

BANTRAK Newsletter

Volume 25, Issue 4 **April 2012**

The Engineer's Cab

Eric Payne



Greetings,

And say hello to April! Spring is here and the warm weather is a welcome sight for many of us. March was full of activity and April has us lined up for more. Al and his team of coordinators did a fine job coordinating the NMRA Mini-Con (see his write-up a few pages down) and the Club also did some T-Trak running as well (check the BANTRAK Calendar for upcoming dates). The April meeting will be on the second Sunday this month (not the traditional third) and will be held in Timonium in conjunction with the GSMTS. Arrive on Sunday afternoon to walk the show and attend the meeting (2pm).

Current agenda items for the April Club Meeting include:

- Show & Tell (items you just bought, created or found)
- Show Reviews/Previews NMRA Mini-Con / T-Trak / April GSMTS (Al Del Gaudio, Ed Hyland, Paul Diley)
- Discussion: DCC Loconet Club Module upgrade project discussion (Martin Myers, Bob Mohr)
- Old Club Business update VP nomination process (Tim Nixon, Al Palewicz)
- Old Club Business update Trailer Committee update (Skip Hayes, John Hale, Dave Clyde, Tim Nixon)
- Old Club Business update Club Car Committee update (Bob Mohr)
- Old Club Business update Club Due's Committee update (Jack
- Old Club Business update F.A.Q.'s (Eric Payne)

Things are coming together nicely so far this year. We have had a h andful of shows & events, we have had good attendance at Club Meetings as well as some lively discussions. Club Improvement projects in the future look promising and the next few months hold some events (both old and new) that should allow us to showcase the Club like we always do.

One more PLEE for help... 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.

So, overall, as you can see, 2012 is shaping up nicely. Stay tuned and remember, "Keep It Fun".



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Next meeting...

Sunday, April 15th, 2012 2pm - 3pm Location: GSMTS @ Timonium





NMRA Mini-Con: March Review

Al Del Gaudio, Bob Mohr & Ed Hyland





BANTRAK was invited to attend the NMRA MiniCon, a 1-day convention of the Potomac and Chesapeake Divisions.

Set up started at 8:30 PM on Friday with modules form Mark Bandy, Bob Mohr, John Hasson, Tim Nixon, John Hale, Bob Winterbottom and myself. We had additional help in setting up from John Darlington, Andy Courtemanche and Eric Payne

as well as the Hylands, Pecks and Leon coming over to help in some of the stages.

While the original plan was for a 14 x 26 foot rectangle, more space became available so the rectangle was "squared off" somewhat to 18 x 22 feet. All went well with set up with no issues. Electrical check out was completed by 10:45.

Notable items:

- This layout was done without the trailer, no yard was included, only two blocks were used and this arrangement worked well for a nominal 80 foot linear run x 3 tracks.
- Two track boxes with 85 % of the joiner tracks and most of the yellow and longer ones were used.
- While running on Saturday went pretty smoothly, we noticed a lack of sufficient quantities of yellow and longer joiner tracks.
- Also, one of the corners, I think it's called Wilderness, is becoming difficult operationally with the weary homosote base sagging and some slight kinks in the tracks. My less than humble opinion is that it needs to be replaced, or in the current vernacular; it's toast, dude.

We had Amtrak new and old from Tim and Bob Mohr, Great Northern S2 with MicroTrains heavyweight passenger cars from Bob Winterbottom, Bob M's KCS executive train, a CSX mixed freight but mostly covered hoppers from John Hasson and a Reading mixed freight from John Darlington. Tim adventured with his BLMA spine cars. I ran a B&O passenger and an NYC Hudson powered heavyweight Pullman set early on with good results.

As far as the NMRA clinics, several of us attended the B&O harbor operations clinic and found it quite informative and I made it to a clinic on planning, building [and modifying] a layout presented by Marty McGuirk. It was interesting that Marty completely changed the layout shortly after completion to something more aesthetically pleasing and less complex. I know Jack Walsh partook in the scratch-building clinic using styrene sheet.

Well all good things must pass and we had the layout packed away within an hour [by 4:40] Many thanks to all that stayed to help from T-Trak.

