (see Alan Del Gaudio's preview) and some T-Trak running as well (check the Bantrak Calendar). Jack Walsh is hosting the meeting (see roster for address) and be sure to arrive early or plan to stay late and enjoy his PRR inspired N Scale layout and memorabilia collection.

Current agenda items for the March Club Meeting include:

- Show & Tell (items you just bought, created or found)
- Show previews - NMRA Mini-Con / T-Trak / April GSMTS (Al Del Gaudio, Ed Hyland, Paul Diley)
- Old Club Business - Trailer Committee updates (Skip Hayes, John Hale, Dave Clyde, Tim Nixon)
- Old Club Business - Club Car Committee updates (Bob Mohr)
- Old Club Business - F.A.Q.'s (Eric Payne, Denise Clyde, Tim Nixon)
- New Club Business - VP nomination process discussion (Tim Nixon, Al Palewicz)

As a quick note, one hour prior to the meeting's traditional 2pm start there will be a question & answer discussion about some typical BANTRAK F.A.Q.'s. An update of the document was requested by a few Club Members to provide all Club Members a document describing the way BANTRAK typically operates on an event by event and year in, year out basis. Be sure to stop by early and provide input and join the discussion. Topics will include a general overview, specific answers (if needed), and a Show Coordinator procedure review. A final summary will be discussed briefly and posted to the web-site (Members Area) by April at the latest.

Current immediate Club needs include a June/July/August Meeting host. Committee members are also needed for the Club Car project (contact Bob Mohr). If you aren't already involved with a Club project or Show, please help out and assist if you can. **More hands = less work.**

Finally, if you haven't paid your 2012 Club Dues, be sure to settle up with Tim at the meeting. Any questions regarding dues should be directed to Treasurer, Tim Nixon. So, overall, 2012 is shaping up nicely. Stay tuned and remember, "Keep It Fun".

*Eric*

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### *Next meeting...*

Sunday, March 18th, 2012  
2pm - 5pm  
Host: Jack Walsh  
(see roster for directions)



# NMRA Mini-Con: March Preview

Al Del Gaudio



On Saturday, March 31, BANTRAK will be displaying both N and T Trak modular layouts at the local NMRA Mini-Convention. The Chesapeake and Potomac NMRA divisions are co-sponsoring the biannual event in Columbia Maryland. Mini-Con is a 1-day event starting at 8:30 AM.

We'll be setting up a 14 x 26 foot N-Trak layout and a 14 x 10 foot T-Trak layout in our allotted 14 x 40 foot space.

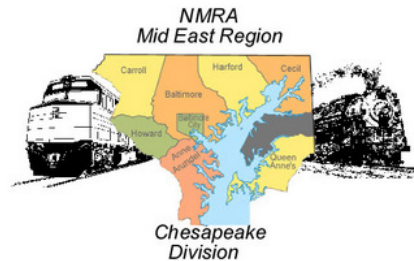
For N-Trak, this is a trailer-less show. All pledged modules are coming from our members except for 3 corners and the duck-under bridge. Bob Mohr's Davidson City module set will be presented in all it glory in what may be the last time [or maybe the annual last time J] it's displayed. The multi-track Red and Yellow lines in the station will serve as set-up tracks, the Blue line will be set up on the bridge.

Ed Hyland is coordinating the T-Trak layout. The other coordinators aside from Ed and myself are Bob Mohr and John Darlington.

We will start set up on Friday between 8:15 and 8:30 PM. The church has several functions that will end at our set-up time. We could use some help. We have the modules set for this size layout with the track plan to be sent around later in the week, in time for our March 18 meeting. We'll make a friendly run schedule.

Members from BANTRAK may attend for the same \$10 registration fee NMRA members pay. Wear your BANTRAK shirt and or hat. Registration starts at 8:30 AM.

The event location is the South Columbia Baptist Church, which is 50 feet west of Broken Land Parkway on Guilford Road. If you're zooming in on a map, look for Rt. 32 between Rt. 29 and I-95. Guilford Road is just south of 32.



*Al*



# NMRA Mini-Con: March Preview (cont.)

Al Del Gaudio



Excerpt from Potomac Flyer March/April Newsletter

*At*

POTOMAC FLYER - QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC DIVISION, MID-EASTERN REGION, NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

## Annual Division Minicon, 2012

### MARTY McGUIRK and BRIAN SHERON

One of the highlights of the Potomac Division year is the annual one-day Minicon. This year the Minicon is being held in conjunction with the Chesapeake Division, offering members of both groups to meet old friends and make new ones as we share a day of model railroading and fellowship.

