
❖ Call Board ❖

Volume 43 Issue 2

October 2003

Super Saying

Preparations for this year's Fall Train Show are coming along nicely. As usual, we'll have the East Hall for vendors, the Ball Arena for layouts and clinics, and the room for the Scout Merit Badge class.

We're concerned about attendance this year, because of the proximity, in time and place, of other train shows. Ray Persing is doing an outstanding job of managing the show publicity. He has analyzed the effectiveness of previous advertising types, is placing media ads where they will be most effective, has arranged for the data entry we need to mail postcards, and designed the layout raffle tickets to collect information about how people learn about our show. He's undoubtedly done stuff that the rest of us haven't even thought of. A thousand Attaboys, Ray.

Leroy Clouser has been working hard getting clinics, layouts, and other displays committed for the Ball Arena. For many attendees, this is an important part of our show; for some, it's the most important part. Way to go, Leroy.

Kirk Perkins reports that the merit badge class was filled by noon of the first day of regis-

tration, and he has about 20 Scouts on a waiting list. Our Scout Merit Badge program is known across the land. An Assistant Scoutmaster with Troop 12 in Fort Collins, Colorado has requested information to help him set up a Railroad Merit Badge class there. Many thanks, Kirk.

The 3-by-6-foot Scenic Ridge layout for the show raffle is finished, and looks better than in the advertisements. We've left two buildings for the new owners to assemble, and some details for them to install, but the layout looks fabulous as it is. If you were at the September division meeting, you saw it on display. Four of the men most involved in the construction were George Ardwin, Richard Davoust, Jim Foster, and Peter Guise. In a panel discussion at the September meeting they described how they built the layout almost entirely of foam, and testified as to how much fun they had doing it.

We have a very nice N-scale Kato SD unit that was donated for use on this layout, but it's too long for the tight curves, and we'd like to trade it for a high-quality jeep. Contact Rich Davoust or me, if you're interested. Our phone numbers are

elsewhere in this rag.

Bruce Albright has been arranging a visit to a member's layout after each meeting. After the September meeting we saw Bill Reese's extensive N-scale layout, which occupies its own addition to Bill's home. Bill let us run a few trains, and from what I saw, everything is working flawlessly. Part of the scenery is done, and looks very good.

Six months ago I wrote that I had adapted Wayne Roderick's Freight Manager program to my small layout. As the layout grows, I will eventually need something more capable. At least I hope so. Two programs I've been looking at are RailOp and Interchange. Both cost about \$100, but have demo versions that are free. If you're interested in this sort of thing, RailOp's web site is www.railop.com/ (where else?) and there is an enthusiastic (fanatic?) RailOp discussion group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RailOp/>. Interchange is a new program. The web site for it is www.mcs wiz.com/MCSMRCDS/MainPage.asp, and there is a discussion group for it at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/>

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Contest

October Ugly Cabooses

You are allowed up to 3 entries per contest. You do not have to be a member of the NMRA to participate in the popular vote contest.

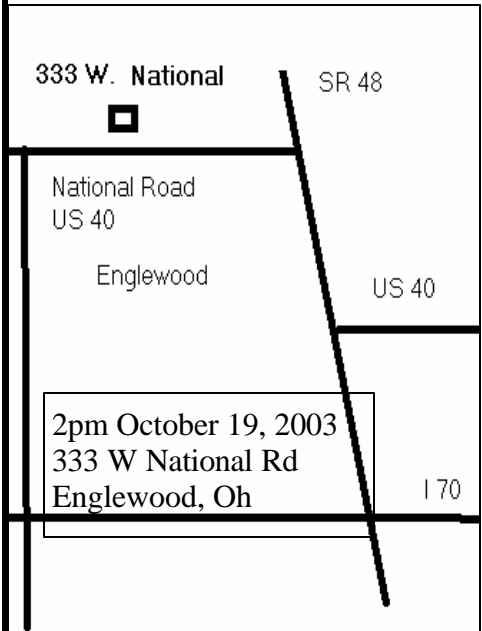
November	Structures	April	Thumbz or Whimsy
December	Freight Cars	May	Non Revenue
January	Passenger cars	June	No Contest
February	No Contest	July	Scene (Any Size)
March	Steam Locomotives		

September Diesel Locomotives			
Models		Photos	
1	Ray Persing	1	Ray Persing
2	LeRoy Clouser	2	Richard Davoust
3	Richard Davoust Bill Spinks	3	Ray Persing

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MRCDS/ Freight car routing programs are like track plans; there is no best one.

