

# BUILD THE COMPACT READING CENTRAL—PART 1



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Hodgson Valley RR*

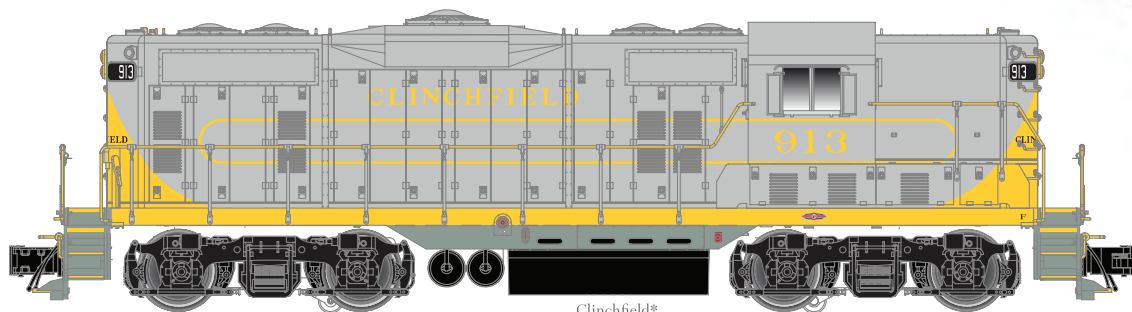
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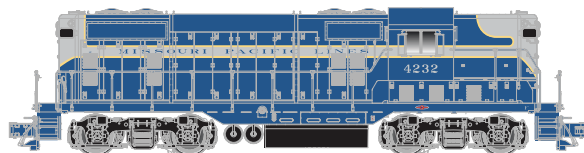
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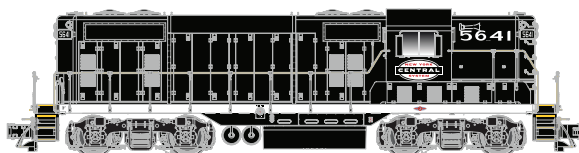
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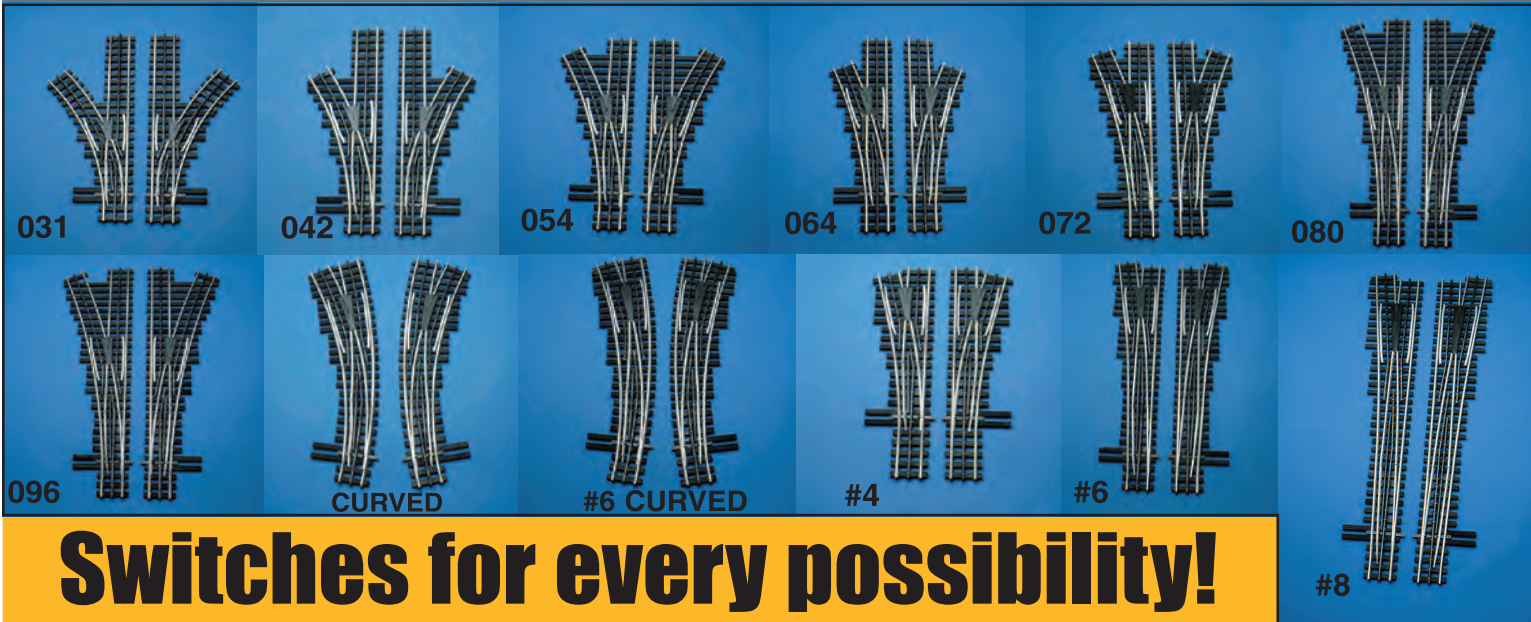
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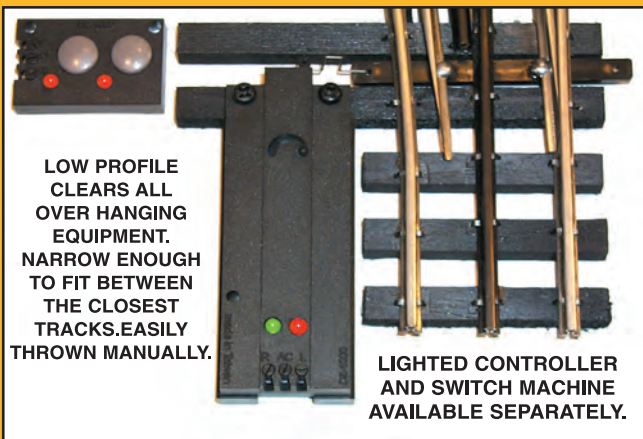


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P.S. Did you know RCS makes sectional track too?

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## ON THE COVER

An impressive display of both Pennsy and Great Northern motive power provides ample evidence that east meets west regularly on the Hodgson Valley Railroad in New London, Pennsylvania. The locomotive service track area adjacent to the six-stall roundhouse on Pat and Jean Marinari's layout is bustling with activity as crews and roundhouse workers begin their day's labors.

*Photo by Pat Marinari*



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## The Growing Season...Again

Two years ago at this time in Run 232, December 2008, this column dealt with the opportunity to grow the hobby, especially at this time of the year. I hope readers will bear with me as I harp on the same topic once again in the hope that at least a few folks, including perhaps some new readers, will be inspired to do their part to sow the seeds that eventually blossom into a fulfilling and very creative leisure pastime.

This is, after all, the start of the special holiday season that provides a window of opportunity for those of us already in the hobby to cultivate future generations of model railroaders in all age groups and in all scales and gauges. And although I may be a bit biased, I believe it's safe to assert that no gauge or scale has played a more significant role in this regard than O gauge.

The tradition of an around-the-tree electric train, sparked by the vision and entrepreneurial spirit of Joshua Lionel Cowen, who founded the Lionel Corporation over a century ago, led to toy trains becoming an inseparable part of the Christmas celebration. From our perspective, it is significant that O gauge trains operating on 3-rail track have long been something of the de facto standard for adorning the bases of family Christmas trees around the nation. This is largely because



The FM Trainmaster from Lionel's 2219W "Thunderbird" set of 1954 performs holiday duty some 56 years later in this photo Dennis Livesey provided of his family's Christmas layout. The ZW transformer was a Christmas present Dennis received in 1956, and the water tower in the right background was a 1962 Christmas gift from his mom. Ah, the power of nostalgia!

these trains are big enough to be appreciated from a distance, simple enough to set up and run, reliable enough to keep going for hours on end, and durable enough for the busy hands of inquisitive and imaginative youngsters. The fact that they are readily

available from any number of retail sources during the holiday selling season also doesn't hurt. But even more important, the trains played with and admired in this season by youngsters, parents, grandparents, and other loved ones have often enough

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planted the seeds of a strong nostalgic link that binds the generations and helps to perpetuate our hobby.

Never underestimate the magnetic power of nostalgia, generally described as a wistful or sentimental yearning for a return to one's past. We feel nostalgia for certain earlier times, places, and events in our lives, but we also harbor nostalgic feelings for objects associated with past memories. And when applied to Christmas memories, which rank among the best memories of all for many, that train circling the tree becomes a colorful, active, smile-evoking, and accessible connection with our past.

The end result is that what likely started with a toy train endlessly circling a Christmas tree on a simple oval of 3-rail track has often enough led many thousands to become full-fledged model railroaders at some point in their lives. At the very least, the memory of those past occasions has inspired countless thousands of families to keep the tradition alive by including a toy train in their own holiday festivities. And there's certainly no reason why that long-standing tradition can't continue if we all do our part, as individual O gauge hobbyists, to promote exposure to the captivating lure of toy trains.

In many respects, it's as simple as sharing something you already enjoy. If you're an active participant in the hobby, I would once again encourage you to try to make some time during this hectic season of the year to share some of your experiences, and fun, with others. The range of possibilities is nearly endless. Simply assuring that a

train is set up and operating around your own Christmas tree at home is a good place to start because visiting family, friends, neighbors, and other visitors who see the train display, however modest, are sure to begin asking about it.

Another option is to invite a loved one or friend to accompany you to a train show or seasonal train display—your treat, of course, if any fee is involved. Just a small amount of exposure to toy trains in such settings is often enough to stimulate the imagination and spark a bit of interest. And once that spark is created, it generally takes only a tiny bit of persuasive fanning to grow the flame. Heck, I know some folks in the hobby who were initially inspired to join in after seeing toy trains operate in a movie or on TV!


For the ultimate in this planting season, consider giving a complete starter set to someone near and dear to you—someone, be they young or older, who you feel might make use of the train at Christmas and perhaps, just perhaps, be motivated to do something more with it after the holidays. But even if it's packed away until the next Christmas, you can be quite certain that you have given a gift that is apt to become a seasonal tradition for the recipient, and it is from such traditions that future hobbyists are often born.

If you are considering a starter set as a gift for someone special, be sure to shop around a bit for the best value. That's good advice at any time, of course. If you're fortunate enough to live in an area with one or more local hobby shops that stock O gauge

trains, certainly consider visiting them first. You may pay a little more for what you get, but that is more than made up for by the point-of-sale service you'll receive and, just as important, the after-sale service.

Don't have access to a local hobby shop? Try browsing the ads in this issue of the magazine to locate dealers who may have what you're looking for. Some of these dealers are very large and offer an extensive range of items, while others may specialize in one or two brands. Before placing an order, be sure to check shipping and handling charges as well as any return or restocking policies the establishment may have.

Another option, especially if you want to study various possibilities or already know what you're looking for, is that vast resource known as the World Wide Web on the Internet. Just about everything imaginable can be found online via the Web, and a reasonable amount of consumer-savvy research will often result in a real bargain, especially at this time of year. But do try to stick with established and reputable dealers. The majority of our advertisers also have a Web presence, so my advice would be to support these folks whenever possible. Above all, be an informed consumer, whether online or off. Do your homework first to determine what you want in terms of features and price, and then start your shopping.

As far as the hobby of model railroading is concerned, this time of the year most definitely marks the start of the growing season. That said and understood, let's get to planting! 



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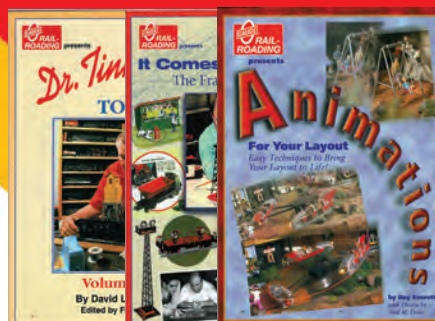
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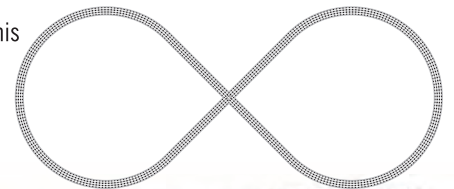
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# Smoke Signals

## Product Announcements

### New Price and Rarity Guide

TM Books & Video has published the 2011 edition of its *Lionel Illustrated Price & Rarity Guide* for prewar and postwar trains manufactured from 1900 through 1969. The new pocket-size, 216-page edition provides comprehensive coverage of 2-7/8" gauge, prewar and postwar O gauge, Standard gauge, OO and HO, sets and boxes, and Plasticville production. Features include listings organized by category in numerical order, more variations identified, 32 pages of color photos, useful trend arrows and rarity designations, and Toy Train Revue articles. The \$19.99 guide is available directly from TM Books & Video, P.O. Box 279, New Buffalo, MI 49117; [www.tmbv.com](http://www.tmbv.com); 800-892-2822.



### Whistling Billboard Announces New Arrivals

Announce that "special delivery" to your railroad's crew with a customized Whistling Billboard from A.J. Trains. The totally restored American Flyer lighted whistling billboards are suitable for O and S gauge layouts and can be customized to feature "It's a Boy" (blue) or "It's a Girl" (pink) messages, along with your new arrival's picture. All models are restored to order and customized to fit your specific needs. The billboard units measure 7"x 4"x 4" and cost \$45.00, plus shipping and handling. A green standard version is also available for \$44.50. To order, call 732-836-9444, [ajtrains@verizon.net](mailto:ajtrains@verizon.net), [www.ajtrains.net](http://www.ajtrains.net).



### Late Steam-Era Tank Car



In the decade following WWII, American Car and Foundry built 11,000-gallon tank cars for transporting liquefied petroleum gas and bulk liquid chemicals by rail. This Atlas O Steam Era Classics 1:48 scale model of the 11,000-gallon tank car is decorated in Lion Oil Company colors with two car numbers available. Cars are now in stock at Atlas O dealers for \$69.95 (3-rail) or \$74.95 (2-rail). The tanker rides on die-cast, sprung 50-ton friction-bearing trucks and also features separately applied metal handrails, grab irons, and ladders. Other amenities include accurately modeled brake appliances, tank fittings, and safety placards. Minimum curves are O31 (3-rail) or 24" (2-rail). Other company names also in stock are Hooker Chemicals, Cities Service, and Shamrock with four car numbers for each name. A two-pack of Calor and Skelly Oil cars is also available at \$139.90 (3-rail) or \$149.90 (2-rail).

### Comprehensive Guide to M.T.H. PREMIER ENGINES 1993 - 2010 Richard Ridolfo



### Guide to MTH Premier Engines

Richard Ridolfo has compiled a comprehensive guide to every premier engine produced by MTH from 1993–2010. The 151-page book contains over 1,600 color photos and details the MTH catalog that the item first appeared in along with road numbers. Items are presented in numerical order that show if they


were produced with horn/whistle, Proto-Sound, Proto-Sound 2.0, nonpowered, and 3-rail or 2-rail versions. The softcover publication is available for \$34.95 directly from The Train Shop at Brentwood Antiques, 106 Lafayette Road, Hampton Falls, NH 03844, 603-929-1441, [Sales@thetrainshop.com](mailto:Sales@thetrainshop.com), or [www.thetrainshop.com](http://www.thetrainshop.com).

## Best Buy in Travel Billboard

This roadside billboard is available from Diecast Direct and sports a promotion for travel via Greyhound Bus Lines. The artwork is appropriate for most any mid-20th-century layout theme, and the billboard features a lattice covering on its base. This model is of sturdy die-cast and plastic construction and will stand up without props. Physical dimensions are 6" x 5". Originally designed as a bank, the billboard will look great on any O gauge railroad layout. Price is \$14.95, plus shipping. Order from Diecast Direct at [www.diecastdirect.com](http://www.diecastdirect.com) or call 800-718-1866.



## Fruitcake for Your Holiday

Just in time for the holiday celebrations, Bachmann Trains has released this colorful No. 27044 Christmas Fruitcake Car in its Spectrum line of On30 trains. Transporting its load of holiday cheer straight from the North Pole, the festive narrow-gauge, woodside boxcar features metal wheels and body-mounted E-Z Mate Mark II couplers. This holiday boxcar is available at Bachmann dealers for \$39.00. 



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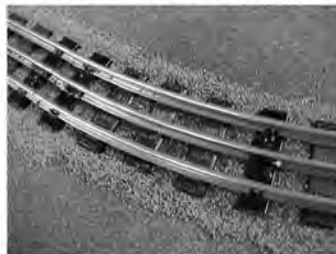
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\$2000 - \$5000 ..... \$367.00 S/H	\$498.00 S/H
\$5000 - \$100 ..... \$370.00 S/H	\$502.00 S/H
\$100 - \$200 ..... \$373.00 S/H	\$506.00 S/H
\$200 - \$500 ..... \$376.00 S/H	\$510.00 S/H
\$500 - \$1000 ..... \$379.00 S/H	\$514.00 S/H
\$1000 - \$2000 ..... \$382.00 S/H	\$518.00 S/H
\$2000 - \$5000 ..... \$385.00 S/H	\$522.00 S/H
\$5000 - \$100 ..... \$388.00 S/H	\$526.00 S/H
\$100 - \$200 ..... \$391.00 S/H	\$530.00 S/H
\$200 - \$500 ..... \$394.00 S/H	\$534.00 S/H
\$500 - \$1000 ..... \$397.00 S/H	\$538.00 S/H
\$1000 - \$2000 ..... \$400.00 S/H	\$542.00 S/H



**#821 Beckett Clothing**



**#822 Marvin's Drug Store**



**#823 Pat and Jean's Jewelry**



**#824 Vinny's Grill**



**#825 Pedicini's Bakery**



**#826 Clare's Furniture**



### How would you like to show your trains and layout to your fellow O gauge railroaders?

You can take your photos using a digital camera capable of at least 3.3 megapixels set to the best JPEG image. Please send only original, unedited JPEG files. Color prints of 4"x 6" or larger are also fine. Be sure to include brief notes about the trains in the photos and any other information you'd like to share, such as the size of your layout, unique scenery, make of track, power supply or control system, and so forth.

We are looking for quality photography with good lighting and clear images; however, on-camera flash photos are generally not acceptable. Send your photo, CD, or prints to Readers' Rails, 33 Sheridan Road, Poland, Ohio 44514-1680. Or you can e-mail your image and text files to [editor@ogaugerr.com](mailto:editor@ogaugerr.com).



New York Central 827, a Lionel Legacy steamer, drifts into snowy Carmel station with its train just in time to take busy holiday commuters down to Grand Central Terminal to partake in the holiday rush. Eliot and Ginny Scher's holiday theme layout is only 4' x 8', but that relatively compact space is packed with scenes that evoke seasonal nostalgia. Their layout appears each year just prior to Thanksgiving. Eliot took the photo with his Canon 5D.

A trolley packed with holiday shoppers winds its way up to the mountain village on the Bergen County Model Railroad Club layout in Pearl River, New York. The layout is located in the Orangetown Museum. John McHugh, who enjoys constructing scenery for the club's layout, created various snow effects with semi-gloss white house paint and wallboard compound.



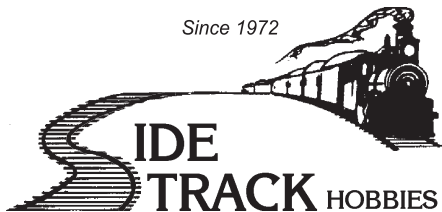


Here is a scene on the Department 56 Snow Village section of Tom Thurston's layout in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Tom originally added a small holiday section to his main layout just so a variety of Snow Village structures could be displayed temporarily, but it has since become a more permanent feature. Another festive holiday view of Tom's Richmond & Western Railroad was featured on the cover of Run 232, December 2008.

A restored Lionel 250 passenger set from the prewar era rolls up to a Marx Girard station on John Johnston's 3' x 6' Christmas layout in Prattville, Alabama. John's layout includes a variety of buildings and accessories by Department 56, Lemax, and Lionel. He is a pastor who received his first train set, a Marx clockwork set, in 1963.



Amid bright seasonal decorations and lights adorning the town, Lionel's North Pole Central dockside switcher slows for a stop at Union Station on the holiday layout constructed by Joe Gozzo and his family. The train is dropping off holiday packages ordered by busy downtown merchants who are enjoying a great shopping season this year. The Gozzo family sets up an elaborate display every year and tries hard to make as many changes from year to year as possible.