**When:** March 31, 2012. Registration Opens at 8:30 am with the first clinic at 9:00.

**Where:** South Columbia Baptist Church  
8814 Guilford Rd., off MD Rt. 32 & Brokenland Pkwy.

Registration fee remains at \$10.

This year there will be one main clinic room, and a smaller room for a "hands on" clinic. A total of four clinic sessions in a variety of subject areas will be offered. We even have one "remote" clinic planned. Jimmy Simmons, who took 2nd place in the structures category at the 2011 NMRA National Contest, will present a clinic on his structure weathering techniques. You'll be able to see Jimmy's clinic, but he'll be in San Diego, presenting his clinic remotely. It should be interesting. The clinic schedule is printed on the next page.

As in any event of this nature, there will be Achievement Program opportunities and model judging contests to enter.

The upcoming Minicon will include a "Celebration of Models" room again this year. If you have either a model you would like to display and let others see, or if you have a model that you would like merit-judged, please bring them with you to the convention. Also, so we can make sure we have enough tables and judges, if you could let Brian Sheron know if you plan to bring any models. Brian can be reached at BWSheron@mac.com, or you can call him evenings at 301-349-5754.

Once the judging is complete, the room will be open for members and visitors to see the models. We currently plan for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards to be given for the merit-judged models based on the judging points received.

Three modular layouts will be featured at the Minicon: BANTRAK, Baltimore's NTrak organization and its T-TRAK division, the

tabletop modular group. Also, the N scale division of MARRS, railroaders active in the Fort Meade and Laurel area have confirmed they will be setting up a modular layout for the Minicon.

Since there aren't any restaurants located close to the church, a lunch will be available for a nominal fee on site, or members may wish to pack their own lunches.

Check the division web site:

[http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac\\_NMRA/](http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac_NMRA/)  
for updated information. For now, save March 31. We look forward to seeing many of you there!

### Report of the Nominating Committee

In the Winter issue of the Potomac Flyer, Superintendent Marshall Abrams in his Business Car column announced that nominations were open for the five elected positions on the Potomac Division Board of Directors. He also announced that Tom Brodrick and Brian Sheron would constitute the Nominating Committee. Nominations had to be submitted 30 days before the Potomac Division annual business meeting, which will take place at the March 31 Minicon. Nominations were therefore closed on February 29<sup>th</sup>. As of February 29<sup>th</sup>, the nominations submitted were for the current 5 incumbent members. No new nominations were received.

The current Board members and nominees are:

Marshall Abrams  
Bill Day  
Brian Sheron  
Mike White  
Andrew Dodge

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Brodrick and Brian Sheron, Potomac  
Division 2012 Nominating Committee





# NMRA Mini-Con: March Preview (cont.)

Al Del Gaudio



Excerpt from Potomac Flyer March/April Newsletter

*Al*

POTOMAC FLYER - QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC DIVISION, MID-EASTERN REGION, NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

## MiniCon: March 31, 2012

### Clinic Schedule

TIME	Track 1	Track 2
9:00 - 10:00	Realistic Model Railroad Photography, Part II Fred Lagno	Styrene Structure Make and Take - Clint Hyde
10:30 - 11:30	B&O's Baltimore Harbor Marine Operations - John Teichmoeller	
1:00 - 2:00	Intro to 2-rail O scale and Preserving Heritage Layouts - David Vaughn	
2:30 - 3:30	Remote Clinic: Structure Building Techniques with Jimmy Simmons, San Diego, CA.	

### CLINIC DESCRIPTIONS:

**REALISTIC MODEL RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHY, PART II**, Fred Lagno: A continuation of Fred's popular Part I Clinic of the same name. Fred will address modeling, model selection and the types of details that contribute to a realistic scene.

**THE B&O's MARINE OPERATIONS IN BALTIMORE HARBOR - 100 YEARS ON THE WATER MORE OR LESS**, John Teichmoeller: This program covers the various aspects of the B&O's Baltimore Harbor marine activity including tugboats, carfloats, barges, sidewheel car ferries, transfer bridges and a little about daily operations. The B&O's on-the-water activities in Baltimore Harbor lasted for almost exactly 100 years. Where possible, modeling applications will also be shown.