See you Sunday, October 19th.



Date	Location	Contest	Program	Layout
19 October	Englewood Gov't Center	Ugly Cabooses	Painting Styrene to Look Like Wood by Curt LaRue	Ray Persing
16 November	GCHS Xenia, OH	Structures	From DC to DCC by J. Hedge	
21 December	GCHS Xenia, OH	Freight Cars		
18 January		Passenger Cars		
15 February		No Contest	Auction	
21 March		Steam Locomotives		
18 April		Thumbz or Whimsy		

Crossroads Railroad Club
 Open House
 11 am — 5 pm November 8
 1 pm — 5 pm November 9
 304 N Dixie Dr.
 Vandalia, OH

Darke County
 Model RR Club Inc.
 Flea Market
 March 7, 2004
 10 am to 3pm
 Darke County Fairgrounds
 Greenville, OH

Cookies and Layouts Needed
 We have been treated to coffee and cookies the last several meetings. We need volunteers to bring the cookies. Bruce Albright will bring the coffee. Contact Bruce (937) 426-3091 to sign up to bring cookies.
 Bruce is also coordinating layouts for after meeting visits. We would like to know which layouts would be available so that we can find meeting locations near them for next year.

2002-2003 Contest Year Results	
Models	
1	Bill Spinks
2	Jim Foster
3	Richard Davoust
Photos	
1	Richard Davoust
2	Brian Petroziello
3	Bill Benysh J. Hedge

Congratulations to the winners and to everyone else who entered.

Train Show help Needed

Ask not what your Division can do for you. Ask what you can do for your Division. It is time to start planning on what you will be doing on November 1 and 2. We can use all the help we can get. The area that seems to have been the thinnest the last couple of years has been the demonstration and clinic area. The Crossroads Railroad Club has volunteered to put on a series of clinics, but we can always use more demonstrations. All you have to do is bring something to work on. You don't even have to talk if you don't want to.

We will also need volunteers to sell raffle tickets for the Scenic Ridge layout. The other positions of ticket sellers, crowd counters and membership sales will probably end up being covered by the BOG and several other hardy souls. Any and all help would be appreciated.

Elections 2004

The Division Elections are coming up in April. We need a nominating committee and candidates. The elected positions are: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Chief Clerk. None of these positions is very time consuming, and they all earn points toward the Association Volunteer AP Certificate.

Meeting Locations

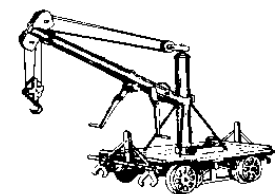
We are having trouble coming up with acceptable meeting locations. The Wright library has been reserved through the end of the year. We will be in Englewood for the next two months. After that we are still planning. We would like to here from the membership on where they would be willing to meet. We would like to find locations that are convenient, and capable of being darkened for slide shows. We are willing to pay rent if necessary.

Call Board Articles

As always, we need words to put on the paper. Everyone has something interesting to say, but most are afraid to say it. Contact the Editor to arrange an interview. We would also like to have someone put together a list of area train shows.

Hobby Shop Discount

The Hobby Shop is offering a 10% discount on a railroad materials to NMRA members. The Hobby Shop is located at the Corners At The Mall shopping center on the corner of Springboro Pike and State Route 725.



Summer Vacation 2004

by J. Hedge

The summer is over and it is time for my annual "What I Did During Summer Vacation" essay. The summer started off slowly. I had my left knee replaced in January and was not very mobile until late April. We usually go to Alliance, Ohio Memorial Day weekend to watch trains and visit my sister. Unfortunately we did not make it this year.

I did take a drive down to Washington Court House that weekend. There are usually several locomotives tied up there on weekends. This is at the CSX, I&O crossing next to the park. I don't have any notes on what was there that day and no pictures. Poor rail-

fanning.

Our summer vacation was to Sedona, Arizona for a week. We decided to take AMTRAK to Flagstaff and then rent a car. We started planning early in the year in order to get all of the details set. The first decision was where and when we would catch the train. We used to leave out of Waterloo, Indiana. This worked well since my brother lived in Fort Wayne and would watch after our car (free parking and security). Unfortunately he moved to New Jersey.

