The

*A Publication Of, By and For The Members*

# DISPATCH

January/February 2025

- Ad Hoc Track Cleaning Car
- Optimizing LED Headlights
- Wood Load For A Franklin Tender
- More Storytelling with Our Railroads
- A Different Approach to Layout Design
- An Interview with Alan Loizeaux of Empire Trackworks

The DISPATCH

January/February 2025

# FEATURES

**14** S Scale and O Scale Event at NMRA Meet a Success!
By Charles Malinowski

**16** More Storytelling with Our Railroads
By Steve Monson

**18** An Interview with Alan Loizeaux of Empire Trackworks
By Phil Scandura, photos by Alan Loizeaux

**20** Wood Load For A Franklin Tender
By Austin Birkey

**22** A Different Approach to Layout Design
By Jack Bartman

**25** Optimizing LED Headlights
By Chris Monje

**28** An Ad Hoc Track Cleaning Car
By Michael Klawitter

# DEPARTMENTS

3 From the Yard Office
4 Pop Valve
6 So Here's What I Do…
7 New Products
8 Down at the Depot
10 Restoration Station
29 Out Along The Line
30 Classifieds
31 Calendar of Events

# The COVER

*Engineer Frank Gibbs would throw out the morning newspaper for farmer Lee Herberg as he took the passenger train down the hill into town. From Steve Monson's article, "More Storytelling with Our Railroads".*

**MEMBERSHIP YEAR:** The Membership Year is determined by the date that one enrolls, guaranteeing 6 issues, starting with the next issue. All applications, renewals and membership questions should be directed to NASG Membership Secretary, Dick Kramer, membership@nasg.org.

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# From the YARD OFFICE

## Minutes of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has voted to discontinue publication of its meeting minutes in *The Dispatch* while continuing to publish them on the NASG web site. The rationale behind this decision is that space within *The Dispatch* is at a premium--32 pages--and could be put to better use by publishing articles instead of minutes. NASG members without internet access can request for printed versions of the minutes to be mailed to them by contacting the NASG Secretary.

## From the Editor

I, Dan Dawdy, your editor of *The Dispatch,* should have come forward much sooner than this. It's already been a few years, but I am a bit of a procrastinator.

I was brought on to help with making *The Dispatch* as good as it could be. With the help of Brian Jackson and Brooks Stover, we came up with standards and guidelines to make it more appealing and standardize things such as headers, columns, fonts and other things.

The result is what you now see, and have seen, over the past few years. Comments have been very positive.

Another issue, pardon the pun, is the content. We try and mix every issue with articles that will appeal to the scale minded, as well as, Flyer and Hi-Rail. Sometimes we go more in one direction, but we try to keep things balanced. Many articles are not gauge specific, so there should be something for everyone.

With that said, we now have two excellent assistant editors. Phil Scandura and Terry O'Kelly. Phil will handle the scale content, while Terry carries the rest. If you have been thinking of writing an article, or have one ready to go, you may email it to one of the two assistant editors. They will help you through the process without being heavy handed in their edits. I have seen instances of articles being totally rewritten and homogenized by editors of other magazines to the point where the original was nothing like the author wanted to express. We will not do that here.

We do have a hard page count so we are looking for one to five page articles, and if necessary, that could be split into two parts.

Phil and Terry's emails appear in the next column so feel free to contact them. We always need articles, and anything within the S scale hobby is fair game. I am still working off articles that are "in the can" Now that the meeting minutes are no longer published in *The Dispatch*, we have more room for the good stuff.

We will publish a list of requirements later but to keep things simple, a simple Word, or comparable file, with pictures and captions are all that is needed.

Pictures submitted must be at least 200 dpi and original out of the camera. We can crop and color correct on our end, but we need that full size image to work with. If you embed the image within the Word file, please also send the images themselves. If it's too large to email, we'll set up a DropBox where you can place them. We are here to help you in any way we can.

I have been sent hard copies from members who do not email or even have computers. Not a problem, I let my wife type those up. She loves doing it.

So, if you have an idea, get started. If you need help, contact Phil or Terry. One way or the other, we'll get your ideas down and in print.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please email me at dispatch@nasg.org.

Dan Dawdy

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# POP VALVE

## 3/16" Anyone?

*The Dispatch* is well done and I appreciate the effort the associations members do to produce it. I do wish there were more photos of 3/16" scale models and layouts, but I believe you all provide a good balance presenting 3/16" scale and gauge.

Brian Hasty

## Don Rosa

On a sad note, Don Rosa, American Flyer collector and operator extraordinaire, passed away on Wednesday, November 15, 2024, after contracting severe pneumonia. Don was very well known across the land as a collector of all things A.C. Gilbert but especially Gilbert American Flyer.

Don was very active in the TTOS, TCA (NorCal Sac-Sierra chapter), and was a member of NASG and the A.C. Gilbert Heritage Society. Don was the main force behind the very successful 1995 TTOS National Convention in Sacramento and was president of the TTOS Sacramento Valley Division for several years.

Don and his wife Sue were happy to share their home and large train collection and layout with friends, hosting many meetings of various groups. Don was always happy to share his vast knowledge of Gilbert products with others.

In addition to the club affiliations mentioned above, Don was an active member of the Golden Gate American Flyer Club (GGAFC) in the San Francisco Bay area and was the founder of the Sacramento Valley American Flyer Club (SVAFC) in the early 1990s. Both clubs enjoyed Don's leadership, counsel and friendship for decades He will be greatly missed.

Carl Rudolph

## Fox Valley Turnout Update

In the November/December *Dispatch* was an article that I had written in another forum concerning a alteration for Fox Valley HR turnouts that allowed them to accept scale and high rail flanged wheel sets. It was pointed out to me during that discussion that Gilbert AF would not work. This is true.

As I do not run Gilbert AF, I had not tested it but should have before offering it in a public forum . To use Gilbert AF you must have back-to-back wheel separation of 0.727" . Not difficult for the cars, but very difficult for locomotives. The alteration will work for AM. SHS and successive iterations, SSA, as well as Lionel AF (I ae several locomotes, both steam and diesel and rolling stock). I hope this clarifies the process and I apologize for the confusion.

Roger Zuerlein


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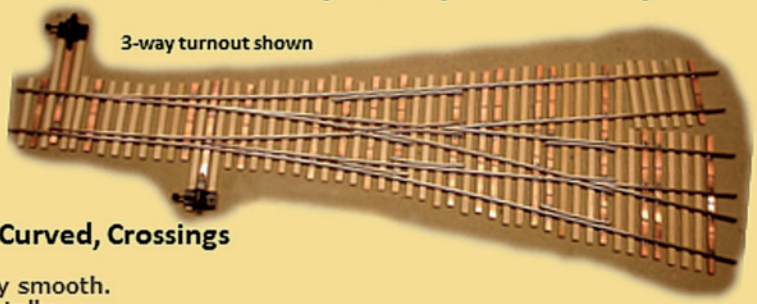


"EMPIRE does fantastic work! The turnouts are really smooth. Very well detailed instructions are provided, and I totally appreciate the work. They look as good as, if not better than, Tomalco turnouts." - *Michael Osweiler (S-scale #6 & #8)*

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# So Here's What I Do ...

By Dick Karnes

## Hiding in Plain Sight

My wife and I have moved into a senior living apartment. But do I still have a workbench? Yes, hiding in plain sight. I bought a roll-top desk from Wayfair. When I open it up, there's all my usual clutter; but when it's closed, it's just another piece of furniture in our TV room.

# NEW PRODUCTS

By Jeff Madden

American Models is doing another run of the 50' ribbed (yellow) modern Railbox boxcars - $56.95 each. These will be available with 4 different numbers. AM is thinking of re-running the intermodal spine cars.

www.americanmodels.com

Thomas Barker is releasing a video about AF repair and history. On YouTube search "American Flyer S Gauge by Gilbert"

Benn Central has been working on 3D printed modern covered hoppers PS 4750) which have been shown recently at the Fall S Fest in St. Louis. The build date for these would be 1972 -1981 with many still out there. A shorter version (PS 3000) that were produced in 1977 is also available. Body only - $70.

https://3dcentraltrains.com/collections/benn-central-shops

Daves Twacks & Twains is closing shop. Check for any remaining parts or who might take up the remaining inventory in the future.

https://www.davestnt.com/

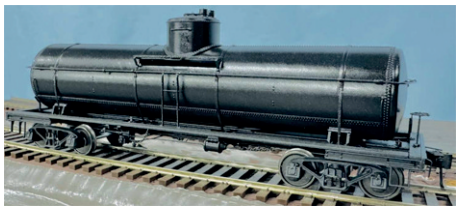
Greenlight has, for $20 each, a gas station and a police station listed. See 3000 Toys or other discount stores and dealers

https://www.3000toys.com/

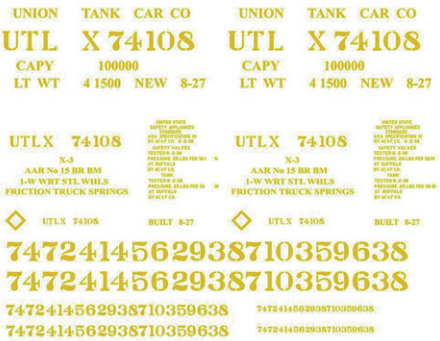
Leopard Arch Models has some new 3D printed B&O interlocking towers including VN (shown with outbuildings) $95, the Grafton one $89 and the brick Sand Patch one for $87.

https://leopardarchmodels.com/collections/s-scale-models

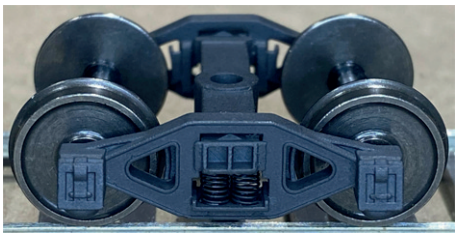
Pre-Size has some new products. Type 27 8,000 gallon tank car is produced by Simon Parent of Miniatures of the North. Designed in 1927 and built until the late 1940's, over 1800 were built. They were the most common type of tank car in the first half of the 20th century. They carried petroleum, alcohol, ammonia, chemicals, molasses and vegetable oil. They were later rebuilt into water cars for MOW use into the early 1980's. This kit is 3D printed with wood footboards. It is very detailed and accurate.



UTLX decals for the Type 27 tank car are also available.




