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Favorite Prototype**

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Little Things
Make Great Scenes**

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New RS3 Diesel**

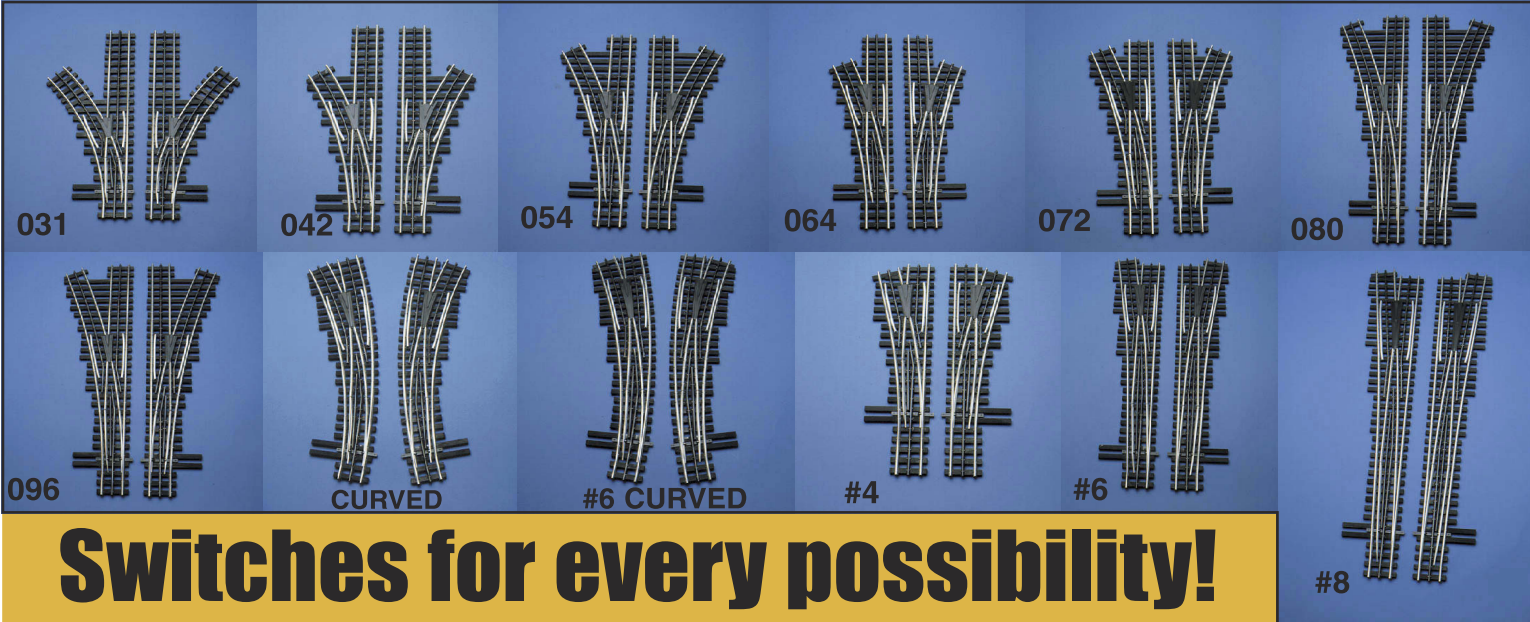
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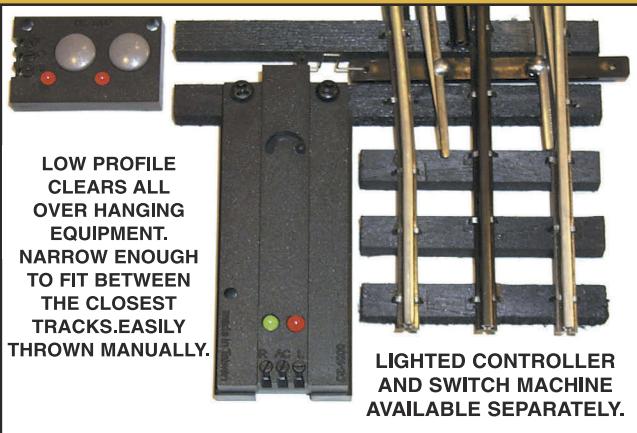
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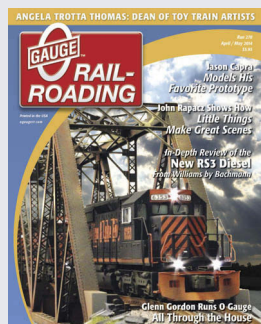
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ON THE COVER

Jason Capra's favorite prototype railroad is the Wheeling & Lake Erie (W&LE), which was founded in 1871 to provide a rail connection between Wheeling, West Virginia, coal fields and Lake Erie port cities and facilities. Still serving the area today, the W&LE system is now a combination of the original W&LE, the Pittsburgh & West Virginia, and the Akron, Canton & Youngstown lines. In this cover photo taken by Jason, EMD SD40-2 cab number 6353, an MTH Premier model, crosses Jamestown Viaduct with a coal drag.



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Editor's Corner

Allan Miller



Stop, Look, and Listen

It's probably safe to say that most of us in the hobby, along with many others who are simply fascinated by trains and rail-roading, regularly attend train meets, shows, and public open houses to see what devoted model railroading hobbyists are accomplishing. I know I certainly enjoy visiting these various venues, particularly if they are reasonably close by, and picking up a few modeling tips based on what I observe. But in addition to *stopping* by these various places and *looking* at the layout and the trains, I also very much enjoy *listening* to the comments made by other visitors.

Late last year, I took advantage of an overcast and chilly late fall day to pay a visit to the Youngstown Model Railroad Association's annual open house. This event is held over several weekends in the pre-Christmas season, and I make it a point to attend every year, if at all possible, in order to support the group's efforts and to enjoy the very large HO and O scale layouts, which are located on separate floors in what formerly was a church.

The approximately 50' x 60' 2-rail O scale layout is situated in what used to be the sanctuary, and it is quite an extensive and ever-growing enterprise in size and scope. You'll find a more detailed account of the club's O scale pike in Run 235 (April/May 2009), where a feature about the Youngstown Model Railroad Association's

O scale operation was provided by a dear friend, the late Jim Marter. Jim was an active member of the YMRA, and he is still fondly remembered by fellow club members who worked closely with him over a good many years. Most significantly, his creative handiwork remains on the layout for all to enjoy for years to come.



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There are always a variety of new additions to the O scale layout—and to the HO layout as well—to study and admire each year. But during my most recent visit, I decided to devote most of my time there listening in on comments made by members of the general public who packed the place during the time I was on hand. So, after devouring a hot dog obtained from the refreshment concession, and subsequently enjoying a bag of popcorn while examining the latest additions, I just stood by in various locations around the layout's perimeter to see what visitors were most attracted to.

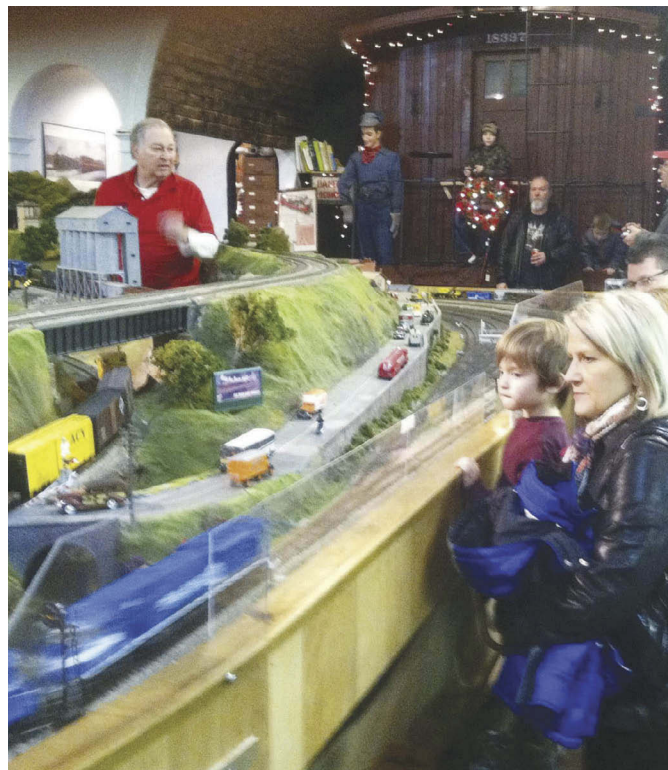
What initially attracted my attention and ultimately inspired this column was the number of families in attendance. The place was packed with mothers with their children, fathers with their children, mothers and fathers with their children, and grandparents with their grandchildren in similar pairings. The smaller tykes often rode on Dad's shoulders for a better view or were hoisted up by Mom for a look-see, while taller kids pressed their faces to the layout's edge to examine the trains up close or to study a trackside scene.

All the comments I overheard were uniformly positive—a good thing for the YMRA and for the hobby as a whole. Grandparents, in particular, would often explain what their offspring (adult and child alike) were seeing, with references frequently enough being made to how they remembered seeing a steam locomotive or early diesel “just like that one” plying the rails in the Youngstown area or in nearby Pennsylvania.

For their part, the young folks seemed to be equally attracted to the right-of-way and trackside details they observed, including such things as a hobo camp, imposing bridges and trestles, various structures, vehicles and figures, and even such seemingly ordinary or commonplace features as the various types of trees populating a scene. It was great to hear a young lad call to his brother to “take a look at this,” or, especially, to ask Dad or Mom about getting a train “like that one” so he could have some rail-roading fun at home. It is from such childhood fascinations—and the memories thus created—that future participants in our great hobby are formed.

I only had my cell phone with me at the time (my bad!) but I did manage to capture a couple of images of just such interaction between adults and the youngsters that accompanied them. Two examples are displayed here.

Public events like this, where what the hobby can accomplish is so strongly demonstrated, are key to keeping this hobby in the forefront of many imaginative minds, young and old alike. Next time you are at such an event, I encourage you to take a bit of time to just listen to what is said by those who may not be active in our hobby, yet, but who are certainly captivated by what it offers. 



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Lionel LLC Releases Legacy Protocol



Lionel LLC announced on January 14, 2014, it will make public its Legacy command protocol and open its WiFi-to-model-railroad interface to help grow the hobby by allowing a single remote to control locomotives from all manufacturers.

This system integrates mobile devices and opens access to independent developers of model train control systems.

Industry hobbyists have long wanted a universal remote that integrates and controls model railroad layouts. Lionel is taking the first step towards realizing this goal via a user's smart device and the Lionel WiFi adapter. The Lionel Layout Control System (LCS) WiFi creates a common access point with a royalty-free protocol designed for model railroading. Any manufacturer can use LCS WiFi to support its unique locomotive command sets. Within this framework, hobbyists will be able to control locomotives from different manufacturers seamlessly from one app running on a smart phone or tablet.

Lionel Chief Technology Officer Jon Zahornacky stated, "To keep up with today's mobile-centric landscape, unified control from a smart phone or tablet is critical in growing the hobby of model railroading. Publishing our WiFi protocol gives the hobby a royalty-free path to controlling any manufacturer's model trains from smart devices using our WiFi adapter."

Lionel is working closely with LCS partners to develop their own apps that connect to the Lionel WiFi interface. The first announced such product is BlueTrain, developed by Bob Krivacic, a longtime innovator in the model railroad industry. The BlueTrain app runs on Android devices, connects to LCS WiFi, runs Lionel locomotives, and can be used simultaneously with any other LCS-compatible controller.

Bob Krivacic said, "By opening the Legacy protocol, Lionel is allowing other manufacturers' products to control Lionel trains. It would be great to see other manufacturers follow suit and begin sharing their own proprietary protocols. Everyone involved in the model railroad world stands to benefit."

The Legacy command specification can be downloaded from www.lionel.com/lcs. The WiFi specification is available through the LCS partner program.



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Product Announcements

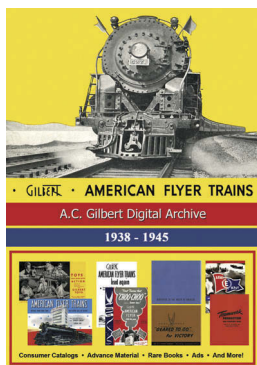


Round Roofs Rule

Add excitement to your fallen flags trains with this CMST&P (Milwaukee Road) round roof boxcar offered by the Milwaukee Lionel Railroad Club. Originally built in 1933 for the Pennsylvania Railroad, the distinctive car design with a single door was popular with a number of other roads, and many were manufactured through the 1960s. This O gauge model, developed in association with the Milwaukee Road archives, is being manufactured by Lionel. The approximately 11-1/4" car has die-cast sprung metal trucks, magnetic operating couplers, prototypical graphics, and a metal brake wheel. Minimum O31 curve. The limited-edition cars cost \$69.95 each, with \$10.00 shipping for the first car and \$5.00 per additional car. Wisconsin orders add 5.1% sales tax (on car plus shipping). Make mail order payable to Milwaukee Lionel Railroad Club, 2721 W. Calhoun Rd., New Berlin, WI 53146, or order online at milw-lrrc.com.

Gilbert Made O Gauge, Too

Mention A. C. Gilbert, and most model railroaders immediately think of Gilbert's postwar, 2-rail, S gauge trains. But during the period 1938 to 1945 when W. O. Coleman and A. C. Gilbert joined forces to continue the "Chicago era" of American Flyer trains, O gauge was part of the lineup. The Chicago-era O gauge trains evolved to 3/16" O gauge trains, which paved the way for the eventual changeover to S gauge trains. Now, HSL with the help of noted collector L. Andrew Jugle and his extensive collection of Gilbert American Flyer paper offers the *A.C. Gilbert Digital Archive, 1938-1945*. This comprehensive CD is compatible with Mac and MS-Windows systems and includes 13 consumer catalogs, folders, and flyers from the period. Also included are advance and dealer catalogs and price sheets, Hall of Science publications, Gilbert war books, the *Roar of the Rails*, and bonus material that includes over 50 ads. Available directly from Hybrid Systems Ltd., 200 University Park Dr., Edwardsville, IL 62025, www.hslinc.com, 800-779-2802.



Second Run NKP TOFC

Stockyard Express has commissioned a second run of Nickel Plate Road trailer-on-flatcars with three new flatcar numbers. The flatcars and trailers for this TOFC are produced exclusively for Stockyard Express by Weaver Models. These TOFCs sell for \$60.00 each, or the full set of three cars with different numbers is available for \$175.00. For full details, visit the Stockyard Express website at www.stockyardexpress.com or call 440-774-2131. Stockyard Express, 49293 Plate Rd., Oberlin, OH 44074.