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Item No.		Our Price
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11170	THREE RIVERS FAST FRT. W/TRANSIDS W/ FIGURE 8' FASTRK . . . . .	\$299.00
11710	CANADIAN PACIFIC RAIL FREIGHT SET C- . . . . .	\$455.00
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11747	LIONEL LINES STEAM SET . . . . .	\$329.00
11818	CHRYSLER IMPAR HISTORICAL EXPRESS (SW-2 DIESEL) SET . . . . .	\$219.00
11821	N.J. NW-2 TRANSIT PASSENGER SET (027) . . . . .	\$219.00
11837	UNION PAC. GP-9 UNIT TRAIN SET . . . . .	\$499.00
11909	#2166 RS WAREHOUSE N&W J FREIGHT SET . . . . .	\$799.00
11912	SERVICE STATION ORE SET . . . . .	\$199.00
11914	#2238 RS NEW YORK CENTRAL GP-8 FREIGHT SET . . . . .	\$395.00
11940	SOUTHERN PACIFIC SO-40 WAREHOUSE COAL SET . . . . .	\$599.00
11971	ALASKA GP-9 DIESEL FREIGHT SET (027) . . . . .	\$99.00
13113	TROLLEY & TRAIL CAR MSRP 499.99 C- . . . . .	\$299.00
22116	K-LINE RTTR DIE. RINGLING BROS. RS-3 SET MSRP \$249.00 C+ . . . . .	\$149.00
22121	K-LINE RTTR STEAM. RINGLING BROS. SET MSRP \$399.00 C+ . . . . .	\$199.00
21977	NYC TM CMO CONTROL SET C- . . . . .	\$399.00
30000	TMCC PENNSYLVANIA KEYSTONE SUPER FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK . . . . .	\$449.00
30002	GREENDALE TRAIN SET (Less track and power supply) MSRP \$99.99 . . . . .	\$299.00
30045	ALASKA STEAM WORK SET MSRP 269.99 . . . . .	\$169.00
30054	WORLD OF DISNEY FREIGHT SET (027, 2006) . . . . .	\$299.00
30056	HALLOWEEN (TRANSYLVANIA) SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 219.99 . . . . .	\$139.00
30061	UPS STEAM FREIGHT SET MSRP 229.99 . . . . .	\$139.00
30069	THOMAS & GAUGE SET W/FASTRACK & DIORAMA MSRP 189.99 . . . . .	\$145.00
30012	THOMAS AND FRIENDS EXPANSION PACK MSRP 137.99 . . . . .	\$103.00
30141	SODOR TANK AND WAGON EXPANSION PACK MSRP 137.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$103.00
30076	WORLD OF DISNEY CHRISTMAS SET (FASTRACK) . . . . .	\$299.00
30081	UNION PACIFIC MERGER SPECIAL SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 299.99 . . . . .	\$199.00
30087	JOHN 51 STEAM 0-8-0 FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 229.99 . . . . .	\$159.00
30088	ARCHA BLVD PASSENGER SET W/11658 ADD-ON PASS L8V1 . . . . .	\$489.00
30089	PENNSYLVANIA FLYER 0-8-0 FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 299.99 . . . . .	\$169.00
30091	SANTA FE 0-8-0 SET MSRP 269.99 . . . . .	\$169.00
30096	PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD KEYSTONE SPECIAL W/WHISTLE & FASTRACK 259.99 . . . . .	\$169.00
30103	NEW YORK CENTRAL FLYER FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK & DIORAMA MSRP 299.99 . . . . .	\$219.00
30108	AMERICAN FIRE & RESCUE SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 399.99 . . . . .	\$299.00
30109	NUTRACKER ROUTE CHRISTMAS PASS. SET FASTRACK MSRP 269.99 L10C . . . . .	\$195.00
30116	LONE RANGER WILD WEST SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 399.99 . . . . .	\$299.00
30118	A CHRISTMAS STORY R-T-R SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 359.99 L10C . . . . .	\$249.00
30122	WIZARD OF OZ FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 309.99 L9V2 . . . . .	\$259.00
30123	BOY SCOUT FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 299.99 L9V2 . . . . .	\$299.00
30124	THUNDER VALLEY WEST SET W/FASTRACK & 2-SIDED DIORAMA MSRP 299.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$219.00
30125	RIO GRANDE SKI PASS. SET W/TRANSOUNDS W/FASTRACK MSRP 399.99 L10TRT . . . . .	\$289.00
30126	PENNSYLVANIA FLYER FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK & DIORAMA MSRP 229.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$169.00
30111	PULLMAN PASS. EXPANSION PACK MSRP 137.99 . . . . .	\$99.00
30112	EASTERN FREIGHT EXPANSION PACK MSRP 137.99 . . . . .	\$99.00
30127	SCOUT FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 199.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$145.00
30136	SCOUT FREIGHT EXPANSION SET MSRP 109.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$72.00
30131	CHESSIE MERGER FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 299.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$219.00
30133	STRASBURG RAIL ROAD STEAM PASS. SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 329.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$269.00
30139	SANTA FE FLYER FREIGHT SET W/FASTRACK & DIORAMA MSRP 269.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$199.00
30142	TEXAS SPECIAL FT. FRT. W/TRANSOUND TWICE AROUND FT. MSRP 699.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$559.00
30144	OPERATION EAGLE JUSTICE MILITARY SET W/TRANSIDS, SMK MSRP 499.99 L10V1 \$429.00 . . . . .	\$429.00
30145	CANADIAN MAPLE LEAF R3S SUPER FRT. W/FASTRACK-SMK, TSD MSRP 549.99 L10V1 . . . . .	\$499.00
30147	MTA LONG ISLAND RR M-7 COMMUTER SET MSRP \$319.99 L10V2 . . . . .	\$269.00
30153	CSX DIESEL FREIGHT SET MSRP \$329.00 L10V2 . . . . .	\$239.00
30154	BNIS DIESEL FREIGHT SET MSRP \$339.99 L10V2 . . . . .	\$249.00
31706	UNION PACIFIC BURRO CRANE SET MSRP \$249.00 C+ . . . . .	\$99.00
31733	JONES & LAUGHLIN STEEL SLAG SET . . . . .	\$99.00
31740	#2519W VIRGINIAN DIESEL FREIGHT SET MSRP \$729.00 . . . . .	\$629.00
31747	PENNSYLVANIA BALLAST TRAIN MSRP \$29.99 . . . . .	\$379.00
31748	SANTA FE U280C DIESEL FREIGHT (TMCC) MSRP 769.99 . . . . .	\$599.00
31749	PENNSYLVANIA COAL TRAIN (TMCC) MSRP 769.99 . . . . .	\$519.00
31751	MTA R27 SUBWAY . . . . .	\$599.00
31753	#2551V GREAT NORTHERN DIESEL FREIGHT MSRP 739.99 . . . . .	\$649.00

317358	#2270W JERSEY CENTRAL PASSENGER SET W/ITMC MSRP 748.99 LbV1	\$558.00
317371	PREVAR FLYING YANKEE PASSENGER SET MSRP 599.99 L7V2	\$428.00
317373	NORFOLK SOUTHERN DASH-A-TANK TRAIN SET MSRP 784.99 LbV1	\$598.00
317374	AEC RADIOACTIVE TRANSPORT SET MSRP 259.99 LbV1	\$218.00
317375	#1252 BURLINGTON GP-7 PASSENGER SET MSRP 469.99 LbV2	\$289.00
317376	#2161 FMI THUNDERBOLT FREIGHT SET MSRP 414.99 LbV2	\$369.00
317377	#2124 LIONEL GG-1 PASSENGER SET MSRP 469.99 LbV2	\$399.00
317378	#1484WS 4-6-4 HUDSON PASSENGER SET MSRP 609.99 LbV2	\$349.00
317379	AMTRAK HHP-8 AMFLEET PASSENGER SET MSRP 498.99	\$399.00
317383	BNSF ICE COAL EXPRESS RT. W/LEGACY/RAILSDONS/DYSSSEY 999.99 L10V1	\$989.00
317384	#1593 UNION PACIFIC WORK TRAIN MSRP 469.99 LbV1	\$349.00
317387	CANADIAN NATIONAL COAL SET MSRP 799.99 LbV1	\$619.00
317390	PA GG-1 PASSENGER SET MSRP 469.99 LbV2	\$379.00
317391	NYC LIONMASTER DIESEL FREIGHT SET (LEGACY) W/FASTRK MSRP 799.99 LbV2	\$649.00
317394	NYC TRANSIT AUTHORITY R30 SUBWAY SET MSRP \$799.95 LbV2	\$749.00
317397	N16 TRANSIT R16 SUBWAY W/LEGACY-RAILSDONS-DYSSSEY H1 MSRP799.99 L10V1	\$659.00
25595	R.Y.C. SUBWAY NYC TRANSIT 2-PACK ADON- N MSRP 399.99 L10V1	\$299.00
317399	GREAT NORTHERN (BERKSHIRE)FRT. EXPRESS W/ RAILSDS MSRP 429.99 L10V1	\$399.00
31960	POLAR EXPRESS PASSENGER SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 329.99 L10C	\$169.00
38310	#2185W NEW YORK CENTRAL F-3 FRIET SET CONVEN. CLASSIC MSRP 599.99 LbV1	\$449.00
38311	#2276 B&O BUDD ROC 3-CAR COMMUTER SET CONVEN CLASSIC MSRP469.99 LbV1	\$289.00
38312	#2343 SANTA FE F-3 A-4 DIESELS CONVEN. CLASSIC MSRP 498.99 LbV1	\$359.00
38313	BALT. & OHIO BUDD ROC 2-CAR COMMUTER SET MSRP 349.99 LbV1	\$239.00
38324	#2507W NEW HAVEN F-3 FRT. SET CONVEN. CLASSIC MSRP 599.99 LbV2	\$439.00
38328	NORTHERN PACIFIC GP-9 FREIGHT SET MSRP \$749.95 LbV2	\$669.00
38329	#2261W 4-6-4 STEAM FREIGHT SET CONVEN. CLASSIC MSRP 609.99 LbV2	\$439.00
38334	CONVENTIONAL CLASSIC ORBITOR FREIGHT SET MSRP \$499.99 LbV2	\$359.00
35059	VIRGINIAN RECTIFIER SET CONVENTIONAL CLASSICS MSRP 469.99 L10V1	\$429.00
38340	#1587 GIRLS FREIGHT TRAIN SET CONVENTIONAL CLASSICS MSRP 578.99 L10V1	\$519.00
38342	1619W SANITE FE A&O FREIGHT SET CONVEN. CLASSICS MSRP 469.99 L10V1	\$419.00
49612	S-GAUGE A/F B&O MKXADO PASSENGER SET	\$649.00
49617	S-GAUGE A/F BLUE COMET PASSENGER SET L7V1	\$895.00
49624	S-GAUGE A/F #2052S DEFENDER SET MSRP 599.99 L10V1	\$549.00
51009	NO. 2896 G GAUGE FREIGHT TRAIN MSRP 629.99	\$498.00
51010	PREVAR NO. 2466 G GAUGE PASSENGER SET MSRP 629.99 L7V1	\$458.00
51012	CHRISTMAS TINIPLATE SET MSRP 674.99 LbV1	\$499.00
81029	LARGE SCALE CHRISTMAS SET MSRP 199.99	\$99.00
7-11004	NASCAR FREIGHT SET MSRP \$299.99	\$189.00
7-11005	DALE EARNHART JR. FREIGHT SET MSRP \$299.99	\$269.00
7-11020	HARRY POTTER HOGWART EXPRESS TRAIN SET W/FASTRACK MSRP 329.99	\$169.00
7-11022	G GAUGE BATTERY OPERATED POLAR EXPRESS SET MSRP 139.99 L10C	\$105.00
7-11140	PENNSYLVANIA FLYER G-GAUGE (BATTERY) SET MSRP 139.99	\$105.00
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30035	SODOR FREIGHT EXP PACK MSRP 137.99	\$89.00
30036	GREAT WESTERN TRAIN SET EXP PACK MSRP 119.99	\$69.00
30037	PENNSYLVANIA FLYER OPERATING FREIGHT EXP PACK MSRP 119.99	\$69.00
30038	NEW YORK CENTRAL FLYER OPERATING FGT EXP PACK W/FASTRK MSRP 119.99	\$69.00
30039	NORTH POLE CENTRAL PASSENGER EXP PACK MSRP 109.99 L10C	\$69.00
30040	NORTH POLE CENTRAL OPERATING FREIGHT EXP PACK MSRP 109.99 L10C	\$69.00
30041	SOUTHWEST SPECIAL OPERATING FREIGHT EXP PACK MSRP 109.99	\$69.00
7-11007	DALE EARNHART SR. EXPANSION PACK MSRP 129.99	\$89.00
7-11011	JEFF GORDON EXPANSION PACK (LESS TRACK) MSRP 129.99	\$49.00
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20-1006-1	NYC #767W "G" TYN PLATE FRT SET W/PS2 MSRP 1195.00 C-	\$849.00
20-2197-1	NEW HAVEN EP-6 ELECTRIC ENGINE BOXED SET (PS-1 QSI) C+	\$449.00
20-2382-1	DENVER R16 G-GAUGE F40PH DIESEL ENGINE BOX SET C-	\$429.00
20-2543-1	BURLINGTON PIONEER ZEPHYR DIESEL PASSENGER SET PS2 MSRP 699.95 C-	\$499.00
20-2595-1	HARTLEY DAVIDSON DIESEL BOXED SET MSRP 649.95 C+	\$499.00
20-2769-1	CNW SODAKO DIESEL HERITAGE SET W/PS2 MSRP 499.99 M7V1	\$399.00
20-2771-1	MOPAC SOD70AC DIESEL HERITAGE SET W/PS2 MSRP 499.95 M7V1	\$399.00
20-2774-1	UP SOD70AC DIESEL HERITAGE SET W/PS2 MSRP 499.95 M7V1	\$399.00
20-2785-1	CSX SOD70 AC DIESEL TWINSTACK FREIGHT SET W/PS2 MSRP 699.95 M7V2	\$619.00
20-2786-1	BNSF SOD70 AC DIESEL TWINSTACK FREIGHT SET W/PS2 MSRP 699.95 M7V2	\$619.00
20-2925-1	UP M1000 DIESEL PASSENGER SET W/PS2 MSRP 699.95 M9V2	\$599.00
20-2926-1	UP M1000 DIESEL PASSENGER SET W/PS2 MSRP 699.95 M9V2	\$599.00
20-2967-1	AMERICAN FREEDOM ALCO PA PASSENGER SET W/PS2 MSRP 649.95 M9V2	\$599.00
20-3023-1	WPA&T SHAY W/PS AS SET W/PS2-98-103 LOG CARS (PS-1 QSI)	\$899.00
20-3226-1	PA P-1 EXPRESS MAIL FREIGHT SET W/PS 2 MSRP 1399.95 C-	\$999.00
20-3301-1	SOUTHERN PACIFIC GS-4 TRAIN SET W/PS2 MSRP 1199.95 C-	\$999.00
20-3324-1	NYC J-1e PASSENGER SET W/PS 2 MSRP 1099.95 M9V2	\$999.00
20-3380-1	ERIE 2-8-2-2 TRIPLEX STEAM FREIGHT SET W/PS2 MSRP 1499.95 M9V2	\$1,299.00
20-3365-1	NORFOLK & WESTERN J-1e PASSENGER SET W/PS2 MSRP 1199.95 M9V2	\$999.00
20-3366-1	NORFOLK & WESTERN J-1e EXPRESS MAIL SET W/PS2 MSRP 1199.95 M9V2	\$999.00
20-3387-1	GREAT NORTHERN 2-8-2-2 R-2 STEAM FREIGHT SET W/PS2 MSRP 1499.95 M9V2	\$1,299.00
20-5609-1	PA GG-1 EXPRESS BEER TRAIN SET W/PS 2 MSRP 799.95 C-	\$549.00
20-5610-1	THE EAST WIND GG-1 PASSENGER SET W/PS2 MSRP 799.95 C-	\$669.00
20-5631-1	NEW HAVEN "THE EAST WIND" EP-3 PASSENGER SET W/PS2 MSRP 899.95 M9V2	\$749.00
20-5636-1	PENNSYLVANIA P-5a BOX CAR BEER TRAIN SET W/PS2 MSRP 899.95 M9V2	\$749.00
<b>RAILKING</b>		
30-1433-1	COORS LOG BEER (SILVER BULLET) TRAIN W/PS 2 MSRP 499.99 M7V1	\$389.00
30-1496-1	NYC L3-4-2 MOHAWK SPECIAL PASS SET W/PS2 MSRP 499.95 M9V2	\$379.00
30-1497-1	NYC L3-4-2 MOHAWK SPECIAL FREIGHT SET W/PS2 MSRP 499.95 M9V2	\$379.00
30-2591-1	PENNSYLVANIA GG-1 PASSENGER SET W/PS 2 MSRP 499.95 C+	\$379.00
30-2592-1	PENNSYLVANIA GG-1 EXPRESS BEER SET W/PS 2 MSRP 499.95 C+	\$379.00
30-2761-1	TEXAS SPECIAL F-3 ABA DIESEL PASSENGER SET W/PS 2 MSRP 649.95 C-	\$499.00
30-2954-1	PENNSYLVANIA AEROTRAIN DIESEL PASSENGER SET W/PS2 MSRP 399.95 M9V2	\$339.00
30-4070-1	PENN'S 2-8-0 STEAM DIECAST R-T-R SET	\$299.00
30-4137-1	PENNSYLVANIA STEAM PASSENGER R-T-R SET W/PS2 MSRP 349.95	\$259.00
30-4139-1	CHESSIE STEAM PASSENGER SET W/PS MSRP 349.95	\$249.00
30-4155-1	AMUSEUR BUSCH 2-8-0 STEAM R-T-R SET MSRP 349.95	\$299.00

30-4156-0	CHRISTMAS 4-6-0 TEN WHEELER R-R TRAIN SET MSRP 279.95	\$229.00
30-4171-1	PITTSBURGH STEELERS SUPER BOWL SET WPS2	\$449.00
30-4180-1	CAPTELLAR 2-6-0 R-T R WPS 2.0 MSRP 349.95	\$249.00
30-4181-1	HARLEY-DAVIDSON 2-6-0 STEAM R-T R WPS 2.0 MSRP 349.95 M10TR	\$259.00
30-4184-1	NM 4-4-BANTAM 1 STEAM FREIGHT-R-T WPS 2.0 MSRP 339.95 M10TR	\$279.00
30-4190-0	M&W F-3 R-T FREIGHT SET WITHORN & BELL MSRP 259.95 M10TR	\$199.00
30-4192-1	JERSEY CENTRAL 4-6-2 BANTAM PAC. STEAM PASS SET WPS2 MSRP 349.95	\$249.00
30-4193-1	BALTIMORE & OHIO 4-2-BANTAM STEAM PASS SET WPS2 MSRP 349.95	\$249.00
30-4197-0	PENNSYLVANIA F-3 R-T FREIGHT SET WITHORN & BELL MSRP 219.95 M10TR	\$159.00
30-4198-1	AMTRAK F59 R-T SUPERLINER PASSENGER SET WPS2 MSRP 369.95	\$299.00
30-4200-1	PITTSBURGH STEELERS 2-6-0 PASSENGER RTR SET	\$449.00
30-4202-1	PEACE & SCALE F-3 R-T DELUXE PASSENGER SET WPS2 MSRP 499.95	\$359.00

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30-4167-1	NEW YORK JETS TROLLEY R-T R TRAIN SET MSRP 129.95 C +	\$89.00
30-4172-1	CHRYSLER TROLLEY R-T R TRAIN SET MSRP 119.95 M10RT	\$89.00
30-4191	MGM TROLLEY R-T R TRAIN SET MSRP 129.95 M10RT	\$89.00
30-2145-1	SANTA FE RDC BUDD CAR SET W/PS C	\$159.00
30-2447-3	PHILADELPHIA (GREEN) 2CAR LOV ADD-ON N/P SUBWAY SET MSRP 119.95 C +	\$69.00
30-2621-1	CHICAGO CUBS 4-CAR 3200 SERIES SUBWAY SET W/PS2 MSRP 399.95 C +	\$299.00
30-2621-3	MLB CHICAGO CUBS 3200 SERIES 2CAR SUBWAY ADD-ON N/P SET 149.95 C +	\$109.00
30-2622-1	CHICAGO WHITE SOX 4CAR 3200 SERIES SUBWAY SET W/PS2 MSRP 399.95 C +	\$299.00
30-2622-3	MLB CHICAGO WHITE SOX 3200 SERIES 2CAR ADD-ON N/P SET MSRP 149.95 C +	\$109.00
30-2622-4	MLB CHICAGO WHITE SOX 3200 SERIES 2CAR ADD-ON N/P SET MSRP 149.95 C +	\$109.00
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## 3rd Rail Santa Fe Class 3700

Review and Photos by George Brown

As a type, the 4-8-2 has not been as popular in the 3-rail O gauge world as other types of passenger locomotives, such as the 4-6-2, 4-6-4, and 4-8-4. Generally known as Mountains, 4-8-2s served on railroads throughout the nation and sometimes carried a name that was unique to the owning road. In the East, the New York

Central System called its 4-8-2s the Mohawks; in the West, the Santa Fe called them the 3700s.

At this writing, the latest brass locomotives from Sunset/3rd Rail are 1:48 scale models of the Santa Fe 3700s. Both 3-rail and 2-rail models are available in early and late versions of the real 3700s, with production limited to 25 early and 50 late. Models of the early version pull a 12,000-gallon tender and have spoke drivers with a standard Santa Fe cab above a Hodge trailing truck. A 15,000-gallon tender, box pok main drivers, modified sand domes, a longer cab, and a Delta trailing truck identify models of the late 3700s.