Bettendorf 50 ton trucks are 3D-printed in black resin with nylon bearing inserts. They are sprung and equalizing. The springs are black. The wheels are machined stainless steel, code 110, blackened. Assembly is required. These are produced by Miniatures from the North in Canada. Pre-Size Model Specialties is retailing them in the U.S. so you don't have to pay international shipping.



www.pre-size.com

3D Print 64 show lots of buildings of some media fame such as the Bates House, Bates Motel, Dukes of Hazard bar, and some other structures based on famous movies and TV programs.

https://www.3dprint64.com/shop

## Reminder: ADDRESS CHANGE

**The address for our Membership Secretary has changed as the Post Office box will be closed shortly.**

**Please send all mail to:**
**Dick Kramer**
**NASG Membership Secretary**
**12 Dogwood Court**
**Middlebury, CT 06762**

# Down at the Depot

By Carl Rudolph

With any luck you may receive this issue before Christmas and Hannukah. We hope so because lots of holiday news has come in via email and newsletters! So let's get to it:

We have heard again from the **Bristol S-Gaugers**. Correspondent **Doug Peck** relates that they started off the season with a meeting at **Tommy Robichaud's** at which they re-elected officers and completed business matters. Then they discussed updating the club layout with more modern rolling stock. They also noted that membership has reached the 50 mark for the first time! Next, they met at **Dale Hasenzahl's** home at which they decided to add DC to the layout to provide many more power options. Lastly, in November, the club met at **John Ciarleglio's** home and saw lots of progress having been made on John's layout (with help from several club members). The layout was set up at the Greenberg show in Wilmington (MA) also. Lots of activity!

**The Pioneer Valley Model Railroad Clu**b (Western MA) is picking up activity again and that's good to see. Steven Allen reports that the annual partnership with Look Park to set up and operate Santa's Trains is once again on track(!) and in preparation. The club meeting was held at the Holyoke Senior Center, which features a beautiful H0 layout depicting the town of Holyoke. The layout was created by **Gene Maag**, club member, and another person. Both this club and Bristol had quite a bit to say about the move of the famed B&M "Flying Yankee" to North Conway for restoration and eventual operation. The next meeting was already set to be at **George Reneris's** home, but no report on that as yet.

**The Connecticut S Gaugers** have been busy too. **Bob Jordan** wrote that the club participated in two shows in November, one brand new and the other a restart after a Covid hiatus. He also said new club president **Bill Krouse** is building new modules to extend the layout. That sounds good, but Bob thinks that will require a new trailer! Ah, what tangled webs we weave! The December meeting, which will be in the past when you read this, will be the traditional dinner at **Bob Davis's** house at which Mrs. Davis puts on a "fabulous spread", and the members play with trains on Bob's layout, and sit by a roaring fire in the fireplace to conduct business in a cozy and congenial atmosphere. Can it get any better than that?

**The South Jersey S-Gaugers** have celebrated their 35th anniversary at the October meeting with sandwiches and the fixin's provided by the club and various wonderful desserts provided by meeting attendees. Editor **Michael McConnell** published a bang-up special edition of the Waybill just for the anniversary that took a lot of work. There was also a display of custom rolling stock produced by and for the club over the years; and there was a clinic on custom loads for hoppers, flat cars and gondolas. Kudos to the club for its strength and longevity!

**The Baltimore Area American Flyer Club** had a big work party in September at which the legs were shortened on all the modules. Faithful readers will remember that the club realized that children couldn't see without being lifted by parents, thus greatly reducing their potential interest in the layout. The leg shortening was first unveiled at the Great Scale Model Railroad show in Timonium with many attendees voicing their appreciation. Big success other clubs should consider. Next up in their busy season is the Westminster followed by the Greenberg show, and that is followed by their holiday BBQ dinner in Ellicott City.

In the Jacksonville area, the **North Florida Division of the Atlantic Coast S Gaugers** had the layout at Lake Nona Middle School (which is a TCA Southern Div. show) and plan on a holiday meeting at **Larry Shughart's** barn just before Christmas. At that meeting they will plan for the Jacksonville Train Show in February.

**The Pittsburgh S Gaugers** are already into serious planning for the 2026 Spring S Spree, which they will host. Unfortunately, the Fairgrounds that they used previously has changed staff and doubled the fees, so they are looking for other suitable venues. It looks like one has been found. At a recent meeting, **Jon Knox** provided a detailed presentation on the history of the NASG. Some of the talking points were listed in the newsletter, and it must have been quite interesting. The November Greenberg show, at which they had a layout, constituted their next meeting; and the holiday party will be held at a local restaurant.

**The Cuyahoga Valley S Gauge Association** (Cleveland area) participated in the Akron Train Show, which was well attended. The club had a good turnout, and the tinplate layout operated very well. Same was true for the Great Berea Train Show, which preceded Akron, except that there was a mysterious electrical glitch early in the operation of the layout. The problem area was bypassed, and all went well afterwards. The Snow Dogs Show the club puts on in January is well along in planning. Lastly, **Jim and Maryann Sima** are hosting the December holiday dinner at their home. They provide the meal; members bring desserts. Sounds like a pretty good deal!

**The Miami Valley S Gaugers** (Dayton area) had the layout at the Cincinnati Train Show, and it operated well while member **Jay Reese** set up a large All Aboard layout on tables. Later, there was a logistically tight weekend with a layout at Christmas on Campus at the University of Dayton. While operating that layout another bunch of members were setting up the big layout for Cleves Christmas Walk (in Cleves, OH), which was scheduled for the next day. Meanwhile, the November meeting was held at **Keith Wagner's** home where the club thoroughly enjoyed Keith's layout.

**The Central Ohio S Gaugers** met at the home of **Ron Merrin** in Frederickstown (OH) and enjoyed his two AF layouts – one 5 x 9 and the other 60 feet around! The club discussed plans for having the club layout at the Buckeye Train Show in Columbus in December.

**The Central Ohio S Gaugers – Northern Division** met at **Monty Kaufman's** home in Sandusky where they had lunch, ran trains, of course, and had the usual "Show and Tell" and "Make it, Take it" sessions. **John Frankforther**, the 3D printing master, reported on a rotary dumper he created. It actually operates, locking the hopper down and dumping the contents. Lastly, it was time for the annual Dinner in the Diner event at **Tony and Audrey Palumbo's** home. The railroad this year is the Kansas City Southern, and the Diner is part of the consist of the "Southern Belle", KCS's flagship passenger train. The dinner is from that train's diner menu. First, the attendees "board the train" and watch a video about the KCS. Then they have lunch. They arrive at their destination and detrain into the train room for train activities. Magical, we think.

**The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers** had the layout at the NMRA North Central Region convention in Northville (MI). The meeting at which that event was discussed was held at **Bob Stelmach's** home. Bob has an outstanding scale layout with many well-detailed scenes. The next meeting was at **Dan Navarre's** home. Dan showed a really cool method of making trees from oak leaf hydrangeas, and **Randy Bosscher** made a presentation on various track cleaners (both chemicals and rolling stock).

**The Badgerland S Gaugers** (Milwaukee area) had another open house at the club location, and this one had better attendance. Sounds like as time goes by, more people find out about it. **Jeff Madden** made a very positive report on the Fall S Fest at St. Louis; the Fest was well organized, and the layout tours on Sunday were greatly enjoyed. **Ron Schlicht** added that the St. Louis club went out of their way to be welcoming to the attendees. Meanwhile, the club is making serious progress on preparing for hosting the 2025 Fall S Fest.

**The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers** took the layout down and put it in the trailer for transport to Trainfest in Milwaukee at a new downtown location. No details were available at the time of writing; it is usually a big and successful show of all scales. Several members attended the Fall S Fest in St. Louis; in concert with the Badgerland folks, they had a positive report, and the newsletter showed the members having a good time at dinner in a local restaurant.

Up in the Twin Cities area, the **Pines and Prairies S Scale Workshop** had a get-together at **Dave Jasper's** because long-distance member **Bob Fann** was in town. **Ken Zieska** has completed demolition in preparation for his urban renewal project, and **Tom Lennon** was brought in for design work. Lastly, **Steve Monson** hosted another get-together at his home with **Dick Karnes** still in the area. Steve promised goodies to eat and some freebies. Who could resist?

**The Kansas City S Gaugers** met for lunch at Breit's Deli and then retired to **Bill Hutton's** office (a few blocks from the deli) for the bi-monthly meeting. Lots of discussion there regarding the S portion of the big display and layout at Kansas City Union Station, setting up a layout at Sol's Jewelry where space was provided for the club, the Mid America and TCA train shows, and reports (quite positive, apparently) on the Fall S Fest, which several members attended. Bill brought back a lot of goodies for members who didn't attend, so the deals must have been good!

**The Houston S Gaugers** sent in this report via **Don Hand**: "UP's Big Boy, scheduled to be in the Houston area on the weekend of October 5 & 6, raised a lot of interest locally in railroading, and especially steam trains. For the Texas City Museum's annual train show, on October 5, Houston S Gaugers responded by weighting our model consists with large steam engines: **Chuck Kemper's** UP 4-8-4; **Rusty Paulu's** ATSF 4-8-4; and **Steve King's** MKT 4-6-2. 'Give the fans what they want to see!' At the other end of the technology spectrum, young **Ryan Kemper** introduced a state-of-the-art miniature action camera by Akaso, riding on a flatcar and transmitting live video back to a Samsung tablet, for the show attendees to view the ride, and themselves as it passed by! 'Look Mom, there's you and me, watching the trains go by!' ('You bet'um, Red Ryder')." Great report! Only us old guys remember Red Ryder!

**The Southern California S Gaugers Club** (Los Angeles area) had the layout at the Del Mar train show. They were able to make a pretty large version of it (30' x 30' L) and had a good time although show attendance and vendor count were less than hoped for. The club has set up an S Fest Exploratory Committee to find a venue and do all the other planning necessary. Meanwhile, the club is working on a set of yard modules for the layout, which presumably will reside in the center area. Lastly, the club has planned a December social gathering at the Old Spaghetti Factory in Fullerton – which originally was the Southern Pacific depot!

In the San Francisco Bay area, the **Golden Gate American Flyer Club** met at **Rich Lenart's** home in Walnut Creek for a work session on the modular layout. Rich noted that a lot of work was accomplished. Next they met at **Bill Riechmann's**, also in Walnut Creek, for business items and, of course, for running trains on the Honest William RR! And once again, as is their annual custom, they are collecting toys for the Adobe Children's Services in Fremont. Toys were to be brought to the December meeting at **Rich Ridgeway's** home in Hayward.

In the last issue your scribe complained about missing a few regular contributors, and I guess it worked. Thanks to all of you this time around for lots of news from just about everywhere. If this issue reaches you before Hannukah and Christmas, have a Happy and a Merry! If afterwards, I hope you had a day filled with family, friends, and fun with them and trains! Keep trackin'!

