

BANTRAK Newsletter

Volume 25, Issue 10 October 2012

The Engineer's Cab

Eric Payne



Greetings,

HELLO October. I have said it before, and I'll say it again!!! Wow this year is flying by! September was jam packed with T-Trak events. One of the reasons the newsletter is late is there are a LOT of reviews. Be sure to read them! October promises Raffle Work Sessions and a big October show @ Timonium. That should be a fun time. Contact Martin and Paul with your availability of modules and sales table requests. In other news, discussions exploring Incorporation of the Club as a potential first step toward 501c3 status are going well. The committee hopes to have a presentation (and potentially some proposals) at the October meeting. BE SURE TO ATTEND! It is VERY important to note the timing of this is not completely known and if you have any concerns, please feel free to reach out to me personally and I will do my best to answer any questions you have. Be sure to attend the next meeting for updates. Speaking of the October meeting, bring your wallet, the Club received a donation and items will be for sale.

The next meeting (3rd Sunday in October) will be hosted by John Cook at his house in Millersville. Contact John for directions and be sure to come on out early! As always, **DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR SHOW &** TELL!

Current agenda items for the October Club Meeting include:

- Show & Tell (items you just bought, created or found)
- Show Reviews/Previews N-Trak & T-Trak
- Club Business update
 - DCC Loconet Club Module upgrade project (Martin Myers)
 - Raffle Layout Committee (Martin Myers)
 - Club Car Committee update (Bob Mohr)
 - Club Organization update (Eric Payne)
 - Trailer Committee update (John Hale)
 - Smile Train Donation: (Eric Payne)
- Call for New Club Business

This month's newsletter features an article by John Darlington as he tackled an ElectroFrog issue. Another thing to check out is the creation of a Facebook page for the Club. Be sure to check out the link (page 11). Finally, as a reminder, Martin put out a call for modules for October, please reply to him with your availability Stay tuned and remember, "Keep It Fun".



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Next meeting...

Sunday, October 21, 2012, 2-5pm Location: John Cook's (contact John via email for address)

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Gaithersburg Old Towne Days: September Review

Chris Hyland



On Sunday September 16th, BANTrak's T Trak group undertook our second Gaithersburg Old Town Days. The event is different from our normal set ups at the Station. Old Town Days is one of the few large civic events that occurs in the city. The center of Gaithersburg becomes one large street festival with different civic organizations involved with the city, bands (the headline group was the Smithereens), artists and a host of other groups. That combined with a massive amount of food trucks makes for a huge amount of public visiting the layout. The perfect opportunity to talk about N scale and the club, and show who we are.

On the layout side we had a T shaped formation again, which tends to be one of our more favorite layout styles. Members in attendance and who brought modules were Leon, Mat Chibbaro, and the Hyland Clan. The layout ran smoothly with only a minor difficulty of an S curve being accidentally added into the layout plan which had to be corrected later in the day.

We had a decent crowd at the show. It was a bit lighter due to all the sports events going on. But with the most of the teams in Baltimore and Washington playing at the same time, turn out was not bad at all. This year was also good for the fact that we were not parked next to the speakers for the main stage and this meant that we could talk more than just between sets ("derailment on red". "what derailment on Fred?", "NO DERAILMENT ON RED!").

So for all who came out to see us and those members who braved the JNROTC checkpoints to get our cars to the right parking spaces: Thank you very much for an enjoyable time. We look forward to doing this again next year.

We have a double header at the end of September with two exciting locations at the same time. These should have already occurred by the time this goes to press. Bowie Days at the PRR tower in Bowie (also known as Huntington railroad museum) and a new event at the Germantown Historical Society in Germantown Maryland. This is right next to the rebuilt Baldwin Station used by MARC (or was it actually a Bandy station?) in the Historical Society's building.

October is going to be a busy month for us with an event virtually every weekend with an Oktoberfest in which we will have a all German themed layout in Gaithersburg, a field trip to New Jersey to run N scale subway and streetcars with East Penn Traction club, and something special for Timonium. So check the calendars and updates that get sent out as the month progresses.

As always,

Hope to see you at the shows!