The engine submitted for this review was the builder's pilot model shown in Photo 1. To my pleasure, the engine arrived at our Southwest Office several weeks in advance of the production units leaving the

builder in China. Our model of Santa Fe 3745 is a late version but has a Hodge trailing truck instead of a Delta truck. An e-mail exchange with Scott Mann, president of Sunset/3rd Rail, confirmed the error is limited to the pilot model only. I joked with Scott about our one-off 3745 being a true collector's item, but at 25 or 50 models, depending on the version, I reckon these small numbers put all the O gauge 3700s into the realm of collectibles. Hmmm, I'll have to talk with Ed Boyle about what makes a particular piece a collector's item.

### Prototype Notes

Between 1918 and 1924, Baldwin Locomotive Works built all 51 of the Santa Fe 4-8-2s numbered 3700–3750. On many runs, these engines replaced 4-6-2 Pacifics overtaxed by ever-lengthening and heavier passenger trains of the early 20th century, especially on divisions with steep or numerous grades. With their weight of over 119 tons on 69" drivers, total weight of over 176 tons, and boiler pressure of 210 psi,



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the 3700s developed a tractive effort of nearly 57,000 lbs. By comparison, Santa Fe Class 3400 Pacifics of the same era developed a tractive effort of 40,000 lbs.

The real Santa Fe 3745 was in the last group of six Class 3700s built in 1924. As far as railroad history is concerned, 4-8-2s on the Santa Fe were rather innocuous—they just did their jobs with no fanfare and few accolades. However, in 1942 two ancient 4-8-2s, numbered 3703 and 3708, were notable exceptions for a few hours. They were specifically cleaned, painted, and prepared to pull a 12-car presidential special train while it was on Santa Fe tracks in southern California. This train carried President Roosevelt with an entourage of political and military personnel on a journey enshrouded in WWII secrecy. The journey included dedication of the

Marine Corps' Camp Pendleton.

Number 3745 spent its last years assigned to the New Mexico division where it worked passenger trains in New Mexico and Colorado. However, by the end of 1955, all the 3700s were gone, and none saved for display in parks or museums.

### Construction and Features

Like its prototype, each brass locomotive is built by hand, one component at a time. And as with real steam locomotives, no matter how many of a particular brass steamer are built in a production run, no two of them are ever exactly alike. But what is common across any given production run is dimensionally correct detail. These details are quite evident on the front of our 4-8-2 shown in Photo 2. Not visible in the photo are the white LEDs

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inside the number boards and the green LEDs inside the classification lamps. The headlight uses a warm white incandescent bulb, as does the backup light on the tender.

All four sets of drivers ride in individually sprung bronze journals, and the prototypically correct individual side rods in Photo 3 are realistically articulated. A simulated lube cap is on top of the main rod at its journal, and individual sand pipes with nozzles are on the brake shoe hangers. Small components including the whistle, bell, sand valves, power reverse, and valve gear hangers are lost wax castings, while pipes, handrails, and lanyards are various sizes of brass wire.

Photo 4 shows the individually sprung axle journals for the trailing truck and also the tender trucks. Between the highly detailed cab and the equally adorned tender, a hinged step plate fills some of the visual void

caused in part by the necessarily long drawbar for 3-rail operation. Additional operating features on the illuminated cab include sliding windows and an opening roof hatch. Each window has clear plastic glazing to protect the two painted figures representing the crew inside the cab from the elements. Both crewmen sit on realistic seat boxes positioned behind the detailed backhead shown in Photo 5. The engineer even has a throttle lever in front of him.

The classic Santa Fe oil tender is as detailed as the engine, as shown in Photos 6 and 7. Details on the front of the oil tank include the box that held sand on the real 3700s, which was used for cleaning out the boiler flues. On the back of the tender are the buffer plate, which pressed against the diaphragm on the real lead car, and the steam and air lines to the train. Simulated petcocks are at the top of both air lines,



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30-4202-1/4921-3/4	Santa Fe ABA w/P2 .....	\$495.00

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and the coupler cut lever moves realistically. Of course the lever does not open the tin-plate-style coil coupler.

As I expected from any high-end locomotive, the paint and lettering on our evaluation model were flawless. I especially liked the natural brass whistle, bell, and popoff valves in addition to the back-head's hand-painted red valve handles and white gauge faces with pointers.

## Electrical Equipment

Inside the boiler, a 9000-series Pittman motor with flywheel powers the model. The Santa Fe 3700s are the first steamers from 3rd Rail equipped with the recently released Cruise Commander motor driver board from The Electric RR Co. This board controls the locomotive's constant speed through electrical feedback from the motor rather than using an external tach generator implemented on the motor's flywheel. I'll get into how the Cruise Commander performs shortly.

A fan-driven smoke unit and the voltage control board for the lights are also inside the boiler as is a cast weight, which is necessary for driver adhesion with the rails.



Inside the tender are the TMCC, Cruise Commander, and RailSounds 4.0 electronics. Also installed is a 9-volt alkaline battery that powers the RailSounds through momentary power interruptions in conventional operation.

Photo 8 shows the two pickup rollers located under the engine plus the third roller under the tender. Rather than employing handrails insulated from the boiler or tender as antennas for the TMCC radio frequency signals, 3rd Rail uses copper alloy wipers on the tender trucks to pick up the signals from the wheels. These wheels are electrically insulated from their axles, and thereby the rest of the tender. Although dirty track can

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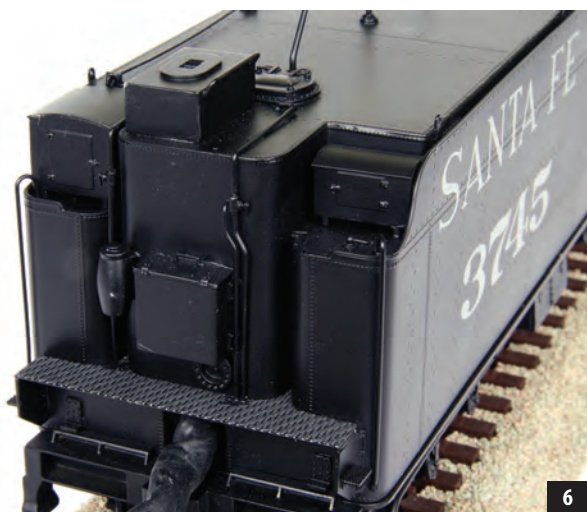
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contribute to signal difficulties with this architecture, our evaluation locomotive experienced no problems with TMCC reception.

### At Trackside

At the engine's initial start on the editorial Carpet Central Railroad, the first and most welcome point I noticed was the lack of noise from the motor. With the RailSounds system turned off for the first slow turn around the CCRR, the motor and drive train were absolutely silent with none of the audible growling of prior 3rd Rail locomotives, which were equipped with the Engineer-On-Board motor driver

board. Oh, by muting the sound system on any new locomotive, I can hear any grinds, clicks, squeaks, or other audible indications of possible mechanical problems.

From the factory, the Cruise Commander is configured for 100 speed steps with speed control enabled. Engine start was smooth and slow, and with the sound turned on, it was invitingly realistic. Slowly increasing the throttle incrementally increased the engine's speed. Conversely, twisting the CAB-1 or CAB-2 throttle knob aggressively resulted in a speedy engine...like right now! Unlike the Engineer-On-Board motor driver, the Cruise Commander does not have software dictated and constrained speed increases at engine start, much to my pleasure.

The Cruise Commander uses command sequences entered through the hand-held controller to select 32 or 100 speed steps and to turn the speed control on or off. Slide switches underneath the cab set the smoke unit on or off and select the rate of the steam exhaust chuffs at two or four per driver

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7

revolution.

Starting our evaluation engine with the RailSounds system set to four chuffs and full volume was a treat. The 4-8-2 eased its train into motion at a dead-slow crawl and picked up speed gracefully as I opened the throttle. I also ran the engine in 32-step mode with the speed control disabled and was pleased with a reasonably constant speed at whatever throttle setting I chose. However, start speed was noticeably faster with a higher initial voltage supplied to the motor in 32-step operation.

Running the locomotive with 100 speed steps requires either a CAB-1 with a Command Base or a CAB-2 operating in CAB-1 mode with a Legacy Base. Of course,

a DCS TIU wired through a TMCC Command Base also works. I entered data for the Santa Fe 3745 into my Legacy system as a TMCC locomotive with RailSounds, and it worked fine in 32-step operation without having to reconfigure the Cruise Commander board.

My only surprise proved to be a design characteristic within the Cruise Commander. As I slowed the locomotive from road speed for a stop, at 10–15 scale mph the 4-8-2 just halted rather than linearly decelerating to a smooth stop. Setting the speed control to on or off made no difference. But if I ran the engine rather slowly, I could bring it down to a graceful and realistic stop every time.


In my past experience with brass locomotives, they usually need a break-in period of several hours, and our Santa Fe 4-8-2 was no exception. Initially, I noticed a slight hesitation timed to rod movement at very slow speeds, but that disappeared after a few cumulative hours of running.

At 14-1/2" from the pilot to the back of the cab roof, and 25" overall including the rear coupler, the 4-8-2 is a moderate-sized engine with a minimum 3-rail curve of O54. Throughout this review, the

engine performed without a fault on the CCRR's Atlas track and O72 switches, including runs through the S-turn crossovers between the layout's O72 and O54 loops. Other motive power assignments included switching head-end cars in and out of the passenger train, which the engine handled competently.

As a related side note, the smoothest running steam locomotive on my roster is a 3rd Rail Southern Pacific 2-8-2. It also needed breaking in when it was new and it just got better and better as the rails passed under its wheels. In the words of a financial prospectus, past performance is no guarantee of future results, but I have a feeling the Santa Fe 4-8-2 will follow in the footsteps of my SP 2-8-2 as a commensurate performer.

## At the End of the Run

I enjoyed my time with the 1:48 scale Santa Fe 3745 from Sunset/3rd Rail. It was a fun locomotive to run and was equally handsome at the point of a mail train with heavyweight head-end cars and coaches, our test train of streamlined cars, or even a steam-era freight train. Yes, it's a pricy locomotive, but then it is hand-built from brass and is but one of 25 or 50 depending on whether it's an early or a late 3700. 



8

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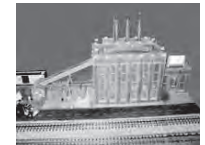
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## Korber USA Made



304 3-Stall Roundhouse, 30"D 189

304A Stall or 304B Extender 45



916 General Lt & Pwr 48"L 175



305 Sandhouse, 16 x 6 49



306 2-Stall Diesel Shed 25 x 11 69

306A Extender 12.5 x 11 27



307 3-Stall Trolley Barn 23" 95



308 Quincy Mining Co. 47



310 Mitchell Textile Co. 39



960 John's Cutlery 6 x 8 25



966 Lehigh Engine 6 x 8 29



912 Roller Bearing 9 x 28 89

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GG-1 Girls Freight Set 335

Steam Girls Freight Set 379

GG-1 Girl's Passenger Set 335

1520W F-3 Texas Special Set 285

VGN (FM) Tidewater Express 275

B&O F3AA Timesaver Frt Set 325

N&W J-Class (5) Freight Set 375

O27 Alco AA \$205 RI, SF, Erie,

UP Yellow, UP Silver

1464W UP 50th Anniversary Set 320

2-car add-on \$80 Full Set \$395

PRR GG-1 Congressional Set 410

2-car add-on \$115 Full Set \$515

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3-Car Add-on 165 Full Set \$599

PRR GG1 w/3 Irvington Cars 295

N&W 4-8-4 J Class Steam 259

J-Class 4-8-4 255 SF Goose,

B&O, CN, NH, PRR, Wabash

Blue Goose Steam Passenger 469

GG-O Cincinnati Passenger 469

B&O-1 179 PRR x 5, Am, CR

NW-2 C&O, SF, Seabd 155

FA-1 AA 225 B 80 ABA 299

B&O, LV, L&N, NYC, PRR, RI,

SF, WM, LNE, GN

PA-1 AA 225 B 80 ABA 299

SF, PRR, RG, UP, D&H, NYC, CP

F-7 AA 205 B 70 ABA 269

Am, ACL, B&O, Burl, C&O, GN,

Lack, NH, PRR, UP

Shark AA 219 B 75 ABA 289

B&O, D&H, PRR x 2, NYC, Demo

E-7 AA 245 B 105 ABA 345

ACL, B&O, Burl, C&O, NYC, UP,

Prr Tuscan, Sou, MR, Tex Spec

Dash 9 Power 149 BNSF, CSX,

NS, SF, UP, CNW, Amtrak, Con, SP,

GP38 139 Dmy 80 BNSF, Chessie,

NH, NS, SF, GT, AK, GM&O, DTI, PC

BL-2 Powered 139 BAR, B&M,

C&O, C&EL, GM Demo, FEC, Monon,

RI Red/Black, WM-Fire, MP

FM Trainmaster 155 CP, JC,

MR, NYC, Rdg, SP, Wabash, N&W

NW-2 155 B&O, Con, LV, NYC,

PRR, UP, MR, GN, Monon, JC

U33C Power 149 CSX, D&H, MR

SF, SP, UP, NH, PRR, Reading, WP

SD90 Power 149 BNSF, CSX,

Demo, NS, BN, Con, Amtrak, SF

UP, MP, CNW, MKT, RG, SP, WP

Genesis Power & Dmy 219

Die Cast Scale Hudson 369

NYC, B&O, GN, SF, JC, CP

#773 NYC Scale Hudson 345

S-2 Turbine #671, #681 \$205

2056 Hudson 219 726 Berk 229

O27 Hudson \$229 LV, BO, MP

Chessie, Sou, Crescent, PRR

Irvington Madison 3-Pk 119

GG-1 Scale Electric 235 Del.

PRR x 5, PC, CR

EF-4 Rectifier 165 NH, CR,

N&W, VGN x 2, PRR Blk

72' (18") Streamline 4-Pk 195

72' Madison 4-Pk 239 2-Pk 120

60' Amfleet 3-Pk 155 Amtrak x 2

Rolling Stock 29 Caboose 34



954 Buck Isl Canning 8 x 12 59

## 2010 Vol 2

### Lionel Product

Vision Line

Genset Switcher 639

### Legacy Product

O Scale Water Tender 255

UP Black, UP Grey, Clinchfield

NS Heritage PRR SD70ACe 425

BSA 100th Anniv ES44AC 699

BSA Ca-3 \$69

Erie #1241 GP-7 385

Erie #1210 GP-7 385

Western Pacific #707 GP-7 385

West Maryland #21 GP-7 385

West Maryland #23 GP-7 385

BNSF #4081 Dash 9 425

BNSF #5121 Dash 9 425

CN #2692 Dash 9 425

CN #2643 Dash 9 425

Amtrak #517 Dash 9 425

C&NW Heritage SD70 425

SP #1865 Heritage SD70 425

KATY #1870 Herit SD70 425

MP #1851 Heritage SD70 425

RG #1870 Heritage SD70 425

WP #1903 Heritage SD70 425

CP 4850TM Trackmobile 259

NYC 4850TM Trackmobile 259

### Traditional Diesels

RG FT Dmy B-Unit 104

RG FT Dmy A Unit 104

JC Alco AA Set 259

Alaska RR Alco AA Set 259

### Postwar Scale - Legacy

6464 Boxcar (2 Pk) #2 105

Sante Fe F-3 AA Pwr/Dmy 585

NYC F-3 AA Pwr/Dmy 585

SF F-3 Powered B-Unit 315

NYC F-3 Powered B-Unit 315

2010 Vol 2 Standard O Scale

57' Cryo Mech Trans Reefer 65

BSA PS-1 40' Box Car 53

BSA Cylindrical Hopper 59

Conrail Heritage Uni-Tank 53

PRR Heritage PS-1 Box Car 53

NS Heritage PS-1 Box Car 53

Virginian Heritage 60' Box 64

Southern Heritage 60' Box 64

B&O Dbl Sheathed Box Car 53

### 2011 Product

### O Scale Steam Locomotives

Pennsylvania E-6 Atlantic 585

B&O 4-4-2 Atlantic 585

S-3 Milw. Rd #261 4-8-4 865

S-3 Milw Rd #267 4-8-4 865

Reading 4-4-2 Atlantic 585

### Standard O Diesels

SF Alco PA AA Set 625

SF Powered B-Unit 339

UP Alco PA-1 AA Set 625

UP Powered B-Unit 339

MP #383 Pwr Unit FA-2 339

MP #385 Pwr Unit FA-2 339

PRR #9614 Pwr FA-2 339

PRR #9616 Powered FA-2 339

### Scale Aluminum Cars

SF Super Chief 18" 4-Pk 469

SF Super Chief 18" 2-Pk 245

Union Pacific 4-Pk 469

Union Pacific 18" 2-Pk 245

Lindberg Special 2-Pk 245

Milw Rd 18" Alum 4-Pk 469

Milw Rd 18" Alum 2-Pk 245

RG Ski Train Diner 53

SP Shasta Daylight 4-pk 469

SP Shasta Daylight 2-pk 245

Canadian Pacific 18 4-Pk 469

## Canadian Pacific 2-Pk 245

### 2010 American Flyer

Scale Size Challenger 815

UP #3985 Blk, UP #3710 Blk,

UP 3977 Grey, RG #3877

Extended Vision Caboose 53

NP, Conrail, GN, BN

1:64 Scale U33 Diesel 325

BN, GN, CR, NP

RG Full Vista 53

Hershey Reefer 53

### 2010 Lionel Vol I

700E NYC Hudson 1400 or Less

UP Challenger 1597 or Less

4 x UP, Clinchfield

### Legacy

BN SD60 419 WP GP7 385

SP FM 415 Amtrak Dash 9 419

Santa Fe AC6000 455

SP Alco PA AA 609 Pwr B 339

B&O FA-2 AA 525

Heritage SD70 ACe 419

Conrail, Virginian, Southern

NYC R16 Sub 4pk 639 2pk 285

BNSF Ice Cold Express Set 785

EOT 57' Add-on Car 69

LionMaster T-1 Steam 685

Amtrak HHP-8, Cmd, RS 339

Early Era Inspect Vehicle 112

SP, PRR, MOW

BN Legacy Crane 288 Boom 184

LV Tugboat 197 Lighthouse 129

Coaling Tower 129

Bascule Bridge 259 Sawmill 97

Postwar Scale

F-3 AA w/Legacy 569 B 319

Canadian Pacific, Milwaukee Rd

Virginian FM Trainmaster 409

4-6-0 Steam CP, C&O 597

Dewitt Clinton Heritage Set 555

Dewitt Clinton Add-on Coach 51

AC6000 UP 575 UP Dmy 289

### Post-War Classics

2515W Rectifier Freight Set 329

1587 Girl's Girl's Train Set 399

1619W SF Alco AA Frt Set 329

4-6-4 Steam Freight Set 455

### American Flyer

#20525 1959 Defender Set 435

WP 2-8-2 Mikado 575

D&RGW Alco PA-1 AA 309

Passenger 3-Pk 185 Baggage 59

Baggage C&O, NP, RG 59

Full Vista SF, UP, NYC 59

Rolling Stock From 51 - 67

Sunoco Oil Derrick 59

#774 Floodlight Tower 89

### Train Sets

CSX Work Train Set 388

PRR GG-1 Passenger Set 409

## MTH 2010 Vol II

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4 UP Variations



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\*Duchess Class Steam\*

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LMS 4-Car 365 Bag/Pass 95

NYC 4-4-0 Empire State 639

4-4-0 American Steam 639  
Cen Pac/Leviathan, NY&NE, B&M



Era Class 241A Steam 1079  
EST, SNCF



S 3/6 Express Steam 1079

Blue/Black, Green/Red/Black,  
Green/Black BR18 Black/Red  
Grey, 1936 Black, 1945 Green,  
1932 Green, 1931 Black

Kanawha 2-8-4 Berkshire 1079  
Southern x 2, C&O



PRR Q-2 4-6-4 Duplex 1169

UP Big Boy Articulated 1299  
4-6-0 Camelback Steam 819

JC, Reading

USRA Heavy 4-6-2 Pacific 819  
NYC, SF, Erie

### Specialty Sets

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UP Big Boy Freight Set 1399

UP Big Boy Passenger Set 1399

PRR Q2 Freight Set 1299

C&O Kanawha Freight 1169

Chessie SD70Ace Freight 589



Crocodile 2 or 3 Rail 819  
Tuscan, Dark Green



TRAXX F140 AC 399 449 189

SBB Cargo Switz, Veolia Trans  
Germany, Ralio European

### Diesels

F-7 ABA 649 Scale 689 B 139

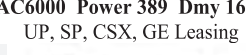
B&M, GN, SF, W. MD

FA-2 ABA 649 ABBA 769

LV, NH, PRR, UP



AC6000 Power 389 Dmy 169  
UP, SP, CSX, GE Leasing



Alco S-2 Power Only 359  
Erie, Susq, CBQ, Staten Island



VO1000 Power Only 359  
NYC, SF, W. MD, WP



Power 389 Dmy 169 Scale 399  
Dash 8 CN, CSX, NS, SF, UP  
F40PH Tri-Rail, NJT, VRE, CRT  
SD45 B&P, MRL, PRR, Southern  
GP38-2BNSF, MM, Gateway, GT  
U30C C&O, MP, RI, SOO  
GP-40 CR, CP RI, Mass Bay, MC  
SD70ACe NYC, Chessie, SF, Sou  
SD70M-2 FEC