Urban Architecture

Korber Models introduces two unique and simple-to-build kits of background building structures in 1:48 scale. The Model 700 Background Apartment Building, which sells for \$65.00, packs great detail into a compact space representing the type of multistory brick buildings that have dotted the landscape dating back to the steam era of railroading. The kit features over 50 windows, super-detailed scale fire escapes, gutters and downspouts, cement foundation, and stair details in a compact 3"x 13" footprint rising 12" tall. Also new is the Model 702 Background Tall City Building that sells for \$115.00 and brings a towering 32" high presence while occupying a mere 1"x 11" footprint. This 13-story building includes crisp window and door details, complete three-dimensional "limestone" walls, and striking arched two-story windows on the lower level. Detailed cornices are on multiple levels of the structure. These kits and the full line of Korber Models are Made in America and can be found at www.korbermodels.com and leading hobby retailers.



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Latest NLOE Commemorative Car

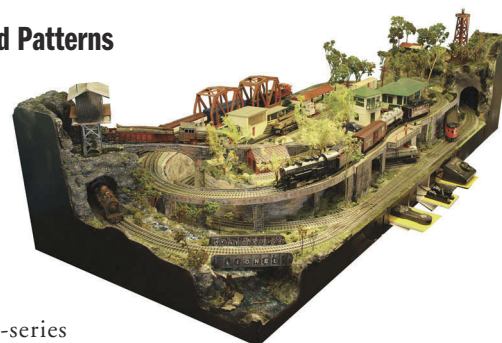
The Nassau Lionel Operating Engineers (NLOE) is taking orders for the Long Island Railroad double-sheathed box-car, which is the club's latest offering in its commemorative car program. The Lionel Standard O car will be painted



Tuscan with a black roof and doors and set off by white lettering. Graphics may differ slightly from the photo. The car will feature die-cast metal sprung trucks, operating couplers, and underframe details. Orders must be received by April 30, 2014, with estimated delivery in December. Cost is \$67.00 each plus shipping (and sales tax if appropriate). Full details are available at www.nloe.org. Purchasers will automatically be enrolled as Associate Members of the NLOE. Make check or money order payable in U.S. funds to NLOE and mail to Nassau Lionel Operating Engineers, P.O. Box 343, Levittown, NY 11756.

Layout Construction Plans and Patterns

In 2012, Alley Friends Architects introduced the first complete layout plan and pattern system for O gauge trains, the RRinaBox 500 series that uses MTH track. The new L-600 series uses Lionel FasTrack geometry. As with the original 500 series, the L-600-series patterns are mounted to customer-supplied foam-core board, cut along preexisting lines, and then assembled to build a basic structure.



No wood or woodworking tools are required, and the modular construction allows for nesting and easy storage. Patterns come with a one-hour DVD and a 72-page illustrated handbook that offers eight different track plans and some creative scenic tips. The RRinaBox L-600 series uses all the O36 track from a Lionel train set plus customer-supplied O31 track for branch lines and O48 track for sweeping S curves. Pictured is the L-605 with A, B, and C modules that measure 3-1/2' x 8'. The full-size patterns for this layout sell for \$199.95 plus shipping. RRinaBox, 309 N. Front St., Philadelphia, PA 19106; 215-922-3554. Visit www.rrinaBox.com for full details.

Oil on the Roll

Prototypes for the Quaker State single-dome tank car from Williams by Bachmann transported liquids such as Quaker State motor oil in bulk quantities from refiner to distributor in the mid-



20th century. This scale-dimensioned car runs on O27 or wider 3-rail curves and features a plastic body and frame, formed wire handrails, die-cast trucks with metal wheels, operating die-cast knuckle couplers, and prototypical graphics. MSRP for stock number 48108 is \$59.95. Order the car directly from Williams by Bachmann at www.bachmanntrains.com or visit your Williams by Bachmann dealer.

Down East Pacific

New from Weaver Models is a 1:48 scale

model of the Boston & Maine

P4 Pacific available with two different cab

numbers. This limited-edition brass locomotive is offered in versions for 3-rail or 2-rail AC operation with Lionel-licensed TMCC and RailSounds, Electric RR Cruise Commander, TA Studios fan-driven smoke unit, and command-operated rear coupler.

A version for 2-rail DC operation with no command or sound is also available.

Minimum curves are O54 for 3-rail or 36" radius for 2-rail. All versions have a

DC can motor with a flywheel, sprung drivers, and real coal in the tender. Suggested

retail price for 3-rail and 2-rail AC units is \$1,249.00; 2-rail DC is \$1,199.00.

This engine is available as stock number G1754 from Weaver Models dealers or

directly from Weaver Models at 315 Point Township Dr., Northumberland, PA 17857;

570-473-9434; www.weavermodels.com.



Bombs Away!

New from R. Bishop ModelCrafters is a WWII U.S.

Army outside-braced ammo boxcar with a highly detailed

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crates, and ammo boxes with rope handles. The boxcar features

die-cast sprung trucks, authentic markings, and custom weathering. Model number SC16US is 3-rail O

gauge and sells for \$395.00 plus \$15.00 shipping and insurance. An optional accessory

item is also available consisting of a 1:48 scale all-metal U.S. Army forklift truck

with a soldier driver figure and ammo cases on the forklift. The ammo cases can be

positioned on the forklift. Price is \$125.00 when sold with ammo car and \$155.00

plus \$5.00 shipping when sold separately. See more photos at www.modelcrafters.com

and www.flickr.com/photos/modelcrafters. Made exclusively by Ramesh Bishop,

ModelCrafters, P.O. Box 2325, Jenkintown, PA 19046. To order, call 802-310-6815

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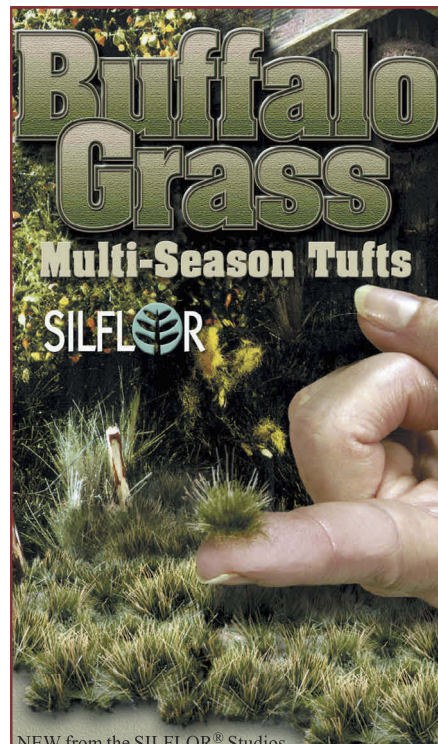
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liveries. The 3-rail versions are \$44.95, and 2-rail models are \$49.95. To order, call

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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.

Two Lines Running

Part of Don McCuaig's new Milwaukee Road layout is up and running with action on the main line and electric short line. This is the first section Don finished. Much of the mountain area extends from the floor to over 6' high. Don says he still has more work to do blackening all the overhead wire and weathering the poles and track on the mining line.



Americana Along the Right-of-Way

This nicely detailed farm windmill and water tank are on Matt Bushong's 3-rail Brisbane & Bushong Railroad in Brisbane, California. Matt used an old Plasticville windmill kit that he built, modified, painted, and weathered. The water tank was custom-built for Matt by master model maker Alan Graziano, who contributes regularly to the OGR On-Line Forum.

Run Through

Conrail 6594, a C30-7A, runs a coal train through the hills of West Woronoco on the way to the O'Neil Power Station. This scene is on a corner module that Dan Bigda is putting together in his model shop. When completed, the module will be added to Dan's 2-rail O scale Hampden Terminal Railroad layout, which was the cover feature of Run 268, our January issue.



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Product Reviews



Williams by Bachmann Alco RS3

Review and Photos by George Brown



For fans of technically basic Williams by Bachmann diesel locomotives, the new RS3 is a quantum leap forward for scale realism. In fact, it's in the same handsome class as the WbB GP30 I reviewed a year ago in Run 263, April/May 2013, which was a 3-rail O scale model that opened new ground for Williams by Bachmann. To get ahead of myself for a moment, the dark olive and tan Seaboard RS3 sitting on my desk is drop-dead gorgeous!

So how does it run? I quickly confirmed that the new RS3 can easily serve as the quintessential road switcher on just about any conventional-controlled 3-rail O gauge pike with O31 or wider curves. I'll get deeper into that topic later.

Prototype Notes

As a road switcher, a concept that Alco turned into reality with its RS1 before WWII, real RS3s were versatile locomotives for their owners. Regardless of whether they were working in yards, moving cars in and out of industrial spurs, or hauling trains on branch or main lines, these engines were in their element.

The RS3 was the third release of four-axle road switchers from Alco with over 1,300 built for North American railroads between 1950 and 1956. As with the preceding RS2 of 1946, the RS3 used the turbocharged 4-stroke V-12 Alco 244 prime mover with General Electric supplying the main generator and traction motors. Generally, the RS3 was run with its long hood forward as a safeguard for the crew in case of a frontal collision.

By the way, for points in a future session of railroad trivia, the model numbers for Alco diesel prime movers can appear rather cryptic, at least on the surface. To decode them, the first digit indicated the company's specification for the bore and stroke of the engine, with the last two digits identifying the year the design was approved for preproduction testing. In the case of the 244, the 2 specifies a 9"x 10-1/2" cylinder bore and stroke, and the approval year was 1944. The later 251 had the same bore and stroke and was approved in 1951.

The WbB model of the RS3 represents an early production unit with its exhaust stack oriented longitudinally on the left side of the long hood. This position of the stack indicated an air-cooled turbocharger. On later RS3s, the turbocharger was water-cooled with the exhaust stack oriented across the long hood near its centerline.

Construction and Features

No matter how it's viewed, the new RS3 is a handsome model of a historic locomotive. At 1:48 scale, the model's dimensions are reasonably close to those of the real engine. Best of all, gone is the bulletproof but unsophisticated frame of earlier Williams road switchers, which were made with handrails stamped from the same flat sheet of steel and bent into a vertical position.

According to Larry Harrington of Williams by Bachmann, the RS3 used the tooling originally developed by the now-defunct K-Line. The model follows the widely used architecture for today's O gauge diesel locomotives where the stamped steel frame is out of sight beneath a detailed ABS body. This frame carries the motors, die-cast trucks and pilots, printed circuit boards for the reverse unit electronics and sound generator, and underframe equipment such as the fuel tank and air reservoirs. The speaker for the sounds rides inside the fuel tank.

As with all WbB locomotives, the RS3 is conventionally controlled and as such it uses varying voltage from an AC transformer to control its speed and direction. The 6-amp electronic reverse unit rectifies and filters the AC voltage picked up from the track to the DC power required by the motors. In fact, the instruction sheet included with the model specifies an AC transformer capable of a minimum output of 80 watts at 18 volts.

On top of the frame are the body and cab, nonslip walkways, cooling louvers and shutters, fan housing, exhaust stack, headlight and number board housings, prime mover covers, and so forth. Assembled to the body molding are the separate stamped metal handrail stanchions with the requisite handrails formed from the correct size of wire. Grab irons are also formed from wire and are inserted into the body at molded-in tabs representing the flanges and bolts of the real





equipment. Two see-through grilles are molded into the cover over the prime mover with an electronic board visible inside. I don't know if these open grilles were designed as vents to allow heat generated by the board out of the body shell, but that's what they do.

On the topic of see-through grilles, the one for the radiator fan is perforated, and when viewed in the right light, stationary fan blades are visible inside. I also discovered the crew doors for the cab swing open, and the side windows slide open a short way. Travel of these windows is limited because they hit the end walls of the cab.

At each end of the RS3 is a thumbtack style of operating tinplate coupler. On our evaluation unit, these couplers stayed closed even with a heavy train in tow. Also on each end, the train and MU lines are cast in the rugged pilots. As with older Williams by Bachmann or even the preceding Williams locomotives, these pilots as well as the trucks and their side frames will most likely resist structural damage from rough handling or careless storage. They're about as bulletproof as components of a model locomotive can get.

Details on the truck side frames are excellent, and I had to look closely to determine they were all part of the casting and not separately applied, especially the brake cylinders and lines. Two Phillips head screws hold each side frame to its truck block and are

easily accessible with the engine turned upside down. Should a traction tire need replacing, easy removal of the side frame makes the task a simple one. Additionally, either truck can be easily disassembled for replacement of a damaged wheelset or drive gear.

Between the trucks, the die-cast fuel tank appears to be reasonably close to scale size instead of grossly undersized as used to be common on models designed for operation on O31 curves. Of course, this casting gives the engine much of the weight needed for traction between the wheels and the rails. On the topic of traction, one unusual feature on the RS3 is the placement of the two traction tires on each truck. One tire is on one side of the front wheelset while the other tire is on the opposite side of the rear wheelset.

The overall satin finish on our sample RS3 was exquisite.

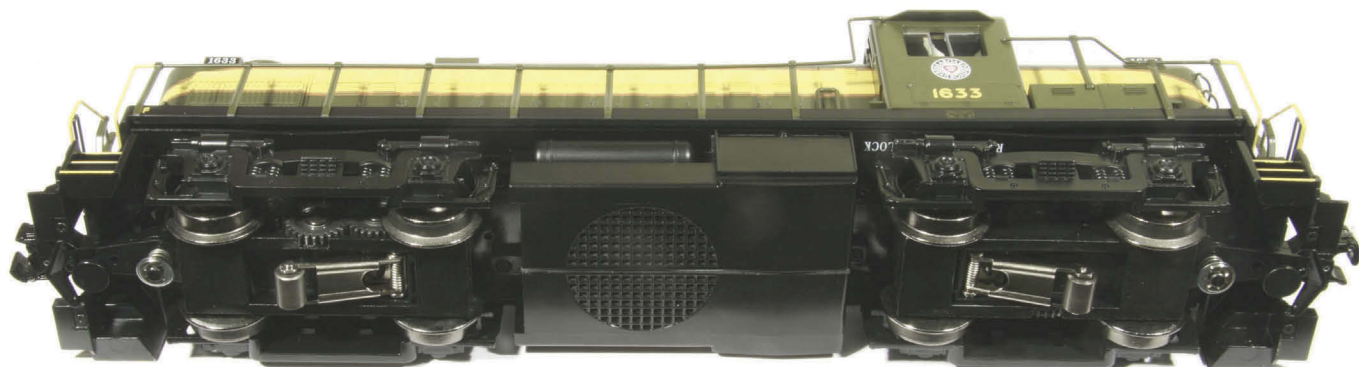
I found no overspray or paint buildup anywhere on the body. Application of the brown pin-stripes above and below the tan side stripe was precise, even where the pin-stripes overlaid the louvers and radiator shutters. I especially liked the aluminum-colored outline of the windows on both ends of the cab and on the edges of the sliding windows. On the truck side frames, the black paint seemed moderately heavy but did not mute any of the cast-in details such as the roller-bearing caps.