**INTRODUCTION TO TWO-RAIL O SCALE AND PRESERVING HERITAGE LAYOUTS**, David Vaughn: This clinic will introduce you to the current state of two-rail O scale modeling - models, sources, and resources. In addition, David will share his experiences preserving heritage layouts and how to assess the practicality of disassembling, moving, adapting, updating and reassembling a preexisting layout.

**STYRENE STRUCTURE MAKE AND TAKE**, Clint Hyde: Scratchbuild a WW&F whistle-stop passenger station in styrene. Comes with all parts, drawings, and training on working this material. Slight charge for materials, payable day of the clinic.

**TECHNIQUES FOR WEATHERING WOOD AND BRICK STRUCTURES**, Jimmy Simmons, Remote Clinic. Jimmy took second place in the Structures Category at the 2011 NMRA National and will share his tips and techniques for building and weathering structures.

### Main Auditorium Activities

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:30 - 4:00	Modular Layouts
11:45 - 1:00	Lunch and Business Meeting
8:30 - 4:00	White Elephant Sale

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# Great Scale Model Train Show: April Preview

Paul Diley



Here is some basic information we know so far.

Set up is scheduled for Friday, April 13th at noon in Timonium. The last Timonium show set up went fast, as we are hoping for the same in April. Skip should have the trailer at the show by noon and work on set-up should start soon after. A gentle reminder for all Club members; During BANTRAK Club set up, Club items like Trailer/Yard/Corner/DCC/Layout leveling/Rail joiners should be done before personal items such as modules and vendor tables, etc.



Chris and I are still finalizing the participating N-Trak and T-Trak modules, as well as juggling available tables and space.

Run slots will be available for sign up on Friday. There is a quick Club Meeting on Sunday afternoon then tear down should start around 3:30pm.

Thanks to every one who has responded so far. More information will be in the next newsletter.

Let's hope for good weather all weekend.

*Paul*





# A Steel Mill in Monterrey: Saving the Sleeping Giant

Eric Payne



Recently, I travelled to Monterrey, Mexico on business. The location was chosen for the climate, however, the city has a reputation that is less that flattering because of ongoing, drug related violence centered in the region.

As you can imagine, my local host wanted to dispel any of our groups misconceived notions and took full advantage of the warm weather to plan a three hour walking tour of a well known local park, centrally located in Monterrey, the industrial capital of Mexico; Fundidora Park.

The park is located on the grounds of an old steel mill, which was decommissioned in 1986. In recent years, the park has been transformed by the local government as a centerpiece for the city. Many of the old steel mill buildings were “turned into” civic oriented centers and destinations (libraries, museums, arenas, theaters, etc.) While the centerpiece (a furnace and support buildings) were refurbished into a world-class museum for historical reference.

Monterrey, Mexico has a city center much like San Antonio, Texas. In fact, San Antonio’s famed River Walk is based on a similar one in Monterrey. Imagine my wonder, as a “no-nothing” tourist, riding on a boat ride on the River Walk and then seeing this grand, old, historical Steel Mill rise in the distance. To say it got my attention is an understatement!

The local park name “Fundidora Park” pays tribute to the foundries original heritage. As I toured the museum, which included an elevator ride “to the top” I was impressed how this park in Monterrey made great use of the land, and maintained the local heritage, all at the same time.

I took many pictures while visiting the museum (can you guess what MY March Show & Tell will be) and won’t even begin to try and describe all the history of the location in these pages. (more information can be found on your favorite search engines or here <http://www.parquefundidora.org/en>).

I CAN tell you that my impression of Monterrey has changed significantly. In the past, I viewed Monterrey as a city overcome by violence and in general “a place where you don’t go out at night”. Travelling and sight seeing around the city showed me that while I still probably shouldn’t go out at night by myself, the City, like all major cities around the world, is definitely alive and well with it’s own culture and history!

*Eric*



*The Fundidora Steel Mill*



*One of the transfer cars (note: it is only “half” a car)*



*One of two saved engines with the iconic Monterrey Mountains in the background, at dusk.*

## News & Notable: 2012 NMRA Convention (77th Annual)



We are **The Grand Rapids Model Railroad Historical Society**, established in 1992. We currently reside in a beautiful Craftsman Style structure built by the state of Michigan in 1914 as a fish hatchery. We acquired the building in 1994 and in 1996 began constructing our version of the Pere Marquette Ry. System circa 1945.