ES44AC BNSF, CSX, RI, Iowa

U25B EL, NYC, GN, SF

GP-35 CP, SF, WM, Sou, W&LE

SD-35 CSX, JC, SP, N&W

Dash-8W CN, CSX, SF, UP

U30C Chessie, MR, PRR, SP



3GS21B Genset 389 Scale 399  
CSX, BNSF, NS, Army, UP, NRE

Diesels Power 389 Dmy 169

2010 Vol 2

RS-11 MEC, SP, N&W, Erie Co

SD60M BNSF, BN, CSX, NS

2010 Vol 1

SD-9043MAC EMD, UP, IN

SD40-2 BNSF, GTW, MKT, N&W

GP-7/9 P&LE, GN, NH, NP

Genesis Amtrak, VIA Canada, NH

SD70Mac AK, BNSF, CSX

F-3 Sou, SF ABA 649 ABBA 769

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CSX, FEC, MRL, UP

N&W Imperial Y6b 2-8-8-2 629

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PRR K-4 Freight or Pass \$489

Imperial P47 4-6-2 Pacific 369

Jersey Central, Sou., W. Md

L-3 4-8-2 Mohawk Steam 349

C&O, GN, NY, Southern

19th Century 4-6-0 359

VA&Truckee, C&O, P&R, N&W

Matching Overton 3-Cars 115

Scale Diesels \$259 Dmy 125

GP-7 B&M RS1 NYC, NH, PRR

GP-9 Sou, PRR, UP, THB, BNSF

Dash 8 NS, CSX, UP, SF, BNSF

F-3ABA B&M, NS, SP, WM 419

Premier Passenger Cars 5-Pk 335

2-Pk 137 Full Vista 77 RPO 77

NJ Transit ALP46 399 Dmy 189

Amfleet 4-Passenger 277 2-Pk 142

Septa, MARC, Amtrak x 2

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Lonel ZW 425 180W Brick 75

MTH Z-4000 385 Z-1000 Brick 59

DCS System 255 Legacy #990 299

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UP M10000 Diesel Passenger 649

M1000 Coach \$85 2#

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Amtrak Superliners 335/172

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2213 513 PRR Cattle Car 69

2224 Xmas 514R Reefer 69

2225 B&O 514R Reefer 69

2232 NYC 514R Reefer 69

2233 Xmas 514 Box Car 69

2236 Xmas 514 Box Car 69

5060 Jersey Central Coach 99

5077 Xmas Santa Baggage 75

5078 Jersey Central Baggage 99

5090 Xmas Donner Coach 75



260E Steam Gunmetal 325

Ives 3236R & 3-Passenger 525

Cadet Blue, Orange/Blk

1197-3 #200 Wood Gondola 175



10-4062 PRR Std Tower 199



#3245 Ives Loco 3 Colors 599

Brill Trolley w/PS2.0 199

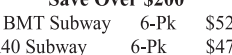
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956 James Co. 13 x 8 x 9H 55



958 Mill Works 11 x 7 Tower 49



320 Stall Roundhouse 26 D 159



908 Shanahan Frt 20 x 8 x 9 75



911 Perfect Tool 8 x 16 55



915 Quaker Foods 9 x 12 49



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Qwest Center Omaha

**Atlanta, GA - Feb 12 & 13, 2011**  
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<b>Novi, MI</b> December 11-12, 2010 Rock Financial Showplace	<b>Sacramento, CA</b> January 15-16, 2011 Cal Expo	<b>Louisville, KY</b> February 5-6, 2011 Kentucky Intl Convention Ctr
<b>Pomona, CA</b> December 18-19, 2010 Fairplex	<b>Anaheim, CA</b> January 22-23, 2011 Anaheim Convention Center	<b>Portland, OR</b> February 19-20, 2011 Portland Metro Expo Center

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**Somerset, NJ**  
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Garden State Exhibit Center

### NEW YORK

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**Rochester, NY**  
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**Oaks, PA**  
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# Lionel Legacy Southern Pacific GP9

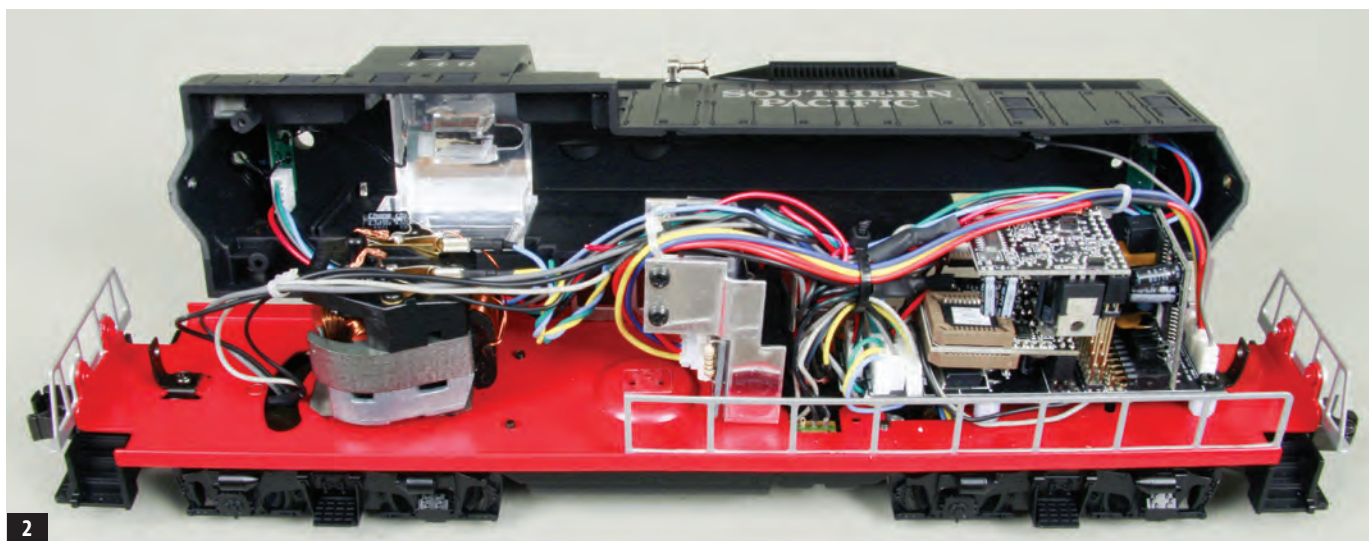
**Review and Photos by George Brown**

Geeps from the postwar Lionel Corporation still have an ageless charm to a number of today's O gauge railroaders. Part of the draw to these engines is their simple and rugged construction, which is about as indestructible as an O gauge locomotive can get. More than just a few Geeps have survived the test of 55-plus years and are still running, including my rebuilt and

custom-painted 2328 from 1955. Another part of the Geep mystique is the growl and the scent of ozone from its ancient open-frame, series-wound brush motor.

For hobbyists like me who like not only the postwar Geep but also today's Legacy control system and Legacy RailSounds, Lionel has joined these elements into what I found to be a singularly

enjoyable engine. The new GP9, decorated in the Southern Pacific black widow livery shown in Photo 1, is an effective hybrid of a traditional locomotive with contemporary electronic systems. This engine is also available in the black and yellow color scheme of the Erie Railroad.



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### Construction and Features

In Photo 2, the Geep's molded plastic body shell is removed to show what's inside. As with postwar Geeps, a screw at each end of the shell holds it to the engine's frame. A metal eyelet pressed into each screw hole helps protect the plastic shell from overly tightened screws. Additionally, a thin plastic washer under each screw head shields the paint from damage.

The rugged steel frame is a single stamping with the separate handrails on each end and side emulating the postwar frame. Both end rails are riveted to the frame as they were on post-

war Geeps while the side rails appear to be spot welded.

A single open-frame motor powers all four wheels on the Geep's separate die-cast front truck as it has since 1955. All gears are metal, and one axle even has the traditional Magne-Traction. On the powered and idler trucks, the Blomberg-style side frames are die-cast. But here is where the new Geep's technical similarity with its half-century-old ancestor ends.

Gone are the postwar Geep's buzzing electromechanical E-unit, DC relay for the horn, and D-cell battery that powered the onboard bicycle horn. In their place, electronic printed circuit

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boards feature the latest in surface-mount microelectronics for the Legacy control and sound systems. However, the Legacy-equipped GP9 does not include the Odyssey System for speed control nor does it have a smoke unit.

A circuit board installed inside each end of the shell holds LEDs for the directional headlights, number board lights, and red marker lights. A small lamp illuminates the cab when the Geep is stationary and goes dark when the engine starts moving in either direction. Each coil-actuated ElectroCoupler opens on command from the remote controller.

Two traction tires increase the

GP9's pulling power, which is helpful on steel rails but essential on nonferrous rails where Magne-Traction is ineffective. The editorial Carpet Central Railroad uses Atlas nickel silver track, which is an example of nonferrous rails. Given the GP9's relatively light weight, the traction tires proved their worth on the CCRR, as shown in the performance sidebar.

Visually, the new SP Geep is retro 1955, as shown in Photos 3, 4, and 5. Except for the separate horns, wire handrails, and dynamic brake housing, all details are molded into the body shell. An improvement to the postwar engine's appearance is the cab window

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glazing, which is a clear plastic molding inserted inside the cab. On each side of the cab, half of the window is open to let cooling air into the motor and electronics. The round opening on top of the short hood, which simulates the exhaust stack for the steam generator, along with two holes

behind the rear fan housing let heat exit the body shell.

Two sets of center-rail pickup rollers are under each truck, as shown in Photo 6. Also underneath the frame are control switches for the electronics and the volume control for the RailSounds.



I'm more than just partial to the SP black widow color scheme, so the Geep appealed to me right out of its box. Upon close scrutiny, the overall satin black and the silver ends were flawless; however, a couple of minor miscues were on the orange wings that adorn the short hood. The most noticeable was the lack of orange paint at the base of one of the grab irons.

Painting the entire frame satin red was obviously a shortcut to hold down production cost as has been done since the 1950s, and the finish was excellent. As to the silver handrails on the sides and ends, I would prefer them painted black, but their finish was also excellent. The minimalist silver lettering on the shell is crisp and completely opaque. When I considered that a black body usually makes for a somewhat somber locomotive, the Lionel model of Southern Pacific 446 actually was quite colorful to the point of being downright striking.

While I'm on the topic of decoration, the prototype for cab number 446 was a real SP GP9 wearing black widow livery, which EMD delivered in December 1956.

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Southern Pacific Geeps with three-digit cab numbers were delivered to the Texas & New Orleans, which the SP owned but which operated as a separate railroad in Texas and Louisiana. Geeps owned and operated by the SP's Pacific Lines carried four-digit cab numbers. The Pacific Lines operated in the states of the Desert Southwest and the West Coast.

Additionally, the real SP 446 was a freight engine with its controls installed for running short hood forward. As a result, the

orange and silver wings are only on the short hood. On SP passenger Geeps equipped for bidirectional running with either end forward, such as for commuter passenger service, the wings were on both ends.

### At Trackside

Although our evaluation Geep has the appearance of a traditional toy train locomotive, its overall size is close to 1:48 scale. Because of its size, I coupled the GP9 to

our standard 1:48 scale freight train for testing rather than a consist of traditionally sized freight cars. In fact, the Geep pulled the scale test train for most of its casual running on the CCRR as well as during the run-for-record testing.

A Lionel ZW provided the power with TMCC and Legacy systems handling the control functions. Although the Geep will run using a TMCC base and CAB-1, only a limited set of the engine's control and sound features will work. All features are



6

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available with a Legacy base and CAB-2, so I used my Legacy system almost exclusively to run and test our evaluation GP9.

At its initial start, the Geep momentarily surprised me with a loud growling sound from its motor. In retrospect, it shouldn't have been unexpected because I have a number of Lionel locomotives with series-wound motors. All of them are noisy, and Pullmor motors in locomotives equipped with TMCC are even more raucous.

A genuine surprise was the amount of CAB-2 throttle necessary to get the Geep moving. Out of the 200 speed steps available under Legacy command control, the diesel prime mover sounds ramped up from idle to "run 1" at step 25 on the remote's display. At step 38, the deadheading engine began moving. With a train in tow, the Geep started at step 46.

Running at scale 60 mph, the Geep was rock solid as it tracked my Atlas O72 and O54 curves and O72 switches. At that speed, a lot of throttle was still available, which enticed me into a brief probe of the upper end of the GP9's speed range—I chose not to seek its top speed. I felt the Geep at full throttle might try to go ballistic...off my O72 curves. Lionel specifies a minimum curve of O31, and I have no doubt that the GP9 would run well on this tight turn.

So how about performance at slow speeds? Well...wow! The Geep took 51 seconds to move 12" without stalling, and that was with its train stretching through not one but two 90-degree O72 curves. As many real-world automobile ads state, your mileage may vary, while in the O gauge railroad world, so can the performance of any other Legacy Geep. But I can state without reservation, I've not seen an

engine with a series-wound motor run that slowly without stalling. Several of my post-war Lionel diesels are exceptionally smooth runners at slow speeds, but none of them compare to the performance of our evaluation GP9. As to my modern Lionel diesels with Pullmor motors and TMCC, they don't even come close. After watching the Geep in its dead-slow crawl for several minutes before deciding it was not going to quit, I opened the throttle to a normal road speed.

Because it was powered by a Pullmor motor without Odyssey, I expected the Geep's speed to vary noticeably at any speed setting, even after break-in. But under way, the GP9 held relatively constant speeds at just about every throttle setting. To say that this engine's entire performance profile surprised and pleased me is an understatement. All I did to prepare the motor and running gear for this review was to oil them as instructed in the owner's manual and then run the engine at various speeds with varying loads for about an hour.

Of course, the Legacy RailSounds system provided much of the operating fun with its eight run steps for the prime mover sound and the quilling horn. I even successfully explored the improved brake sounds of the

recently released Legacy version 1.3. About the only way I could envision having more fun with the SP GP9 would have been availability of a second one, with both engines running together in a two-unit Legacy lashup.

## At the End of the Run

The SP GP9 effectively merges retro style, construction, and power with contemporary control and sound electronics. Bottom line—it's a runner! 🚂

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(sound: on)

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1st and 2nd: 2-7/8"

1st and 3rd: 8-3/8"

**Tractive Effort @ 18 VAC:** 1 lb, 2 oz @ 2.6 A, 46.8 W

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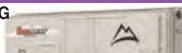
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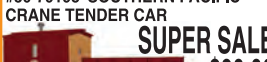
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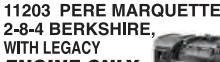
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# East Meets West on the Hodgson Valley Railroad

**Article by Pat Marinari**

**Photos by Pat Marinari and Jim Barrett**

My adventures in this hobby began when my father bought me a Lionel train set for Christmas in 1950. I was three years old, and we lived in a two-room apartment. I think the kitchen in that apartment must have been the model for Ralph and Alice Kramden's kitchen in "The Honeymooners" TV show, and the place was so small that the train layout, built on a sheet of plywood, was stored under my parents' bed. That layout and those trains taught me basic carpentry, electricity, and mechanical repair as I repeatedly built and rebuilt basement layouts throughout the remainder of my childhood years. My late teens and early twenties brought forays into N and HO gauges, but by the mid-1970s, the trains were stored in the attic.

In the fall of 1999, my wife, Jean, encouraged me to dig out the old trains and see if they would still run. They did of course, but not very well, so Jean decided we should find a train store to see what was out there. At that time, we lived in Medford, New Jersey, and the closest O gauge train store was J&B Trains, a small shop in nearby Maple Shade. What a fateful trip that was! We will be indebted to Betty and Jules Ermel, the proprietors of that shop, for the rest of our lives. Jules spent a great deal of time demonstrating an MTH Proto 2 locomotive with all its features. I did not think I wanted trains that talked, but Jean said she wanted it all. So we dove head first into the world's greatest hobby. We left the store that day about a thousand dollars poorer, but our lives became much richer after that visit. Betty and Jules sponsored us for membership in the Train Collectors Association; introduced us to the TCA Eastern Division meet in York, Pennsylvania; and told us about the OGR forum, which I joined in 2000.

Our first permanent layout was about 12' x 15'. We had so much fun designing, building, and sharing that railroad with friends that I knew a large O gauge layout would be an important part of my retirement.



Located northwest of Aronton yard are the zoo and an amusement park that features a balloon ride and a carousel. All six locomotives in this scene are from MTH.



A Cass Scenic Railroad Climax passing high above on the logging line does not appear to faze either the workers or the animals on the farm scene below. The locomotive is a Lionel model.



The mid-century Empire Builder arrives at Bramenburg Union Station to board passengers while a mixed freight passes. The Great Northern F3 is another MTH loco converted from Proto-Sound 1 to Proto-Sound 2.0.

A view of a large section of the layout was taken from the engine service facility end of the pike. A pair of MTH Great Northern SD45s is passing the turntable, roundhouse, and engine service facilities at Aronton, while a westbound Pennsylvania Railroad passenger train glides by.

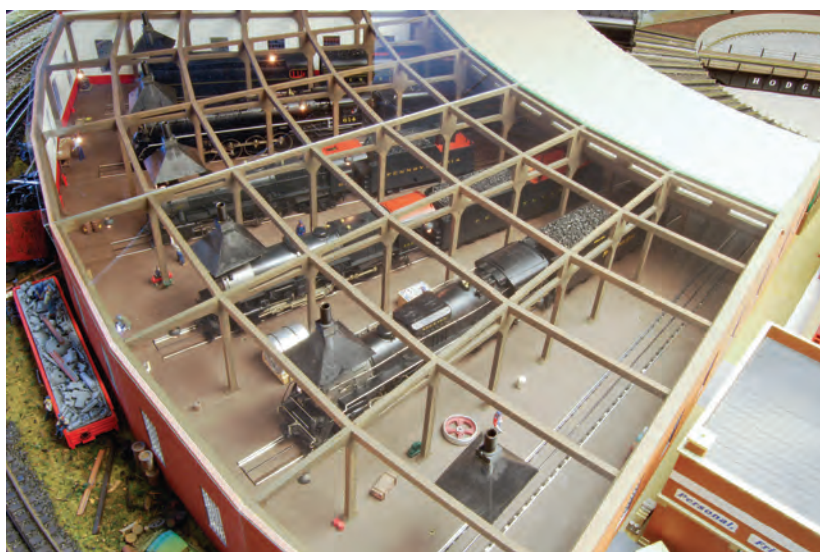




An overall view shows Bramenburg. Many of the buildings feature interior detail.



Legs positioned in support pockets hold a lift-out section that provides easy access to all of downtown Bramenburg.



The roundhouse's rear roof section is clear Plexiglas, allowing for easy viewing of the interior and safe movement of the locomotives. The roundhouse and turntable are Ross Custom Switches products.

We were so attracted to southeastern Chester County in Pennsylvania while driving through the area on our many trips to the York train meet that we decided to retire there. It was hard to find a realtor who understood that the basement is the most important feature in a house, and it took almost two years of house hunting. But we finally found a great basement with a suitable house over it and began planning our move, our retirement, and the layout you see here.

After studying dozens of track plans, I found my favorite was the PRR-Schuylkill Division plan from *The Classic Layout Designs* of John Armstrong, but that plan did not fit my available space.

***There just is not anything better than seeing the faces of first-time visitors as they descend the stairs to our basement train room.***

Using RR-Track computer software, I managed to incorporate many of my favorite elements from that plan into the final design for the Hodgson Valley Railroad, named for Hodgson's Run, a small stream behind our house.

Shortly after starting construction of the railroad, I received an e-mail from OGR forum member Alan Ramsey. He offered to help with the construction of the layout and has been at it a few hours a week for more than four years now. He painted the sky and cloud backdrop and created Ramsey Falls State Park. More importantly, Jean and I have found great friends in Alan and his wife, Kaye. They are among many wonderful friends we have



There are no malls in Bramenburg, so the downtown shopping district is always busy. Frequent trolley service is provided by a Philadelphia Transportation Company PCC trolley from MTH.

It is not yet rush hour on the subway line, but there are still a good number of citizens waiting for their rides home. This MTH New York subway model is passing through the stop located directly beneath Bramenburg Union Station.



made through this great hobby. We enjoy sharing our work with friends and have been fortunate to have had visitors from all over the U.S. and from three European countries. One couple from Scotland has been here three times. There just is not anything better than seeing the faces of first-time visitors as they descend the stairs to our basement train room. A stack of "Can You Find?" sheets are also great for helping folks of all ages to see and enjoy our layout.

The layout is supported on L-girder benchwork, some of which was salvaged from our previous layout, and built using

square-drive screws driven from underneath, which allows easy changes and corrections. Track is laid on Midwest Products cork roadbed glued to Homasote, which is bonded to 3/4" plywood with contact cement. Sheet cork replaces the cork roadbed in the yard and roundhouse areas. The layout includes over 850' of track with Ross sectional curves, Ross switches, and GarGraves flexible track for straight sections and nonstandard curves. To avoid visible switch machines, I use Tortoise switch machines that mount beneath the table. Mainline curves are super-elevated, O96 minimum, with some O80 hidden staging tracks. The logging line and



Nickel Plate 765 takes on coal at Aronton. The MTH locomotive is a Proto-Sound 1 model that has been converted to Proto-Sound 2.0.