Chris







Kensington: September Review

Chris Hyland



On September 8th and 9th, BANTRAK's T trak group took part in a new event. In conjunction with the National Capital Trackers and the Kensington Historical Society, a Train day was held at the Kensington Town Hall (The Old Armory)to help out with the continued operation of Noyes Children's Library in Kensington. The Library is a historic building that was one of the first public libraries (built 1893 by Baldwin) in Montgomery County and was converted to a children's library in the 1980's. As it is a specialized place it is always on the edge of being closed. The proceeds from the gate were used to help cover the operating costs of such a special place during the year and keeps the doors open. It also gave us a chance to operate in Kensington, my home town. Kensington Maryland has had a lot of railroading history. The town is home to one of the last wooden Baldwin stations on the B&O and at one point also operated a streetcar line that went from Chevy Chase to just north of the Town.

We did our initial set up on Friday. The Hyland clan provided all the modules for this event due to the distance from the site and also still working out the exactly the space allotted. We had two layouts running. One was a normal two 2 1/2 x6 foot table mainline layout with a switching district to allow for operations. The second was a simple t trak trolley loop on another 2x6 ft. table. We had both layouts up and running by 6pm on Friday. Most of the hall was filled by a large 3 rail layout which was truly massive.

Saturday started off really well with a decent sized crowd. Most came in to see the 3 rail layout. Seeing that we were there, we were an added bonus. The trolley layout generated a lot of attention as it was linked in by the Historical Society of Kensington as being like what ran in the town until 1933. The members that were in attendance that day were the Pecks, Leon, Matt Whiting, Matt Guey-Lee, and of course the Hyland Clan. We also had a visit from NVNtrak in the form of Jim Altobello. We had a lot of children who visited and they were for the most part well behaved and the layout ran without any problems. We had lots of visits from the 3 rail guys who took all sorts of photos and talked a lot with us about the current state of modular railroads and N scale. Some of us ex pats from a year ago had worked often with them on another one of their events down in Virginia for a Christmas show we did in Kenya Temple. It was a good way of catching up with them and reestablishing contacts and forge new ones. For your humble author, not only was the layout wonderful cause it was near his home, but it was also a bit of a return to his roots. Way back when before I got started in N scale I was a Lionel guy myself (besides the HOn3) and when I finally hung up my gloves, my Dad and I had accumulated close to 60 steam engines. There is something rather interesting about hearing the click clack of large wheels around the layout.

Around 4pm, we got a visit from Eric Payne, Bob Mohr and Tim Nixon. Unfortunately for them this was also the same time power got knocked out by the large rain storms and they were unable to see the layout in action. Though they did get a chance to see everything static, due to a tornado warning we had removed a lot of our scenery. During this time, I showed Eric, Bob, and Tim the Kensington Historical Societies booth which had aerial photos of the town over time and the changes that were made to the station. I hope that they got to make it down Howard Ave. to see the station before they made the trip back to Baltimore.

Sunday started with a bang. Matt Whiting returned and we were joined by Tom Long. We had a large amount of public come in right after the local churches finished services. There was a constant stream of people after that. We also got some other N scale visitors. Phil and Janice Poole from the Capital PeNscalers visited us. With a full packed hall we were also treated to a Dixieland/Swing jazz band who were quite good and added a festival feeling to the event. In the lobby to the Town hall there was a bluegrass band playing there as well. Your author spent quite a bit of time following around a MTH French 2-3-1 Pacific on the other layout as it was hauling an Orient Express train with the private car "Georgia" on the end. It was quite a sight.

The layout ended at 5pm and our tear down time was 20 minutes. <u>Here</u> is a video. We then closed the books on another successful show. We have made arrangements to return next year so mark your calendars. Thank you again to the Ditto Group, the Kensington Historical Society, The Noyes Library Foundation and the National Capital Trackers for having us at the show.

Chris



Bowie Fest: September Review

Jeff Peck



On Saturday, September 29th the T-Trak Division played split squad and had setups in Germantown and Bowie. The Bowie setup was in conjunction with their Fall Fest and on the other side of the tracks, the Antique and Craft Fair.