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# Restoration Station

By Bill Clark

The holiday season is past now; and I expect that some readers have put away their trains for another year. Others may have gotten out their Flyonel Polar Express; and even after taking down the tree, they left the train in place so the magic of the set can continue with its Christmas story.

I have titled my Restoration Station column this issue "Bits and Pieces" because it included a number of topics instead of just one. I decided to do a "Bits and Pieces" for this issue providing information about the repair, tuning, or cleanup of Flyer that can be quickly done and quickly explained to help performance or fix nagging problems. I use all of these solutions when working with my own Flyer and items given me by others.

### Cleaning White film from Early Flyer Plastic

I watch and read online sites about AF all the time. I continually read about the problem of the white film that appears on the couplers and other places where Gilbert used plastics in the mid-1940s. People always seem to try figure out what it is and then the best way to clean it off. Those of us who have been in the hobby for years know that the white film is caused by the chemicals leaching out of the plastic. We know it will always continue simply because the chemistry of these early plastics will not change.

Cleaning the film with a number of solvents or detergents works to some degree. Using abrasives will always damage the plastic. I have found the simplest and best answer is the use of a hair dryer to heat the film and then simply wipe it away. I learned of this solution years ago but I don't remember the source.

### Cleaning Rolling Stock and Engines

This topic appears over and over again in many places. My feeling is that there isn't any one right answer as to how best to clean rolling stock and engines. What I will write here is what I personally use on my own items. There are really two categories with one being plastic and the other being metal.

Let's start with plastic first. The one thing I try never to use is a petroleum solvent on plastic. I feel it has the possibility of dissolving paint, decals, and stickers that I want to remain. The only time I will use a petroleum solvent is when I have a small spot or stain I know is caused by grease or oil. Many people suggest a dish detergent, but I believe some of these products are strong enough to remove paint, decals, and stickers the same as a solvent.

Now for my preference. First I try plain water. Many soiled areas come clean with just water and the use of a cloth rag. After I dry the item off I use a common product most people already have, Armor All. This product has enough of a cleaner that it removes soil that water didn't. My method of spreading the Armor All is to use a small soft paint brush so I can get in all the nooks there are on the item. Then I use a paper shop towel to wipe the item off. This is especially true with plastic steam locomotives. With the use of Armor All the item is left with a slight sheen that makes it very presentable for display.

On cast engines I start with WD-40 and an old tooth brush. These engines are more likely to be coated with grease. I am careful not to rub the lettering on the engine too hard or the numbers can come off the cab or lettering on the tender. I also use a paper shop towel to wipe off any excess WD-40. If the engine is pretty clean I use the Armor All and the process for plastic items.

### Quick Cleaning Reverse Units and Motor Commutators

If I have a locomotive that isn't running as well as I want it or its Reverse Unit is not cycling, I always try to use a simple solution first. My first step is the lubrication of wheels and motors.

The second step is to clean the reverse unit and commutator. Starting with the reverse unit this is done on most steam locomotives by taking the shell off the tender, and on diesels by taking the shell off the locomotive. With the reverse unit exposed I simply spray on a contact cleaner. I use enough to make sure all of the grease or oil on the reverse unit drum is dissolved. I then spray it with compressed air from a spray can to blow away any remaining fluid.

On the motor's commutator I follow the same procedure. These always seem to have more dirt on them, so I try to blow the dissolved material into a paper towel.

The brand of contact cleaner I use is CRC, 2-26 Plastic Safe Multi-Purpose Precision Lubricant. This product I get at Home Depot. It costs a little over $10. Cans of the pressurized air can be purchased there too..

### Improved Performance with New Motor Brushes and Springs

Since Gilbert engines are now over 45 years old, the wear of critical parts is normal. However, sometimes the wear is not apparent as we play with them. If I have a locomotive running slowly I always consider the springs that push the motor's brush into its commutator as the problem and, for steam engines more than diesels, the length of the brush.

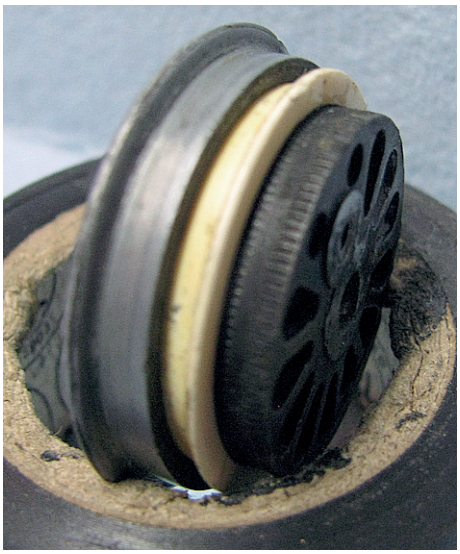
To examine the brushes of a steam locomotive, you have to disassemble the engine to examine the spring and the brush. To check these I simply remove them and compare them to new ones. If they appear worn I change them.

For diesels it is a little different from steam engines because the shape of their springs is different. To get a good look at them you take the shell off. The length of the brush is easy to spot while it is in place. To test the spring I will use a small screwdriver to push the brush harder into the commutator. If the motor speeds up I know that the spring is weak, and I replace it.

New brushes and springs for all locomotives are available from parts suppliers.

### Repairing the Drivers of Steam Engines

One of the common problems of Flyer steam engines is the white insulting tires separating from the inner and outer parts of the drive wheel. This is because over time the white plastic shrinks. If I have an engine that has trouble tracking and sometimes shorts out, I know this is the probable issue. To find out, I pick up the engine and examine each of the drive wheels to see if I can find one that will slide in or out from the chassis. Once the



problem wheel or wheels are located, it takes just a few minutes to fix them. Here is a photo of the drive wheel separated into its three parts.

I have read many different solutions in the past about completing the repair, from peening the metal wheel rim to using epoxy. Both of these mean you have to take the wheel off the engine. I use a much simpler method that is quick, and if it isn't permanent I just use it again.

I use any super glue product with the wheel still on the chassis. I pull the wheel's outer two bands, including the white plastic insulation, toward the chassis and place glue in small portions on the outside of the inner wheel and on the white plastic insulator. Then I close all of the bands so they are even with the inner wheel and wait 20 minutes. This is all the time I take.

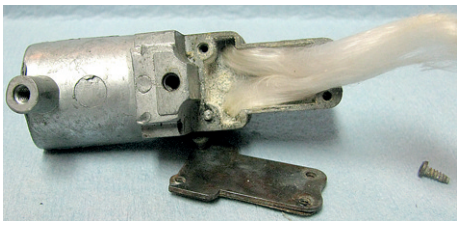
### How to Determine if a Smoke Unit Needs Rebuilding

Often I have a steam engine that just doesn't smoke as well as I would like it to. Since I have over 50 of them I don't keep records of those where I have replaced smoke element. That being so, I do have a method that I find helpful to determine if I should. What I do is disassemble the locomotive and take the smoke unit off the chassis. Then I unscrew the plate on the underside of the smoke unit so I can see the condition of the wick. If it is all gummed up with dried out smoke fluid, there is no way it can provide the siphon process necessary to provide fluid to the heating element in the upper chamber.

I have tried to use a solvent to soften and clean the wick; but to be honest, I have had limited success. With the engine disassembled I most often just change the wick.

Note that you should not unscrew the top plate and try to examine the element in the top chamber. There is no way I know of to do that without breaking one or both of the wires of the heating element.

This works on most engines from the early



and mid-1950s. Later smoke units had a different internal structure, and there was not a removable bottom plate. Below is a picture of the smoke unit with the lower plate removed. Note that this smoke unit has a new smoke element installed.

### Petroleum Jelly as a Lubricant

For years I have been using petroleum jelly instead of grease to lubricate the gears of my engines, both diesel and steam. The reason is that petroleum is clear and not black, so traces of it do not look like soil and it does not stain. It is also easy to obtain and keeps well. I have been using the same small container since the mid-90's.

On a steam engine, I use it on the main gear that is found by unscrewing the plate of the locomotive chassis. I also smear a small amount on the inside of the smoke unit where the piston moves. This causes more air to go into the unit to puff better smoke and the chuff to be louder.

For a diesel, I use it for the two gears that are under the truck frame after you remove the two screws that hold the frame to the truck with a motor in it.

### Removing Paint from Plastic Engines and Cars

Through the years I have found that the easiest way to take paint off plastic cars and engines is to use brake fluid. I bought two aluminum roasting pans years ago and several bottles of cheap brake fluid. I have used these for the longest time to remove paint from my plastic Flyer diesel engine shells and plastic rolling stock. I have never had brake fluid damage plastic.

The process is to fill the pans with brake fluid and place the plastic item in the fluid. Usually within an hour most of the paint can easily be rubbed off. Doing it a second time will normally finish the job. Once you are happy with the results, wash the items off with dish soap and water. Once the item is dry, you can begin the repainting of the item.

Now, brake fluid does not work on engines and cars that went through the early chrome surfacing used by Gilbert. I had a situation where I wanted to remove the paint from an already repainted passenger car, and that paint was not soluble by the brake fluid.

Well, that's enough for this column. I hope these items will prove helpful for you. Please send your ideas and questions to me at billstrains@aol.com.

# TRIPLE 'S' SUPPLIES

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| AC0274 | P-9251 Pilot Truck Screw HO | $2.95 ea |
| AC0333 | PA9444 Boiler Front 565-300 | $9.95 ea |
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| AC0357 | PA9502 Pilot for K5 | $15.75 ea |
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| AC0398 | PA9735 Tool Box Red | $9.50 ea |
| AC0480 | P-10025 Boiler Front HO 0-6-0 | $4.50 ea |
| AC0477 | XA10020 Trailing Truck K5 | $15.00 ea |
| AC0578 | XA10469 Link Coupler -Brass | $2.95 ea |
| AC0640 | PA10721 Turntable Bushing-755 | $5.00 ea |
| AC1044 | PA14A171 Pick Up Shoe-Baldwin | $4.50 ea |

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| AC0378 | PA9603 Slotted Brush | 2/$1.50 |
| AC0387 | PA9603A Shoulder Brush | 4/$2.50 |
| AC0649 | PA10757 Brush Springs | 4/$1.00 |
| AC0256 | P-10185 Brush for SIT | 2/$2.50 |
| AC0702 | P-11000L/R Springs | 2/$2.50 |
| AC0809 | PA11684 Brush — Alco GP7 HO | 2/$3.95 |
| AC0950 | PA13A128 Brush 5 Digit Orig. | 2/$4.50 |
| AC0810 | XA11684 Brush Assembly | 2/$12.50 |
| AC1064 | PA14A414 Baldwin Brush | 2/$3.95 |

**RIVETS & SCREWS**

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| AC0001 | S-0 Screw — Metal Tenders | 6/$1.00 |
| AC0003 | S-1 Screw — Various App | 6/$1.00 |
| AC0074 | S230B Screw — Various App | 6/$1.50 |
| AC0096 | S319 Screw — Alco Atlantic | 6/$1.50 |
| AC0172 | PA4367 Rivet — Atlantic | 4/$1.00 |
| AC0178 | PA4938 Short Drawbar Screw | 2/$1.50 |
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| KT-0315 Hudson Tender<br>PA10241, PA10209, PA10235A, PA8715B, PA1405 | $6.95 |
| KT-0320 Tune Up Kit<br>2 PA9603A, 2-PA10754, 2-PA10757 | $4.95 |
| KT-0321 Pilot Truck Hardware<br>PA8887, PA10707, W6 | $2.50 |
| KT-0322 Pilot Truck Hardware<br>PA8887, PA4939, W6 | $2.50 |

**Books**

| | |
|---|---|
| BA-0001 "S"Gauge Reference<br>by Bob Hannon | $24.95 |
| BA-0002 Gilbert American Flyer<br>Parts & Train Numbers — 100 pages<br>by Thomas J. Seccia | $19.95 |
| BA-0003 Operating & Repairing<br>American Flyer Trains HO-O-S<br>Hardcover — 331 Pages<br>by Thomas J. Seccia | $29.95 |

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# NASG introduces new PROMOTIONAL PRINT MATERIAL

NEW!