In addition to the Seaboard color scheme, this first release of the WbB RS3 is also offered in Canadian National, Rock Island, and Pennsylvania liveries.

At Trackside

At power-up, the RS3 starts and runs forward with the traditional WbB reverse unit sequence of forward, neutral, reverse, neutral, forward. Regarding direction changes, I especially like the directional headlights with separately illuminated number boards. In neutral, both headlights are dark, but the number boards remain lit. The cab is not illuminated.

As I've seen with previous releases of WbB diesels, our sample RS3 was a smooth runner; it was also a spirited speedster. Even with a moderately heavy train coupled to the engine, it proved



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Williams by Bachmann RS3 Features and Details

- Molded ABS body on stamped steel frame
- Die-cast side frames, pilots, and fuel tank
- Wire handrails with stamped steel stanchions
- Wire grab irons
- Glazed windows
- Opening cab doors and side windows
- Crew figures
- Separately applied hand brake, windshield wipers, and horns
- Working drop-down steps
- Die-cast operating couplers
- Dual DC can motors with flywheels
- Metal drive gears
- Die-cast truck blocks with bronze axle bushings
- Four traction tires
- 6-amp electronic reverse unit with direction lockout
- True Blast Plus 16-bit digital sound:
 - Alco diesel prime mover
 - Horn
 - Bell
- Directional LED headlights
- Illuminated number boards
- Set of four spare traction tires

capable of running deep into triple-digit scale speeds with a lot of throttle still available. As to how fast it would go, I didn't explore that end of the model's performance envelope because I felt it would more than likely leave the rails in curves, and that was on my O72 main line.

The RS3 started smoothly with the initial 5 volts of chopped sine wave power from my Lionel ZW-L, although it accelerated briskly as I advanced the throttle lever. In switching service, the RS3 tracked my Atlas O72 and O36 turnouts with the aplomb of a sure-footed mule, but one that was in a hurry to get the job done.

The True Blast Plus sounds, which started almost simultaneously with the RS3's movement, were definitely representative of an Alco prime mover. Revs increased or decreased in response to my raising or lowering the track voltage. With the engine stationary in neutral, I counted eight run levels. For the most part, I ran the RS3 with its various trains in tow at a realistic 35 to 40 scale mph. At the fairly low voltages that produced these speeds, the rev sounds were at idle or "run 1" at most. If the Alco was pulling an extremely heavy train up a long, steep grade, I'm sure the rev levels would increase depending on the throttle setting and the resulting track voltage.

However, the intensity of the sounds is fixed and cannot be turned down or shut off. If the RS3 were mine, I'd probably install an on-off switch so I could control the power to the sound board at will.

Williams by Bachmann RS3 Performance

(sound: on)

Length: 14-1/4" over couplers
13-1/2" between end sills

Distance Between Locomotive Pickup Rollers: 8-1/2"

Weight on Driving Wheels: 3 lbs, 15 oz

Tractive Effort: 2 lbs, 1 oz @ 12.2 VAC, 6.2 A, 74 W

Minimum Sustained Speed:

12 scale mph @ 5.6 VAC, 1.9 A, 11 W

Maximum Tested Speed:

60 scale mph @ 8.6 VAC, 2.1 A, 18 W

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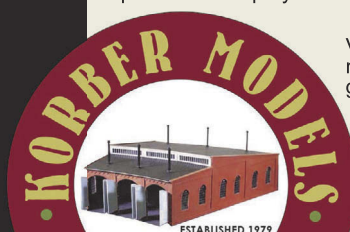
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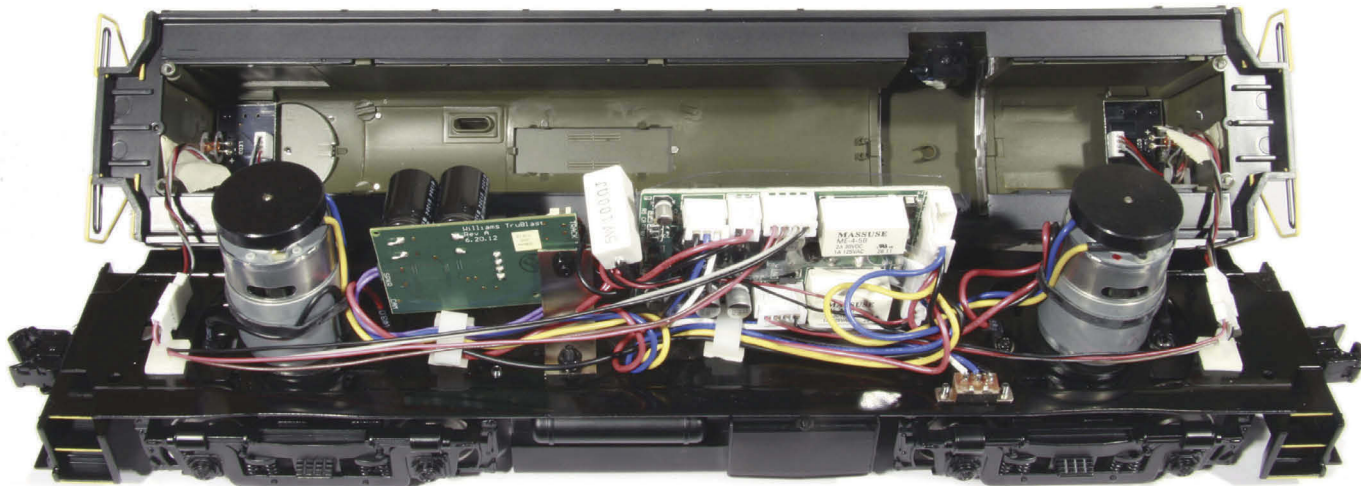
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As I reported in my review of the WbB GP30, the True Blast Plus sound board produces a single blast of the horn that lasts about a second. With a little finesse on the transformer's horn button, the horn's sound can be modulated. Of course, the bell sound is...well, like a bell.

As to the RS3's tractive effort, it's excellent especially considering the engine's modest weight. One of the trains I coupled to the Seaboard road switcher was extremely heavy with 25 weighted scale steam-era freight cars. A slow and realistic start was the only noticeable sign that the train was a hard pull—no wheel slip, no hesitation, just pull.

Running the RS3 at the head of a three-engine consist was a bunch of fun, and yes, the other two were WbB diesels with the same gearing and electronic reverse units.

At the End of the Run

When I reviewed the WbB GP30 last year, I thought it would be a tough act to follow. Well, the RS3 not only followed the Geep with panache; it came out on top. As to price, I've seen the new WbB RS3 quoted in the \$250 range from large mail order dealers. From my viewpoint, this makes the 1:48 scale Alco road switcher a great buy for the conventional operator in today's 3-rail O gauge marketplace. 

23004 Seaboard RS3 #1633

Suggested retail price: \$429.95 at Williams by Bachmann dealers

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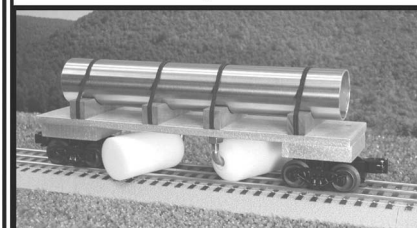
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Lionel Legacy N&W Class Y3 2-8-8-2

Review and Photos by George Brown



Although the Norfolk & Western has never ranked among my favorite railroads, its massive 2-8-8-2 Y-class compound mallets have fascinated me for years. So when offered the opportunity to review Lionel's latest rendition of the Y3 with Legacy control, Odyssey II, and Legacy RailSounds, I jumped on it.

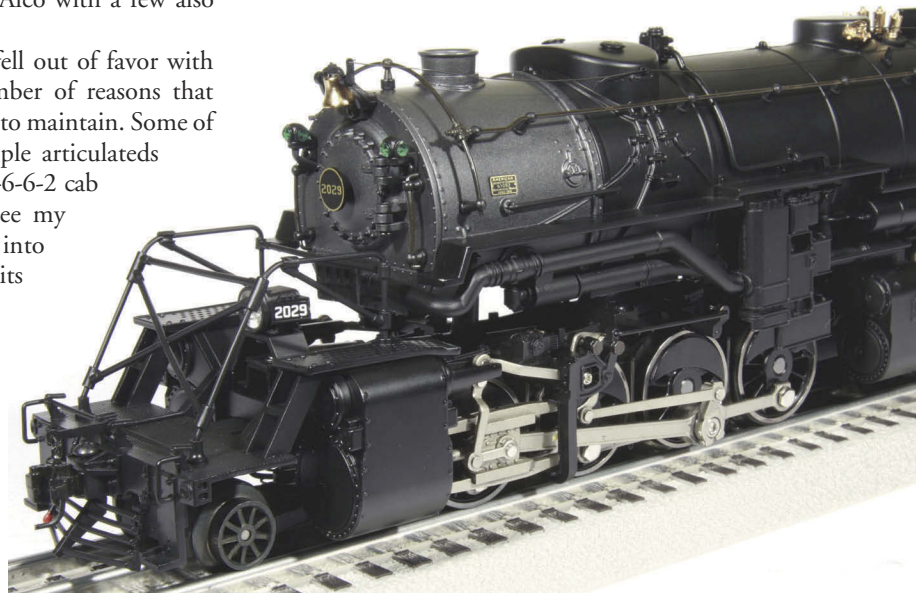
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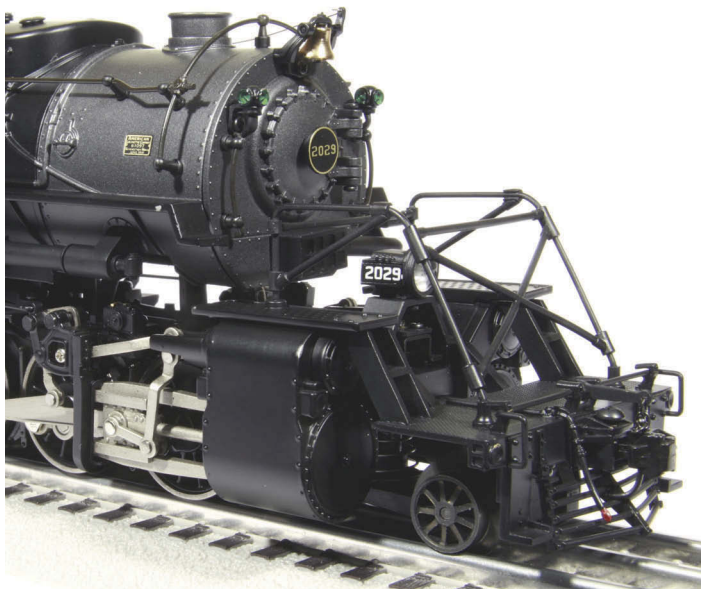
A product of the WWI-era United States Railroad Administration design committee, the real USRA heavy 2-8-8-2 was essentially designed using blueprints of the N&W Y2. As I understand from several sources, 80 of the original USRA 2-8-8-2s were erected in 1918 and 1919 chiefly by Alco with a few also from Baldwin.

By the mid-1930s, compound mallets fell out of favor with most North American railroads for a number of reasons that included being inherently slow and complex to maintain. Some of these locomotives were converted into simple articulateds with the SP rework of its MM-2 class of 4-6-6-2 cab forwards into its AM-2s as one example (see my review in Run 231). Others were rebuilt into different types such as the GN rebuild of its 2-6-8-0s into 2-8-2s (see Runs 254 and 269), and the remaining mallets were scrapped. However, on the N&W with its heavy coal trains and mountain grades with continuous curves, compound mallets served well to the end of steam operations. The company even built new mallets in its Roanoke shops with the last and best being the often-modeled Y6b.

During WWII when construction of new locomotives was restricted, the N&W sold eight of its surplus Y3s to the AT&SF, six to the PRR, and five to the UP. When the war ended, the AT&SF scrapped one of its former Y3s and sold the other seven to the VGN. The rest of the expatriate Y3s were scrapped.

According to Lionel, its model depicts how the real Y3s looked after a major mechanical and cosmetic change in the late 1920s. At that time, a Worthington BL feedwater heater was added onto the left side of the boiler, and the air compressors were moved from the smokebox front to the right side of the boiler for balance. Additionally, the four-axle USRA tender was replaced with a six-axle N&W standard tender.





Construction and Features

The de facto standard construction for mass-produced 3-rail O gauge locomotives is die-cast, and the Y3 is no exception. From the cast pilot with its scale coupler to the back of the tender with its oversized tinplate style of ElectroCoupler, the major components are die-cast with details fabricated from wire or small separately assembled castings. Major components include the massive boiler with cast-in domes and sand pipes, front and rear engine frames with separate cylinders and valve gear hangers, cab, and tender body. Drivers are cast with pressed-on steel rims, while the pilot and trailing truck wheels have prototypical spokes. Rear drivers on both engines have today's requisite rubber tires mounted in grooves on the rims, which significantly enhance the Y3's pulling power.

Each engine frame is a monolithic casting with bronze bearings for each axle pressed into the frame. This design dates back to the prewar Lionel Corporation and is relatively inexpensive to build compared to other designs within today's model railroad industry. However, special tools or excellent mechanical skills are required should a driving wheel, axle, or gear need replacement. Speaking of the drive mechanism, all 16 drivers are powered. A large can motor provides the mechanical drive directly to the rear engine via a gearbox on the leading driver axle. The side rods transfer the mechanical motion from the lead drivers to the other three sets of drivers.

An engineering plastic universal joint between the rear and front engine couples the mechanical power from the rear engine's gearbox to a worm and gear for the front engine's main drivers. Again, the side rods turn the other three axles on that engine. I'll discuss more about the rods later in this review.

Inside the boiler are the Legacy command receiver and motor driver electronics plus the motor-driven synchronized smoke unit. O gauge railroaders who like lots of smoke from an exhaust stack will likely find the Y3 pleasing. On the other side of that Bitcoin, the amount of smoke can be reduced in steps from full down to zero, which is how I ran the big N&W

Lionel Y3 2-8-8-2 Features and Details

- 072 minimum curve
- Legacy command control and RailSounds
- Odyssey II Speed Control
- Can motor with flywheel
- Metal drive gears
- Fan-driven smoke unit with adjustable output
- LED headlight and classification lamps
- Legible builder's plates
- Pewter-toned side rods and valve gear
- Separate brake shoe hangers for drivers
- Wire handrails, coupler cut levers, and whistle lanyard
- Wire and cast air and steam pipes
- Separate die-cast steam, water, and air appliances
- Brass-colored separate whistle, pop-off valves, and swinging bell
- Hand-painted valve handles
- Detailed boiler backhead with painted dial faces
- Firebox flickering glow
- Ashpan glow fluctuates according to locomotive speed
- Opening cab roof vents
- Cab illuminated while locomotive stopped
- Clear glazing in cab windows
- Illuminated doghouse with crew figure inside
- Opening water hatches cover several controls
- Directional backup light
- Command-operated ElectroCoupler
- Infrared data transmitter under tender truck





mallet—with a really clean, zero-emission stack. Although a smokeless stack is not true to prototype, it saved on our winter-time energy bill because I didn't have to open my train room windows to vent the white vapor outside.