Taking advantage of the great weather, we set up an oval spanning two tables in the waiting shed. Modules were provided by Cliff Enz, Christian, and myself. Tim Nixon came later in the day and helped with tear-down. The fest had vendors of all sorts and live music. Fortunately, the live music stage from the street fest was facing away from us.

We were visited by young and old the entire day and Amtrak sent many trains our way on the Corridor. We broke down a bit early on the advice of our host so we could get out of the parking lot as the bands changed.

All in all, a great setup in a great spot to get the club out in the public eye.















Sykesville & Patapsco Tower: September Review

Denise Clyde



Yet another Sykesville show is in the BANTRAK history books. A fun day was had by all considering the historically small venue.

Jeff and Christian Peck were the first on the scene and were patiently waiting for us. They provided four straight modules and a corner module. We all gained access to the building at about 9:50am and all began organizing the setup.

Matt Chibbaro showed up shortly thereafter with his infamous mountain and was a welcome addition to the layout not to mention, the hit of the day. The balance of the modules were provided by us, Dave and Denise.

Setup went well thanks to Jeff's efforts in leveling and assembly of the modules. Matt took great care of preparing his mountain which, ran flawlessly while I took care of the electronics. By 11:45am we had the layout troubleshot and trains running.

Jeff began the show by running a freight drag on DC with Christian running an Amtrak passenger train on DCC with zero stretching. Matt kept trains running on his mountain while maintaining a Sponge Bob theme on his point to point.

Al Del Gaudio and Eric Payne arrived a couple hours into the show and ran various engines and combinations of passenger and freight drags.

As is usual with this venue, turnout was light to moderate with quite a few awestruck children. There's nothing like seeing a child's face light up when they see the trains, in this case, literally "coming around the mountain".

With additional help from Al and Eric, tear down took about a half hour with the train room cleaned up, vehicles packed and thank yous and goodbyes expressed.

In closing, I'd like to thank everyone who participated as this was our first attempt at coordinating a T-Trak event. We would like to thank Chris Hyland for making sure we stayed in the loop and to Jeff, Matt and Christian who made this a very easy and enjoyable event.

Denise













Germantown: October Review

Chris Hyland



In early October, BANTrak T Trak group once again entered uncharted territory. This time it was at the Germantown Historical soceity building (the old community bank) next to the MARC station in Germantown Maryland. The event was run in conjunction with the historical society to show the importance of the B&O railroad in Germantown's history.

The layout was once again a T shaped layout which had both our Gaithersburg and Germantown station models placed on it. Set up was at 10.30. The show started at noon, and tear down was at 4. Leon Sorge was the coordinator who also provided 4 ft of modules. The other members in attendance were the Hyland Clan. Jim Atebello visited us from NVNTrak. On the whole the event went quite well. What we thought might be a laid back event was actually rather busy as we had quite a sizable crowd. Many had seen the advertisements for the event in the Washington Posts Local events section and the work done by the Historical society on getting out the word on us being there. Most of the public and the society had never seen N scale before and all sorts of questions were asked about model railroading and how to make a start in it. Also the public got a chance to see how the railroad had changed it's operations from the B&O locals that we were running to the larger through trains of CSX outside the station. The kids as always were entertained by the trains going around the layout.

The facility itself was a rather good one, with excellent views of the Metropolitan Branch. CSX and AMTRAK provided us with numerous freights and the Capital Limited. An extra special bonus was the fact that CSX was doing track work and we got to see the tye and ballast cleaning equipment in action as well. The worked on the tracks the whole afternoon and finished up their work by running Track Cat car over the line as a final check.

We look forward to doing more events with the Germantown historical society in the future. Much Thanks again to Susan Soderberg and the Germantown historical society for having us operate









Chris

ElectroFrog Point Fix

John Darlington



Some months ago, I started adding an extension to my double horseshoe loop layout which would enable me to add a small classification yard that could be accessed by both loops in both directions. The idea was to have an island running perpendicular to the center of the horseshoe that could be accessed from both sides. (See figure 1)

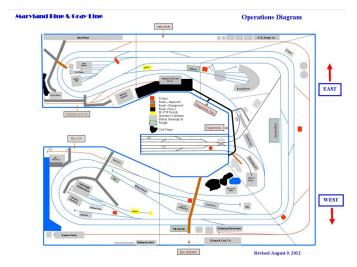


Figure 1

New Layout Plan—2

In order to make the yard function as I intended it to, I needed to install a double slip switch or crossover at the throat of the yard (see figure 2) so that trains from any yard tracks could be switched to either loop directly. Since I use Atlas track and Peco turnouts, the Double Crossover from Peco seemed ideal.