The Hodgson Valley Railroad features motive power from our favorite roads. From left to right are a Great Northern S2, GN R2, PRR J1 Texas, streamlined Pennsylvania K4s, PRR K4s in a prewar paint scheme, PRR I1 Decapod, and PRR A5 switcher. The Decapod is a 3rd Rail model that has been converted to Proto-Sound 2.0, and the others are all MTH models.




Ramsey Falls State Park is named for Alan Ramsey, a friend who helps with layout construction. The park offers hiking, camping, fishing, canoeing, and rock climbing. There is also plenty of wildlife.

subways have O54 and O64 curves. Yard and round-house tracks are 50-1/2" above the floor, and the main lines climb a 2.8 percent grade to a maximum elevation of 59-1/2".

The logging branch line is 67-1/2" high, which provides an excellent opportunity to watch the mechanical action of the Shay, Climax, and Heisler locomotives that operate there. The subways are, of course, below the main line, about 42" above the floor. We operate the trains with hand-held remote controllers exclusively, using MTH Digital Command System and Lionel Legacy control system. There are four control panels strategically placed to allow switching local industries, the classification yard, and locomotive service facilities.

The Hodgson Valley Railroad does not attempt to model any specific location or era but is generally set in the late 1950s to early 1960s and features trains that Jean and I relate to in some way or another. Jean grew up in Tacoma, Washington, and remembers the Great Northern from her childhood, so it is one of the featured roads. I am from suburban Philadelphia, so the Pennsylvania Railroad is also featured. We have three towns named for our children: Bramenburg (Brad and Carmen), Matabyville (Matt and Abby), and Aronton (Aaron). Total population at the last census was around 2,000. About half of the figures were hand-painted by Jean, who has also created many of the little scenes. Buildings and industries vary from highly detailed scale-size craftsman kits to toylike postwar operating accessories. The grandchildren and many of our non-train friends are memorialized by businesses and signs bearing their names.

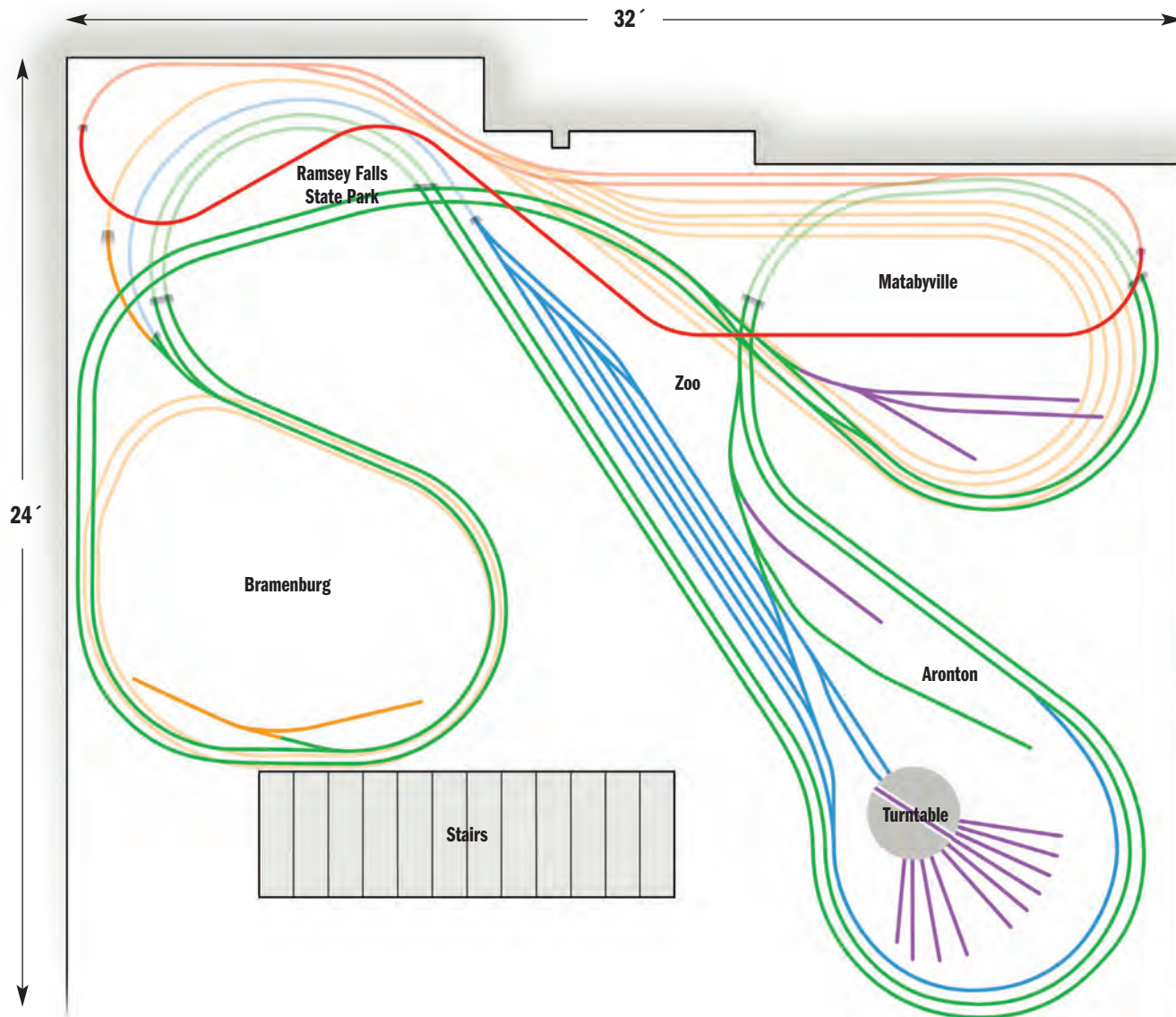
Of course, our model train layout is by no means finished. Future plans include an operating catenary, functional signals, and additional detailing of all the prebuilt structures. 



The layout fascia includes hidden storage areas for equipment and supplies. The cabinet is made from two small units that previously flanked a bathroom mirror.



The cabinet provides convenient storage for layout essentials such as smoke fluid, spare batteries, hand-held controllers, track cleaning supplies, and a couple of small OGR screwdrivers.



## About the Author

Jean and Pat Marinari are retired in New London, Pennsylvania, and share an interest in all things related to railroads. When Pat is not busy working on the layout, he also enjoys woodworking. Jean is an active member of a synchronized ice skating team and an IRS certified volunteer tax preparer.



A Pennsylvania Railroad HH1 from Lionel rides the Ross turntable that serves the Hodgson Valley round-house area.



The Empire Builder descends the grade at the Hodgson Valley electric substation. The backdrop is made up of a series of seven photographs stitched together using computer software. We then had the image printed on heavy vinyl by a sign shop. The photos of Hodgson Valley were taken from just outside the layout room.

An MTH Standard gauge Blue Comet circles above the layout above the future site of Matabyville. I like to temporarily place buildings for a couple of months to see how a town feels before deciding on final placement. The tracks visible beneath the town, which have been enclosed since this photo was taken, are staging tracks that can hold six complete trains.



**A tradition lives on: Example A.**



# *Holiday Spirit at* **HADELER'S HARDWARE**

**Article by Paul Hadelers, as told to Skip Natoli      Photos by Skip Natoli**

**Paul Hadelers reminisces on part of the 105-year history of his business, Hadelers Hardware, in Pearl River, New York. Established in 1905 by Paul's grandfather, Hadelers Hardware has survived the onslaught of the mega-sized hardware chain stores and remains a popular business in the quaint little town. —Allan**

During the 1957 Christmas season, a customer named Bob Scully brought his six-year-old son, Ken, to our store to see the fabulous Lionel train display that my father, George Hadelers, had placed in the window facing Central Avenue. The youngster was mesmerized by the lights and movement of the trains and accessories. That same year, Ken Scully got his first Lionel set for Christmas, and that began his lifelong enthusiasm for toy trains.

The memories of those Christmases and the Hadelers Hardware window stuck with Ken through the years. In the mid-1960s when Lionel was on "life-support," Ken turned to HO scale trains to carry on his model railroading hobby.



**This is Hadelers Hardware in the 1915 photo.**



Some 60 years ago, the display of toy trains in shop windows during the Christmas season was common. Today, it is something of a rarity, but this is not the case at Hadelers Hardware in Pearl River, New York, where the tradition is alive and well.



The colorful Standard gauge Blue Comet is a perpetual favorite.



There is plenty of ongoing action on the layout to captivate the attention of passersby no matter what the weather outside.

Just before the 1993 holiday season, Ken asked me if I would be interested in having trains in the window of the store. At that time, Ken had discovered the joys of Lehmann Gross Bahn (LGB) large scale railroading and was hoping to re-create some of the magic he had found at Hader's Hardware some 36 years earlier. I agreed, and Ken, equipped with two white bed sheets, an oval of 45-mm-gauge large scale track, and a few accessory items, began a new tradition at Hader's Hardware, which is now in its seven-teenth season.

Three years ago, Ken sold most of his large scale equipment to fellow garden railroad enthusiast John Sullivan and began instead to acquire Lionel and MTH Standard gauge trains. The Hader's

Hardware window would now have the classic and colorful look of the toy trains that really launched the holiday tradition. The trains would be further enhanced by the artistic touch of John who was more than happy to help Ken develop a new plan as well as with decorating the layout in the whimsical fashion seen today. A line of LGB motorized units including a trolley is still part of the layout, but the Standard gauge trains are the main attraction.

Ken and John have put together a marvelous layout that has parents bringing their children to see as well as children bringing their parents. It is a tradition we hope to carry on at Hader's Hardware for many years to come. 🎄



John Sullivan, Paul Hader, and Ken Scully pose behind the upper-level large scale line.



This station stop scene shows some of the myriad details that make up Hader's Hardware's colorful window display.

*A tradition lives on: Example B.*



# *Year-Round Holiday*

**Article by Andy Lisle    Photos by Jim the Dare Photography**

My fascination for trains started on a long-ago Christmas when my grandfather gave me a set of American Flyer trains. He worked for the B&O railroad, and at Christmas he would construct what we in this neck of the woods call a “train garden.” After

I received this set, my father, a week before Christmas, would construct a 4' x 8' platform on sawhorses in the living room. He had what I thought was the best track layout for a small train garden. It was a figure-eight layout where the trains would travel through



This overview of my layout reveals a myriad of lights and action-packed accessories.



The store window painting is by Angela Trotta Thomas, who is recognized for preserving toy train history and memories in her paintings.



Steam power, representing prototypes that range from 19th-century wood burners to the giants of steam's waning era, is ever present on my layout.



This Standard gauge race car set is featured in a separate area on my layout.

a large mountain and then wrap around and cross the top of the mountain. My father would have it all assembled, and on Christmas Eve, Santa would adorn it with lights, houses, people, roads, and bright sidewalks made using table salt.

Later in life and married with three children, Rebecca, Ashley, and Kelsey, I kept a 4' x 8' train garden up year round in my recreation room. Every year I would visit all the train shows in the area and kept adding to the display and expanding with sections of plywood until it became what it is now. I would like to expand it even more, but I have run out of room.

At one train show, I met Angela Trotta Thomas, the well-known toy train artist. She was showing her prints, and one caught my eye. The image was one with children looking into a train store window on a cold winter day, enthralled by the trains. The print was average in size, and I said to her that it would be great to have a full-scale print to display at a train garden and create the same feeling of enthusiastic children looking at the display. She said she would do it. I purchased one of the first prints and placed it at the far end of my display, complete with glass and framing so it looked like a store window. It has become my favorite item and is the first thing you notice when you see my display.

My other special favorite is a small section of the layout that is devoted to Halloween. It is complete with a haunted house, graveyard, and trick-or-treat figures. Screams from a haunted mansion and with a flying witch on top add some special effects. The fall leaves scattered in that area serve as a reminder that winter and Christmas are on the way.

In the back of my display is a section for a small amusement park with a roller coaster, bumper cars, a parachute ride, a space rocket, and a merry-go-round. All are fully animated with movement, lights, and sound effects. The many neon signs positioned throughout my display are from Miller Engineering and they certainly add more action and brightness to the overall look.

The layout also features many operating MTH accessories including the McDonalds, fire station, car wash, gas station, and drive-in diner. There is always a lot of action. All kinds of sounds come from a barn with chickens, roosters, and other livestock. Announcements from the train station and other sounds from the various rides and trains add to the overall effect.

The 15' x 24' layout is powered by three Lionel ZW transformers. Track and switches are from Lionel. The curves are O72. Motive power and rolling stock are a mix of Lionel, MTH, and Williams.

On the upper side of the layout above an antique bowling alley, I placed an MTH tinplate race car set with an operating horse race in the center. Two push buttons allow guests to race each other.

Wall space on all sides of the train room hold shelves for my locomotives and rolling stock that I




When not in service on the layout, many of my trains provide a colorful display along the train room walls.

A favorite section on my layout is the one devoted to a Halloween theme.



have collected since my childhood. From time to time, I swap the trains and rolling stock from the shelves to my train garden for variation and to give everything some running time to keep them in shape.

My favorite train is the Lionel Chessie Steam Special set. In 1976, I rode the prototype for a bicentennial run from Baltimore to Cumberland, Maryland. Later, Lionel made the O27 set available, and I had to have one.

Finally, I want to give a special note of thanks to my mom and dad from my brothers, Rob, Steve, David, and myself. Their thoughtfulness made each of our childhood Christmas holidays very special and memorable. Those memories are fondly reinforced every time my current layout comes alive with the lights, sounds, and action that continually stimulate the imagination. 



# Reading Central Railroad's Doorway to the Northeast

**Article and Photos by Jim Policastro**

As a youngster growing up with Lionel trains in a tiny Bronx apartment, the challenge was always how to make operating in a small space fun and interesting. Imagination played a key role because buildings and scenery were practically nonexistent on that little 3' x 5' piece of plywood. After all, it had to slide under my bed for storage between operating sessions. Although I can now indulge my interest in trains in a large, dedicated basement area, the challenge of overcoming space limitations continues to fascinate me.

I still enjoy building small layouts. It was fun, for example, to build the modular scenery layout featured last year in *OGR* Runs 238, 239, and 240. The fact that its scenery could change with the seasons was interesting. However, there was no escaping the fact that the simple loop of track and siding had little operating potential. So this year, I decided to create a railroad that would still fit in just about the same

2,400 square inches but was more suited to operation. The result is the Reading Central Railroad's Doorway to the Northeast, a name inspired by the fact that it would all fit comfortably on a typical hollow-core door (Photo 1).

## The Plan

I always begin my planning by listing the features that I really want the layout to include. In this case, must-haves included coal-country scenery with a small mine as the primary industry, a city scene including a power plant to burn some of that coal, spur tracks for switching, and an interchange track with other railroads. All of this would have to fit into an area 31" x 80". As you can see, I accomplished this by making good use of the air space above the track, as well as by using a device known as a sector plate to take the place of two switches.

## The Benchwork

I wanted this layout to be portable so that I could carry it without assistance to train shows or other events. To accomplish this, the benchwork was divided into three sections bolted together. Two 15" x 31" end sections would carry the O27 end curves, and the center section would be a manageable 31" x 48". I used the usual flat-top construction with 1/4" luan plywood framed and braced with 1 x 4s (Photo 2). Much of the lumber has been recycled from previous projects. The sections were bolted together using 1/4" carriage bolts and wing nuts. Of course for a home layout, one of those previously mentioned hollow-core doors would be an ideal alternative. At shows, the layout will be supported on a banquet table. However, I added bolt-on 2 x 4 legs to raise the table to about 40" in height. This made construction easier on my back and also allowed a better viewing angle for adult visitors. The



legs were braced with gussets cut from 1/2" plywood, and cross braces were added under the table for better stability (Photos 3 and 4).

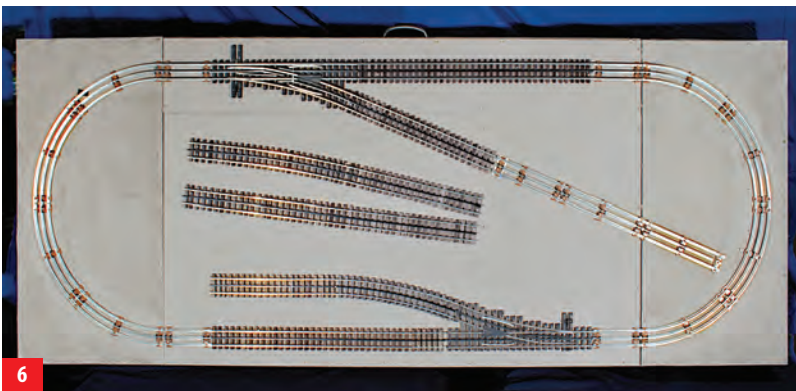
Because making use of the air space above the track was vital to my plans, I added 24" high backdrop panels made from 1/8" tempered Masonite hardboard. The 2' x 4' center panel was attached with a few bolts, and the end sections were designed to be part of the lift-off scenery panels (Photo 5). These end backdrops feature openings for access to the hidden end curves. These openings will also serve as part of a "fiddle yard" operating system where rolling stock or engines are removed from or added to the railroad by the 0-5-0 switcher—in other words, by hand.

## Track Work

In my experience with portable modular layouts, I have found that nothing is as durable and able to withstand abuse and frequent separation as traditional tubular track. For this reason, the O27 end curves, as well as the four half sections of track on the main module adjacent to the curves, are Lionel O27 tubular track. Very little of this track will be visible when scenery is completed. However, with ballast, weathering, and some additional ties cut from 1/8" Masonite, tubular track can hold its own on a semirealistic hi-rail layout. The remainder of the track is GarGraves regular tinplate Phantom rail flexible track, and the O72 switches are from Ross, a brand noted for smooth operation. Transition pins are available to mate the Ross and GarGraves track with the Lionel tubular track.

The track was attached directly to the plywood table with small wood screws (Photo 6). Cork roadbed could be added if you prefer to reduce the sound. It should be noted that in operating this layout, I rediscovered the joys of smaller, traditional size O gauge trains zipping around tight O27 curves. An amazing





number of engines will traverse these tight curves. Most interference with bigger engines occurred at O27 switch machine housings. By using manual ground throws from Caboose Industries on my switches, I avoided this problem, and many fairly large engines were able to make it around the layout easily. By increasing the overall dimensions, you could certainly use O31 or wider curves.

## The Sector Plate

The sector plate, which consists of the straight sections of tubular track running diagonally, as shown in Photo 6, is the key to making this plan work because it

enables one to place a number of spur tracks in an extremely small space. It is basically a pivoting section of track that allows access to other tracks that radiate outward. It is similar in operation to its larger, more prototypical cousin: the turntable. My sector plate is nothing more than a single length of tubular track secured by a wood screw and washers at its pivot point (Photo 7). The sector plate is 27" long, which will accommodate a short switcher and a standard length freight car. Using Super Glue, I put some small styrene strips under the ties to reduce friction. The sector plate track can also be mounted on a length of plywood for more rigidity, shimming the spur tracks as needed. This

concept also comes in handy for accessing engine storage tracks in an area where a full-size turntable simply will not fit. It is not prototypical, but it is a great way to store engines right on the layout rather than taking the risk of transferring them frequently to and from shelves. As useful as the sector plate might be, however, its unprototypical appearance requires that it be hidden by some scenery magic. In this case, I will use city structures and stone retaining walls to disguise it.

## Wiring

For such a small layout, a minimum of feeder connections are sufficient to supply






power to the track. I connected a pair of feeder wires to the front straight section, and 18-gauge jumper wires then transfer power to the sector plate, to its pair of spur tracks, and to a point on the far side of the layout. All wires are soldered directly to the rails. I did not see a need to control power individually to the spur tracks, but it would be an easy matter to add single pole/single throw on/off switches to the wire feeders running to the center rails. To do this, I would also add jumpers to link the outside rails of the GarGraves track at the switches. The transformer is connected to the layout at a small two-wire terminal strip screwed to the front edge of the benchwork. I also added a small plywood shelf screwed to the underside of the main module to support the transformer.

## Scenery

The layout features a rural scene with a coal mine and rocky hillside at one end (Photo 8) and a city scene at the other (Photo 9). In between are yard tracks that serve the mine. A number of fairly standard scenery techniques were used to create the landforms and to provide some lush

ground cover. The scenes also feature straight-from-the-box structures as well as a variety of simple customized buildings. For example, the coal mine is a rebuilt Plasticville coaling station, and the city scene includes an Ameri-Towne building topped with an impressive Plasticville

feature. Lionel and MTH structures are working side by side to supply electric power (Photo 10).

Creating all of this scenery and more will be in Part 2. There is really no limit to the distinctive and eye-catching scenes you can create for even the smallest layout. 



*John Ciccarelli gives an Ameri-Towne building a unique personality.*

# Signs of the Times

Article and Photos by John Ciccarelli



When Rich Melvin asked me to paint the prototypes for the new line of OGR two-story Ameri-Towne building kits, I was only too happy to oblige. Because there were eight of them, and since I am all about visual variety, this project would

really give me the opportunity to explore some varied approaches to the painting of these nicely detailed kits. I tried to take into consideration the type of business each kit represents and go with what I thought that type of establishment might

look like. This is not to say that my approach or interpretation is the only way to go, I just want to demonstrate what can be done to give a building some individual personality.

One of the things I did was to paint signs directly on the bricks. Sure, there are many commercially made signs, and you can create your own stick-on signs with your computer's word processing and graphics programs, but I really like the look of signs painted right on the building (Photo 1).