The NASG announces a set of promotional handouts to help clubs and NASG members explain and promote S modeling to potential newcomers. These new print materials carefully target information to the interests of the individual in a series of six fully illustrated, full color 8 ½"x14" tri-fold handouts.

To obtain copies of the tri-folds, contact your regional VP or the Promotions Committee.

Darby Marriott: eastern_vp@nasg.org
Brian Jackson: central_vp@nasg.org
Clay Buckage: western_vp@nasg.org
James McAuliffe: promotions@nasg.org

You can view each tri-fold in detail on the NASG website. From the Welcome page, click on the NASG button, then click on Tri-folds under the NASG Promotions heading.

# S Scale and O Scale Event at NMRA Meet a Success!

## By Charles Malinowski

*Charles Malinowski with his S scale portable layout "MR2GO!"*

The 3rd Annual S/O Scale Meet at the Danville Indiana NMRA show was a great success.

The Central Indiana Division (CID) of the NMRA sponsored an annual show that drew nearly 1,200 adults, kids and vendors to the Hendricks County Fairgrounds Expo Center, just west of Indianapolis.

Realizing the shared challenges of promoting both S and O Scale model railroading, my good friend/neighbor and O Scaler Eric Peterson decided that we should host a special event showcasing the benefits of modeling in our chosen scales. The CID Board was happy to accommodate us with three beautiful classrooms that opened into a large hall to gather 14 vendors on 31 sales tables and displaying both S and O scale operating layouts.

In addition to the Saturday event, a small group of S/O modelers gathered at a nearby restaurant for socializing.

The CID had two very large exposition halls filled the customary vendor tables and operating layouts. Volunteers were available to answer questions and also managed a "Popular Vote" Contest. I knew of two of our S-Gauge/Scale brothers in those halls.

The overall option of the vendors that I spoke with enjoyed their experience (but would have liked to have had more sales…maybe a few more of you kind readers could visit next year to increase their enjoyment…and yours too!).

Watch *The Dispatch* Calendar-of-Events for the 2025 Danville Event.

**Central Indiana Division**
**NMRA**

***Allen Ambler***

***Jim Kindraka and Sam McCoy***

***Mick Hinkle and Rob Berridge***

***Paul Alldredge***

***Merlyn Jarman and Charles Malinowski***

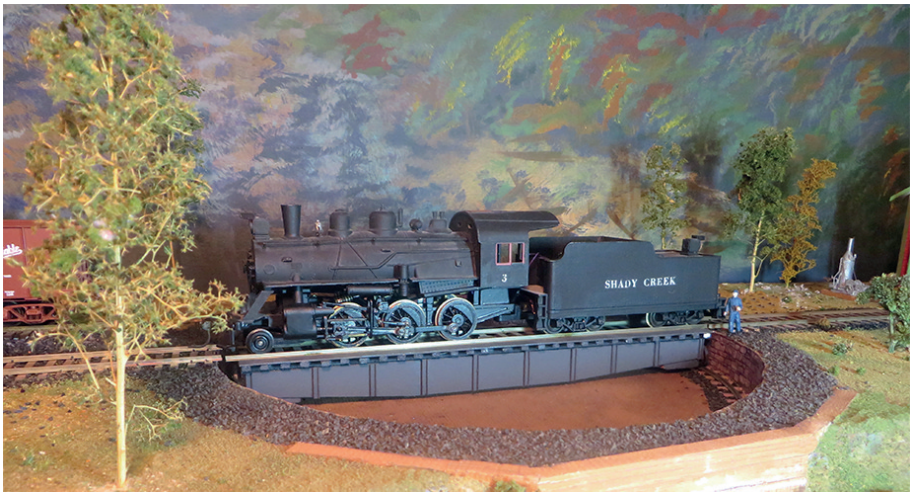
***David Gove of New Hampshire and Kurt Kruty***

# More Storytelling with Our Railroads

**By Steve Monson**

***Engineer Frank Gibbs would throw out the morning newspaper for farmer Lee Herberg as he took the passenger train down the hill into town. Attached to it was a little note of how many eggs he wanted that morning. A couple of hours later on his way back up he would stop the train to pick up the eggs and to pay Mr. Herberg. Frank's family always had fresh eggs, and Mr. Herberg got a newspaper earlier than if he had to wait for the postman. And it was a later edition.***

I have studied the branch line I am modeling extensively, and I can take you around my railroad and tell a true story for many of my scenes. Good and bad times. Trains full of passengers and trains carrying but one lone soul. Long freights bringing materials for new growing communities, and trains consisting of a single combine carrying a few packages. Stories of men getting killed on their very first day of work and men getting their gold watch for a lifetime of service. And stories of men running their train much like that of the Cannonball on Petticoat Junction. Not worrying too much about schedule and making special stops when it would convenience shippers and passengers. The stories that follow are 100 years old and are all true.




***The turntable at the end of the branchline was a 56' Armstrong type. When recently balanced and greased it took only one man to swing a ten-wheeler or mogul around. But at other times, and especially in the winter, it was all that four men could do. Out of protest, the crew sometimes backed the loco the twenty miles to the mainline wye, then ran light back to pick up their train. They even expected to be paid for the extra 40 miles.***

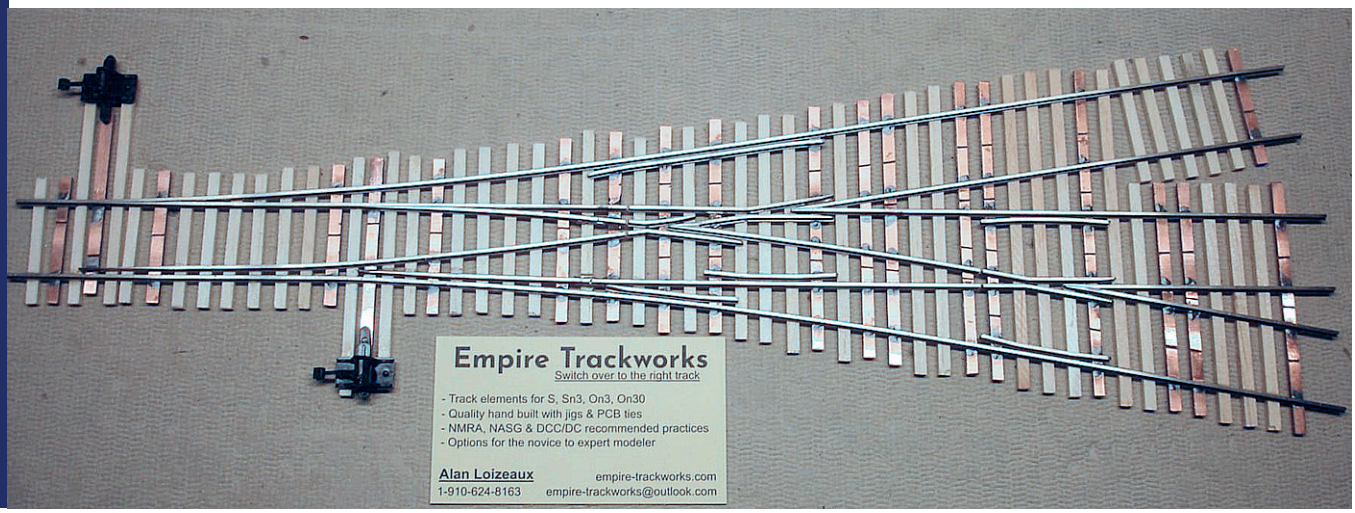
*Only a one mile walk from town, an 1880 Howe Truss bridge sat high in the hills overlooking the St. Croix River and Wisconsin on the other side. It was a popular spot for young lovers. Also, a good vantage point for the local photographer to get photos to make into postcards to sell at the local drug store.*

*The evening train arrived at 7:30. The crew would stay overnight in the local hotel, while the locomotive watchman watched over the locomotive in the enginehouse. He did some light maintenance and repairs, but mostly his job was simply to keep it steamed up. A cold locomotive in Minnesota would take a long time to get going. The passenger cars for tomorrow's train sat on the siding alongside the enginehouse. In the winter a steam pipe was run from the locomotive over to the cars so that they would be warm when the passengers boarded at 7:00AM.*

*Of course, a steam locomotive is known to emit sparks, and on more than one occasion a fire started. When that happened, the watchman would frantically blow the locomotive whistle. The town's people knew what this meant, and all able-bodied men would get out of bed and run down to help put out the flames.*

# An Interview with Alan Loizeaux of Empire Trackworks

## By Phil Scandura, photos by Alan Loizeaux




*S Scale #6 Three-Way Turnout*

### Finding Quality Ready-to-Run Track

Over the years I've modeled in nearly every scale, except narrow-gauge. One of my primary requirements for modeling in a particular scale is the availability of a bullet-proof track system. I had attempted hand-laying HO track many years ago and was not successful. The failure was primarily mine, not the products I used, but it convinced me that I didn't like hand-laying track, and that I needed a ready-to-run track product.

When I transitioned to S Scale in 2008, my initial layout design attempts used sectional track with integrated roadbed. While the track worked well, my design configurations were limited to the available sectional pieces. I quickly changed to using flextrack and ready-to-run turnouts. The first brand of turnout I used was disappointing, but I was able to make modifications so that it was reasonably reliable. For my second layout, I turned to a then new ready-to-run product line that I truly enjoyed. Sadly, it is no longer available.