T-Trak was very popular and there was a lot of modeling interest during the early hours.

Al & Bob

T Trak set up at 8.30 Friday night at South Columbia Baptist Church. The following helped set up: Ed, Chris and Pat Hyland, Jeff and Christian Peck, and Leon Sorel. It took us a little while because this was our first set up with DCC wiring, transmitters, and newly made modules with control panels. After doing some set up and discussing important model railroad topics, we left at 11.30.

Saturday morning we did operations with DCC on the inner track with several new modules. The Peck family supplied a two ft and four ft switching modules. The Hyland family provided a three ft. and four ft. switching modules. Plus a six ft yard. Leon had a single one ft module and Ed showed up on Saturday with his newly constructed 2 ft grout module. Operators through the day were the Hyland Clan, the Peck Clan, Leon, David Balderston, Conrail Ed, Cliff Enz. We had visits by Matt Guey Lee, and Jim Davis, president of NVNtrak.

Through the day, many tried running small freights and switching the various sidings. The DCC worked fine, except we need to know how to program the equipment faster. I attended the Baltimore Harbor/ B&O equipment workshop and found it quite informative. We observed MARRS layout and BANTRAK layouts with modules that had not been seen for a while and some that will be going into retirement.

We all had a great time at the show and much thanks to everyone!



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NMRA Mini-Con: (continued)

Al Del Gaudio, Bob Mohr & Ed Hyland



Pictorial Review from various sources (thanks to Tim and John for submitting pictures)











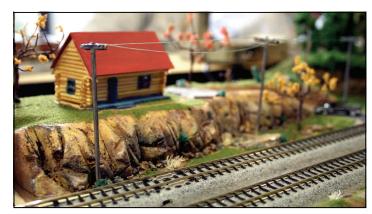
NMRA Mini-Con: (continued)

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NMRA Mini-Con: (continued)

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Pictorial Review from various sources (thanks to Tim and John for submitting pictures)









Gaithersburg Museum Train Day: March Review

Chris Hyland



BANTRAK started off it's monthly set up for the year at the Gaithersburg station on March 24th. In attendance were, Leon Sorel, Cliff Enz, David Balderston, Matt Whiting, Chris, Ed, and Pat Hyland. As the weather was wet and dreary all day we moved to inside the museum (the B&O freight house) to do the set up. We had two tables with 14 ft. of new modules provided by the Hyland's to test track and turnouts. These were built to be some of the modules used in NMRA minicon. We also practiced some of the switching techniques with our new DCC equipment.

On the whole the layout was a smashing success. We had

came even after we did tear down. One of the visitors was Matt Guey Lee, who helped with the DCC set up and to help unbug the thing to get it ready for the NMRA minicon. Once again this is always a fun show to

Feel free to drop in for our April events which are:

Silver Spring Station: April 7th.

Timonium Great Scale show: April 14th and 15th.

Gaithersburg: April 21st.



Silver Spring Station: April Review

Jeff Peck

BANTRAK arrived Saturday morning (April 7th) for set up. We used three six ft tables in our standard T formation with most of the same modules from NMRA mincon the week before. Modules furnished by the Peck's and Hyland's.

We ran an all DC layout to save time and noise in setting up the DCC operations. A local film crew showed up and wanted quiet while they were doing interviews inside the station.

Members in attendance were Jeff and Christian Peck, Ed and Chris Hyland, David Balderston, Matt Whiting, Cliff Enz. We had visits from members of the Vienna Model Railway club and Vincent, an ex NVNtrak member. We also had a visit from the last B&O station master and the Gaithersburg Model Railway society. The Glen Echo Barbershop quartet provided live music accompaniment.

We ran various Amtrak, Penn Central passenger trains, Several mixed freights (including a Crandic train). CSX provided live action on the Met Branch with many various freights and Amtrak. Metro also must have run a hundred subway sets by while we were there. Some odd ball equipment was seen in RF&P paint and Amtrak Material Handing cars re-lettered (but not repainted) for private freight firms.