On the outside of the boiler are the large and small details shown in the photos. One detail shown but not legible in the photo is the brass and black builder's plate on each side of the boiler. This plate states "American Locomotive Company 60197 Schenectady Works June 1919." At the front of the boiler is an opening smokebox door with a magnetic latch holding it shut under all operating conditions.

A flat layer of real coal rides in the tender bunker, which is my only criticism of the Y3. I liked the real coal, but a mounded pile would have been more realistic with only a minor increase in manufacturing cost, if at all.

The die-cast side frames on the tender trucks have excellent relief and contain bronze bearings for each of the needle-point tender axles. All 12 of the fast-angle wheels, a design pioneered by Lionel years ago, are flanged. When moving just the tender along the rails using our calibrated digital force meter, I saw only a minor increase in drag as the tender rolled from straight track into the Y3's recommended O72 minimum curve.

Not visible in the photos of the tender is a small residual pile of coal cast into the walkway at the foot of the coal bunker doors. Inside the tender are a command receiver, the Legacy RailSounds system with dual enclosed-back speakers, and the driver electronics for the coil-operated coupler and backup light. As with all of the command-controlled steam locomotives from Lionel, infrared transceivers on the drawbar transfer control signals between the sound system in the tender and the motor driver in the locomotive. These control signals synchronize the steam exhaust chuff sounds to the motion of the drivers.

I can't fault the finish and decoration on our evaluation sample of the Y3 as they were excellent. Lionel also released models of the USRA 2-8-8-2 lettered for the Pennsylvania, Santa Fe, Union Pacific, and Virginian.



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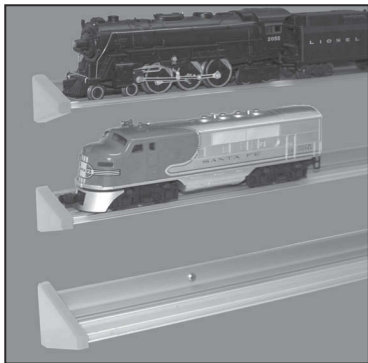
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At Trackside

Like the Lionel H7 I reviewed in Run 267, the Y3 is a heavyweight both figuratively and literally. Its massive weight for an O gauge steam locomotive translates into some really awesome pulling power, as listed in the performance sidebar. Best of all, the engine started, ran, and stopped with the smoothness I've recently come to expect from Odyssey II. Throughout more than 20-plus cumulative hours of pulling and switching trains on the editorial Carpet Central Railroad, I experienced no operational irritations with the Odyssey II system and didn't detect any mechanical binding in the side rods or, for that fact, the rest of the running gear. Additionally, the articulated Y3 negotiated my Atlas O turnouts with the aplomb of an 8-coupled yard goat.

On the CCRR, a Lionel ZW-L provides the electrical power with either a CAB-1L and Base-1L or a Legacy Command Set providing the command control. Of course, the smooth-operating handles on the ZW-L are the controllers for conventional operation.

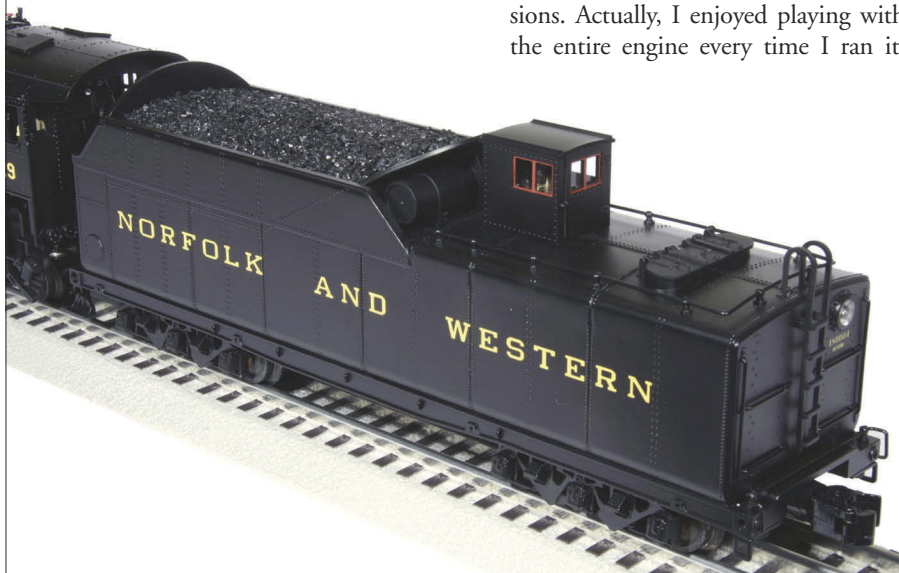
As with the H7, the as-built positions of side rods for both the front and rear engines were identical. By identical, I mean when the front engine's rods were up, down, or any point in between, so were those for the rear engine. In my review of the H7, I wrote that if it were mine, I would set the front engine rods rotationally out of phase with those of the rear engine.

Well, I did just that with the Y3, as shown in the photos. To see how easy it was to change the position of the rods, take a look at my "Helper Engine" column near the back of this issue.

As I mentioned earlier, the recommended minimum curve for the Y3 is O72. On my O72 main line, the boiler overhang was 1-9/16" from the side of the rail, which was not unexpected considering that 7-1/4" exists between the front axle of the rigid engine and the smokebox front.

The steam exhaust sounds that emanated from the dual speakers were fabulous with a satisfyingly heavy bass tone, at least to my ears. In normal operation at speeds of over three or four scale mph, the exhaust beat was correct for a mallet running in compound operation at four chuffs per driver revolution. However, when starting, compound mallets ran as simple articulated. For a brief description of how mallets started, see the Starting Simple sidebar. I'm somewhat surprised the Lionel sound engineers didn't mix into the Legacy RailSounds repertoire the exhaust sounds of simple operation that occurred at engine start. But even without the correct starting sounds, I found the audio rendition of the Lionel Y3 to be no less exciting.

For the N&W steam fan, the classic hooter whistle is sure to please, especially with the quilling capabilities offered by a CAB-1L or CAB-2. Okay, I have to admit I enjoyed playing with the quilling whistle on a number of occasions. Actually, I enjoyed playing with the entire engine every time I ran it.



Starting Simple

In compound operation of an articulated locomotive, boiler pressure steam was fed to the rear (high pressure) cylinders where it expanded and pushed the pistons to turn the wheels. The expanded and thereby lower pressure steam that exhausted from the rear cylinders was then fed to the front (low pressure) cylinders, which were considerably larger. With the lower pressure steam expanding a second time in the larger front cylinders, the front engine developed the same power at the drivers as did the rear engine. Because of the use of the same amount of steam to drive the two engines, compound mallets are sometimes referred to as double-expansion articulated locomotives. The spent steam from the front cylinders then exited the stack with an exhaust beat of four chuffs per driver revolution—the same as from a locomotive with a single set of cylinders and drivers.

In simple operation, boiler pressure steam is fed directly to both sets of cylinders with the spent, expanded steam from all four cylinders exiting out the exhaust stack. Locomotives built exclusively for simple operation, such as the 4-6-6-4 Challenger, are also referred to as single-expansion articulateds.

When a compound mallet was at rest, no steam from the high-pressure rear cylinders was available to the low-pressure front cylinders because none had been exhausted yet. Without some means to get steam to the front cylinders for starting, the locomotive would have only the power from the rear engine for the first few revolutions of the drivers, which wouldn't work at all. In this situation, the front engine would have been no more than so much dead weight. So to bring the front engine into play immediately for starting, steam was fed directly from the boiler to the front cylinders, but at a significantly reduced pressure through what was called a reducing valve. Considering the large low-pressure cylinder bores and pistons, feeding steam at boiler pressure would have resulted in useless wheel spin from the front engine. At the same time, boiler pressure steam was fed to the high-pressure cylinders in the normal manner, but what was called an interceptor valve diverted the exhaust out the stack rather than letting it go to the front cylinders. At engine start and until about 3 or 4 mph, the mallet ran in simple or single-expansion operation, producing four exhaust chuffs per driver revolution from each of the two engines. As I've heard from a real Challenger, eight individual exhaust chuffs during engine start produced interesting off-beat syncopation.

To close this discourse, should additional tractive effort have been necessary from a mallet for short periods during normal operation on the high iron, such as its train was about to stall, the engineer could select simple operation for a short period of time. This of course used a lot more steam than compound operation did over the same time period, but the increase in tractive effort was significant.

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At the End of the Run

The Lionel Y3, with its fat front cylinders that mandated its exceptionally long pilot, proved to be a uniquely handsome locomotive the entire time it was on CCRR rails. It was visually or prototypically at home pulling a long string of steel hopper cars loaded with coal. As a steam locomotive from the early 1920s, the Y3 was particularly attractive hauling a consist of steam-era wood sheathed boxcars and reefers plus 8,000-gallon tank cars and composite gondolas. My saying the well-balanced 2-8-8-2 was pleasant to look at and fun to run could be classed as a major understatement. 

6-11405 Norfolk & Western Y3 2-8-8-2

Retail price: \$1,349.99 at authorized Lionel dealers

Lionel LLC; www.lionel.com

Lionel Y3 2-8-8-2 Legacy Performance

(smoke unit: off; sound: on; speed control: on)

Length: 29-3/8" over couplers
28-1/2" pilot to tender sill

Distance Between Locomotive Pickup Rollers:
1st and 2nd: 3-1/2"
1st and 3rd: 7-1/2"
1st and 4th: 9-3/4"

Distance Between Tender Pickup Rollers: 7-5/8"

Weight on Driving Wheels: 8 lbs, 12 oz

Tender Weight: 4 lbs, 5 oz

Power Consumption at Idle @ 18 VAC: 0.2 A, 3.6 W

Tractive Effort @ 18 VAC: 4 lbs, 6 oz @ 1.5 A, 27 W

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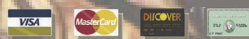
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Lionel Inspection Car Prototype


Review Follow-On by George Brown

Photo by Allen Glenney

In my review of the Lionel motorized units hosted by Run 267, I wrote that the inspection car body was a reasonable rendition of a 1938 Chevrolet Master Deluxe four-door sedan. Well, close but no cigar. The year of the prototype auto was in fact 1937, and the sedan was from General Motors, but it was a Buick. Allen Glenney, who runs an MTH service and upgrade center in Mineola, Texas, and is also an old Buick enthusiast, sent me photos he took of the Maryland & Pennsylvania No. 101 inspection vehicle displayed in the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. A couple of e-mail messages confirmed this is definitely the inspection vehicle that Lionel modeled.

To trace the history of Ma & Pa No. 101, a funeral home in Pennsylvania bought the top-of-the-line Model 90 Buick Limited new in 1937, and after using it for five years, sold it to the Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad. The railroad then converted the former luxury sedan to run on rails with a rudimentary steel

pilot, four-wheel swiveling front truck, flanged steel rear wheels, air compressor, air brakes, and a sander. Both side mounts, spare tires stylishly mounted in the front fenders, were removed, and their wells were made into storage bins. The significant extra weight of the rail-ready Buick probably wasn't a problem to move along the rails considering the torque available from its 320-cube straight-eight engine.

The Ma & Pa Buick-on-rails replaced a 1926 Rickenbacker the railroad used to transport its officials and track inspectors. According to the car's facts published on the website for the B&O Railroad Museum, the Maryland & Pennsylvania was one of the first railroads to use two-way radios in its locomotives. To test the efficiency of radio communications between the road's locomotives and company offices, No. 101 was also one of the first inspection vehicles equipped with a railway communications radio. This inspection vehicle was donated to the B&O Railroad Museum in 1972. 

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WE384 heads out over Hudson Viaduct with two SD40-2s and a GP35-3. They labor east towards the CSX connection at Connellsville before heading onto CSX tracks to Baltimore.

The W&LE in O Gauge

Article and Photos by Jason Capra

I grew up in southwestern Pennsylvania, so trains were naturally a part of my boyhood experiences. My grandparents lived in McDonald, Pennsylvania, and my first memories of trains were the big blue locomotives of Conrail plying what was left of the old Pennsylvania Railroad panhandle line. In 1995, all that came to an end when Conrail abandoned the remainder of the line from Carnegie to Burgettstown, Pennsylvania. I was deeply saddened by this and was left without a place to watch trains.

My grandfather took me to Southview, an old mining town along the former Montour Railroad line. He told me it used to be the old Pittsburgh & West Virginia main line, which for the longest time was operated by the Norfolk & Western after the P&WV failed. He wasn't quite sure who operated the line but said he usually heard a locomotive horn every afternoon around that time.

We sat and waited. When we had just about given up hope, the familiar sound of an air horn could be heard to the east. Soon the roar of EMD engines could be heard coming closer. Rounding

the bend near us appeared three big, black, high hood diesels with a gold W&LE painted on the side of each one. As the train rocketed by at what seemed to be a faster pace than anything I had ever seen on the old panhandle line, I was immediately hooked on this new unknown operation. That day, my fascination with the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway began.

The Real Wheeling

The Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway (W&LE) dates back to 1871 with the need for a rail connection between the coal fields in Wheeling, West Virginia, and the port cities and facilities on Lake Erie. Initial development was offset by capital constraints and financial difficulties, which slowed the progression of the line until 1877. Then interest began again in earnest to move southeastern Ohio coal to Lake Erie and iron ore from the lake to steel plants in the Ohio River valley. In 1913 the main offices were moved to Brewster, Ohio, where they remain today.



While pausing for their lunch break, a W&LE section gang strikes a pose for the camera.

Since the end of World War II, the W&LE has had various owners. First, the Nickel Plate leased the line. The Norfolk & Western then took control until the Norfolk & Western and Southern Railway merged to become the Norfolk Southern. The W&LE was dissolved as a corporate entity in 1989. A spinoff sale in 1990 by the NS to a group of investors renewed the old W&LE corporate name.

The new rail system is now made up of a combination of the former W&LE, the Pittsburgh & West Virginia, and the Akron, Canton & Youngstown lines. The 576 miles of track combined with trackage rights acquired from the NS amount to 840 miles.