Fast-forward to 2024 and there is a new player in the S turnout market, Empire Trackworks owned by Alan Loizeaux. Empire Trackworks offers custom, hand-built turnouts to fit your layout's needs. But rather than listen to me, let's talk with Alan...

### Tell Us All About it, Alan!

*The Dispatch*: How did you get started in model railroading?

AL: As a young kid, my father introduced me to the model railroad hobby. I attended many conventions and helped him to build his S Scale layout. In my younger years, dad had built me a large Lionel train set which folded down from the wall. Around 8 years old, I entered a raffle contest for a HO train set and won the drawing. The HO trains lived under the bed on a sheet of plywood for years. In my teens, I built a full-size HO train layout in my bedroom around the walls (11' x 13'). All the while helping my father with his layout learning benchwork, track laying, wiring & scenery. I loved the mechanics behind everything working together.

Fast forward 22 years and after retiring from the military, I was hired by Norfolk Southern as a Conductor. The railroad bug was still alive, and the wife approved space allocations in the basement. I started building my layout and enjoyed every moment with the help of a few good friends.

*The Dispatch*: Do you have a favorite scale (and why)?

AL: I personally model in On30. With the dedicated space for my model railroad, On3 would have been possible, but I found Mountain Model Imports (MMI) offered their steam engines in both On3 & On30. I was able to have a slightly tighter radius with On30 and achieve the goals I wanted for my railroad. Other engine and rolling stock manufactures also have On30 wheel sets for their On3 equipment.

*The Dispatch*: Do you have a favorite prototype (and why)?

AL: Denver Rio Grande. I knew I wouldn't achieve my dream results of a huge layout in HO with all the complex industries I wanted. I had to target my focus within the reality of what could be

done. O scale narrow-gauge fits better with my plans to have a reasonable track-to-scenery mix.

*The Dispatch*: Are you a freelancer, prototype modeler, or somewhere in-between?

AL: Proto-freelancer all the way. I'm not a rivet counter by any means. It is more important to have the prototype feel with the flexibility to have the scenes "generally" right.

*The Dispatch*: What prompted you to start Empire Trackworks?

AL: I had the opportunity to purchase Tomalco (S Scale) from a good friend, Larry Morton. I was intimidated by the aspect of being a small business owner and reluctantly declined his offer. The thought lingered in my head, what if?

It dawned on me reading through various topics on forums, that most mass-manufactured RTR turnouts needed modifications to be within NMRA/NASG and DCC standards for reliable operations or were only available in very limited frog angles. Some websites offering custom turnouts are still active but not responding to email requests (so I have been told).

I'm heavily invested with the Fast Tracks (FT) method of building turnouts and offered my services among the On30 Facebook groups. I had an order, then another, then another; all with positive review comments. Soon, I was contacted to discuss building other trackwork pieces: S Scale, Sn3, On3. I felt I had a quality service to provide to other modelers to fill a void in the hobby track department.

*The Dispatch*: How long has it been in business?

AL: It has been four months (February 2024) since the "official" date. I first offered my turnouts as a test pilot phase back in November 2023.

*The Dispatch*: How was it getting started?

AL: Scary! I had no clue how to run a business. I asked a lot of questions of other small business owners, watched YouTube videos, searched the web for information, and concluded I had the determination to give it a shot.

I contacted select professionals who guided me through the process. I was lucky in many aspects to have contacts within the modeling manufactures to provide help. The large picture broken down into smaller pieces was easy to digest making the decision manageable to become successful. I have much to learn but I am not afraid to ask questions.

*The Dispatch*: Is it "just a business" or is it a "labor of love?"

AL: Primarily, I do it because I enjoy helping others in their hobbies get their desired track plan to become reality. I might not complete my personal layout, but I can have pieces of my craftsmanship live on layouts over the world.

*The Dispatch*: What is your favorite product (or product line) that Empire Trackworks offers?

AL: Not so much as a favorite product, but I like a challenge. As an example, someone was requesting an O Scale 45 degree crossing between Code 125 O Scale and Code 100 On30. The general response from other custom builders was do it "with all the same code rail" or "it can't be done." I took on the challenge and completed the crossing with minimal difficulty. The customer was happy as it was exactly what he wanted.

*The Dispatch*: What is the most popular product (or product line) with your customers?

AL: Ready to Drop In (RTDI) one-piece stub turnouts.

*The Dispatch*: Can you give us a hint about what's on the horizon for Empire Trackworks in the coming months?

AL: Empire Trackworks is scheduled to attend several conventions over the next two years: NASG in July 2024, NNGC in Sept 2024, Sn3 Symposium 2025, and O Scale West 2025. Advertising is on the agenda with many of the popular model railroad magazines.

*The Dispatch*: Do you have any words of wisdom or advice for our readers?

AL: There are various skill sets required to complete a model railroad. Know your strong talents, ask for help to learn a new task and pass your knowledge onto others. Get the kids involved in the hobby.

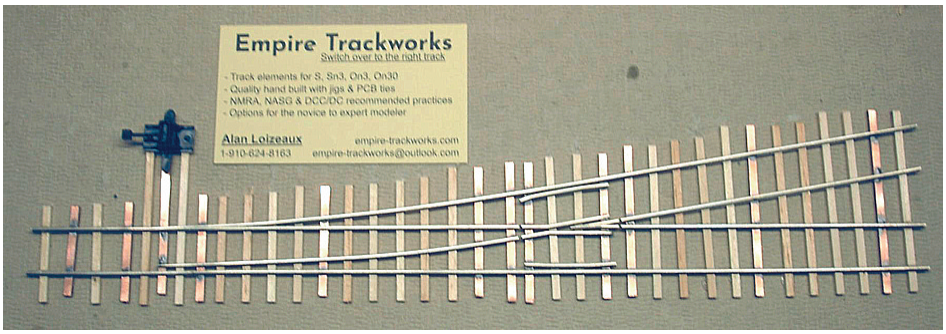
*The Dispatch*: Thanks very much for taking the time to speak with *The Dispatch* today!

AL: My pleasure!

## Where to Find Empire Trackworks Products

Visit the Empire Trackworks web site at www.empire-trackworks.com or look for Al's booth at upcoming conventions mentioned above.

***S Scale Right-Hand Point Derail***




***Sn3 Left-Hand #6 Turnout***

# Wood Load For A Franklin Tender

**By Austin Birkey /** Photos by author

***Austin Birkey enhanced the appearance of his AF 4-4-0 locomotives by installing a load of fire wood in the tender. This simple addition substantiall improves the appearance and realism of the locomotives .in the Dundon yard on Brooks prior layout. Brooks Stover photo.***

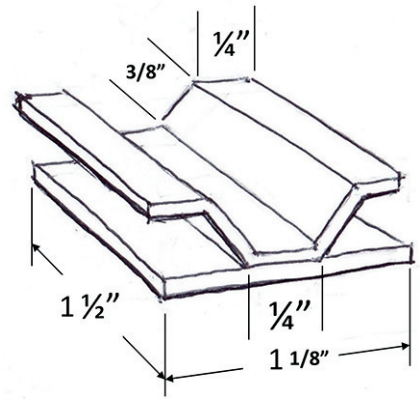
The American Flyer American-style 4-4-0 steam engines are unique in many ways. Not only are the Franklin and Washington engines some of the more colorful engines produced in 1959-1961, but they are wood burners! A recent rebuild of one of these engines left me thinking it needed something more...maybe something to fill the tender. Here is one way to load wood into an American Flyer Franklin or Washington tender.

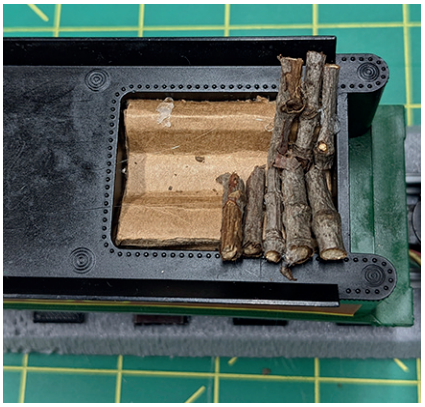
The first thing I did was stroll through my yard to pick up a few sticks that would become my tender wood load. Using a scale ruler, I cut the sticks into 2-and-3 foot lengths.

Next, I measured the wood bunker space. I wanted to create a sub floor that would help me stack the logs in a "V" configuration. My material choice was again something available and inexpensive, namely cardboard. I made two rectangles. The lower base was 1 1/8" by 1 1/2". I then made a second "V" shaped platform of the dimensions and fold locations shown in the sketch below. Using hot glue, I assembled the sub floor and "V" section together.

With the base and "V" platform installed in the tender bunker, I began to glue down the logs. My goal with the logs was to cover the cardboard while also creating a somewhat believable stack of logs. After the cardboard was covered it was time to add some character to the pile with logs just tossed in and a few even outside of the bunker.

I have a love/hate relationship with hot glue. I appreciate how quick it is but hate the strings. To avoid the stringing as much as possible, I used very small amounts of glue. I then came back and added a little super glue where the lumber was not held very well. My Franklin and Washington engines now have fuel to burn!



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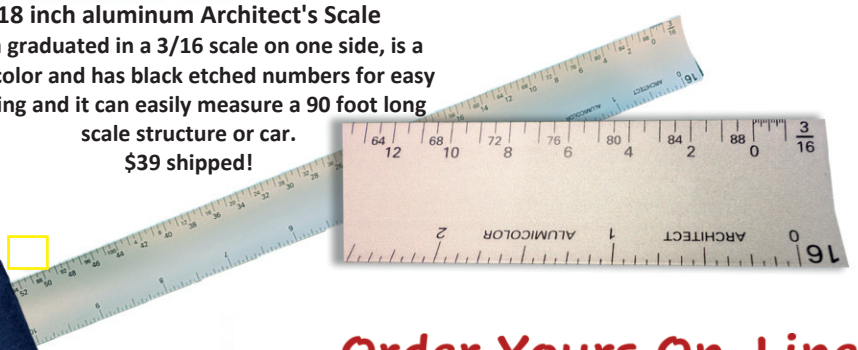

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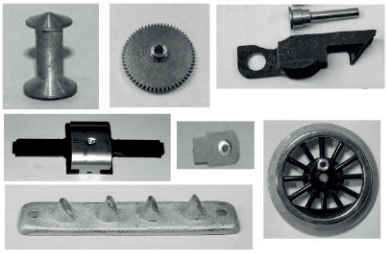

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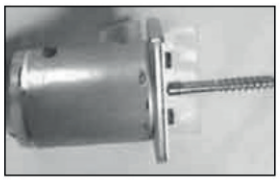

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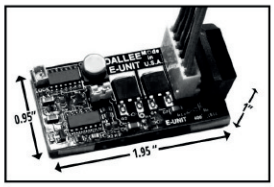

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# A Different Approach to Layout Design

## Building a Conrail Branch Line

**By Jack Bartman – Photos by the author**

***FIG. 1 - A Frank Titman-built Reading consolidation leaves the LVM engine house. The roof at the lower right belongs to a LVM branch line station. The rubber company flat on the left still needs to be secured in a vertical position. Note the effective use of background flat cut-outs on the sky board, typical throughout Jack's project.***

I'm a big fan of "*S Gauge Herald*" editor Frank Titman. I've been in and out of S scale since I subscribed in 1974. I was 15 at the time; this year I'm turning 64. I even got to meet *Herald* publisher Wally Collins and drove him over to Frank's house for a reunion. I've always admired Frank's Lehigh Valley Models (LVM) kits. Those were the buildings I looked at first for my railroad. Two old-time Lehigh Valley S Gaugers are getting out of the hobby because of age and illness, so from them I've been able to purchase several of Frank's Spiral Hill structures that he built, as well as some freight cars and engines; and I'm really happy to own them now.