Before getting to the signs, let me show what can be done to give a building a look all its own.

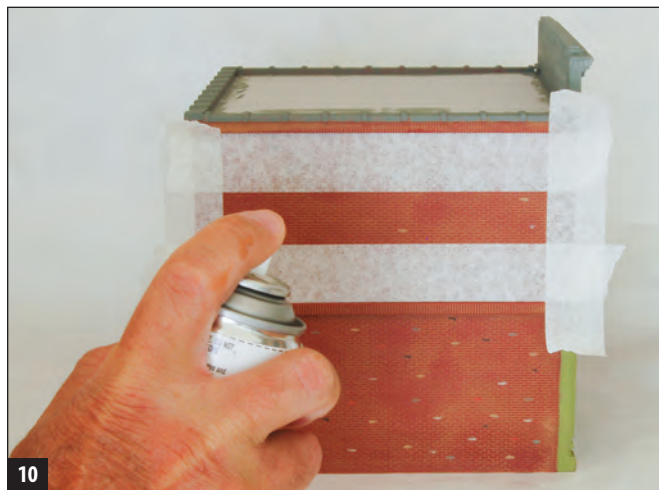
## The Basics

The starting point for this particular project is the new Ameri-Towne Marvin's Drug Store (Photo 2), which although you could, of course, make it into any business you like. This kit, like the others in the series, is made up of one storefront side, one window side, one overhead and utility door side, one solid brick wall side, a roof, window glazing, and graphics. The kit also comes with a cornice. The building I worked on for this article was already assembled by Jim Barrett, so my first step was to spray the entire structure with Testors Dullcote (Photo 3). Flat paint gives the plastic a little tooth in order to give the paint a more



receptive surface on which to adhere.

When dry, necessary sections were masked off, and the building was painted with a color to represent the mortar lines (Photo 4). I chose to use acrylic paints and an airbrush; however, the paint could also be brushed on. If you wanted to, you could leave this color on to simulate painted brick or bricks of a different color. To bring out the mortar lines before this color dries completely, I use a rag and wipe off most of the paint on the surface of the bricks (Photo 5). This process leaves paint in the grooves, resulting in mortar lines. Some of the color also remains on the surface of the bricks, changing them slightly from their original color. By using different colors for each building, you can give all of your buildings a slightly different overall color and look. I like to use white, ivory, gray, tan, and even black on occasion. You can also use different mortar line colors on the same building to simulate repairs made to the mortar over time or for various stains that develop on buildings. A technique I like to use occasionally is multicolored



bricks painted individually with a small brush. That's right, I said individually (Photo 6).

With the bricks done, it is time to turn attention to the architectural details. On this particular building, the storefront area was sprayed after masking off the previously painted bricks (Photo 7). Using the same color, the windows were then painted

with a brush, along with the utility and overhead doors (Photo 8). Next, the cornice, the tiles at the tops of the walls, and the window headers and sills were painted to simulate concrete or stone, along with any other trim areas that would have been made using the same materials (Photo 9). These areas could also be painted in a decorative trim color to give the impression

that the current owners or tenants have tried to spruce up the building.

### Specifics

There are some simple but effective ways of giving this building a truly distinctive personality of its own. It is time to send the sign painters to work. Because




this is to be a drug store, I thought the word “Pharmacy” would be appropriate painted on the plain brick wall. The area to be used for the sign is masked off and sprayed with Dullcote. This is done to seal the edges of the tape and prevent any paint from bleeding underneath (Photo 10). Then, the color of the letters is applied (Photo 11). If you want the letters to be the color of the bricks, just skip this step. Next, stick-on letters are applied (Photo 12). Then the background color is applied (Photo 13). Finally, the letters and tape are removed (Photo 14).

If you want a sign that has faded or chipped, you can rub or scrape some of the color off or place some masking tape over the sign and carefully lift off some of the paint.

The roof is next. You could just paint it flat black to simulate tarpaper, which is something I have done many times. However, to add more texture and variation, there is always a roof

coated with asphalt and gravel. To do that, I would simply coat the roof with glue, sprinkle on some ballast, and pat it down evenly (Photo 15). Once everything dries, the excess is shaken off. If too much falls off, touching it up with some thick black paint simulates an asphalt patch. After all of this is accomplished, another application of Dullcote is in order.

Finally, the window treatments and any other details can be added, along with some weathering to represent a building in what I call past-its-prime condition. The end result is a building with its very own unique personality.

To see how I did the various other buildings in the series, check out OGR’s new catalog. I think these new buildings will be a great addition to your city or small town. Happy detailing! 

## Paints for Modeling

I prefer to use acrylic paints for much of my modeling projects because they are easy to clean with soap and water. Also, the lack of toxic fumes is something I especially appreciate. And although acrylic paints may not be as durable as lacquer or enamel, they can be made more so by the application of a clear coat. They also are not as opaque with one coat, so two may be necessary in some instances. However, I see this as an asset rather than a liability. This somewhat washed-out look adds to that worn and weathered look that tends to further enhance realism. I also like to use flat muted colors as opposed to bright glossy ones. Flat colors help to give that impression of wear and the effects of nature.

If you would like to see my inspiration for the use of these colors, I highly recommend the paintings by American realist painter Edward Hopper, who painted scenes from early 20th-century America. Unlike my buildings, his are pristine.

*The fun never ends for Steve and Barbara Tapper.*

# A 3-Rail Blend of Fantasy and Realism

**Article and Photos by Steve Tapper**

Growing up in the 1950s and '60s, I always wanted a set of Lionel trains. Unfortunately, with a wife and five sons, my father could not afford that luxury. We had bikes, skates, and all kinds of sporting goods like baseball gloves and footballs,

but not trains. My friends had trains, and I would enjoy playing with them when they set them up at Christmas. My uncle even brought home a set of Lionel trains when I was five years old, and I remember the cattle cars, milk cars, and that big steam

engine with the pill that made it smoke.

In December 1998 when my wife, Barbara, and I were looking for holiday gifts, I told her that I wanted a set of Lionel trains. She asked if I wanted to relive my childhood, and I told her I would, especially

**The train room takes up most of our finished basement. You can see various signs depicting all of the railroads I model. The train-related top wall border is from Sherwin Williams, and a mirror runs behind the layout to create an illusion of greater depth.**



if I could change the part when I had no toy trains. We bought a Lionel NYC starter set and thus began our journey into this hobby.

While visiting Barbara's cousin in Thurmont, Maryland, we mentioned that we had bought a set of Lionel trains. While there, we went to see an HO layout of the Western Maryland Railroad. The man who built the layout was a retired employee of the WMRR, and his layout inspired us to build one of our own.

Barbara and I attended every local train show we could find and then started to visit many of the local hobby stores in the area. One of the best turned out to be Catocin Mountain Trains in Thurmont, which is owned by Paul Johnson and was managed by the late Peter Bellissi, a retired New York State police officer.

After accumulating a wide variety of MTH RealTrax, buildings, figures, and bridges, we had a room full of products and still no layout. Since I had never built a layout, I did not even know where to begin, so I bought the book *How to Build Your First Lionel Layout* by Stanley W. Trzoniec. This book provided a detailed example of how to build the benchwork and wire a 4' x 8' layout.

I followed the book to the letter in building the benchwork but deviated on the buildings and scenery. Barbara actually enjoyed working on the layout and did most of the scenery. Whenever we went to a train show, she would visit with the people selling scenery products. I enjoyed repainting and customizing the buildings and tried to be as detail oriented as I could.

Our first 4' x 8' layout was a hit with family and friends who encouraged us to enlarge the layout. We eventually sold the furniture in our recreation room and relocated the 4' x 8' section of the layout to a new location by our patio door in order to make room for the expansion. Because the first section of the layout was flat, I decided that the next section would have two levels so that we could have trains crossing over each other for more action. This section was also planned as a U shape so we would be able to reach all parts of the layout. At this point, my brother, Alan Tapper, suggested that we put casters on all of the layout supports so we could move the sections if we needed to. A third and final section that was added included a mountain and enough room for us to have two trains going in opposite directions through the mountain.



**The Lionel Hot Rod GP9 is hauling a mixed consist of freight cars out of the tunnel past the animated Mr. Christmas circus. A ring full of wild animals is on one side of the tracks, and a busy Lionel track gang works on the other.**

Because this layout is shared with Barbara, we also compromised on the content of the layout. It was decided early on that we wanted to run as many trains at one time as possible and that we should have a lot of operating accessories. It was also decided that the layout would include Department 56 villages in addition to prototypical buildings. As much as I wanted a hi-rail layout, it was a joint venture. We also wanted our scenes to tell a story.

We set up the layout to run DCS, TMCC, and conventional engines. The

layout has six loops operating with O31 and O42 curves. We are using MTH RealTrax with one loop of Lionel O27 around one of the villages. We use two MTH Z-4000 and three MTH 75-watt transformers to run the six loops and many of the accessories. Some of the accessories are operated with AC current, most notably the Mr. Christmas amusement park rides. We have over 26 animations on the layout. The amusement park and circus consist of the animated circus, rocket ships, two Ferris wheels, tea cups, a Lionel



**A Lionel SD90 with its consist of cars waits patiently for the MTH Southern Pacific GS4 Daylight Special to pass. The animated carpenter behind the trains is busy building a new house. A busy Texaco gas station and an animated oil refinery are visible in the background.**



The popular amusement park features an array of Mr. Christmas Ferris wheels, flying teacups, and the new rocket ship ride. A brave young man is testing his strength on the Lionel test of strength apparatus as a Lemax hot air balloon circles the park. An old Lionel 4-4-0 steam engine hauls a consist of horses and other animals around the little Department 56 village, while the proprietor of the Lionel hot dog stand is having a good day selling foot longs.



The Beer Depot is a popular place where customers stock up on their favorite brands. That Budweiser pickup is making a delivery.

test of strength, a pony ride, a Lionel hot dog stand, and two hot air balloons. One of these is a Lemax balloon, and the other is an Ink Well hot air balloon, which operates with a mechanical motor to raise and lower the balloon.

Over the past 11 years, we have been collecting a large number of steam and diesel engines, passenger cars, freight cars, and a special collection of beer reefers. Our locomotives are from Lionel, MTH, K-Line, and Williams. Our rolling stock is Lionel, MTH, K-Line, Weaver, Williams, Atlas, and Industrial Rail. Being from Maryland, I am partial to the Western Maryland Railroad, the B&O, and the Chessie, although quite a few other fallen flag railroads are represented including the Canadian Pacific.

We recently built a new storage room in order to store our empty boxes. We also have a large number of figures and 1:43 scale cars and trucks.

Having worked for the National Brewing Company in the early 1970s, I have a penchant for beer reefers and have 26 different reefers at this time. This also helped me to focus on buying specific cars. When Paul Strickland began his quest on the OGR forum to have a Natty Boh beer reefer made, I was determined to buy one. (See Ed Boyle's Collector's Gallery "Paul Strickland and the Natty Boh Reefer" in Run 241, February/March 2010.) After almost a year of waiting for the reefer, a number of us gathered at the old National Brewery site to pick up our Natty Boh reefers in person. That was a great day for everyone who participated.

The unique quality of our layout is that it is only 8' x 16', which makes this a medium-size layout. Part of the enjoyment for me in building the layout was the challenge of doing all of this in such a small area. People who visit the layout ask if we have plans to knock out a wall to enlarge the layout because they want to see it expand even more.

In 2004, we joined the Northern Central Hi-Railers (NCHR), a local train club made up of folks who have operating O gauge layouts in their homes. We meet at members' homes on a round robin and then usually have a summer group outing to a train-oriented location. Belonging to a train club opened a lot of doors for me to share ideas and improve the layout. Members of the NCHR have wonderful layouts.

I have had an opportunity to meet many OGR forum members in person and have become good friends with several. One of them is Chuck Ambrogio, who I invited to visit our layout. Another is Jim Mason. I see our layout as being one that the average hobbyist could build in a limited space and still have worlds of fun running trains. No, it is not prototypical, but it sure is a whole lot of fun. That is what running trains to me is all about. 🍻



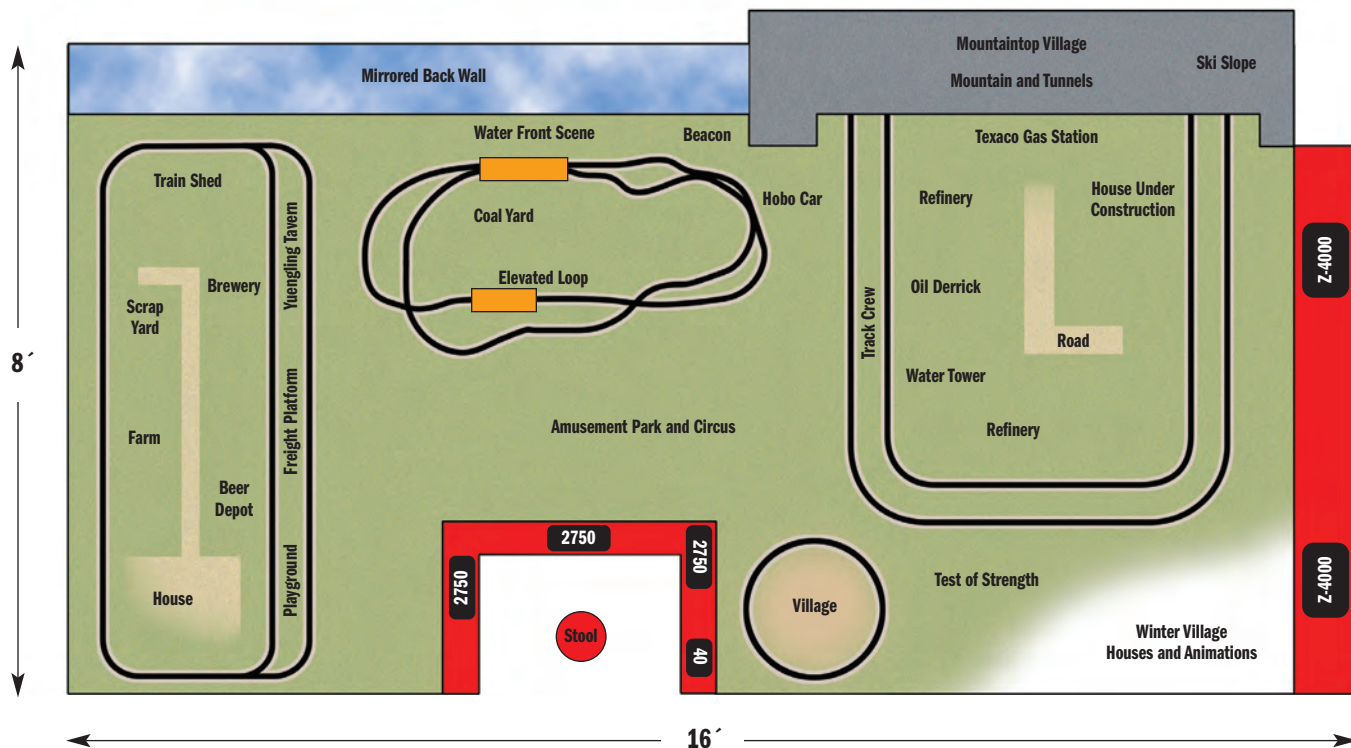
Happiness is running trains.



A Williams Lehigh Valley Berkshire with its consist of six beer reefers passes the popular Department 56 Yuengling Tavern.



The Lionel track gang is busy repairing a section of track, while the caboose of a CP Rail train passes by.



A train on the elevated track crosses over another train on the lower track, creating a lot of interaction. A Lionel Western Maryland 2-4-2 and its consist are on the upper line, while a Williams Western Maryland GP9 pulls a mixed freight below. Underneath the bridge, men are working on a scaffold.



The scrap yard gang is busy as they dismantle an old New Haven diesel. Other workers are busy in the scrap yard trying to recycle parts and salvage what is usable.



## About the Author

Steve and Barbara Tapper live in Reisterstown, Maryland. Steve is now retired after a 40-year career in sales and marketing, but Steve will be joining his brother Alan's fence, deck, and remodeling company as sales manager. In addition to O gauge trains, Steve is active in the Mustang Club of Maryland and is restoring a 2002 Mustang to like-new condition. Steve and Barbara also had a successful part-time photography business for over 20 years. Steve enjoys sharing the hobby with people he meets and often invites them over to see their layout and run the trains.



I pose with Chuck Ambrogio (center) and Jim Mason (right). We met through the OGR forum and have become good friends. Jim is still building his layout, and Chuck has big plans for his future layout.

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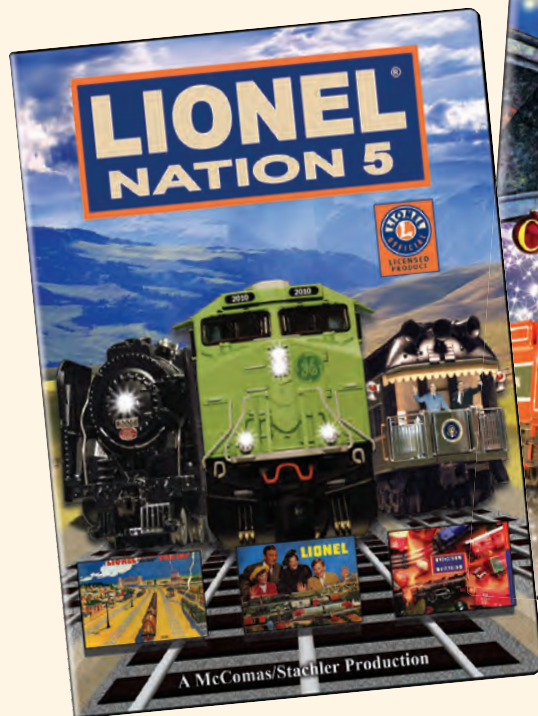
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## Magnetic Attraction— Lionel 165 Crane Then and Now

Photos by Rich Melvin

“It’s cute and I like the colors,” the visitor to my office said. Then she asked me what it did, and I gave her a brief overview of the prewar tinplate Lionel No. 165 Magnetic Crane—one of three versions produced over the years (Photo 1) that are the subject of this article. I was rewarded with a polite nod—not a bad reaction for a toy that does not look like a train and is more than 70 years old.

### Introduction

In 1938 and again in 1940, Lionel introduced operating accessories that

defined the best in play value for 3-rail toy trains in an industrial age. In 1938 came the No. 97 Coal Loader. It was big, tall, noisy, and messy, but it actually loaded coal into gondolas, hoppers, and operating cars. Lionel introduced two more noteworthy operating accessories in 1940: the No. 164 Log Loader and the No. 165 Magnetic Crane. The No. 164 Log Loader was a large accessory that did the same thing for logs that the No. 97 Coal Loader had done for coal.

Rounding out the trio was the No. 165 Magnetic Crane. Lionel acknowledged that this one was special with “Greatest

accessory of 1940...” flatly stated in its catalog blurb. In this column, we are going to examine why Lionel could make that statement in 1940 and also take a look at the modern reincarnation of the No. 165 Crane offered by today’s Lionel Corporation Tinplate.

### Triple Action Makes It Different

Most other action accessories used two buttons, but Lionel provided the owner of the No. 165 Magnetic Crane with a neatly packaged miniature control panel comprised of four buttons and a knob switch

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(Photo 2). The art deco No. 165C Controller looked really cool, but what the crane could do when the buttons were pressed was even cooler and made it a standout accessory, either by itself or as part of a layout.

The buttons on the left allowed the cab and boom to swing in a complete circle, either left or right. The two buttons on the right enabled the operator to raise or lower the electromagnet attached to the hook. The center knob switch turned the attached electromagnet on and off, which meant you could both pick up and drop a load of ferrous scrap wherever you wanted within the circumference of the circle that the boom could reach. The only manual control was a wheel in back of the cab (Photo 3) that raised and lowered the boom. Once you had the height you wanted for the boom, this adjustment was rarely used, at least by me.

So why is this accessory so different, and why do operators as well as collectors like it so much? The No. 165 Magnetic Crane was the first major Lionel operating accessory that was not tied to 3-rail track like the No. 97 Coal Loader and the No. 164 Log Loader. It was also the first operating accessory that allowed the user to remotely pick up and drop off a load without any manual “five finger” intervention. You could have fun with the crane whether there was track within reach of its boom or not. Part of that fun was mastering the controls of the No. 165 Magnetic Crane because just pressing the buttons was not enough to make it work right. It took skill and concentration to remotely pick up and deliver magnetized scrap where you wanted it to go.

## The Originals

The No. 165 Magnetic Crane provided an extraordinary level of play value, but in terms of colors and looks, the crane fit right in with the rest of the Lionel accessory line. The red roof and the yellow body of the cab on top of the crane matched the colors of the No. 97 Coal Loader and the No. 164 Log Loader. In a typical use of toy train parts, the tinplate roof and cab, the plastic boom, the metal pulley and hook, plus the manual boom adjustment wheel were taken from the No. 2660 Crane Car in O gauge, which was offered from 1938 to 1942.