With the bulk of its commodities in the steel, coke, and coal industries, the W&LE had a slow but promising start. Within the past several years, however, those industries have been hit hard due to the economic downturn. Ever resilient, the W&LE looked for other customers. Timing could not have been better for the boom in the new natural gas business in the Ohio River valley. This boom has given a strategic location to the railroad in the Marcellus and Utica Shale natural gas fields and oil production areas in which the W&LE has a strong foundation to continue building.

For now the future seems bright for the W&LE with its locomotive paint scheme inspired by the Rio Grande. The main line has been upgraded to continuous welded rail, and the four miles of previously abandoned Montour Railroad right of way has been rebuilt to the new Westland yard, which is solely for the loading of Mark West natural gas. The Wheeling is quite the model of a successful regional railroad.

The O Gauge Wheeling

My O gauge W&LE started off like most model railroads—just a daydream. I have always been heavily into HO scale trains. With my career bouncing me around over the past six to seven years, I have never really had the time or space to build the HO scale W&LE layout I have been thinking about for quite some time. Then one day on my way home from work, I stopped by the Imperial Train Company store in Imperial, Pennsylvania. It was there that I met Regis Gill and Victor Tiberie, who have since become my great friends.



The quiet of a hazy summer morning is shattered by the roar of EMD SD40-2s as WE212 heads out over Hudson Viaduct towards Rook yard in Pittsburgh.

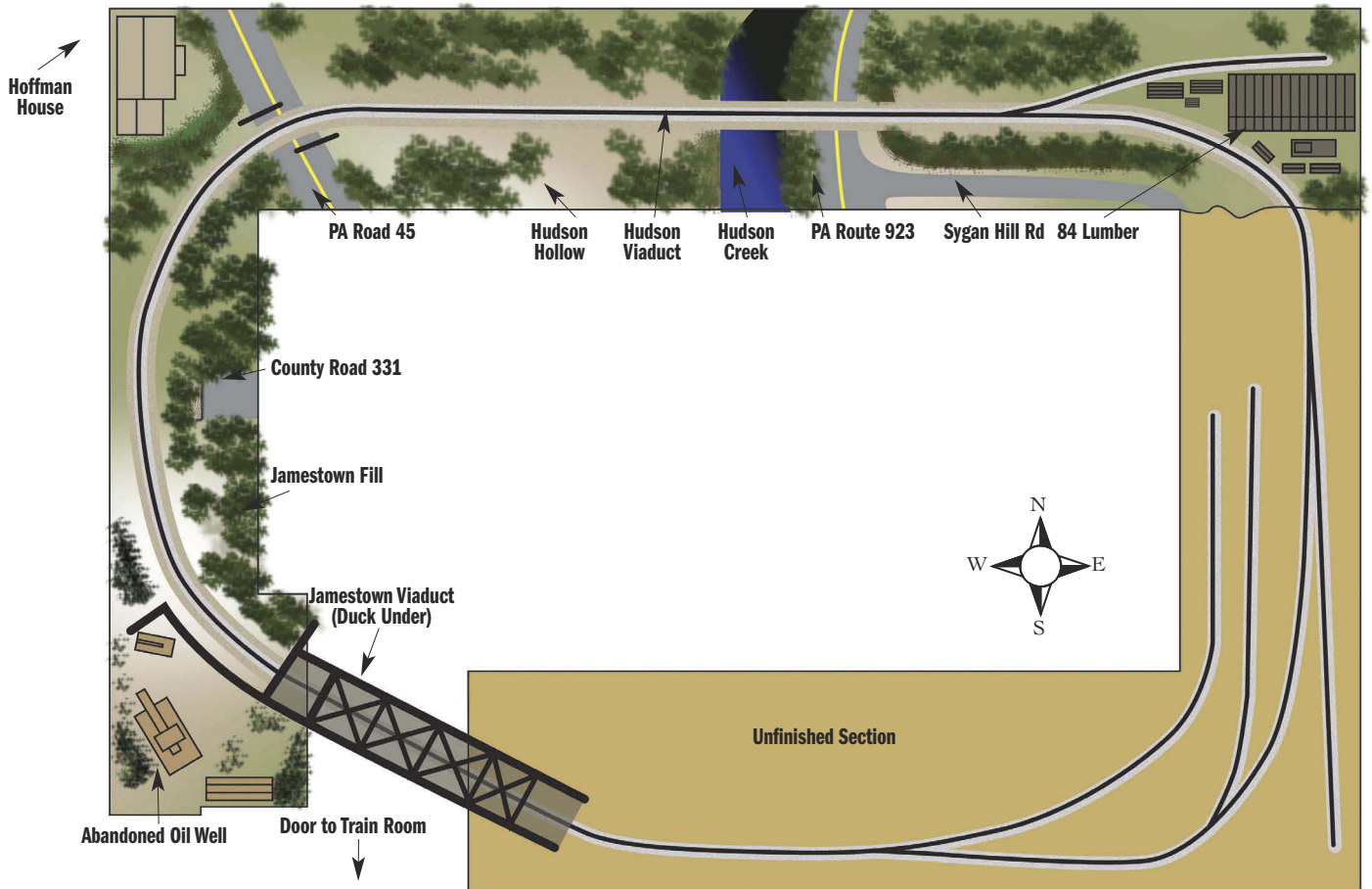


SD40-2 No. 6353 passes 84 Lumber as it heads east to Rook. This is an Atlas O kit painted to represent a local 84 Lumber. The photo backdrop is of the 84 Lumber store in the company's namesake town of Eighty Four, Pennsylvania.

On a shelf in the store, I spotted an MTH O gauge W&LE No. 105 GP35. I had to have it! Of course it was just for display purposes. By the time I got the locomotive home, my curiosity had gotten the best of me. I had to hear this thing run. I headed back to the hobby shop the next day to buy some track. The rest was history. Having just moved into my new house in May of 2013, I decided one of the spare bedrooms would be a train room. The new home of the O gauge W&LE had

begun. The room measured 16' x 10' and offered more than enough space for the type of layout I had in mind. As a railfan and historian, I wanted to bring guests into the model world as if they were at track level walking around the entire layout. This would give them a forced perspective into the world I wanted them to see.

I felt the best way to provide this illusion was to have the layout run along the wall with the guests standing inside the layout and to have it set at what would be



Its early evening as GP35-3 No. 101 rockets west with WE213, the Rook-Brewster road freight. Here WE213 crosses PA Route 45 as it enters Jamestown Fill.

eye level for most adults. The benchwork was to be 4' high built from standard 2x4s, and the platform was to be made of 2'x 4' sheets of plywood.

On top of the plywood base would be stacked four sheets of 2" thick white insulation Styrofoam to use for my terrain. This would allow me to sculpt or carve, as needed, to make the most convincing terrain and scenery to match the real W&LE right of way. As a result, the track level now sits at approximately a height of 5'. Because the bulk of the real Wheeling & Lake Erie from Mingo Junction, Ohio, to Rook yard in Pittsburgh is elevated fill, I needed to be able to give that same look with the track being above and elevated from most of the scenery.

I also am a firm believer in "less is more." Simply stated, I would be better off to convey a very convincing scene with the right scenery techniques and perspective than to build a massive model empire. This led to my layout only being 2' wide along most of the right of way. Photo backdrops provided the illusion of a much bigger and believable scene.



Buffalo & Pittsburgh SD45 No. 456 leads train NCCE-1 back to Bruceton Junction where it will head back towards B&P rails in Evans City, Pennsylvania. NCCE-1 is a bridge freight for the CSX between New Castle and Connellsville on my O gauge W&LE.



Buffalo & Pittsburgh SD45 No. 456 and train NCCE-1 head over Jamestown Fill as they make their way west from Connellsville, Pennsylvania.

Scenery

I have found that for convincing O gauge scenery, Scenic Express is unmatched in its selections. All of the grass is Heki static grass fiber mats. The trees consist mostly of SuperTrees and SuperSage.

Woodland Scenics products are also used extensively, mostly for roadbed, roads, water, and ballast.

Track, Bridges, and Power

All of the track is Atlas O 3-rail, weathered with Floquil track weathering markers. This is a time-consuming process but turns out great in the end. Once ballasted, I use weathering powders to weather the right of way and then seal it with Testors Dullcote. The minimum radius curves are O63, and the largest are O90. Switches are all hand-thrown high-speed turnouts by Atlas O. I removed the switch mechanisms on all of them to give a more prototypical look and make it more like real-world Wheeling operations.

The Atlas O bridges are all weathered. Atlas really did a great job on these, and they look right in place on the Wheeling & Lake Erie.

The layout is currently powered by an MTH Z-4000 transformer. I intend to get into DCS soon, and the layout is currently wired for such an operation.



A repainted Lionel track car in W&LE colors is seen with its contingent of track workers as they inspect the right of way. That's the old Hoffman house in the background along PA Route 45.



Buffalo & Pittsburgh train NCCE-1 rumbles past the WE610 that has pulled into the 84 Lumber siding to clear the right of way.



GP35-3 No. 101 works today's WE610 and is seen shoving loads of lumber into the 84 Lumber yard. This Pittsburgh & West Virginia locomotive is one of two Heritage Units that the real W&LE owns honoring the line's past.



WE610, the Rook local, has been dispatched out to 84 Lumber to retrieve two empty boxcars. Today's tasks are being handled by GP35-3 No. 101, the P&WV Heritage Unit.

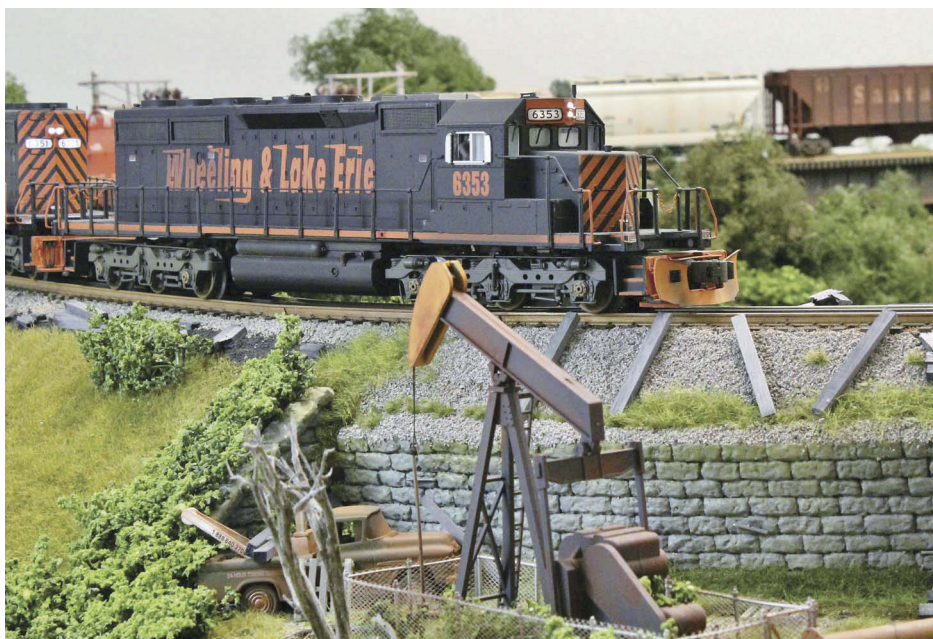


County Road 331 passes under Jamestown Fill on my O gauge W&LE. This is a typical scene in Western Pennsylvania along the W&LE as well as other railroads. The photo used to create the scene inside the portal is of an actual Montour Railroad overpass in Imperial, Pennsylvania.

Locomotives and Rolling Stock

All of my locomotives are MTH Premier. Most of the freight cars are also MTH Premier along with a few Atlas O cars. I believe in weathering to give that special hint of realism to the models. All of my locomotives are weathered as much as possible to match their real-life counterparts. From chips of paint missing from the plows and doors to the exhaust stains by the radiator grilles, I wanted my Wheeling locomotives to look the part.

The rolling stock is a weathering dream. Since the real Wheeling uses a lot of hand-me-down freight equipment from virtually every former fallen flag under the sun, the possibilities of what can be seen are endless. The only new cars the Wheeling has are 150 hoppers built in 2005 with speed lettering as well as newly built leasing company covered hoppers and tankers used heavily in the natural gas business. Other than those examples, rust and grime are everywhere with patch job markings covering up the former road's reporting marks. Anything and everything can be seen ranging from Rock Island to Chicago & North Western to Santa Fe. These old cars really offer a unique, historical look at railroads, some of which are no longer with us.



Two SD40-2s lead WE213 over Jamestown Fill and past an abandoned oil pump. The oil pump is an Atlas O structure, and the retaining walls are from Scenic Express.


An old P&WV 0-6-0 pulls one of the road's heritage photo freights across Hudson Viaduct.



About the Author

Jason Capra has had a lifelong interest in airplanes and trains. He took his first flying lesson when he was 15 years old and has been flying professionally since he was 19 piloting charter and freight. Jason is a graduate of Mountain State University and resides in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he is a captain for Republic Airways flying the Bombardier Q400 for United Express. When not working on his O gauge Wheeling, he is either flying a vintage 1945 Douglas DC-4 for the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation or can be found trackside along the real Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway photographing the railroad for an upcoming book on the company. Jason has also had his photos featured in the last three years of the real W&LE company calendar.

What's Next

At this point, my layout is about half complete. The next notable scenes to be built are a small rail yard, tunnel, and interchange with the Allegheny Valley Railroad. My O gauge Wheeling & Lake Erie has an active heritage program that hosts steam specials pulled by fully restored P&WV and Montour engines at certain times of the year. The specials range from photo freights to employee specials. My Wheeling really believes in honoring its heritage and routes. Until the next time, the black and orange "Tigers" of my Wheeling will be hauling freight the only way it knows how: The Wheeling Way! 