I don't do things conventionally. I work on one section at a time. First I build a backdrop out of one-inch foam painted sky blue. Then I glue on Scenery Express backdrop building photos after cutting out the sky. Then I fade them with a mist of white spray paint, after which my wife paints the clouds. Next I place buildings from my stash where I want them. Lastly, I bring track to the buildings. I really don't do any track planning in advance. I'm a retired railroad conductor, so I get how track is supposed to be.

I'm designing the layout as a fictitious Conrail branch line, the Conrail Canandaigua Division, with operations being a key element. Amtrak will run here with an RDC. The era is 1976-1982 Conrail and Chessie System. I am using code 100 Tomalco track and Shinohara turnouts, the majority of which will be hand-thrown. There will be a couple of operating PRR-style signals.

Phase one is twenty-two feet long and eighteen inches wide, expanding to forty inches wide at the end where the roundhouse is. I want to build this railroad scene by scene, because it gives me a chance to do all facets of modeling

instead of just doing track and wiring for a long time. The railroad will be roughly twenty-two by twenty-two feet, a double-decker. The area under phase one is going to be a shelf for tools, food, drinks, etc. Unfortunately, my basement ceiling is only six feet high. My house was built in 1895, so the only thing they thought about keeping down there in those days was a sack of potatoes and some coal.

***Fig. 2. The east end terminal's steam-era roundhouse will be served by a three-way turnout in lieu of an unnecessary turntable. Car shop is on the right. Track-laying will be one of the last parts of the construction process; laying out the industries, utilities, and facilities will dictate the track arrangement.***

The first thing I started working on was the East End engine terminal (Fig. 2), since the layout is a point to point-to-railroad. On eBay I purchased an Atlas O scale engine house kit missing parts for just $50, a bargain, given its $250 list price. I chopped it down and shortened it and I'm pleased with the result. Next to it is a car shop that Frank Titman built for an "*S Gaugian*" article in the 1990s. The sanding tower is an old Delaware Valley Models kit. There is also a yard tower where the Superintendent has an office. Next to that is a Mahr Milling Co. flat, built by Frank for Bert Mahr, a Lehigh Valley S Gaugers member. There is a LVM engine house (Fig. 1) that fits in the area as well. Across from it is a LVM branch line station, perfect for an Amtrak RDC to service. Next to the station is a NASG kit-bashed crew quarters building. Next to the wall will be a fueling and sanding facility. So, based on my personal real-life railroad experience, everything is there for an S scale crew to go to work, even porta johns!

Traveling west there is an LVM oil dealer (Fig. 3), a LVM cement dealer (Fig. 4), and

***FIG. 3 - A Lehigh Valley Models oil dealership fronts backgropund storage tanks.***

a Duco Cement plant built by Barry Mertz in front of a hand-drawn and painted backdrop building by Frank Titman. Next comes LVM coal dealer, then a LVM Angelo Bova produce dealer (Fig. 5) that was on Frank's Spiral Hill. Then there are two non-rail customers. Not every building has to have a siding; and, besides, it's sometimes impossible to put sidings to every structure. So at this point (Fig. 6) there will be a run-around track, allowing an engine to push a freight car into both facing-point and trailing-point turnouts. Then we have a LVM Hawk Milling kit (Fig. 7). Continuing around the curve is a LVM lumber yard kit, behind that is a frozen foods structure built by Frank Titman for his Spiral Hill. As the rail line continues west, construction will proceed in a similar manner.

To sum it up, I built and purchased a large group of structures for phase one first, before laying any track, just using trial and error, making sure there is space for an individual siding and placing them appropriately. The next step was to lay a running track from end to end. From that I was able to determine where the sidings would go, and if they would be facing-point or trailing-point turnouts.

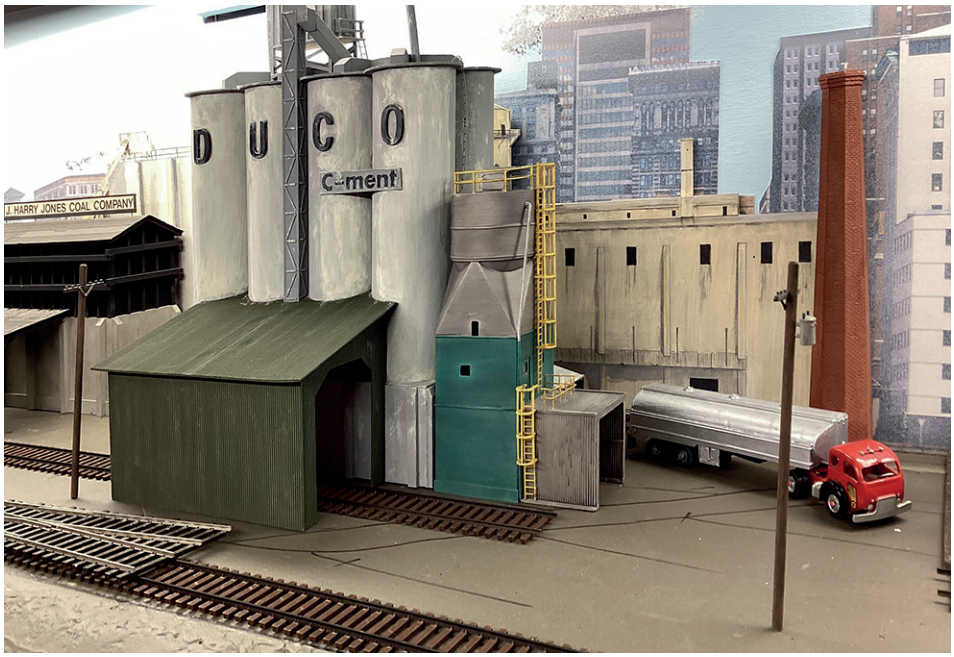
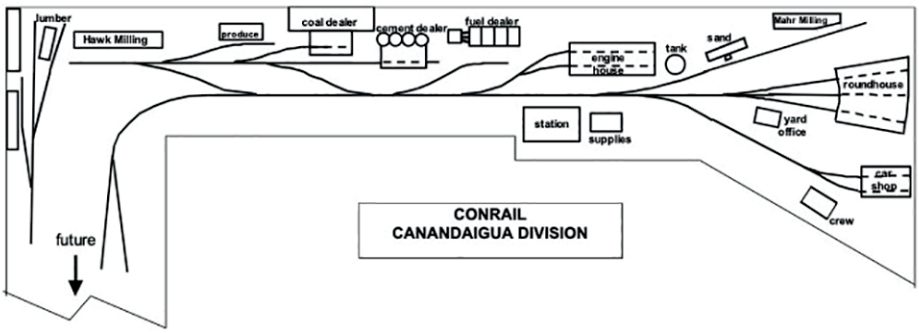



***FIG. 4 - Here's Duco Cement, built by Barry Mertz, next to an LVM J. Harry Jones coal dealership. The flat behind the cement plant was created and hand-painted by Frank Titman.***

*FIG. 5 - A really nice scene is fronted by the Angelo Bova wholesale produce company. Bova's was originally on Frank Titman's Spiral Hill Railroad.*

*FIG. 7 - More LVM buildings appear here: Hawk Milling, Purina Chows, a lumber company, and a frozen food plant. These are also from Frank Titman's old layout.*

*FIG. 6 - Some buildings are adjacent rail line just by chance, requiring no rail service. Such locations are perfect for locating run-around tracks (short passing sidings), as will be done here.*




*The layout schematic, not to scale, shows the general arrangement of the spurs and sidings that service the various clients along the way. The numbered order of the photographs follows the schematic from right to left. Not to scale.*

I also had to keep in mind a run-around track, and I found the spot by the non-rail customers. There's no room for a turntable, but I did have a Tomalco three-way turnout on hand to service the roundhouse. Prototypically, some railroads tore out their turntables when the steam era was over, and just replaced them with turnouts into the roundhouse, since turning diesel engines is not always necessary.

What to do with my model railroad? There are many facets to model railroading. Some like to build freight cars; some like to build brass engines; some like structures, scenery etc. My favorite draw is operations. I like the thought of having a miniature transportation system in my basement.

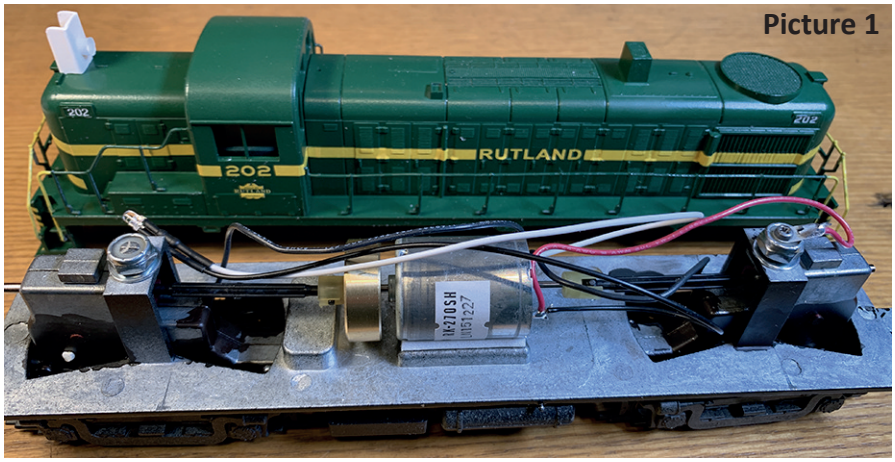
Since I am a retired railroad conductor for New Jersey Transit, it reminds me of the good old days. It's fun for me to have a couple of guys over, acting like a crew, and having the interaction of trains, paperwork, and friends. Operations give the layout a reason for being once it's up and running. Because my layout is going to be a Conrail branch line, that means more switching and less mainline loop running. Loop running is good for when I'm alone, and just want to see a train run for a bit.