The next option was to leave out of Cincinnati. Unfortunately the train does not run on the days that we would need to travel. We also looked at Indianapolis, but did not like the idea of having to be at the station at 4 am going and not getting back until after midnight. We decided to catch the Southwest

Chief in Chicago. We looked at the cost of sleeper accommodations and decided that we would survive one night in coach seats.

Flying to Chicago was thrown out early. I do not fit into airline seats and the hassles of taking all of our luggage through airport security was not appealing. We also looked at the costs of renting a car for the drive to and from Chicago. We finally decided that driving our car to Chicago was the most cost effective. After a little time on the internet I found that the cheapest, most convenient, long term parking in Chicago was at O'Hare airport. This was also attractive since transportation from O'Hare to Union Station was very easy by CTA Subway. We had taken the subway several times when we had gone to the National Hobby Show in Rosemont and



Outside Chicago

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La Junta, CO

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found it to be very convenient, fast and practical.

On June 25th we started on our summer trip. The drive from home to Union Station took about 5 hours. I dropped off the wife, kids and luggage and continued on to the airport. The drive was easy (unusual for Chicago) and took about 30 minutes. I parked at the Thrifty Rental valet parking lot and took their free shuttle to the airport terminal. O'Hare has a nice subway station. It is a walk of several hundred yards from the number 2 terminal. It is all indoors and has moving sidewalks.

It costs \$1.50 to ride one way on the subway. The Blue Line is a combination of surface and subway running. It runs in the median of the Kennedy expressway and it is nice to see the traffic back-

ups without being in them. The subway ride to the Clinton station took about 45 minutes. From there it is a 3 block walk to Union Station.

I found the family near the AMTRAK ticket counters. They had checked several of the bags that we would not need on the train and were returning from finding something to eat. Union Station has a decent food court with a large variety of tastes. The prices were about what you would expect in a large city.

The AMTRAK waiting area was very crowded and hot. We found seats and set up camp. We watched the people and waited. They started boarding at 3:15 (published departure time). We were assigned seats by the car attendant. We were at the middle of the car next to the stairs. Two seats

were at the bulkhead and had a little extra room. The car was not full and there was plenty of room in the overhead rack for all of our stuff.

The train left at 4:10. We stopped outside the station for ten minutes while the express cars were tacked on. We bought dinner in the snack bar and settled in to watch the world go by. We ran into heavy thunderstorms around Kewanee, Illinois. Nice being able to watch the lightning and heavy rain while moving along. We were about 30 minutes late when we got into Galesburg, Illinois. The weather cleared a little when we crossed the Mississippi River at Fort Madison, Iowa. (Check out their webcam) The rest of the way across Iowa was after sunset.

We arrived in Kansas at midnight. Everyone in the car had

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spread out into the empty seats for more room. The car attendant came through and woke everyone and made them return to their assigned seats so that the conductor could check tickets and give seats to boarding passengers. The rest of the night was quiet with several other stops in Kansas. We remem-

Albuquerque. We were scheduled for a crew change and service. This allowed a lot of time to walk around the platform and buy stuff from the vendors. I was also able to get a look at the consist. We had 4 Genesis P42 Locomotives, 1 baggage car, 1 transition sleeper, 2 sleepers, 1 diner, 1 lounge, 3 coaches, 1 baggage coach, 1

scenery was very nice and the ride was comfortable. We went to the Grand Canyon but did not ride the Grand Canyon Railroad. We saw their train during its layover at the canyon. We did go down to Williams and watched the train arrive there. Unfortunately my camera broke there and I lost all of my pictures of the train. There is also a small museum with a lot of ATSF information.

The return trip started in Flagstaff with a 5:45 am departure. The Flagstaff station is a nice place. Half of it is used as an information center for the area. While we waited for the train several double stack trains passed at high speed. Our seats were at the back end of the car. The car was not completely full and there were several empty seats near us. The trip to Albuquerque was pleasantly uneventful. The operator of the snack bar was very entertaining and informative with his announcements. He suggested that during the layover in Albuquerque that we go over to the Cold Stone Creamery for ice cream. Good idea.

The consist of the eastbound Chief was about the same as the westbound. We ate lunch in the diner and dinner from the snack bar. There were thunder storms in eastern New Mexico, and western Colorado. The car attendant spent the night going through the car making everyone return to their assigned seats even though the car behind us was completely empty. Sunrise was before Kansas City. Nice views going through Fort Madison and across the Mississippi.

We arrived in Chicago at 3:05. This was about 20 minutes ahead of schedule. There was a



bered to bring pillows but forgot to bring blankets and it got a little chilly.