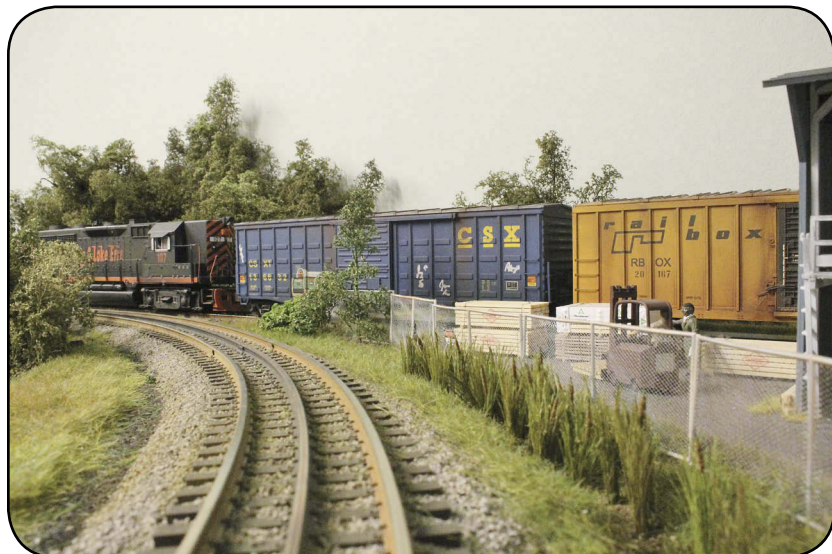
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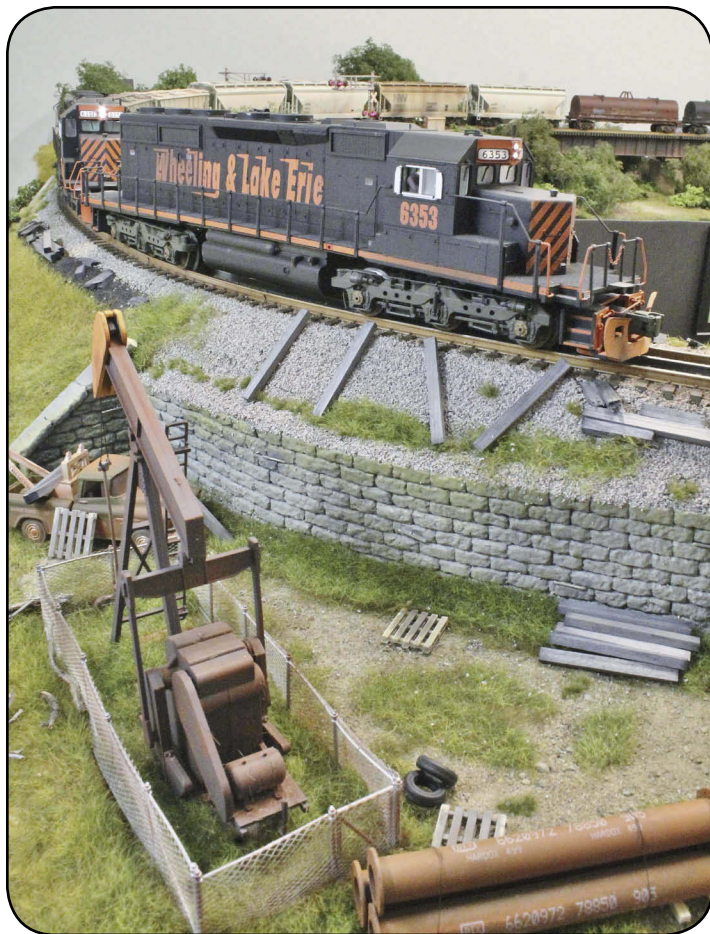
*More Pictures From Jason Capra's
Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad*



Even though Jason's Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad is a small layout, careful photo composition can yield shots of trains that make the layout appear to be much larger than it really is! This shot is less than 8 feet deep, yet it looks like the train goes clear to the horizon.

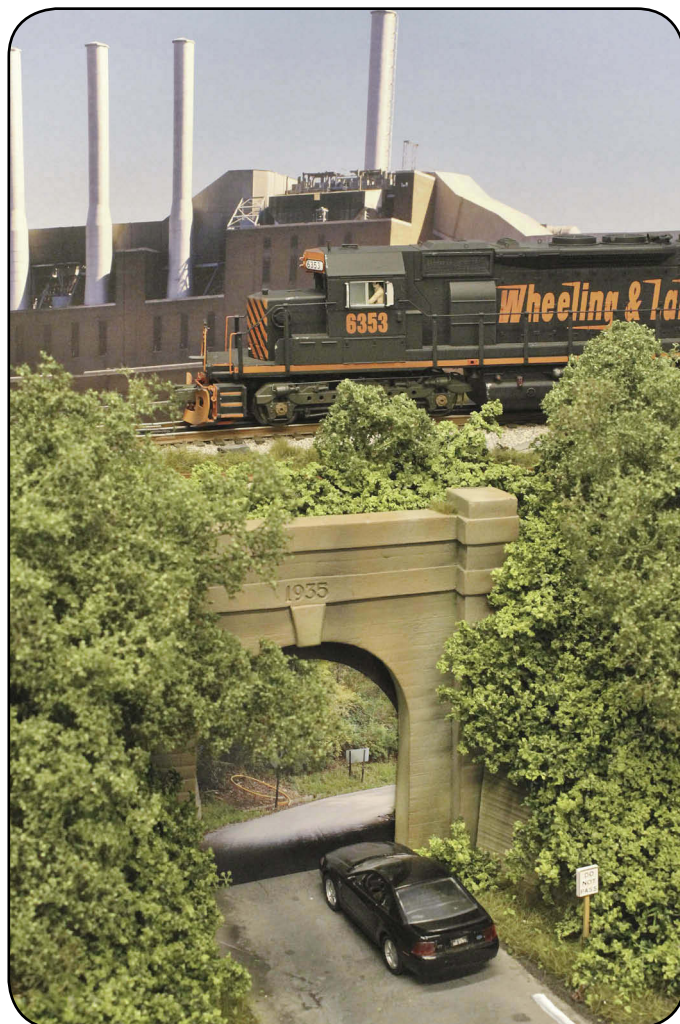
*More Pictures From Jason Capra's
Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad*

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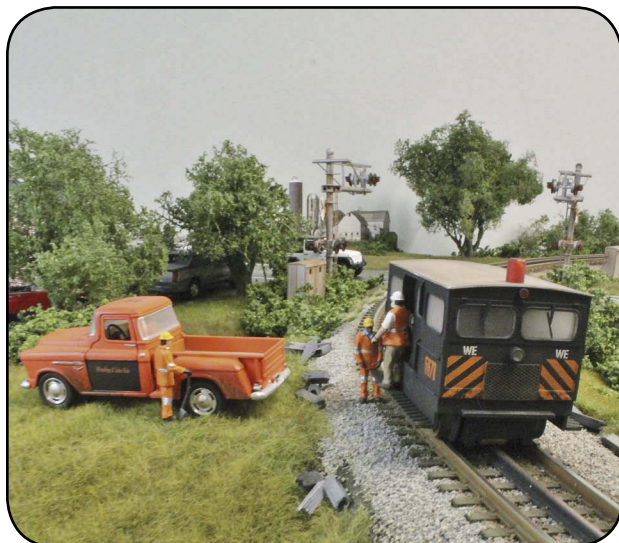
Vertical development of scenery detail helps to create the look of reality.

By using many subtle vertical details in his scenery, Jason makes the most of the limited space he has available for this layout.



*More Pictures From Jason Capra's
Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad*

 Premium Member *PERK*



Details make a scene look realistic. At left, note the new ties scattered along the right-of-way. This is a very common sight when a railroad is about to begin a tie replacement program.

Cropping a photo can make a difference, too! Compare the shot below to the shot on the bottom of page 41. This is the same photo, cropped wider to show both sets of flashers and gates. The different crop gives the shot a whole new look.





Little Things

Article and Photos by John R. Rapacz

“Little Things Mean a Lot” is a 1954 song sung by Kitty Kallen that stresses the importance of minor actions and items in kindling and retaining a person’s interest. The same minor items can be said of our railroad empires. Here are some very little things I’ve come up with for my layout that involve no or minimal cost that you can use to make your own railroad more interesting.

Wall Treatments

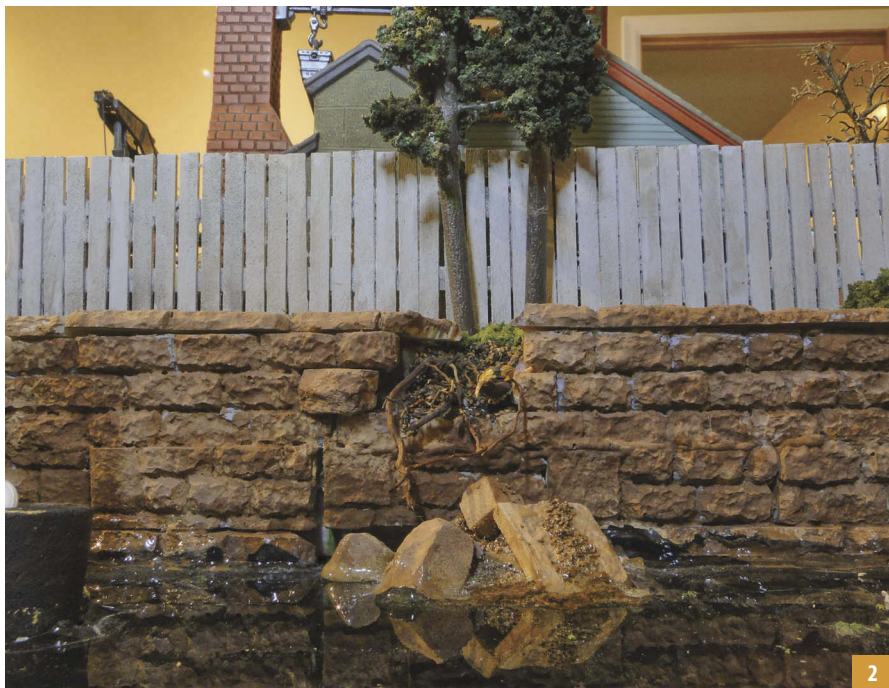
The long flagstone walls of the icing station and the end of the track were unremarkable until an engineer failed to stop and punched the knuckle of a coupler into one of the walls. Some of the stones were forced into the hole while others broke and fell

onto the track along with some small rocks and dirt (Photo 1).

Cut out a section of your wall, paint the interior of the hole black, glue some of the stones inside the wall at crooked angles, and place the rest under the hole with some dirt or ballast.

Another example in the photo illustrates the ability of plants to cover flaws or mistakes. The meeting of the flagstone walls at the end of the track left a gap on the right side. A little white glue and some foliage created a climbing vine that covered the error and looked more realistic.

I have a large stone retaining wall around the municipal storm pond. It all looked the same until the roots of the large evergreens cracked the mortar and forced some of the wall into the water (Photo 2).



Cut a hole and dig out an area for the roots. Paint the interior black or dark brown and sprinkle some sand or fine ballast onto the wet paint. Glue in the roots. You can use a heat gun on a plastic tree to melt the branches and create a gnarly appearance or else use garden weeds. Place the stones that were forced out under the hole with some dirt or fine brown or black ballast. Use only the material that you removed from the original hole for a more realistic look. Don't add anything extra even though you may think you should. The stone wall has much more interest when viewed between the two cottages (Photo 3).

The high bluff from the pole yard to the highway was just dirt and minimal shrubbery and of no particular notice until a large barrel of waste oil tipped over and ran down the hill into the grass and bushes alongside the road (Photo 4). Now there is something to catch your attention!

From the tipped over barrel, run a thin line of gloss black paint down the hill. Use very thin paint for the first run because it will follow the bumps, curves, and depressions of the hill for a more realistic look. Let that first application dry and then run more paint to your satisfaction. For additional realism, be sure to "kill" any shrubs that have absorbed the oil by coloring them brown, yellow, and pale green.

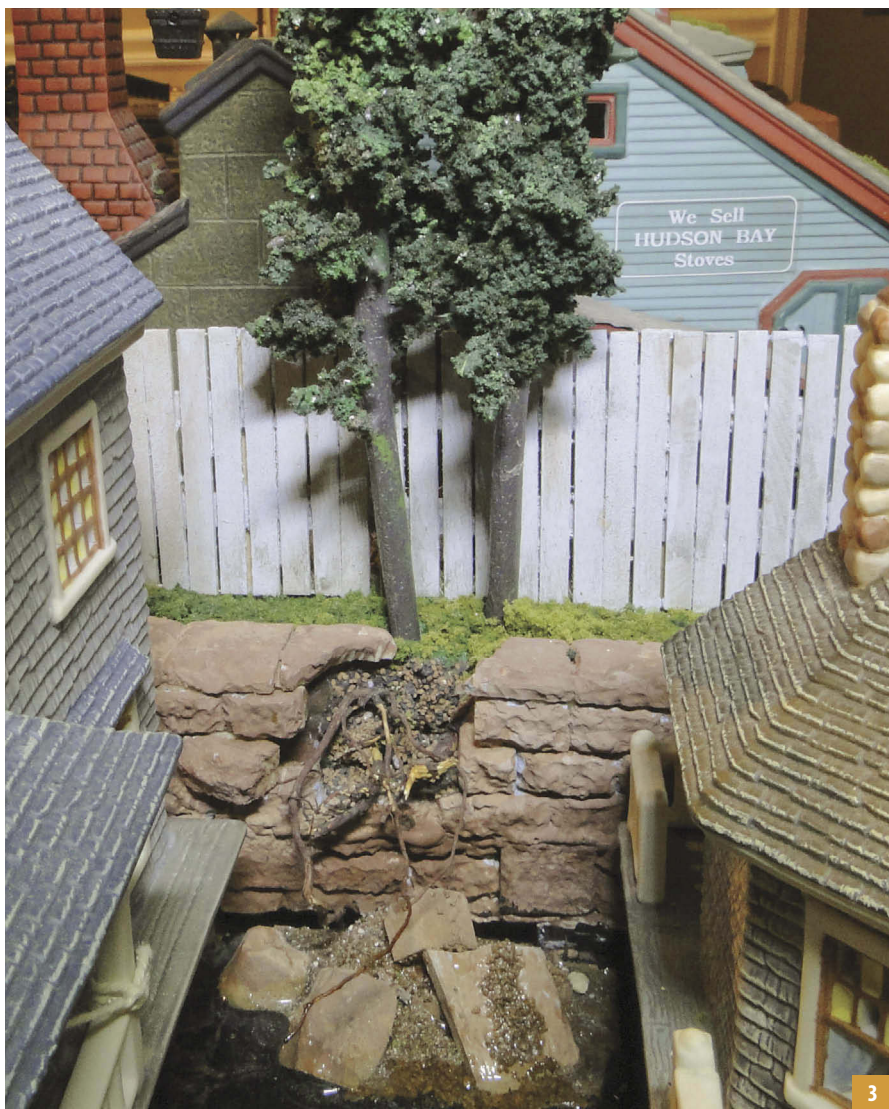
Along the back wall of my layout and under a large window is a "poured concrete retaining wall that borders a country dirt road."