We have two original No. 165 Magnetic Cranes to show you. The 1940 version (Photo 4) has a painted aluminum tower with a green base and a red ladder climbing the girders on the front of the tower. The green boom on the pictured model is a reproduction caused by the collision between an overly friendly dog and the crane. (The complete tale about the dog will only be related by e-mail or phone request. This column is about the No. 165 Magnetic Crane and not the canine. Grrr! The other option is to read “Buying Trains?...Beware of the Dog” in Run 192, February 2003.)





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Photo 5 shows what the original rubber coating on the wires from the No. 165C Controller to the crane looks like after the coated rubber dries out, becomes brittle, and cracks. If you want to use the crane as well as display it, the only practical solution is to replace the original wire with new, coated, six-wire cable.

The second crane dates from 1941 (Photo 6) and is virtually identical to the first except the girder tower is painted a glossy medium gray color. During 1941 and 1942, Lionel phased out aluminum and used this gloss gray instead for both accessories and rolling stock. A theory advanced by the good folks at TM Books & Video in the *Lionel Illustrated Price & Rarity Guide*, Volume I: 1901–1969, 1999 Edition is that the aluminum used in the silver-looking paint was needed for the war effort in Europe that was beginning to involve the U.S. Another theory is that the switch to glossy gray was part of an effort to make existing trains look more realistic and less toy-like. Hey, choose the theory you like best because this

kind of speculation among fellow collectors is a lot of fun and a firmly rooted part of the collecting hobby.

The No. 165 Magnetic Crane came with a pulley and hook, as shown in Photo 7. But the 1941 example of the crane has the older, more elaborate pulley and hook combination with the circular weight above the hook, as seen in Photo 8. This pulley with hook was used on the O gauge No. 2810 Crane Car from 1938 onward.

### The Lionel Corporation Tinplate Crane

The Lionel-branded MTH tinplate crane offered some surprises when I looked at it. The MTH interpretation of the No 165 Crane had been engineered and produced first as an MTH Tinplate Traditions item well before the license agreement with Lionel LLC that brought Lionel Corporation Tinplate into existence. During my examination of the piece, it became apparent that the design goal for this replica was to make it a sturdier, more

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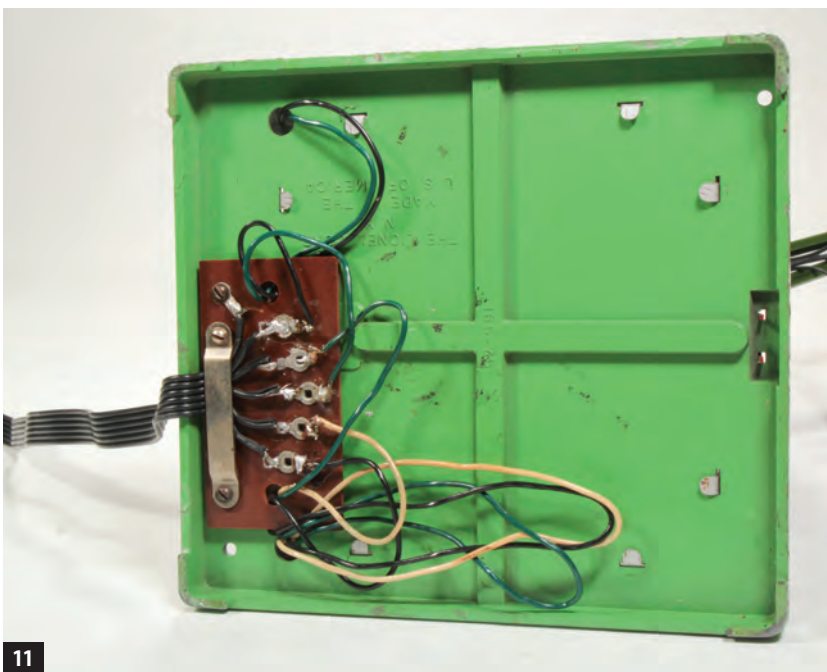
height as the prewar model. The heavier base makes the crane a steadier platform when it is operated, and the hook holding the magnet is bigger and beefier than the original (Photo 10).

Take a look at the electrical connections on the undersides of the cranes. Instead of a mass of soldered wire connections on the prewar crane (Photo 11), the new version has a neat connector to go between the controller and the crane (Photo 12). The electromechanical guts underneath each crane are also quite different, but those details lie more in Jim Barrett's and George Brown's bailiwicks than mine. The important thing to know

reliable version of the No. 165 Crane both electrically and mechanically. Making it look exactly like the prewar piece was a secondary consideration. The Lionel Corporation Tinplate replica is decorated to look like the 1941 version of the prewar crane with a gray-painted superstructure (Photo 9). The green base is painted metal rather than painted Bakelite plastic, which helps make the crane significantly heavier than the original, even though it has the same 6"x 6-1/2" x 10" footprint and

from the collector-operator perspective is that the Lionel Corporation Tinplate No. 165 Crane runs quieter, operates more reliably, requires less maintenance, and can be placed in more locations, thanks to its connector, than the prewar predecessor.

Oh yes, one more thing before I leave this subject, and it is in the nature of a minor objection that is as annoying to me as it is unnecessary. The four screws on the top of the Lionel Corporation Tinplate version, as seen



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"I now have 20/20 sharpness" – says Pedro Pinhole

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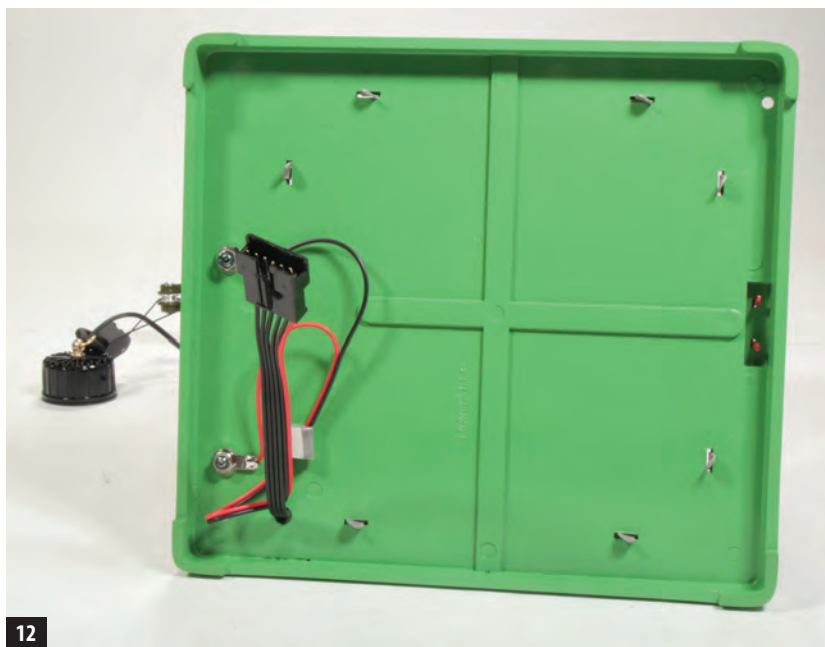
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12


in Photo 9, are silver and not black. Hey, what is that? The MTH product people know better!

However, the bottom line is that the Lionel Corporation Tinplate model is not for collectors but is ideal for operating on your layout. This leaves your original prewar crane free to be placed where a collectible ought to be located—decorating a shelf in your train room or safely hidden away in a box.

## Summary

All three cranes discussed here are desirable accessories, but only the two prewar No. 165 Magnetic Cranes are really collectible. The 1941 version is considered to be more valuable, even

though I have the instruction sheet and the instruction tag for the 1940 model. I don't have the boxes for either of my cranes, and this would tend to negatively affect their value in the current market.

What makes this accessory unusual from the collector's point of view is that not only does condition matter but so does functionality. Cranes that still work are worth more because both collectors and operators want them. The No. 165 Magnetic Crane was a breakthrough accessory in terms of functional fun, and 70-plus years later, you still can't buy a newly built, conventionally controlled Lionel magnetic crane that can do any more than these pioneer accessories from the early 1940s. 

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## Pave the Way to Realism

Realistic paving to me means pavement that looks like pavement. It is at the right height compared to the track and has a color and consistency that instantly reminds me of either asphalt or concrete. On my layout, as with many if not most layouts, pavement also has to be rugged enough to be able to stand up under standing or kneeling on it if it's necessary to get to part of the layout that requires that. Even if you think that won't ever happen, trust me, it does sooner or later. One dent from a knee or a fracture caused by a mis-step, and the look is ruined.

Creating a grade crossing or paved area with embedded tracks requires you to raise the pavement up to the rail height. That height will vary depending on the kind of track that you use. In my case, I use GarGraves track, which means that the rail sticks up above the ties at exactly  $7/32"$ . I learned long ago that making pavement match the rail height is the most realistic way to go. That means that all highways or paved lots with rails must be raised to the height of the rails. Secondary roads can, of course, have grade crossings that start at the table surface and slope up to the top of the rails and then back down.

I'll deal first with a commercial lot, such as a paved intermodal crane area. For best effect, the entire lot needs to start out at the rail height. In my case, that means using some sort of material to create a sub-surface for the pavement. National Balsa at [www.nationalbalsa.com](http://www.nationalbalsa.com) stocks balsa wood, bass wood, and precision plywood and will ship the product right to your door. It has great plywood that is exactly the right height if you know something about ordering plywood. It seems that if you order  $1/4"$  plywood, its exact real thickness is  $7/32"$ , or  $1/32"$  less than  $1/4"$ , which is just right for our needs. The wood is available as three-ply and five-ply. I use the five-ply because its thickness is more accurate, and it tends to resist warping.



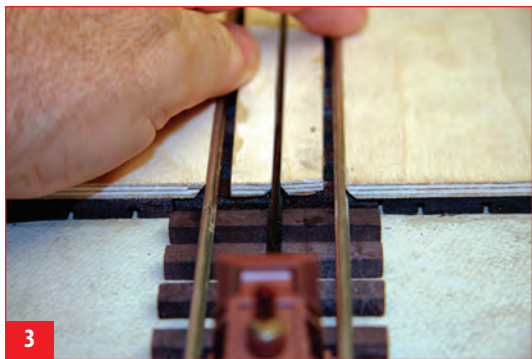
When this plywood rests on the wooden track ties, the top surface of the plywood is exactly at the height of the rails. I always have extra ties around, so gluing a few of them in place between the tracks where needed provides a good base for the plywood (Photo 1).

I wanted an intermodal yard with tracks embedded right in the pavement. The first trick was to lay the tracks exactly parallel at the optimum spacing to accommodate my Lionel intermodal crane (Photo 2). Once the tracks were securely fastened to the main table, I cut the plywood to fit between two tracks from the outer rail of one to the outer rail of the other. I also cut more plywood to create pavement on the outer sides of these two tracks.

Fillers are needed between the outer rails and the center rail of both tracks, as shown in Photo 3. The dimensions here are very important. Cut strips of wood no wider than  $7/16"$ , as precisely as possible, leaving flange slots no narrower than  $1/8"$ . I know that these slots may seem rather wide, but with so many different manufacturers of engines and rolling stock wheel



sets, you very likely will need that full  $1/8"$  width. I also have a trick for making those fat slots look much narrower, but more about that later. Photo 4 is a close-up of the wooden filler strips showing the extra wide flange slot.



Examine closely to make sure that any and all wooden filler strips do in fact rest below the top of the center rail so there is no disruption between pickup rollers and the center rail. If there is an area where the wooden strips are too high, thin them down with a little sanding. There is nothing worse than an engine that won't run on the paved area because the pavement is lifting the roller off the center rail.



Look closely at Photos 3 and 4 and you will notice that a bevel has been cut on the underside of the plywood pavement material where the material butts up against the edges of the rails. This is true not only for the outer pieces of wood but also for the wooden strips positioned between the center rail and the outer rails. This is an absolutely necessary modification to make room for the flare at the bottom of the rails and any possible tie plates and track spikes located along the rails. I use a Micro-Mark table saw to make these bevels on the wood. You can also do them with a file instead, but it takes a little longer.



Locate the edge of the beveled wood on the bottom and against the rails for a trial fit. Make sure that no part of the wood extends above the top of the rails. Glue the wooden strips in place on the ties using some super thin CA glue or equivalent to keep the wood from ever buckling up and moving higher than the rails. Keep in mind that where the track first enters the paved area, any operating cars equipped with slide shoes will need a ramp to guide the shoe up to the top of the pavement. Therefore, it may be necessary to file a slight angle on the edge of the pavement between the outer and center rails to keep the slide shoe from snagging on the edge of the pavement.



Photo 5 illustrates how you can further enhance the realism by applying some spackling compound into any cracks or irregularities where the surface of the plywood pavement meets the outer edges of the outside rails. Sand the spackling compound surfaces up to the outer rails. Don't do the same thing to the center rail though because the surface of the wooden filler must be kept as low as

possible to provide pickup rollers with uninterrupted contact with the center rail. Be sure to clean out the flange slots thoroughly using cotton swabs to make sure that none of the spackling becomes hardened in the flange slots.

Now it is time to make those fat wide flange slots look much more believable. Get hold of some 1/16" thick by 3/32" wide, or even 1/8" wide, balsa wood strips and cut them to the length of the pavement slots as needed. Using a wide blade screwdriver, gently squash the strips down into the slots until they rest right on the ties, as shown in Photo 6. Use some CA glue to keep them down in the slots. When the time comes to apply the pavement paint, apply the paint all the way down into the slots, including along the sides of the rail. You won't believe how much narrower the flange slots look with the bottoms filled in and painted. At first you will think that the slot is not deep enough, but I have never had an operational problem doing flange slots this way.

Photo 7 shows what the pavement ends up looking like after applying Woodland Scenics Road System #ST1453 asphalt topping. Photo 8 illustrates the results using the #ST1454 concrete topping. Pay particular attention to both photos and see how well the flange slots seem to disappear.

Random paved country roads can be done between grade crossings using the same road system toppings. Starting with its #ST1455 Paving Tape product, the edges of a road are defined by applying this narrow, sticky foam tape along lines where you want both edges of the road to be. The result is a 1/16" thick foam tape that will act as a dam, keeping in the liquid paving material.


The paving material is made by combining #ST1452 Smooth-It with water to a thin plaster consistency. Two cups of the Smooth-It powder and one cup of water are mixed to make the road paving material. This material is troweled in between the foam tape edges with an implement such as a Popsicle stick, thus making up the pavement. Working time is about 20 to 30 minutes and is actually fun to do. Good results are easy to

obtain even the first time. Grade crossings are made using the wooden filler method discussed earlier for the inter-modal crane lot. Use some random length pieces of wood for the inclines with the wood slanting down away from the rail edge. Apply the edge tape up to the wood and blend it in using the Smooth-It material. Remove the edge paving tape and sand any irregularities out of the road. Fill in the sides of the inclines with spackling compound and paint, as desired, using the asphalt paint.

When the paint is thoroughly dry, clean off the surface of all the rails carefully with Kwikieze paint brush cleaner or an equivalent product to make sure that electrical contact can still be made with wheels and pickup rollers. Carefully wipe along the top and inside edge of outer rails using a rag moistened with some of the cleaner. Be careful not to let the cleaner go off the rail and onto the painted surface. I found that sometimes a little touchup with the paint was necessary before I finally got the hang of it.

Be sure to add the little extra touches such as creating concrete expansion joints and cracks, as shown in Photo 9. I simply scored the finished product using a utility knife along a firmly applied straightedge for the expansion joints. The concrete cracks are simply pencil lines drawn on the pavement near the corners where the expansion joints meet. You may also need to use the pencil on the scored pavement expansion joint to make the scored line stand out better.

For added realism on asphalt road surfaces, wait until the paint is dry and then very lightly scour the surface of the asphalt pavement with a scouring pad. Lightly scour along the length of the pavement only. This stresses the pavement and lightens it. I also used this technique where tires would have tracked on the pavement. Asphalt cracks can be added using a fountain pen with black ink randomly applied to look like tar drizzled in the cracks.

I finished the scene by adding scenery ballast, gravel, and weeds. There is a wealth of different products to make any scene stand out dramatically on any layout. 



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9



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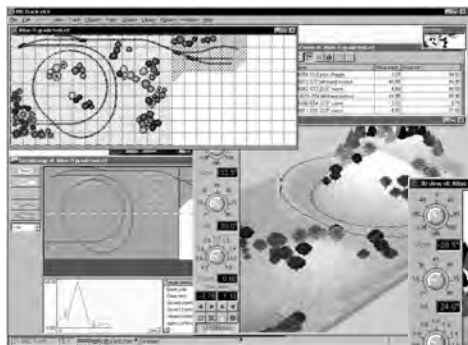
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# Backshop Letters

**Do you have a question about repairing or operating your trains? Do you have a problem with your trains, accessories, or layout?**

For answers, e-mail Jim Barrett (jim@ogaugerr.com). Please include your phone number, city, and state. If possible, also include your work phone number so Jim can respond directly to you, as it may be several months before your question and his answer appear in the magazine. If you are unable to e-mail Jim, you may write to him at OGR Publishing, 33 Sheridan Rd., Poland, OH 44514.

I have an old Lionel 3-rail O27 gauge layout with an MTH Z-4000 transformer on which seven Lionel postwar locomotives run quite successfully in forward, stop, and reverse, including all whistles. I just purchased an MTH O27 Proto 1 locomotive that was upgraded to Proto 2. Anyway, it won't run and sticks in neutral, and the red direction button on the Z-4000 transformer has no effect.

I then took it in to my local train store on two occasions, and it ran fine both forward and reverse with their Z-100 transformer on their Atlas 3-rail track loop. Any ideas as to what may be wrong?

— Ernest Mayer, Newark, DE

*If you have a Proto 2 locomotive and you are running it in conventional mode, then I haven't any idea why it would stick in neutral at all. That just can't happen. One of the things most people miss when they operate Proto 2 locomotives in conventional mode is that the transfer from forward to neutral to reverse is not as instantaneous as it is with mechanical reversing units.*

*In other words, there has to be a much longer pause when stopping and starting the voltage to the locomotive. Could that be your problem? If the same locomotive runs fine on another track and transformer, I would not suspect the locomotive, but I would suspect either your operation of your transformer, the transformer, or the track itself. The fact that you have seven other locomotives with mechanical reversing units that operate perfectly though makes me think that you are unconsciously working the power interruptions just as fast with your Proto 2 locomotive as you are with your locomotives with mechanical reversing units. I suspect slowing down the cycle time will make it work like you want it to. —Jim*

In "Backshop" in Run 243, you said that the K-Line passenger car lighting strip had those Christmas tree light bulbs wired in series, yet you say that if one went out, the others stayed lit. I thought that was only true with parallel lighting when both wires carry the same current to all lights.

— Chuck

*I did commit a boo boo here because I didn't fully explain the circuit that K-Line installed in their lighting strip. I'll try again.*

*"Series" is when one goes out, it breaks the string of current, so they all go out. "Parallel" is when one goes out, it is the only one that goes out. However, in the case of K-Line's circuit, it is actually series wiring with a shunt, meaning that the total voltage is indeed evenly split among all the bulbs, as in series wiring. However, due to the shunt in the circuit board, when one goes out, the total voltage is shunted onto the remaining lit bulbs, causing them all to burn brighter due to the added voltage from the one that went out.*

*What then happens is the weakest filament among all the remaining bulbs will soon fail, causing that bulb's voltage to be shifted among the remaining bulbs. In other words, it's the worst of both worlds. Instead of the entire string going dark when one bulb burns out, their system makes sure that all bulbs will burn out in rapid succession, starting with the first one. —Jim*

I have an old ZW transformer that runs numerous streetlights and lighting towers. The transformer is throwing the breaker light on after running the lights for two or three minutes, then the breaker light goes out, and the streetlights come back on. This happens several times during an operating session. I do not smell any burning wires. It appears to be a gradual overload. Is there such a possibility? I don't

think I have added anymore lights to the circuit; however, it is running a lot of lights. Is the logical suggestion to break up the line and reduce the number of lights it is running and then just use another circuit for the remaining lights?

— Russ Barone

*Do it this way. How many lights? Each light counts for about 1 to 4 watts, depending on the size of the bulb. Grain of wheat bulbs are about 1 watt, and headlight bulbs on postwar engines are about 4 watts. Add up the total load you're having the ZW handle. A 275-watt ZW doesn't actually mean it will comfortably handle a continuous load of 275 watts. That rating is only valid for short durations such as what you would be using if you ran a loaded train at full speed for a short time. The number you are looking for is actually only about 167 watts of load on a continuous basis.*

*What you might find out is that you still are well under what the transformer should stand, but the circuit breaker is letting go periodically anyway. That happens on old circuit breakers after some period of time. Breakers fail by opening up too early (error on the side of caution). If that is the case with your ZW, it needs a new circuit breaker. These parts are available from parts guys at the York meet or possibly at other train shows.*

*Here's a tip. Outdoor landscape lighting is powered by transformers operating at about 12 volts AC output, but up to 600–800 watts total. The cost of these transformers from a home improvement center is often less than \$150 for the biggest ones. It would probably cost you that much to get a good technician to go through your postwar ZW and make it right. Even then, it would still be good for only about 170 watts of lights. On the other hand, if you have no problem opening up your transformer, removing the circuit breaker, and installing a new one, then that would be the way to go. —Jim*

What would I need to get started using MTH locos and the large MTH transformer that I already have? There was an article in the January 2010 issue in the OGR Bookcase called *The DCS O Gauge Companion* by Barry Broskowitz. It sounds like this literature would be very informative to a novice who may be considering purchasing the system. I was inquiring about how I could get that literature. It did mention being able to possibly download the piece at a cost of \$12.95.