We are joined by a group of dedicated modelers from all across Michigan in our quest to bring you a convention you will remember fondly for years to come.

There are many levels and areas of talent on our team and with this blend we will strive to provide you with the most enjoyable experience you can have at an NMRA National Convention.

We believe that the number of great layouts we have in a concentrated area is only one of the many reasons that **Grand Rails 2012** will be more than just another National Convention. Visit us online at [www.gr2012.org](http://www.gr2012.org).

[Contact us](#) today for more information.

## News & Notable: 2012 N Scale Convention (20th Annual)



2012 NATIONAL N SCALE CONVENTION  
**MEDFORD, OREGON**  
20th N Scale Enthusiast Convention  
**TUESDAY, JUNE 26 TO  
SUNDAY, JULY 1, 2012**  
CHECK OUR WEB SITE FOR MORE DETAIL  
Contact Dick Ollendorf, Convention Chairman  
(610) 923-7535 [Dick@NScaleCollector.com](mailto:Dick@NScaleCollector.com)

Visit us online at [www.NationalNScaleConvention.com](http://www.NationalNScaleConvention.com)



# New & Notable: Bantrak.org

Dave Clyde, Webmaster



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

*Dave*

1. 02/19/2012 - Corrected the Contact Us page to reflect the change of club officers.
2. 02/08/2012 - The February Newsletter is now available.
3. 01/06/2012 - The January Newsletter is now available.



Have an idea for new/updated web content?

Contact the Webmaster with your ideas!

*Email the webmaster today !!!*

# New & Notable: Membership

Al Palewicz, Membership



Please contact Treasurer Tim Nixon for more information on your membership status and roster questions

BANTRAK is a division of N-Trak. Be sure to check out the latest N-Trak newsletter !  
To view the January/February N-TRAK newsletter, click here  
([www.ntrak.org/Newsletter/NL-JF12Clr-Opt.pdf](http://www.ntrak.org/Newsletter/NL-JF12Clr-Opt.pdf))



## Club Member Benefits

- Sharing of your knowledge (railroading & modeling) with others of similar interests
- Access to railroading and modeling knowledge of other members
- National exposure and recognition of your endeavors in modeling
- Hands on activities:  
Club modules - track, wiring and scenery  
Raffle layout - track and scenery  
Members' layouts - whatever's asked
- Recognition as being part of a Nationally known club
- Purchase of surplus club property & access to group discounts





# DCC Corner: UR92 Duplex Radio Transceiver (Exploring Digital Command Control)



## Features:

- \* Simplex Infrared Receiver For Digitrax Infra-Ready Throttles
- \* Duplex Radio (UR92), Simplex Radio (UR91) and/or InfraRed (UR90) Wireless Can Be Used Simultaneously On Any LocoNet Layout
- \* Range Is Approximately A 300 ft Diameter Circle
- \* Supports Up To 20 Digitrax Duplex Throttles At The Same Time
- \* Group Name Feature Allows Multiple Clubs To Run Independently In Close Proximity At Train Shows and Exhibitions
- \* Includes PS14 Power Supply
- \* Operates In The 2.4 GHz Band
- \* Only One UR92 Is Needed To Run Duplex On

## Digitrax Tech Support Depot



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



## Website of the Month: JMRI

Email the editor and recommend a site !!!

The [JMRI project](#) is building tools for model railroad computer control. We want it to be usable to as many people as possible, so we're building it in Java to run anywhere, and we're trying to make it independent of specific hardware systems.

JMRI is intended as a jumping-off point for hobbyists who want to control their layouts from a computer without having to create an entire system from scratch. JMRI provides several applications that are optimized for specific purposes. You can of course also write your own. For additional support, check out their [Yahoo Users Group](#).

### DecoderPro

A better tool for programming decoders. DecoderPro simplifies the job of configuring complicated DCC decoders by providing screens on which you can select the various options and values you want.

### PanelPro

Operating CRT based CTC control panels that reflects the real-time state of your railroad and let you control it - almost like a Prototype dispatcher!

### LocoNet Tools

A set of Digitrax LocoNet-specific tools:

- LocoNet monitor
- Slot monitor
- Packet source
- PM4 programmer
- BDL16 programmer
- SE8C programmer



## BANTRAK: 30th Anniversary Club Car

Any Club members with ideas or thoughts about the project should send me an email so that these may be taken into account prior to a proposal presentation to the membership.