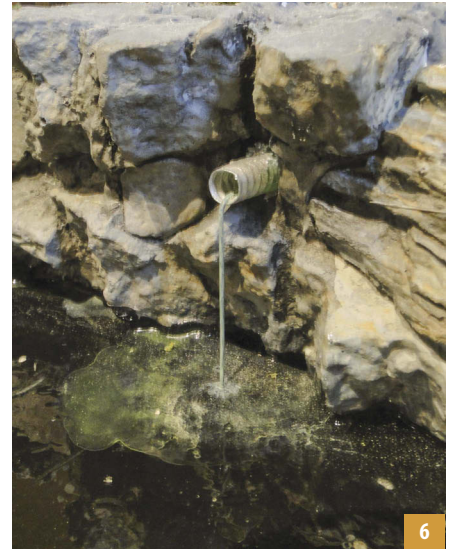
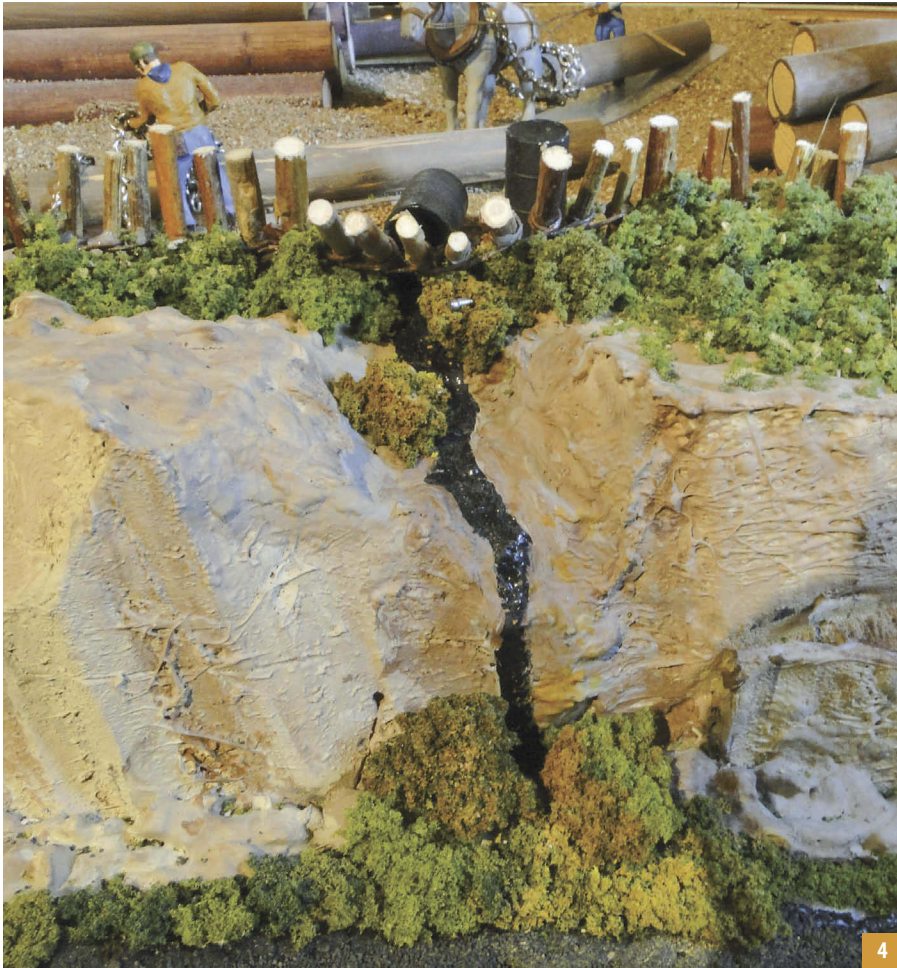
The wall is balsa wood painted with a thin coat of gray, allowed to dry, and then scratched vertically with a wire brush and painted again with the process repeated until I had the look I wanted.

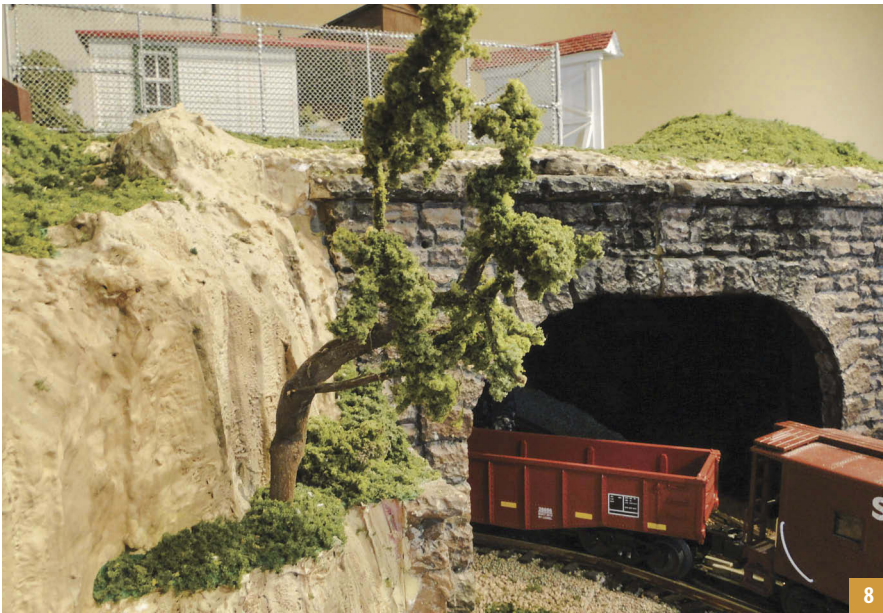
However, the wall was still plain, utilitarian, and colorless until someone ignored a Post No Bills sign and put up advertising handbills for automobiles, U.S. Savings Bonds, movies, beverages, and the Barnum and Bailey Circus (Photo 5). Old bills were often not removed, and new ones were just pasted over them. Eventually, the wind, sunlight, and rain would tear the older bills.

Use your computer to find old posters and ads. Size, print, and then glue them to the wall.

The lake front on my layout is bounded by a rock wall, which is interesting but has the same appearance from end to end.







To prevent monotony and to introduce additional interest, drill a small hole in the wall, insert the flexible portion of a bendable straw, paint it gray and rust, and then glue a length of clear fishing line from the straw to the water (Photo 6). At the area where the drain runs into the water, paint some green and dirty gray runoff to look like slime. If you don't have fishing line, use a piece of white thread and run some clear plastic glue down its length.

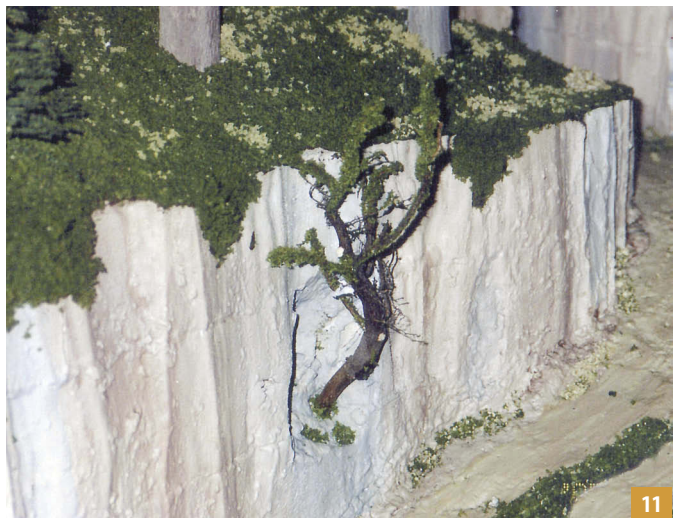
Going Green

An open area next to the table's edge was boring and without interest until a sudden summer windstorm blew over a medium-size tree, lifting the ground and exposing the roots (Photo 7).

I used one tree for the toppled trunk and crown and then cut the crown off a similar tree to use as the roots. If your layout has a Styrofoam base, dig up an area with a knife or chisel, paint the interior black, and glue foam to the roots in the hole. Glue sod onto the roots and some grass onto the top of the sod and then weather the tree pale brown and light gray. If the base is not Styrofoam, you can glue small pieces of foam around the hole and on the top of the exposed roots and cover them with grass to create a sod appearance.

Trees growing on rocky soil or on the sides of mountains constantly fight for survival in constant winds and a minimum of moisture. As a result, they have twisted trunks, gnarly branches, and sparse foliage (Photo 8).

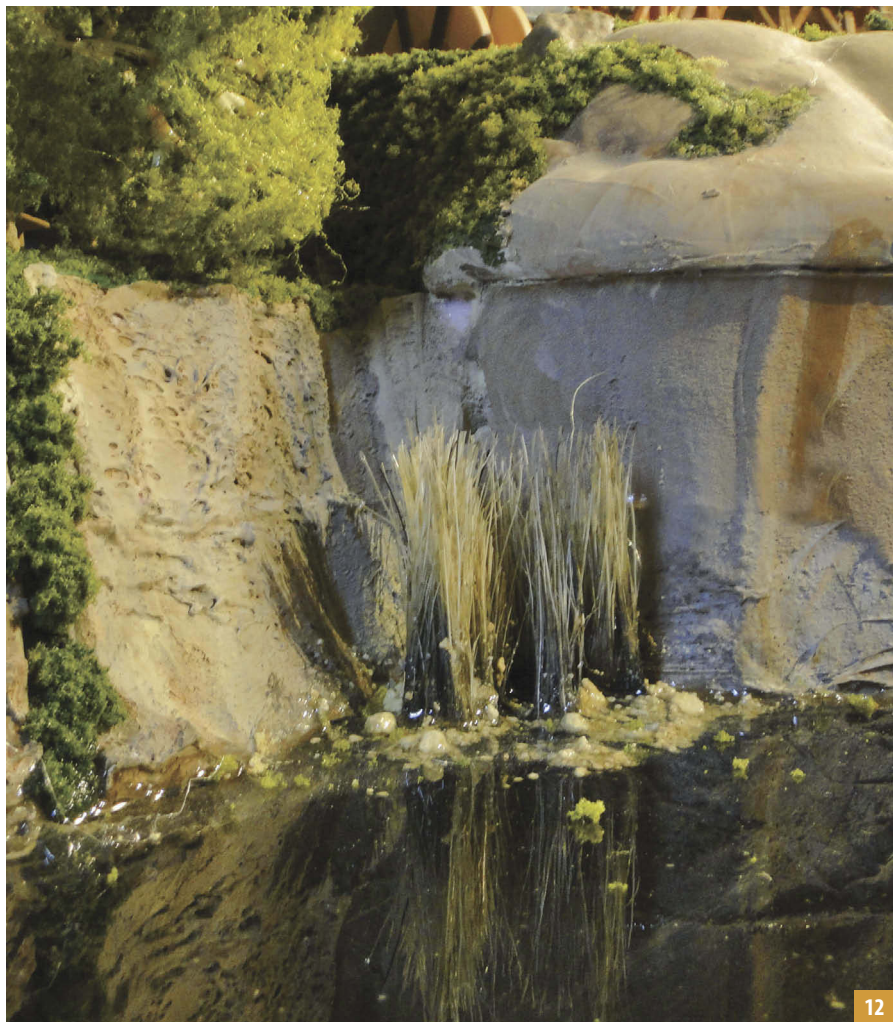
To model these trees, the first step is to not weed your 1:1 scale garden, at least not



right away. Let some of those weeds grow until their stems appear woody, loosen the soil or mulch around them, and gently ease them from the ground. Do not attempt to remove the soil from the roots. Doing so will break the small rootlets and destroy the root hairs. Hang the weeds somewhere dry, such as in a garage or furnace room, and leave them alone until they are completely dried. Then gently squeeze the dirt clumps. The dirt will crumble away from the roots. Glue some sparse foliage onto the roots, which are now the tree crown, and attach the tree to your mountain wall (Photos 9, 10, and 11).

Water Reeds

Now let's explore a simple way to create realistic water reeds (Photos 12 and 13). I customarily use a number of inexpensive paint brushes because the coarse Styrofoam causes them to wear quickly. After a while, these cheap brushes are ragged and begin to lose bristles with each use. The lower bristles have absorbed the dark pigments and are unevenly stained (Photo 14). Don't throw them away. Lay the brush horizontally so it can drain and then apply a thin coat of white glue and water to the brush where it meets the ferule (Photo 15). Let this soak all the way through the brush, turn it over, and repeat



12



13



14



15



16

the process. Do this a number of times until there is about a 1/4" solid base at the bottom of the brush. Then use a utility knife, jigsaw, or jeweler's saw to cut off sections from the ferrule (Photo 16). Simply glue these sections into your water scene. It is not even necessary to paint or weather them.

Weeds

Behind my grist mill, I have a long wooden walkway to the wheel that opens the sluice to the water wheel. This walkway was eye-catching but boring. One of the boards broke, sunlight was allowed in, and weeds grew in that spot only (Photo 17).

Use long-nose pliers to push and break one of the boards so that the wood in the broken board can be seen. Then glue some typical grass weeds in the hole.


Glance in the Mirror

Although the entrance to the winery appears to curve into the mountain, it actually is only a few inches deep (Photo 18). A mirror is located at the curve to provide an illusion of depth.

Photo 19 depicts an area of my lower city under the main city and train station. Two figures are on the sidewalk, and there is a black truck loaded with boxes of bird products coming out of the underpass with a red truck loaded with barrels following it. In Photos 20 through 23, you'll see one man with a different front and back, and the double truck is really one item.

Grind flat the front and the back of two figures for this illusion and then glue them together. I used Arttista figures. The truck surgery is similar, and the illusion is very convincing.

As a variation, Photo 24 shows a lumberjack wearing a plaid shirt, carrying an axe, and leading a brindle mule. The facing figure appears to be wearing a leather outfit and leading a gray mule. These are the same figures painted differently on each side.

Little things mean a lot! 