Sunrise was somewhere in Kansas. The stop at La Junta Colorado allowed us to get off the train and stretch our legs a little. Got to see how long our train was. The Climb from Trinidad, Colorado to Raton Pass is very pretty. There are still signs pointing out points of interest left over from when this was the Santa Fe route. The trip down from the pass to Lamy, New Mexico is very steep and winding. We met the eastbound Chief near Lamy. We were delayed in Lamy for about an hour while they tended to a sick passenger. We ate lunch in the diner. Reservations are only required for dinner and we were able to get immediate seating. Good food.

The next major stop was at

sleeper, 8 materiel handling cars, and 4 roadrailers. We were right on schedule when we left.

The rest of the trip across New Mexico and into Arizona was very scenic. There was a Native American guide on board who talked about the area. We saw very few other trains during the whole trip. I found out that this was pretty normal. The trains run in bunches determined by when they leave California and Kansas, and AMTRAK runs during mostly dead time. We arrived in Flagstaff at 9:30. Overall the trip out was comfortable with very few problems.

The next week was spent exploring Arizona. We went to Clarkdale and rode the Verde Canyon Railroad. The train runs about 2 hours up the Verde River. They use 2 F7A locomotives and a mix of coaches and open gondolas. The

very short wait for our checked bags. We decided to carry all of our bags on the subway out to the airport. This would save us the cost of lockers and the time of having to come all the way back to the station after picking up the car. The hardest part of this was getting the bags down to the subway station. The Clinton Street station is not handicap accessible so we had to drag our bags down a flight of stairs. There are escalators from the ticket area down to the platforms. The subway ride to the airport was good as usual. We had a little trouble with the elevator from the subway level to the terminals. The elevator seemed awful small for such a high usage area. The wait for the parking shuttle was very short and the car was waiting when we got off the bus.

The drive from Chicago was the worst part of the whole trip. If you remember the 4th of July weekend featured a lot of bad thunderstorms. We managed to leave the Chicago area just as band of storms started through. It seemed that I-65 was perpendicular to the storm. This meant that in-

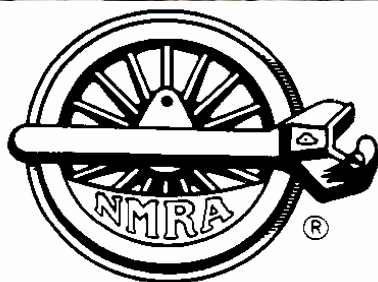
stead of quickly passing through it we ran right down the front of it. We had to stop several times in Indiana to wait for the rain to let up. We finally arrived home about 3:30 am. A five hour drive had taken over 8 hours.

A long trip is always an adventure. A long AMTRAK trip is no different. This was the third overnight trip we had taken by train. Overall I would recommend the train if you have the time.

The rest of the summer was quiet. We did go to Alliance to watch trains, and see my sister. While there we took a day and drove up to Lake Erie. We went to the Conneaut railroad museum. They have a Nickel Plate locomotive, a B&LE Hopper and a Nickel Plate Caboose next to the Conneaut depot. The collection is very interesting and worth the time to check it out. From there we followed the lakeshore west to Ashtabula. The maritime museum there is on the bluff overlooking the NS port. Most of the port is used to ship coal. There is a nice public park with a good view of the railroad operations. There is a little railroad

related material in the museum. There is a large scale model of a Hullet ore unloader which would be interesting to use as the other end of the route for the boats loaded at your Walthers ore dock.

We went back to Chicago in September for the National Hobby Show. The Model railroad part of the show did not seem as large as it has been. This was also the first year that the exhibitors were allowed to sell. Most of the large manufacturers were represented. Several of the small companies that usually attend were missing. I did not see many really interesting new offerings. Most of the interest by the other attendees was focused on the car racing areas. It seems to me that we are getting ready to go through another cycle of high interest in race cars and low interest in trains. The last time this happened in the 60's we saw a severe loss of railroad modelers and manufacturer offerings. The prevalent attitude seems to be that model railroaders are aging and that we are not doing a good job keeping the youth and young adults in the hobby.



Next Meeting	
When:	2pm 19 October 2003
Where:	Englewood Government Center 333 W National Rd Englewood, Ohio
Program:	How to Paint Styrene to Look Like Wood by Curt LaRue
Contest:	Ugly Caboosees
Visitors and Guests Always Welcome	