Tear down was done in about 20 min to clear the station for a multiple children's birthday party. Our next set up is Timonium on the 13th-15th, followed by Gaithersburg on April 21st. Our shows in May open on the 5th at Silver Spring celebrating Cinco De Mayo (with lots of NdeM trains running) and Nation Train day at Gaithersburg on the 12th of May (No train day at Washington or Penn stations). Plan to finish May with Bowie Days on May 20th (Sunday).

See you at the shows.





Great Scale Model Train Show: April Preview

Paul Diley & Chris Hyland



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 but here is what we have so far:

Alan D. 8' + 3' club corner Skip 4' Alan P. 4' Mark 7' x 7' corner Dave 4' Al Pal. 8' John H 4' Eric 8' Paul 12'

We have a big space to setup and have room for more modules.

As far as table allocation goes, we have been able to take care of all sales table requests for this show (Jack, Alan D., Paul, Bob M., Jerry, Skip, and the Club)

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 2:00pm.

Thanks to every one who has responded so far. A show review will be in the next newsletter.

Let's hope for good weather all weekend.







Cumberland, Md: A Quick Drive-By

Eric Payne



On our recent drive to Ohio for the Easter Holidays, the family agreed to make a scheduled stop at Cumberland Maryland to stop in and say hello to the folks at the Western Maryland Scenic Railway as they prepared for their season to open in early May.

A quick shot through town and you immediately find the old Western Maryland station. Five minutes later, you can be at the shops and see their two prime movers, diesel #501 and steam engine #734.

More information can be found online at www.wmsr.com











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A Scenic Approach: Styrofoam & Red Rosin Paper

Al Del Gaudio



Recently, I made a mountainside with a long tunnel portal inside my new [HO] railroad. This is about 3 feet long bending around a 90 degree double 38/41" radii track curve. To do this, I first thought to make the mountain removable so as to access any errant trains inside. It turned it was unnecessary to remove it, so it was anchored in place. However the method to build it was different than what I've previously done.

Usually, I've stacked 1 or 2 inch thick Styrofoam and then contoured them with hot wire cutter and *Surefoam* tools and added rock castings, dirt, grass foliage and trees.

Since the mountain was to be up to 12 inches high, I thought I'd go bonkers stacking 6-7 pieces of 2" Styrofoam and contouring it over a 3 foot length. So a different method was attempted. Having talked with Howard Zane and seeing his layout on Allan Keller productions, I considered his technique of using red rosin paper and white glue.

Essentially Howard builds a web of cardboard then attaches the red rosin paper with hot glue. This is then coated with white glue and painted an earth color. Scenic materials are sprinkled on it and then larger foam shrubbery and trees are added with hot glue.

While planning the mountain to be removable, I figured a web of cardboard was not going to give me the rigidity. So I stacked many pieces of ¾ and 1" Styrofoam sheet vertically where I shaped them as a mountain front and cut the tunnel portal into each piece. (See Fig A)



I've been asked to give a presentation on this so to demonstrate the technique I made a small hillside.

Fig 1: First I shaped 8 pieces of 1" foam with the hot wire tool and glued them together using liquid nails [the projects tube that's safe for foam products] alternating these with smaller pieces of foam between them This saves material and makes use of what is otherwise scrap. You end up with a rigid Styrofoam backbone.



Fig 2: These Styrofoam ribs substitute for the vertical cardboard parts of Howard's web. Using hot glue, cardboard strips are attached as the horizontal elements.



Fig 3: Then a piece of red rosin paper is hot glued over this backbone. I started at the bottom and glued it along each row of cardboard strips. Once it's wrapped over the top and around the sides, I painted it with white glue.



Fig 4: Let's say, I slathered it with gobs of white glue mixed with dark brown paint to make the hard shell. This assembly was dried in front of a fan in about 90 minutes.



Fig 6: Plaster rock castings were attached using cell-uclay or paper Mache and again, the assembly dried in front of a fan [3 hours]. The castings were painted and...



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A Scenic Approach: (continued)_

Al Del Gaudio



Fig 8: more white glue was painted on with fine turf and grass added then misted with isopropyl alcohol. Matte medium was added with a pipette.

Larger pieces scenic foam [clusters and clump foliage] were hot -glued into place and then I used more matte medium to better lock them in place.