# Optimizing LED Headlights

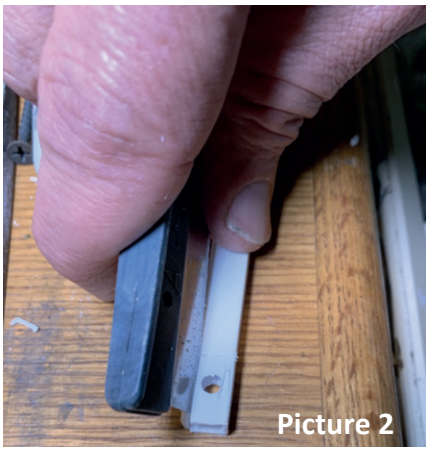
## By Chris Monje

LED lighting is an eye-catching asset for models. DC locomotive headlight illumination is improved because LEDs are brighter at lower voltage. It's also important to center the LED for optimal illumination. This article describes using styrene brackets as an economical option for optimizing LED positioning.

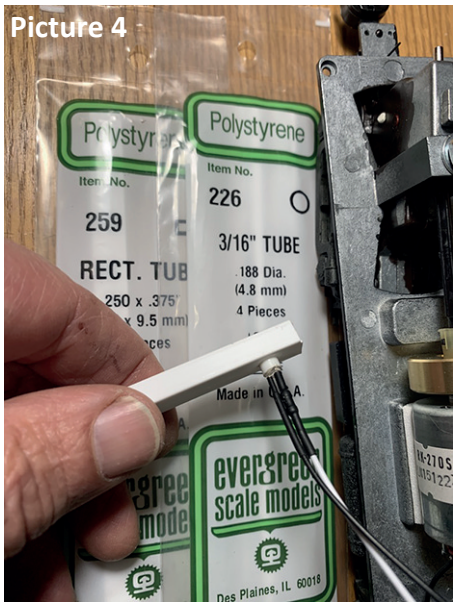
This American Models RS-3 comes with a single LED that can benefit from more accurate positioning. To locate the LED directly behind the headlight lens, 3/16" tubing makes a good housing for the LED. **Picture 1** shows the stock LED headlight unmounted, with the white styrene bracket on top of the locomotive. This bracket is made with Evergreen number 259 tubing 25" x .375", adapted as needed. **Picture 2** shows one portion of the rectangular tubing being cut with a saw.



Picture 1

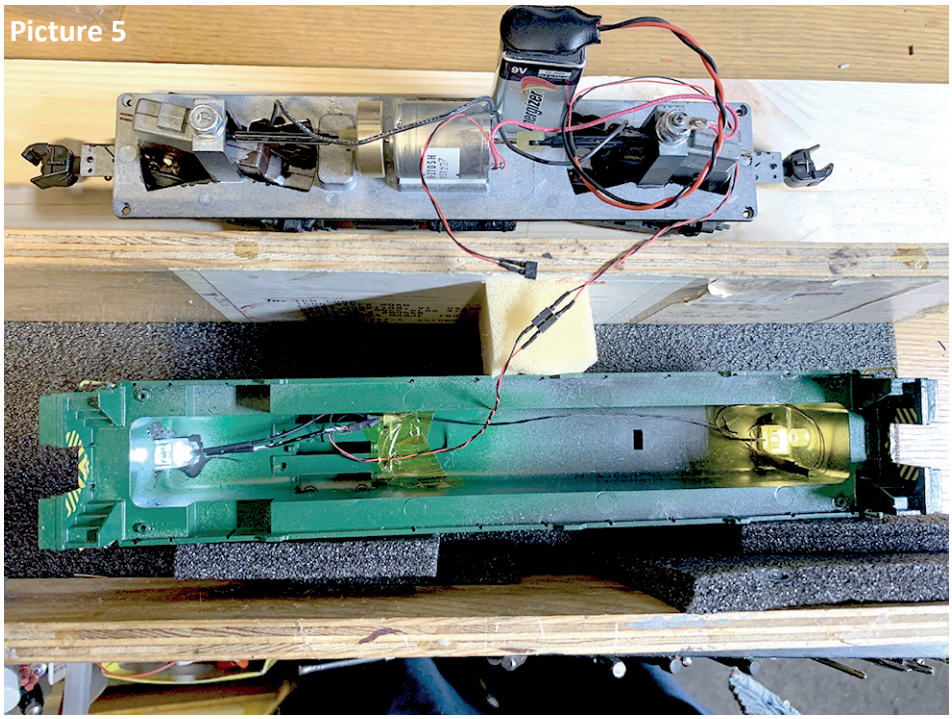

Picture 2

**Pictures 3 & 4** show front and rear views of the headlight mounting. For accurate positioning, the LED must be illuminated. Incidentally, LEDs operate




at less than 3 volts. This American Models LED comes with a built-in resistor underneath the shrink tubing. I'm substituting a 9-volt battery to position the LED. LEDs are polarity sensitive, so the factory equipped LED illuminates in one direction only.

I decided to add a second LED from Evan Designs. Evan Designs sells a variety of LEDs, including those equipped with a rectifier and resistor module. This allows them to be used with DC, AC, and DCC. I used a 5-millimeter LED in warm white. This provides what I think is a more accurate color illumination for a 1950's locomotive headlight. (**Picture 5**)

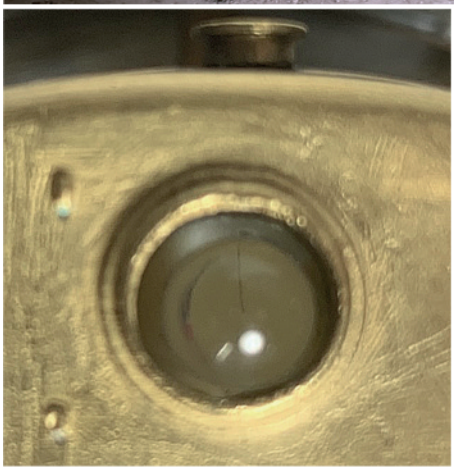


Either 3-or-5 mm LED's work well in this application behind a lens. For the 5-mm LED, I simply drilled a hole in the 259 tubing used as a headlight bracket.

**Picture 6** shows both the 3-and– 5 mm LEDs in their styrene mounts. Knowing that the styrene bracket will be held in place with epoxy, bracket length is approximate. The important thing is to have room for vertical adjustment. The top of the styrene bracket will be immersed in a small puddle of epoxy beneath the roof. **Pictures 7 and 8** are closeups of the two headlights.

**Picture 7** shows how the stock headlight is held in the round tubing, inserted into the modified rectangular

JB KwikWeld (**Picture 9**) is a thick and quick setting epoxy, ideal for an application like this. An ordinary toothpick is strong enough to mix the two part product, and it is thick enough to not drip. Try experimenting with it. You can feel it begin to "set," yet still be moved. At this point you have about a minute until it become rigid, five minutes after mixing. I've found a wide range of repair uses, such as reinforcing plastic handles around the house.



Using a plug for locomotive headlights makes it convenient to detach the body for servicing. This plug is visible in **Picture 5**. In this case, there's one plug for both headlights. Evan Designs sells a plug that's ideal for this application and other modeling uses.

Incidentally, the locomotive was painted with a spray can of Rust-Oleum Hunter Green, and decals were purchased from Bill Brillinger's Precision Design Canada. Bill supplies top quality decals that work well.

LEDs brighten the model railroad scene. It's rewarding to enhance realism with all the lighting options LEDs provide.

Addendum: I also included pictures of a 5-mm LED used as a headlight lens in a brass RS-1.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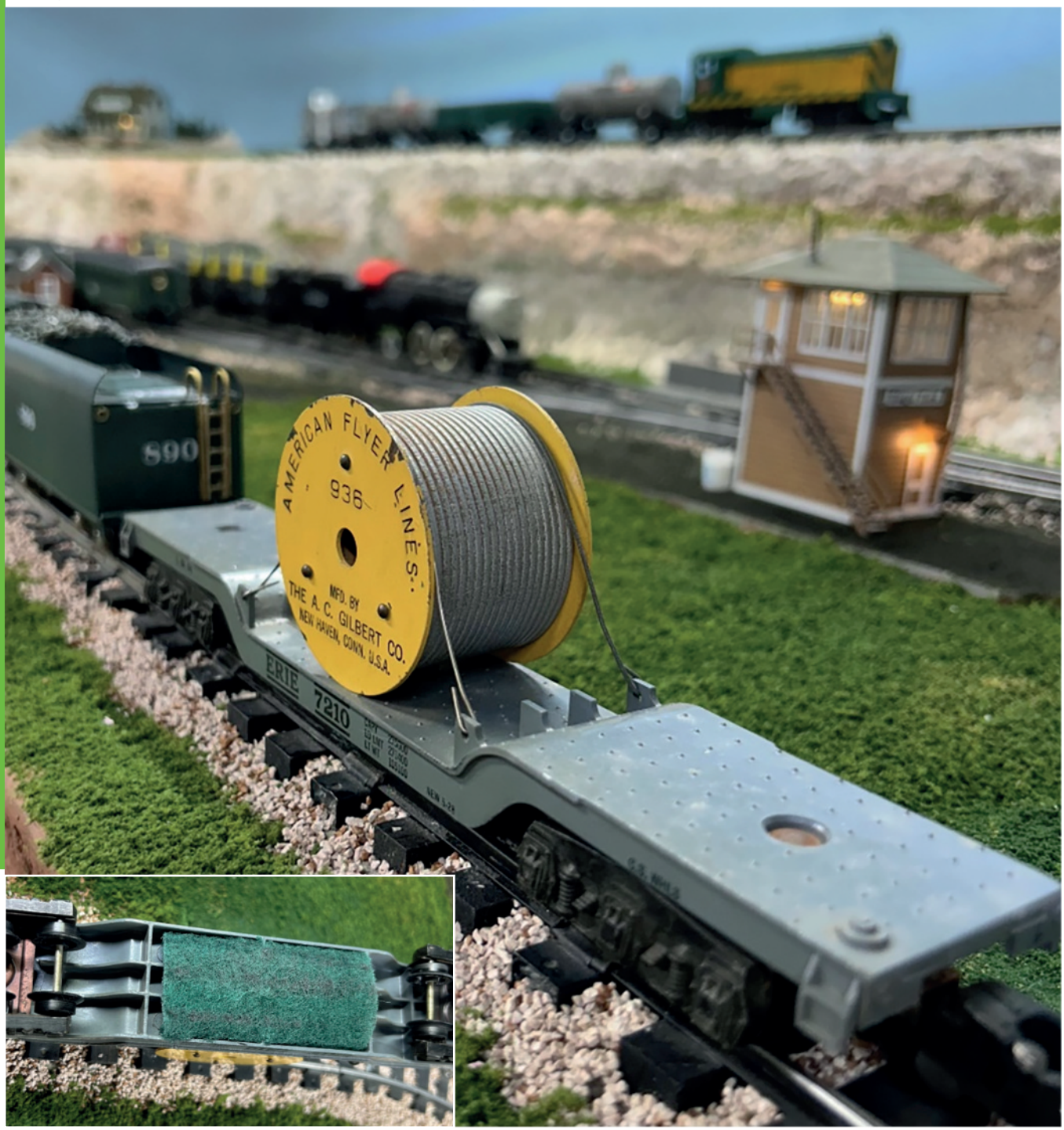
# An Ad Hoc Track Cleaning Car

**By Michael Klawitter -** Photos by author




Do you have a need for a track cleaning car for a blind tunnel or other hard to reach spots? Here is an easy method to making a usable cleaning car.