Figure 2

Since all of my other turnouts were Insulfrog, this would be my first adventure with using an Electrofrog. The directions that came with the crossover were very poor with microscopic diagrams. Fortunately, I was directed to a web site that had large full color diagrams (see figure 3) and instructions. Phil Peters was kind enough to give me a hand in wiring up the crossover that required the use of a polarity switch. After a few struggles, we finally succeeded in getting it to work.

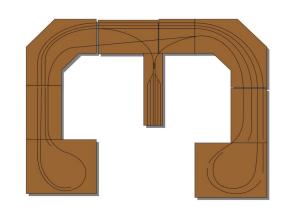


Figure 3



ElectroFrog Point Fix: (continued)

John Darlington



Almost immediately, I ran into some intermittent electrical problems where the engines would stop at either end of the crossover. I traced the problem to the points which pick up the electrical current from the stock rails. (see Figure 4) Although the points appeared to be snug against the power rail, I sometimes had to push the point against it before the connection. I tried everything to make the connections better, even to the point of bending the point tip inwards, but nothing seemed to work.

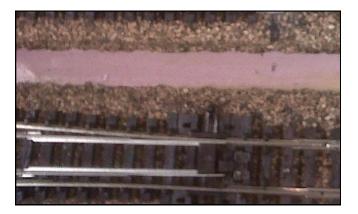


Figure 4

I sent out a plea for help to the Chesapeake Division and one of the respondents suggested that I solder a thin wire which "jumps" the point hinge connection with the power rail (see Figure 5). I remember Bob Mohr, some years ago, reminding me that the place to look for electrical problems was a mechanical joint or connection. Well, he was spot on with respect to this problem. I spent an afternoon making 8 connections and everything works perfectly.



Figure 5

This solution brought similar problems to mind. I know that there are a few BANTRAK modules which have Electrofrog turnouts on some of the sidings on which four axel engines stall. It would seem to me that this solution would be a fix for that problem, too.

John

News & Notable: Laying Ties in Springfield

This is what is happening from Chicago to St. Louis for a high speed rail line. They are now working around Springfield.

For those who live in the Springfield area and have seen all the machines running up and down the tracks, here is a link to a video that shows you how the concrete ties and rails are put in place. The road bed is being raised approximately 13 inches to accommodate the high speed rail line. There are only two of these track laying machines in the world, one here and one in Europe.

Check out the video here.



New & Notable: N-TRAK Donation of Items



Recently BANTRAK received a donation of items from Jim Fitzgerald @ NTRAK. These items will be available to Club Members at the October Meeting as well as the General Public at the October Scale Show. The pictures below are of 8 boxes Jim sent to 8 different N TRAK Clubs. Our items have been priced and are ready for your review and purchase. Don't forget to bring your wallet. :)







News & Notable: 2013 NMRA Convention (78th Annual)



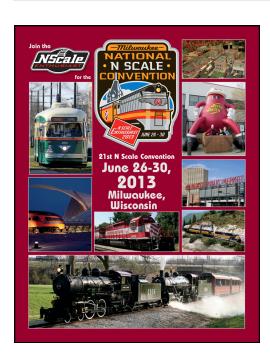


Atlanta's <u>Piedmont Division</u> is proud to host the 2013 NMRA National Convention. Located in Northwest Atlanta, the <u>Cobb Galleria Centre</u> is a beautiful facility to house the convention and the National Train Show.

Layout tours will provide access to more than 60 layouts already showing on the annual <u>Piedmont Pilgrimage</u> open house event in each November. Other impressive layouts from around the <u>Southeastern Region</u> will also be on tour.

Click **HERE** for more information !!!