Current sentiment is to go with a Fox Valley wagon top boxcar a la B&O. Nothing is decided and the committee has not met.

All interested parties are welcome to contribute. Target release would be Christmas season 2012. This would be slightly prior to the thirtieth anniversary of the first club meeting in January 1983.

If you can assist or are interested in volunteering to be on the committee, please contact Bob Mohr at a Club Meeting or Show.



# BANTRAK: Company Store



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.

*List Priced at \$69.95 (plus shipping and handling).*



Baltimore Area N-Trak currently has a limited supply of the 20th Anniversary Car Set. Presented in prototypical fashion, the commemorative set consists of the 1983-2003 two-car set presented on traditional brown boxcars featuring the Baltimore Belt Line herald in white.

*List Priced at \$35 (plus shipping and handling).*



Gray t-shirts with pocket having a full color BANTRAK logo on the back and a single color (green) logo on the front above the pocket.

*Prices are:*

<i>Large</i>	<i>\$12.25</i>
<i>X-Large</i>	<i>\$12.25</i>
<i>2X-Large</i>	<i>\$13.25</i>
<i>4X-Large</i>	<i>\$15.25</i>
<i>(plus shipping and handling)</i>	



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.

*List Priced at \$25 (plus shipping and handling).*



For more information contact [treasurer@bantrak.net](mailto:treasurer@bantrak.net)







Item from the March 1991 Greater Baltimore N-Scale Associates Newsletter.

*Jack Walsh*

## **Feb Meeting at Phil's:**

There was a good turnout at Phil's with 17 of our members showing up. The highlights were a first look at the LIFE-Like module with the track work done and ready for scenery and a how-to demonstration by Skip on how to make molds and how to use them with a new product called Liquid Plastic. We also were able to see Phil's new module and, of course, run his great layout.

## TOWERS

Final assembly of the towers themselves is currently being done. The circuitry is done at this point. It is hoped that the towers will be available for the B&O RR Museum event in order to test them out and see how they affect our unique method of operations. Paul, Bob, and John B. need to be thanked for their efforts on this project. (From the next newsletter we learn that the track detection circuits and the towers were given a baptism under fire and a few bugs were found - and corrected.

## C-CLAMPS (Sound familiar!)

It seems that clamps are like socks in the dryer. You know you put two or four in, but only one or three come out. Well, that is the way with our club clamps (and a few of our members, too). After each event, there appears to be fewer clamps than before. A request was made that each member bring FOUR clamps to each of the upcoming events. An interesting note is that most of the club's clamps are Gene's which he has let us use.

## BANTRAK: Classifieds

FOR SALE: Two (2), 1-Trak modules (being sold to make room for more trains!)

The modules are double tracked and feature a pair of crossovers. If you are interested, please contact Al DelGaudio.



*To list your classifieds, Email the editor*



# BANTRAK Call Board

(Activities & Events of BANTRAK Club Members)

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

**CHRS Susquehanna  
Limited**  
June 16th

**NMRA Chesapeake Div. Group Mtg.**  
Coming Soon  
Info Contact: Arthur Boyd

**Severna Park Model RR Club Open-  
house**  
May 5th

**Springfield 2013**  
January 26th & 27th  
Info Contact: Eric Payne

**BANTRAK Club Mtg.**  
Host / Location needed (various  
months)

## BANTRAK 2012 Calendar

*This is a listing of all N-Trak events. We have Monthly Meetings, Field Trips, 1-Trak and T-Trak events as well. Attend a meeting for a full list of events!!!*

3/18	Club Meeting	Columbia, Md
3/24	Gaithersburg	Gaithersburg, Md
3/31	NMRA MiniCon 12x24	Columbia, Md
4/7	Silver Spring	Silver Spring, Md
04/14 & 04/15	Great Scale Show 50x50	Timonium, Md
4/21	Gaithersburg	Gaithersburg, Md
5/5 or 5/6	Fieldtrip - SP Model Railroaders	Severna Park, Md
5/5	Silver Spring	Silver Spring, Md
5/12	Gaithersburg	Gaithersburg, Md
5/20	Bowie	Bowie, Md
5/20	Club Meeting	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.

**President:** Eric Payne

**Treasurer:** Tim Nixon

**Membership:** Al Palewicz



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](mailto:newsletter@bantrak.net).

Editor: Eric Payne