— Dan Venet

To get started in DCS, it takes actually nothing more than the purchase of the system consisting of the TIU and the DCS remote. The wires that come from the transformer you have right now that go to the track simply go through the TIU and then go to the track. That's it, nothing more. The power from the transformer goes through the TIU and adds a digital signal and then on to the track. All MTH engines equipped with Proto 2 will be recognized by the TIU and added into the system as a command engine. That means the engines will no longer move until you call them up in the remote and start them. And they will sit at an idle until you command them to go some scale miles per hour, which you read in the window of the remote.

If you also get the TMCC TIU patch cable, it will allow you to connect the TIU to the Lionel Command Base, and now all TMCC-equipped locomotives will also work with the DCS remote. If you add an MTH AIU, it will allow you to flip up to 10 switches and 10 accessories with the same remote.

Barry's work is a great tool to have. It not only helps you understand it, but it also makes short work of individual quirks you may come across. The book is by download only. It is well worth every penny of the \$12.95. —Jim

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I want to thank you for the article in the April/May 2010 issue. I have had a DCS since it first became available several years ago. In the past few years, I began experiencing the problems that you list in the article. I was contemplating buying a new DCS.

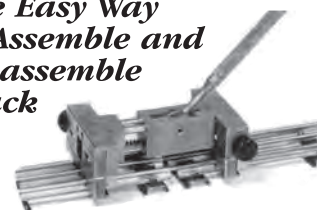
I started your fix with my two remotes. The RF board was not separated, but in each case I noticed some looseness in the seating and applied the foam weather tape as instructed. Thereafter, I did not notice any significant improvement. I then applied the remedy to the TIU. The result was unbelievable. All of the problems went away, and the remotes now function farther from the TIU than they did when they were new. What was interesting to me was that the cure for me involved the TIU that lies flat behind the Z-4000 and is hardly ever moved. I have never had such an easy fix lead to such dramatic results.

— George, Haddonfield, NJ

*I had the exact same list of problems, which is what led me to delve into the remote and the TIU. Noticing the same two boards (being identical, I mean) caused me to try the foam tape. I love to pass such things on to everyone because it can do nothing but improve the fun we all have.*

—Jim Barrett

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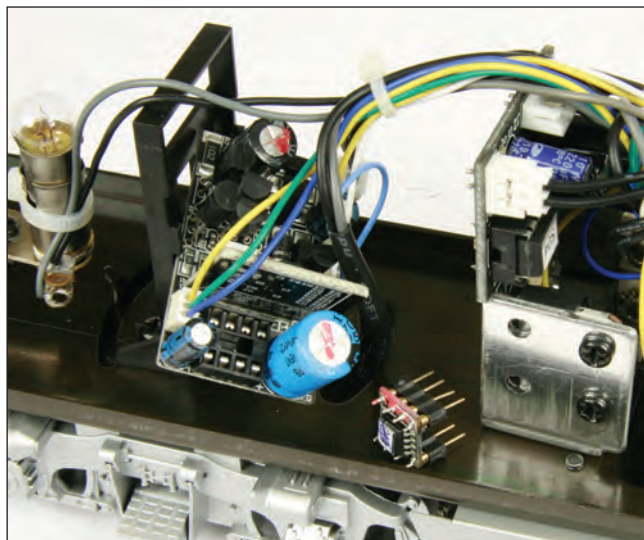
As Kitty carried the newly arrived RDC into my train room, rocking it gently from side to side, an ominous rattling sound emanating from inside its box proclaimed...bad news. Obviously something came loose inside the car during its long trek from its origin in the Orient to its final destination at the OGR Southwest Office.

Model train manufacturers take a great deal of care to ensure safe delivery of their products to consumers. After all, warranty repairs are expensive in not only personnel time and replacement parts but especially in lost customer confidence and loyalty to the particular brand. But, to freely paraphrase a contemporary colloquial expression, things happen.

Several years ago I received a locomotive that was packed in one of the most engineered and expensive shipping boxes I've seen, but the die-cast fuel tank was ripped loose from the engine's heavy gauge sheet steel frame. I returned the product to the manufacturer and promptly received a replacement, which had also suffered the same damage. In a subsequent phone call, I learned the intercontinental shipping container carrying several production runs of trains from China was involved in a train wreck as it traveled across the land bridge here in the U.S. As it turned out, a number of the locomotives in that shipment were damaged identically to the two I received. But happily, the third engine to arrive was pristine...no damage. Hmm...maybe I should carry that engine to Las Vegas with me as a talisman.

In the case of the rattling RDC, my usual practice of oiling a new engine and then placing it on the rails for its initial run didn't happen. Instead, I carefully removed the car's body hoping to not find something I really didn't want to see. In this case, the problem shown in the photo was not a catastrophe. Obviously, the circuit board was jarred loose from its plastic carrier and, once it was loose, shook the chip out of its socket. All I had to do was determine which way the wayward chip had to face in its socket, plug it back in, and snap the board back into place on its carrier.

While I was reassembling the RDC's electronics, a string of scenarios flashed through my thoughts, playing out like scenes in a movie preview trailer. With the RDC, here was a box that should have been full of excitement and fun but instead contained a problem to deal with. In another envisioned scene, a new engine powered up with smoke billowing out from where it was not supposed to. Or, a starter set moved but a few feet and stopped dead in its tracks. In other scenarios, sounds wouldn't work, the engine ran jerky, and so forth. Over the past two decades, I have experienced all of these disappointments with new products. Because of my experience and a respectable inventory of spare parts, I usually make the occasional but necessary repair and then carry on. But what about the person who is new to model trains or whose expertise and interests are in other aspects of the hobby,




such as creating detail-rich vignettes or spectacular mountainous scenery? Their new toy just broke, so...what now?

Every manufacturer of O gauge trains warrants its products against defects in materials or workmanship. Usually the warranty period for complex products such as locomotives or command control systems is one year, but frequently components such as light bulbs and traction tires are not included. Fortunately, several manufacturers include spare traction tires and even a spare light bulb or two with each locomotive. Spare light bulbs are also included with some illuminated cars and accessories.

Each of the train makers requires you to contact it to get a return (or repair) authorization before taking or sending the defective product in for warranty repair. Of course, each company has its own policy for warranty repairs. These policies and the procedures for getting a train repaired under warranty are explained in the information that accompanies the product. Additionally, several of the manufacturers have warranty information or repair policies listed on their respective websites as follows:

- **Bachmann/Williams by Bachmann** – [www.bachmanntrains.com](http://www.bachmanntrains.com)
- **Lionel** – [www.lionel.com](http://www.lionel.com)
- **MTH** – [www.mthtrains.com](http://www.mthtrains.com)
- **Weaver** – [www.weavermodels.com](http://www.weavermodels.com)

Lionel and MTH have a network of authorized service locations throughout North America. Each service location is an independent business with a factory-trained repair person on its staff. Atlas, Bachmann, 3rd Rail/Golden Gate Depot, Ready Made Trains, and Weaver perform warranty repair work at their respective home offices. So regardless of the make of the locomotive, car, or accessory, help is always just a phone call or e-mail message away. 

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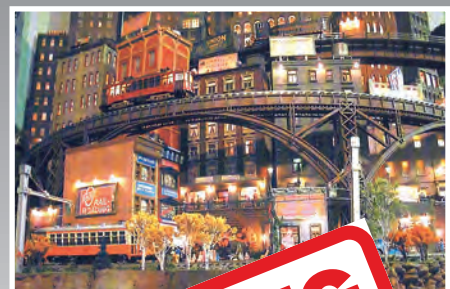
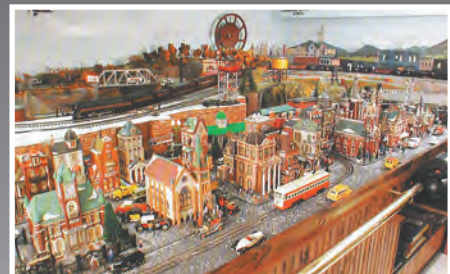
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# Scheduled Meets

## December 4, 2010

**KEY WEST, FL** – Model RR Club Toy & Collectibles Flea Market, Double Tree Grand Key Resort. 10a-6p, Adm: free. Info: Skip Fleet (305) 292-1009, keywesttrainman@aol.com.

## December 4-5, 2010

**TIMONUM, MD** – Greenberg Train & Toy Show, MD State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Rd. 10a-4p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Greenberg Shows, 120 Easy St., Carol Stream, IL 60188, (630) 279-4087, staff@greenbergshows.com, www.greenbergshows.com.

**TURLOCK, CA** – TTOS San Joaquin Valley Div. Toy Train Show, Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, 900 N. Broadway. Sat. 10a-5p, Sun. 10a-4p, Adm: \$5, families \$9. Info: Ed Cathcart, (209) 874-5544, edrailroadman@aol.com.

## December 5, 2010

**NEW HOPE, PA** – New Hope Eagle Fire Co. Train Show, Rte. 202 & Sagan Rd. 8a-12p, Adm: \$4, under 12 free w/adult. Info: Fred Dauncey, 1443 Leonard St., South Plainfield, NJ 07080, (908) 755-7989.

**RACINE, WI** – Tri City Train Show & Swap Meet, Roma Lodge, 7130 Spring St. 8a-12p, Adm: \$3, children free w/adult. Info: Ron Solberg, (262) 488-0193.

**WILLIAMSPORT, PA** – Whistle Stop Train Show, Woodward Fire Hall on Rte. 220. 9a-3p, Adm: \$3, under 12 free. Info: Jim Stabley, 709 Wildwood Blvd., Williamsport, PA 17701, (570) 326-4280.

**ELMONT, NY** – St. Vincent DePaul's Model Train & Toy Show, 1500 DePaul St. 10a-3p, Adm: \$8. Info: Frank DeOrio, (516) 352-2127.

**ALBANY, NY** – Update Train Assn. & The Hudson-Berkshire Div. NMRA Great Train Extravaganza, Empire State Conv. Center. 10a-4p, Adm: \$5, teens free w/adult. Info: www.gtealbany.com, (518) 371-9164, trains@gtealbany.com.

**FRANKLIN SQUARE, NY** – RR Lines Train & Toy Show, Plattduetsche Park Restaurant, 1132 Hempstead Turnpike. 8a-1p, Adm: \$5, under 12 free w/adult, seniors \$4. Info: John Koenig, (516) 486-6658, Jerry Nappi, (516) 384-4566.

## December 11, 2010

**ST. CLOUD, MN** – Granite City Train Show, National Guard Armory, 1710 Veteran's Dr. 9a-3:30p, Adm: \$5, 12 and under free. Info: (320) 255-0033, edwardolson@cloudnet.com, www.granitecitytrainshow.com.

**NASHVILLE, TN** – Dixie Division TCA 17th Annual Christmas Toy Train Show, State Fair Grounds, Agricultural Building. 9a-4p, Adm: \$7, 12 and under free. Info: James R. Tate, 212 Paul Dr., Juliet, TN 37122, (615) 758-6003, www.dixiedivisiontca.com.

**COLUMBUS, OH** – 48th Buckeye Model Train & RR Artifacts Show, Ohio Expo Center (Lausche Bldg.). 9a-4p, Adm: \$6, under 12 free. Info: Gordon Hartranft, (330) 755-1914, nliion02@aol.com, www.gserr.com.

## December 11-12, 2010

**OAKS, PA** – Greenberg Train & Toy Show, Philadelphia Expo Center, 100 Station Ave. 10a-4p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Greenberg Shows, 120 Easy St., Carol Stream, IL 60188, (630) 279-4087, staff@greenbergshows.com, www.greenbergshows.com.

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA** – Rappahannock Model RR Club Christmas Train Show & Sale, National Guard Armory, Armory Dr. 10a-5p, Adm: \$7, 6-14 \$2. Info: John McKeown, (540) 373-0911, www.rmrrclub.org.

## December 12, 2010

**HILLIARD, OH** – Buckeye Div. TTOS Christmas Model & Toy Train Event, Franklin County Fairgrounds, Norwich St. 11a-4p, Adm: \$3, family \$6, under 12 free. Info: Barry Reese, (614) 557-3241, 15760 Hawn Rd., Plain City, OH 43064, blreese44@msn.com.

**MASSILLON, OH** – C J Trains Winter Train & Toy Show, Massillon Knights of Columbus Hall, 988 Cherry Rd. NW. 10a-3p, Adm: \$4, 12 and under free, tables \$20. Info: Jon Ulbright, 941 Buchholz Dr., Wooster, OH 44691, (330) 262-7488 after 6p, cathijon@ssnet.com, www.cjtrains.com.

## December 13, 2010

**ANAHEIM, CA** – Southern Pacific Div. TTOS Train Meet, Brookhurst Community Center. 12p-3:30p, Adm: \$5. Info: Ken Flory, (714) 538-8218, www.ttos-sp.com.

## December 18, 2010

**LIMA, OH** – Train Show & Swap Meet, Allen County Fairgrounds, St. Rte. 309 E. 10a-3p, Adm: \$4, 12 and under free. Info: Arch Kious, 18656 St. Rte. 66, Delphos, OH 45833, (419) 523-5923.

## December 18-19, 2010

**RICHMOND, VA** – Greenberg Train & Toy Show, Richmond Raceway Complex, 600 E. Laburnum Ave. 10a-4p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Greenberg Shows, 120 Easy St., Carol Stream, IL 60188, (630) 279-4087, staff@greenbergshows.com, www.greenbergshows.com.

**TAMPA, FL** – 6th Annual Tampa Model Train Show, State Fairgrounds. Sat. 9a-5p, Sun. 10a-4p, Adm: \$8, under 12 free. Info: Charles Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213, rrshows@aol.com, www.gserr.com.

## December 19, 2010

**FARMINGVILLE, NY** – Central Operating Lines All Gauge Swap Meet, Bingo Hall, 1055 Portion Rd. 8:30a-2:30p, Adm: \$4, under 12 free w/adult. Info: Michael Iorio, 382 Holbrook Rd., Ronkonkoma, NY 11779, (516) 314-6499.

## January 2, 2011

**RACINE, WI** – Tri City Train Show & Swap Meet, Roma Lodge, 7130 Spring St. 8a-12p, Adm: \$3, children free w/adult. Info: Ron Solberg, (262) 488-0193.

**SHELTON, CT** – Classic Shows LLC Train & Toy Show, Courtyard by Marriott Shelton, 780 Bridgeport Ave. (Exit 12 off Rte. 8). 9a-2p, Adm: \$5, 12 and under free w/adult. Info: (230) 926-1327, www.ClassicShowsLLC.com.

## January 8, 2011

**KATY, TX** – TCA Lone Star Div. Annual Winter Toy Train Meet. Katy VFW Hall, George Bush Dr. & Ave. D. 10:30a-4p, Adm: \$6, family \$9, under 12 free. Info: Carl Olson, (281) 277-7630, Michelle Bradford, (713) 269-8360, www.tca-gulfcoastchapter.org.

## January 8-9, 2011

**YORK, PA** – Greenberg Train & Toy Show, Expo Center, 334 Carlisle Ave. 10a-4p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Greenberg Shows, (630) 279-4087, staff@greenbergshows.com, www.greenbergshows.com.

**DELAND, FL** – 34th Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Tommy Lawrence Bldg. Sat. 9a-4p, Sun. 10a-3:30p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Charles Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213, (703) 536-2954, www.gserr.com, rrshows@aol.com.

**HUDSON, NY** – Mountain Toy & RR Club Toy & Train Swap Meet, American Legion Hall, 7 Fairview Ave. 9a-2p, Adm: \$3. Info: George Washburn, 40 Hudson St., Hudson, NY 12534-2713, (518) 828-7902.

## January 9, 2011

**PHILADELPHIA, PA** – TCA Atlantic Div. Toy Train Meet, Plumbers Union Hall, 2791 Southampton Rd. 10a-1p, Adm: \$5, spouse and family free. Info: Bob Lubonski, 8 Pheasant Dr., Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054, (856) 608-9265.

## January 15, 2011

**ATLANTA, GA** – 40th Model Train & Railroadiana Show, North Atlanta Trade Center, 1700 Jeurgens Ct. 9a-5p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Charles Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213, (703) 536-2954, www.gserr.com, rrshows@aol.com.

## January 15-16, 2011

**SOMERSET, NJ** – Greenberg Train & Toy Show, Garden State Exhibit Center, 50 Atrium Dr. 10a-4p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Greenberg Shows, 120 Easy St., Carol Stream, IL 60188, (630) 279-4087, staff@greenbergshows.com, www.greenbergshows.com.

## January 16, 2011

**FARMINGVILLE, NY** – Central Operating Lines All Gauge Swap Meet, Bingo Hall, 1055 Portion Rd. 8:30a-2:30p, Adm: \$4, under 12 free w/adult. Info: Michael Iorio, 382 Holbrook Rd., Ronkonkoma, NY 11779, (516) 314-6499.

**TROY, MI** – 7th Annual Troy Train Show, Athens High School, 4333 John Rd. 10a-3p, Adm: \$3, 12 and under free. Info: Frank E. Lams, (248) 823-4052, www.troytrainshow.org.

**DAYTON, OH** – All Trains Swap Meet, Montgomery Co. Fairgrounds, 1043 S. Main (St. Rte. 48). 10a-3p, Adm: \$5, under 12 free. Free tables for all RR Clubs and Historic RR Org. Info: Larry Zeller, 1215 Camaro Court, Piqua, OH 45356-9793, (937) 773-7186.

**NEW BERLIN, WI** – Lionel RR Club Trains & Collectibles All Gauge Swap Meet, Entertainment Center, 16000 W. Cleveland Ave. 8a-12p, Adm: \$4, under 13 free w/adult. Info: Art Oseland, (414) 764-5375.

## January 22-23, 2011

**MONROEVILLE, PA** – Greenberg Train & Toy Show, Convention Center, 135 Mall Blvd. 10a-4p, Adm: \$7, under 12 free. Info: Greenberg Shows, 120 Easy St., Carol Stream, IL 60188, (630) 279-4087, staff@greenbergshows.com, www.greenbergshows.com.

## January 29, 2011

**LA CROSSE, WI** – 20th Annual Great Tri-State Rail Sale, Show, and Swap Meet. La Crosse Center, Second and Pearl Sts. 9a-3p, Adm: \$5, under 12 free. Info: 4000 Foundation, P.O. Box 3411, La Crosse, WI 54602, (608) 781-9383.

**TAMPA BAY, FL** – TCA Train Show, Minn Reg Building, 6340 126th Ave. 11a-4p, Adm: \$5, under 12 free. Info: Charlie Anyan, (727) 345-0288, canyan1@tampabay.rr.com.

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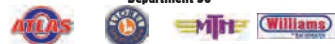
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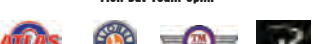
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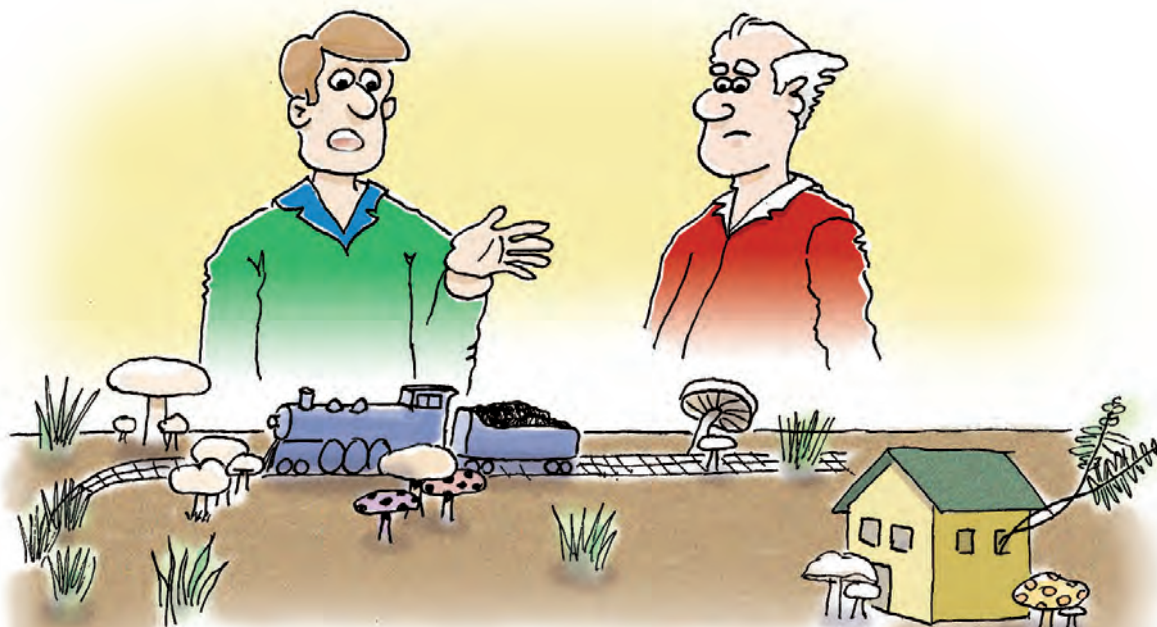
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