News & Notable: 2013 N Scale Convention (21st Annual)



Check out John Sing's ultra detailed gallery of ALL the action in 2012 here

Visit the 2013 Convention registration website at www.NationalNScaleConvention.com



New & Notable: BANTRAK Online

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.



09/13/2012 - Caught up the Events 2012 page with the N-Trak shows. Still need to add 09/06/2012 - The September Newsletter is now available. the T-Trak shows.

- Facebook page is now active



Have an idea for new/ updated web content?

Contact the Webmaster with your ideas!

New & Notable: BANTRAK Membership

Al Palewicz, Membership





BANTRAK is a division of N-Trak. Be sure to check out the latest N-Trak newsletter! To view the May/June N-TRAK newsletter, click here





BANTRAK does a significant amount of charitable activity, although we rarely think of it that way because we get pleasure out of it. When you think about it, that is "as it should be" with all "giving from the heart."

What is our charitable activity? Our major participation is in the B&O Museum's (which is a charitable organization) Annual Festival of Trains. Our display has been a major draw for people to come to the Museum for many years, both recent and in the past. There are plenty more examples, this is just one.



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



New & Notable: BANTRAK Raffle Layout



Pics from Work Session at Mark Bandy's in September.











New & Notable: BANTRAK 30th Anniversary Club



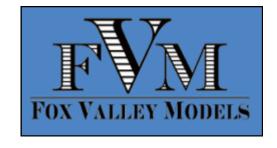
The project is coming along nicely and there is a target release date of Christmas season 2012. This would be slightly prior to the thirtieth anniversary of the first club meeting in January 1983.

Current sentiment is to go with a Fox Valley wagon top boxcar a la B&O with artwork is pending from FVM.

We have confirmed enough Club Members are committed to meet the minimum order.

Questions can be directed to Bob Mohr at a Club Meeting or Show.



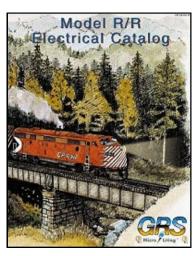




Website of the Month: GRS Micro Liting

All <u>GRS Micro Liting</u> electronic products are handcrafted in our own U.S. facility using only the highest grade state-of-the-art components. Each is designed to operate over the wide range of low voltages available to the modeler.





All circuits have built-in voltage regulation and automatic overload protection to fully assure the longest possible lamp life. Hookups are simple, 2-wire types, and each product comes with easy-to-understand instructions. Our quality 1.5 volt micro bulbs have negligible heat output and can be safely installed in any plastic, wood or metal model.

Thousands of modelers worldwide are using our unique products not only in Z thru G scale model trains and layouts, but are also finding them extremely useful in all sizes of static model airplanes, boats, cars and dioramas.

DCC Corner: (Exploring Digital Command Control)

TONY'S TRAIN EXCHANGE

GLOSSARY: A collection of specialized terms with their meanings



Click <u>HERE</u> for a DCC Glossary of Terms (how many do YOU know ???)



Subscribe to our newsletter using the form below. It is an easy way to learn about new products, product updates, special deals, and more. Delivered straight to your inbox.



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



The Sept/Oct 1992 Baltimore Area NTRAK Newsletter featured a major article on how the various positions in the club came about, this article should give you some idea.

JACK WALSH RETIRES

Boy, some days I wish that were really true. Because of personal reasons, I cannot guarantee that I will be available on any given weekend and consequently must turn over the great job (remember that fence) of coordinating this wonderful group. Rather than ask for one person to step forward, I am listing the various functions that could be picked up by other individuals. There is still the need for a single point of contact for our group who will keep us all in line. The major functions that I can think of are:

<u>NEWSLETTER</u> - this is really a fun job, you can write whatever you want. On an average month I put in about four to eight hours putting one of these together and getting them into the mailbox. This function should be held by someone who can be at almost all of our meetings in order to do a good description of the SHOW & TELL items.

<u>COORDINATION</u> with <u>EVENTS</u> such as Scale Show, Greenberg's, etc. This one is fairly easy. The rough part is finding coordinators for each event who really do most of the work. The only work here is to make sure that they know we are coming and what space we will be given.