Fig 9: The hillside can be used either standing up or laying down.



If you want to add trees, with careful attention to where the Styrofoam web is in contact with the red rosin paper, you can land trees through the red rosin paper into the Styrofoam. Were one to only use the cardboard web, it may be the red rosin paper will not have the rigidity for the nail in the tree trunk.

What is also nice about using Styrofoam as the verticals is that you can use wider 2" pieces here and there in the backbone. This will allow one to cluster more trees in an area giving a more random look.

This mockup was made small enough to transport, but as in figure A, this technique can be used for much larger projects.









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 <u>www.gr2012.org</u>.

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

Visit us online at www.NationalNScaleConvention.com



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.



04/01/2012 - Made some minor corrections on the BANTRAK FAQ page.

- 2. 03/31/2012 Completed the FAQ page. 3. 03/18/2012 - Began development of the FAQs. 4. 03/12/2012 - The March Newsletter is now available



Have an idea for new/ updated web content?

Contact the Webmaster with your ideas!

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 March/April N-TRAK newsletter, click here

(http://ntrak.org/Newsletter/NL-12-05a.pdf)







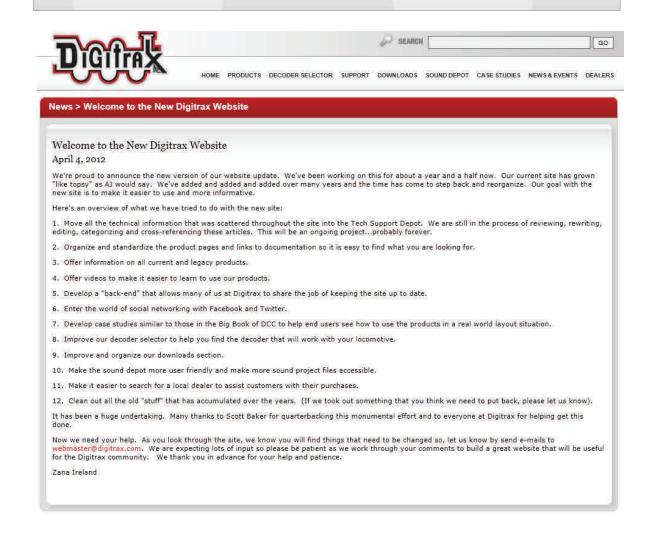
Club Member Benefits

- 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)



Welcome to the the new Digitrax, Inc. Website! Please feel free to explore all of the great new features! Complete overhaul of our support system, including videos and much more! Faster and easier browsing and searching of products, manuals, downloads, etc. Case studies similar to those in the Big Book of DCC. Central download section to make updating your products a snap! Find a dealer by zip code, name, state, or country! Social networking with Facebook & Twitter.





Website of the Month: Signs

Sources for Road Signs and Descriptions

These may be for Germany and Poland, but a lot of the traffic signs are used in the USA.

A good reference to print in N-scale and put on layouts.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Road signs in Poland

http://www.gettingaroundgermany.info/zeichen.shtml





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:

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



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).





Bantrak: Time Machine



Follow-up on the item from last month's Time Machine Bab Mohr

Follow-Up to the Feb Meeting at Phil's:

The Life-Like module came to be as a result of an idea pitched to Bill Moore at Life-like by Skip and Me. We offered as a Club to build a display module using all Life-like products assembled out of the box for use as an advertising medium by Life-like.

The module featured detachable end loops so it could be used as a free standing layout at train shows. With the end loops detached the module could be part of an N-Trak layout. The company gave us the go ahead and approved the budget (about \$80) and we delivered the unit. They were so impressed with it that they contracted with a company to build a sturdy packing crate for shipping it to shows. The crate cost many times more to build than the module it contained. The module made appearances at local and national shows until it was gored by an errant fork lift truck driver at the Pittsburgh convention.

The corpse was donated back to the Club and has seen new life as the module currently owned by Bob Winterbottom.





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.













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!!!

April 21st

Info Contact: Jack Walsh

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



This is your newsletter! Please send articles, photos, and suggestions to news

Editor: Eric Payne

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