The materials are an AF 7210 Flat Bed Wire Spool car, 1 ¾" x 3 ¼" piece of scrubbing pad and a track cleaning solution.

Trim the pad so it fits under the center of the car with its ends curled and tucked into the frame. Cut a slit on both sides to clear the center rib of the under carriage. Test fit the pad so it touches the rails and the wheels still make contact also. Apply your cleaning solution to the pad and hitch up a locomotive and run it around the track several times.

# Out Along The Line

photos by NASG members

*Workers are unloading a Lionel Flyer 6-41002 GB&W refrigerated boxcar made for the Southern California S Gaugers. A Gilbert Flyer No. 21155 Dockside is spotting the reefer. The diecast figures are Barkley pieces by Joy Line. Numerous all-original Gilbert and Mini-Craft accessories are in the background on Bob's layout. Although Gilbert did not make a GB&W reefer in S gauge, a Nos. 526/33526 reefer was made for Gilbert's HO line. Photo by Bob Bubeck.*

*A Lionel American Flyer No. 6-48085 Rio Grande Challenger is positioned at the ready next to a scale detailed factory on Gene Ploeger's hi-rail layout done with scale-detailed scenery and structures. Although the track is Gilbert, the careful application of ballast contributes to the sense of realism. Photo by Gene Ploeger.*

***We Want To See YOUR AF, hi-rail or scale photos here!***
***Send photos and captions to Bob Bubeck at: rbubeck327@aol.com***

# Classifieds

All NASG members may place non-commercial ads here at no charge. Ads are limited to 750 characters. Email ads to dispatch@nasg or mail to Dan Dawdy, 407 East Chippeawa St., Dwight, IL 60420. Include membership number. Ads will run three consecutive months unless canceled.

**FOR SALE:** Overland Models imported brass diesel with custom NYC authentic half-stripe paint scheme is now a buying opportunity. Engine comes with River Raisin Models improved drive, decoder (silent) installed, crew, couplers and a working diaphragm. Test run only. Effectively brand new. Ask questions or request more photos, but eventually please make your best reasonable offer for my consideration. If it makes me smile, the loco is yours. If not, I get to keep it. Fair enough? With this arrangement, nobody has ever complained about my prices. Think about that.Email communication works best for me. Ed Loizeaux **Loizeaux@SBCGlobal.net** (3)

**FOR SALE:** Classic Toy Trains magazine collection, April 1990 to present, P-10, free to NASG member, must pick-up or pay shipping; Racing Champions 1/64 (S scale) 6 die-cast cars ('56 Thunderbird, '69 Cougar, '62 Pontiac, '66 Chevy Nova, '86 Buick, '70 Chevelle), C-10, OB, $18 + shipping.
**Email: jshirey1@comcast.net; 916 429-2764**, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm PST. (3)

**WANTED:** SHS wood-sided reefers; #00477, unlettered yellow; #00478, unlettered orange; #00690 Carling Black Label (CBL 804); and #02124 Carling Black Label (CBL 812). Prefer SHS reefers with scale trucks or with scale wheel sets included. Also wanted: unbuilt, 40 foot, wood-sided, freight reefer kits by Kinsman, Scenery Unlimited, Ye Olde Huff-n-Puff, Main Line Models. Prefer unbuilt kits without trucks but will consider with trucks.
**Email: tpatterson31@wi.rr.com** (2)

**WANTED:** Either running or non-running chasis with wheelsets for a Santa Fe #360 A-unit.
**Jim Bender 672 Beechwood Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06605 cell 203-913-8187** (3)

**FOR SALE:** American Flyer NASG convention cars. Selling as one lot. Complete collection from the 0700 car of 1981 and 1988 to 2003. You get 23 cars in total, most are NIB and most come with their original shipping box. The NKP flat comes with the Ertl trailer, also NIB. 2021 Greenberg has it all at $2,160. Will take $1,200. TCA work train set, includes (2) boxcars, combine, gondola and flat car with wheel load. All (5) cars NIB with shipping boxes. List for $352. Will take $240. All prices include shipping. Joseph Wozniak **Email: finelinewp@aol.com** (2)

**WANTED:** Putt Trains (Rex) PRR B-6 060 slopped back Tender.
**Jim McMinn: gjeanie616@verizon or 814-944-3865** (2)

**WANTED:** SHS/MTH 70-ton roller bearing freight car trucks and SHS/MTH/Scale Trains 50-ton friction bearing freight car trucks (Bettendorf and Andrews side frames). Scale wheel sets only. ALSO WANTED: TOMALCO rerailers; two hi-rail and one scale. Email: tpatterson31@wi.rr.com. (1)

**FOR SALE:** S Gaugian magazine, 1990-1919 complete with 240 issues in excellent condition. $120 plus shipping or free pickup if you are in Texas. **stephen.terni@yahoo.com** (1)

## Advertisers Index


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2024 Annual Convention & Member Cars | Pg. | 32 |
| 2025 Spring Spree | Pg. | 5 |
| Depot G Hobbies | Pg. | 13 |
| Empire Trackworks | Pg. | 5 |
| Pikesville Models | Pg. | 13 |
| NASG Company Store | Pg. | 4, 21 |
| Port Line Hobbies | Pg. | 21 |
| Pre-Size | Pg. | 13 |
| Trains and More | Pg. | 9 |
| Trainz.com | Pg. | 30 |
| Tripple 'S' Supplies | Pg. | 12 |

# Calendar of Events

### Prototype Rails Cocoa Beach, FL
January 9 to January 11, 2025
1550 N Atlantic Ave, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931
96 great clinics under development by fantastic modelers and historians. Clinics start on Thursday, Jan 9, 2025 at 7:00PM and conclude on Saturday at 10:00PM.
https://www.prototyperails.com/

### RPM-East
March 21 and 22, 2025
Westmoreland County Community College
145 Pavilion Lane, Youngwood, PA 15697
The WCCC space has great rooms for presentations, model displays, and vendor sales. Our 2023 event was well attended and we are looking forward to the 2025 RPM-East! Make your plans to attend and re-energize your modeling efforts as winter melts into spring.
https://hansmanns.org/rpm_east/index.htm

### Sn3 Symposium
April 24, 25, & 26, 2025
10695 Auto Mall Dr, Sandy, UT 84070
We are currently at work lining up a full agenda of great layouts, clinics, and activities to entertain you. We will of course continue to provide an area for vendors to show off their new wares, as well as offering a raffle and swap meet near the end of things to pick up that old offering you might have missed out on.
There were a host of narrow gauge railroads, as well as a few very interesting standard gauge roads in the early years in this area.
https://sn3symposium.com/

### Spring S Spree (See our ad in this issue)
May 16 & 17, 2025
157 E Fair Ave, Lancaster, Ohio 43130
Central Ohio S Gaugers are proud to host the Spring S Spree 2025. The gathering of S gauge model train enthusiasts will be held at the AAA Multipurpose building on the beautiful grounds of the Fairfield County Fairgrounds in Lancaster, Ohio. Lancaster is approximately 30 mile southeast of Columbus.
All facets of the 1/64th scale of modeling railroading will be on display, with operating layouts, vendors selling tons of s gauge related items, How-To clinics, auctions, door prizes and much more!
https://sspree.info/

### 2025 NASG Convention
Wednesday August 6, 2025 through Saturday August 9, 2025
All of the activities will be held at, or originate from, the Holiday Inn Norwich hotel
10 Laura Boulevard
Norwich, Connecticut 06360
https://www.nasg.org/Convention/index.php

# New Members

## July 1, 2024 to August 31, 2024

| | |
|---|---|
| Gordon R. Aprill | Oconto Falls, WI |
| Carey D. Beamesderfer | Santa Teresa, NM |
| Jim Blackford | Hampstead, NH |
| Dr Neil Blumberg | Pittsford, NY |
| Dudley H. Bottom | Shelbyville, KY |
| Forrest Boyd | Pueblo, CO |
| Michael D. Brondos | Haymartket, VA |
| Kirtley J. Cooke | Clarksville, IN |
| James B. Davis | Stockton Springs, ME |
| Anthony E. Dixon | Lincoln, IA |
| Robert Donigan | Brooklyn, NY |
| Thomas Fritsch | Akron, OH |
| Paul J. Grabek | East Haddam, CT |
| Clarence E, Harris | Chicago, IL |
| Stephen Hawrylik | Windsor, CT |
| Murrell M. Johnson | High Point, NC |
| Philip Kendrick | Rockland, ME |
| Rudy Krastin | Mondovi, WI |
| Steven G. MacVean | Normal, IL |
| Michael F. McClure | Minneapolis, MN |
| Keith Olmanni | Phoenix, AZ |
| David P, Owens | Tucson, AZ |
| Dave C. Pahler | Canton, OH |
| Chrtis Perry | Winfield, MO |
| H. Wayne Potter | Westerville, OH |
| Newton C. Taylor III | Henryville, PA |
| Peter Thomson | Huntly, Victoria, Australia |
| Tom L. Tyler | Muskegon, MI |
| Gregory Urbiel | Grosse Pointe Park, MI |
| Charles Williams | Monterey, CA |
| Martin E. Woodward | Holly Springs, NC |

# In Memoriam

| | |
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| Robert Disse | Washington, MO |

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