<u>PUBLICITY</u> - this one requires letters to the various magazines in enough time to get it in the right issue. We are now being carried in at least five publications.

<u>ARRANGING MEETINGS</u> - we are now doing about seven or eight meeting a year. This job is to insure that we have a place to meet and if needed refreshments.

TREASURY - not much work here, just keeping track of what funds we have, which is currently under a hundred until the car committee pays back the \$500 the club put up.

COORDINATOR/POINT OF CONTACT - again this one is vitally important, since this is our contact with most of the outside.

If you would like to call and talk about any one of these roles, please call me at any time. The current timetable is to have this new structure in place at the close of the Firehouse Display.

BANTRAK: Classifieds



hey guys,

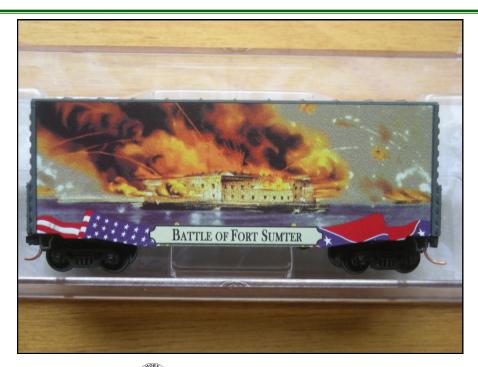
To list your classifieds, Email the editor

I started the Civil War set with TexnRails not knowing there were 2 different series. I wanted the CW BODY STYLES and he sent me the first commemorative - it's a high-cube box car with Ft. Sumter burning on the side.

Anyone want it for the \$18.95 I paid? I'll eat the shipping. If nobody takes it, I'll return it to Brad at Timonium.

let me know.

Mat Chibbaro



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

BANTRAK Call Board

(Activities & Events of BANTRAK Club Members)



NMRA Chesapeake Div. Group Mtg. October: TBD Info Contact: Arthur Boyd

Host / Location needed (various months) Info Contact: Denise Clyde/Paul Diley BANTRAK Club Mtg. Info Contact: Al. Del Gaudio, Eric Payne,





BANTRAK 2012 Calendar

Ongoing

Ed Kapusinski

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!!!

Home Layout Work Sessions

8/25 & 8/26	Bedford N Scale Weekend	Bedford, Pa	Al Potter / Bob Winterbottom	show
9/1	Silver Spring B&O Tower	Silver Spring, Md	Jeff Peck	t-trak
9/8 & 9/9	JV w/ Capital O Scalers/TCA	Kensington, Md	Ed Hyland	t-trak
9/9	Sykesville B&O Tower	Skyesville, Md	Dave Clyde	t-trak
9/16	Gaithersburg (Old Towne Days)	Gaithersburg, Md	Ed Hyland	t-trak
9/16	Club Meeting/Raffle Layout Work Session	Ellicott City, Md	Mark Bandy	meeting
9/29	Bowie Days (B&O Tower)	Bowie, Md	Jeff Peck	t-trak
9/29	Germantown (Historical Bank Building)	Germantown, Md	Leon Sorge	t-trak
10/13	Gaithersburg	Gaithersburg, Md	Chris Hyland	t-trak
10/14	Kentland (Oktoberfest)	Gaithesburg, Md	Ed Hyland	t-trak
10/21	Club Meeting	Crownsville, Md	John Cook	meeting
10/27 & 10/28	Great Scale Show	Timonium, Md	Martin Myers/Paul Diley	show
11/4	Gaithersburg Artifact Show	Gaithesburg, Md	Ed Hyland	t-trak
11/10 & 11/11	Rockville Lions Show	Rockville, Md	Ed Hyland	t-trak
11/18	Club Meeting/Club Work Session	Baldwin, Md	Skip Hayes	meeting
11/25	Bowie Days (B&O Tower)	Bowie, Md	Jeff Peck	t-trak
12/12	B&O Festival of Trains	Baltimore, Md	Dave Clyde/Jack Walsh	show







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 VP's: Denise Clyde/Paul Diley Treasurer: Tim Nixon Membership: Al Palewicz