17



18



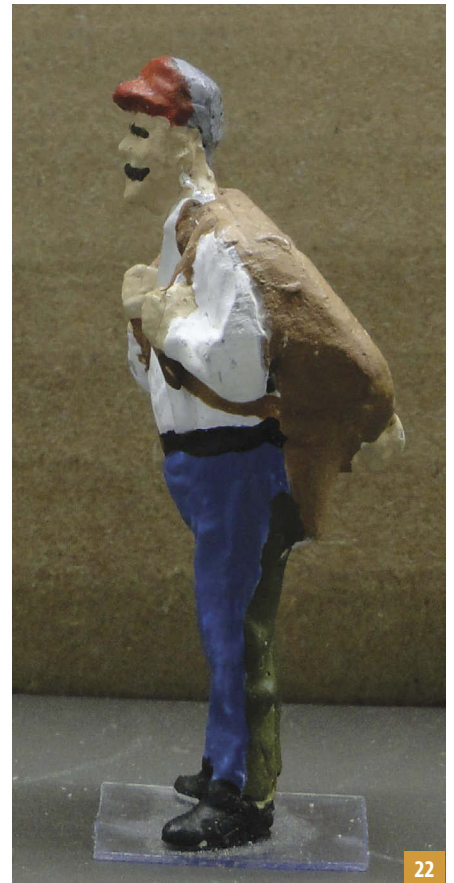
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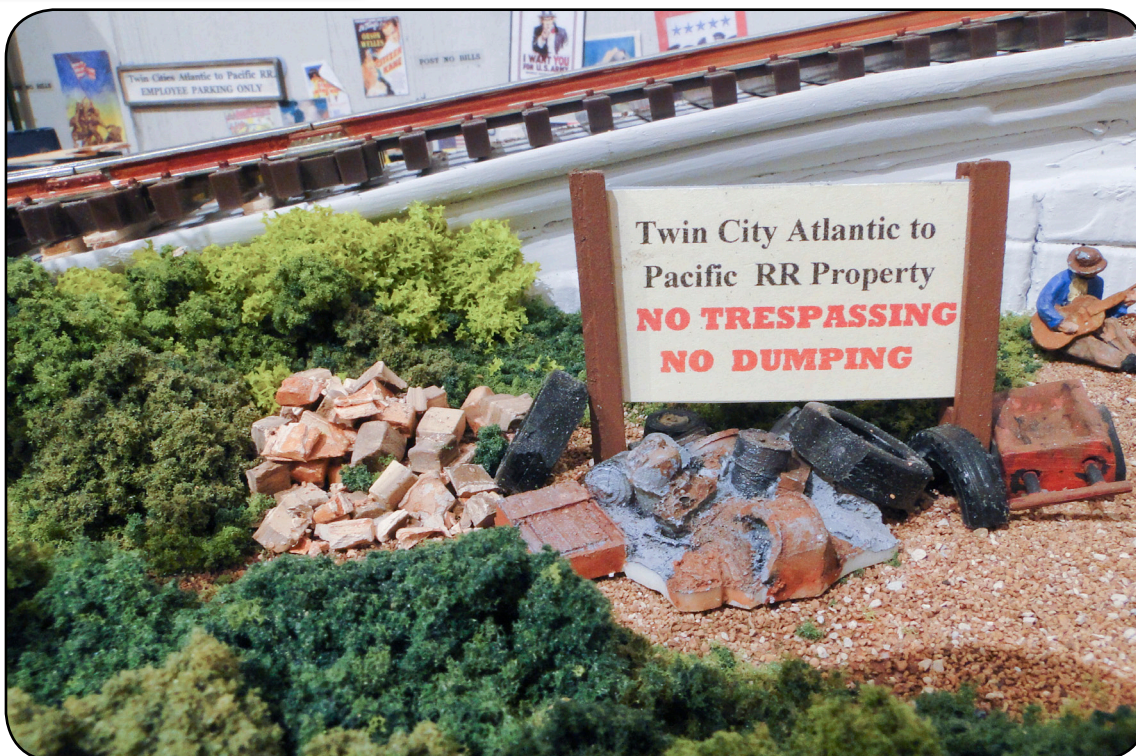


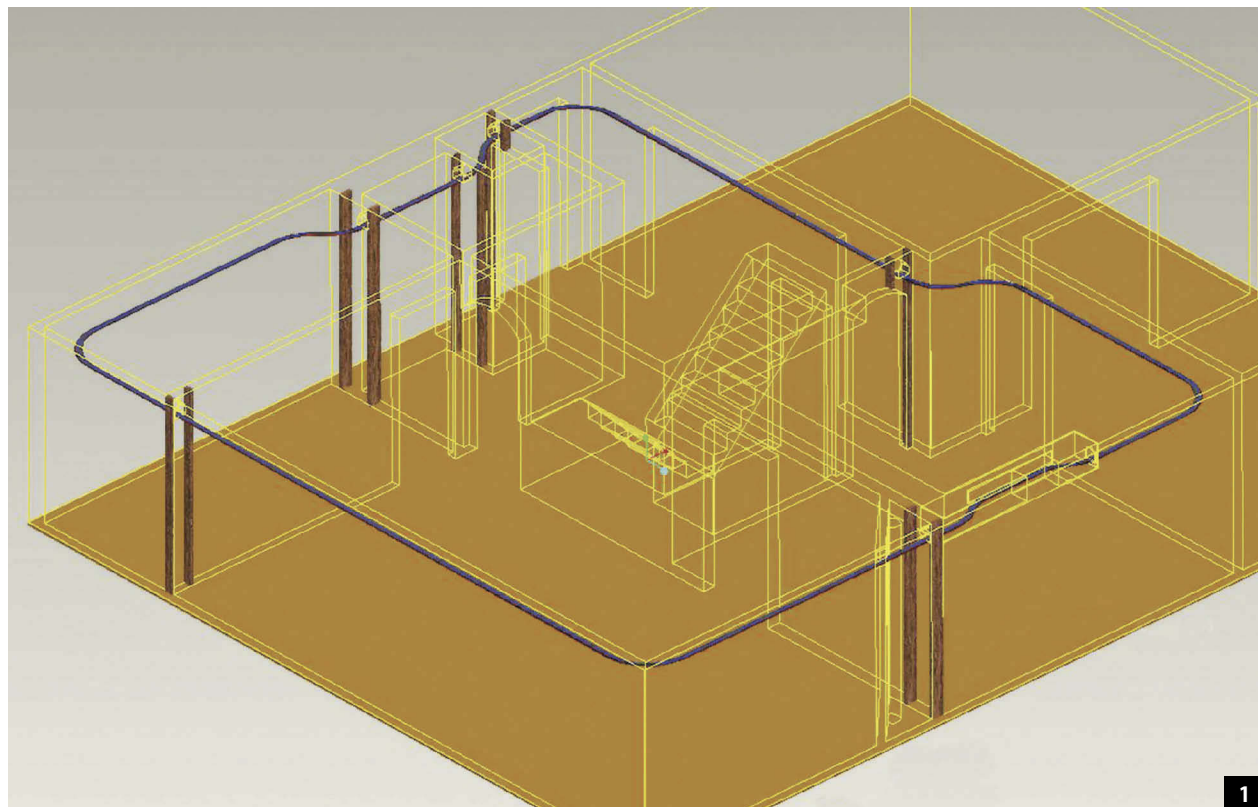
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RAILROADING ALL THROUGH THE HOUSE

Article and Photos by Glenn Gordon

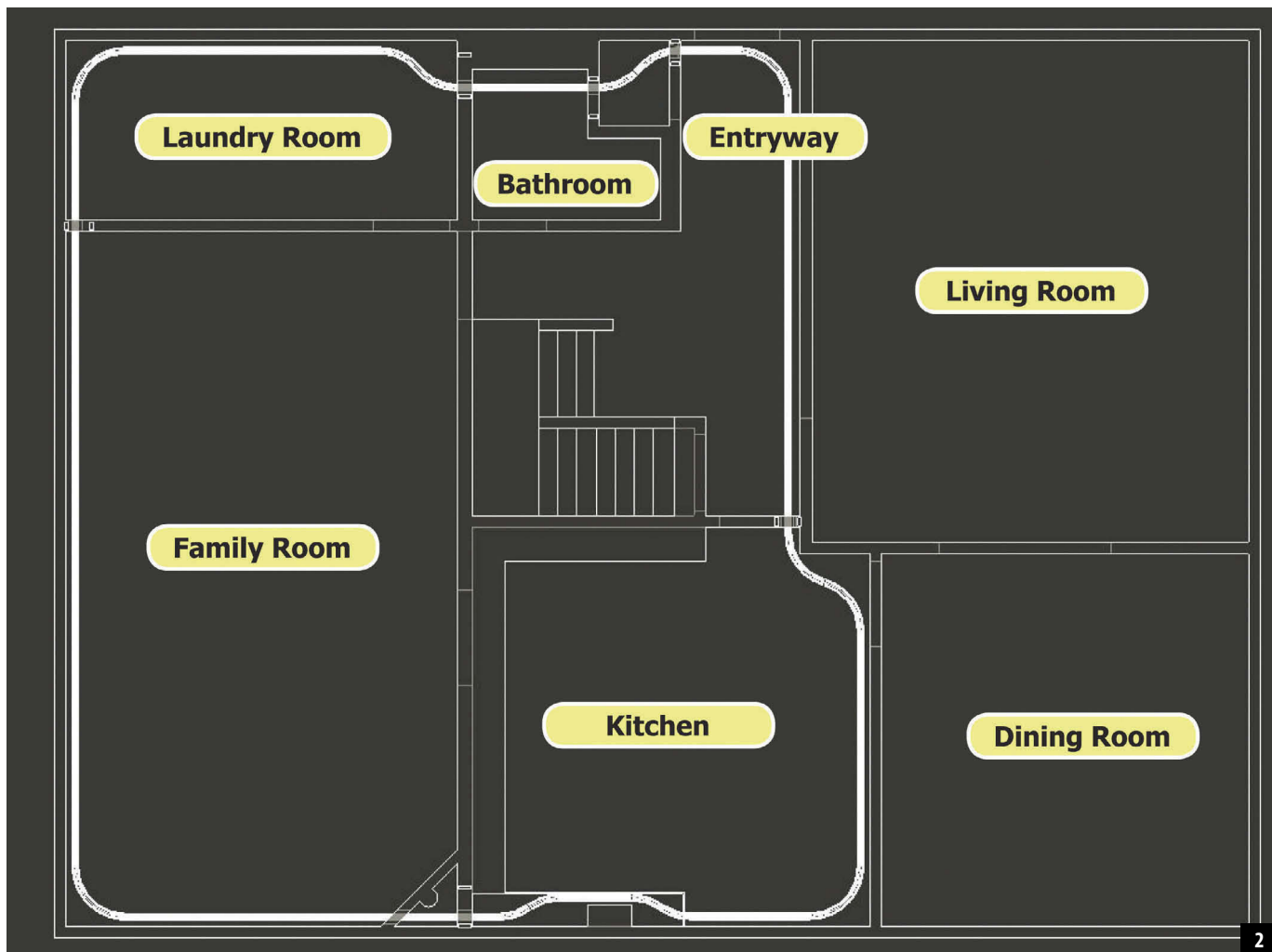
While dining at a sushi bar one evening, my friend asked me when I would be building a moat with sushi boats running around my house. It seemed like a reasonable question; after all, it was just the sort of eccentric thing I might actually do. I quickly eliminated the idea of building a waterway, but that inquiry made in jest spawned the idea for a model train layout to adorn the walls of my house.

Home remodeling is one of my hobbies, and I didn't want the train to create an eyesore on the beautiful home I have spent many years creating. Required for this project was a willingness to take creative risks, some technical know-how, and an artistic vision of a seamless integration to match the styling of the house, along with a very understanding wife. Truth be told though, she loves to see the trains running through the house.

Planning

The first order of business was to determine where the train line would run. I used an ultrasonic stud finder to avoid studs and structural components of the house in designing a rather modest single loop line.

Next, out came the hole saw, inspection mirror, and flashlight so I could see what the stud finder could not. The discovery of a 6" diameter PVC drainpipe and an HVAC duct necessitated some major rerouting. Incidentally, this rerouting led to the creation of two particularly interesting visual areas on the layout: the bridge and the soffit over the stove. This change also resulted in doubling the length of the loop.



2



3



4

Now that I had a potential track route in mind, I created a 3-D model of the house using Pro/Engineer, the same software I use at work to design injection-molded parts and mechanisms (Photo 1).

The model included walls, studs, track, roadbed, soffits, ductwork, and tunnel portals. Since I had some areas that could pose some clearance problems, I also mechanized the CAD model to show

me how the engines and rolling stock would overhang as they ran along the rails (Photo 2). Thorough planning paid off, and no further surprises were encountered during construction.

Tunnel Construction

The 6"x 6" tunnel portals were constructed by cutting the tunnel openings 1/2" oversized around the perimeter of the desired portals. Next, I glued an 8"x 8" piece of 1/32" thick aircraft grade plywood to the wall. I had precut these pieces to size with a cutout representing the precise tunnel opening I desired (Photo 3).

I used a try square to ensure that the plywood tunnel openings on opposite sides of a given wall aligned with each other. Once the glue used to laminate the plywood tunnel openings to the wall was dry, I proceeded to connect each pair of portals. Again, using 1/32" thick aircraft grade plywood, I cut pieces of plywood to 1/2" thicker than the wall, which I cut to length and glued in place to line each tunnel.

Once dry, I sanded the liner flush with the plywood tunnel openings. A little spackle work around the perimeter of each tunnel opening was required to feather the portal to the surface of the wall.

Installing a tunnel opening on the 45-degree fireplace wall required a stretched version of the tunnel opening. I built the fireplace several years ago, so I knew what was waiting for me behind the drywall. Even though the fireplace is exhausted through a two-layer B vent, I decided I would take an extra precaution to assure that my trains did not emerge from the tunnel melted from the heat of the fireplace. In this section of the tunnel, I installed a metal heat shield to further insulate the trains from the heat of the fireplace.

The tunnel over the kitchen soffit also required some extra work (Photo 4). Rather than have the train hidden from view as it passed through the soffit, I decided to make the front of the soffit open to viewing. In addition, this is the area where I had to route the track around the range hood exhaust duct. Some creative use of sheet metal and drywall allowed curved tunnel walls that followed the contour of the track.

Shelving

The types of shelving were selected to match the styling of each room the train passed through. In the entryway I used oak, which matched the stain on the adjacent stairway banister and newels (Photo 5). The kitchen, family room, and

closet shelves were pine that was painted white to match the existing trim (Photo 6). These shelves were cut from 1x6 boards with a simple cove routed along the visible edge.

In the laundry room was 24" deep white wire shelving (Photo 7). Shelving this deep in the laundry room leaves enough shelf space to eventually add switch tracks and two long sidings for additional trains.

These shelves carry load well; however, they tend to sag between their cross members. For this reason, I added 1/2" metal conduit to the underside to reinforce the shelving between the braces.

The bridge through the bathroom was styled and painted to match the geometric character of the bathroom mirror frame (Photo 8). In addition, I made the bridge span the entire width of the bathroom





8

vanity and offset it from the adjacent wall. This was done to avoid blocking the vanity light from below, which would have created a shadow on the ceiling above the bridge.

Shelving Support

Appealing to aesthetics, I found it absolutely imperative to not have any unsightly brackets above or below the shelving. I felt that even simple L brackets would be a visual disruption to the look I wanted to achieve.

I wanted fully cantilevered shelving that looked simple and elegant. Constructing such shelving required the development of a system that would consistently yield accurate and reliable results.



9



10



11

of each pin (Photo 11). I then started seating the shelves onto the pins until the shelves were about 1" from the wall (Photo 12). This 1" gap allowed me to grab any given pin with vise grips and to rotate the pin, which enabled me to make very fine adjustments to the angle of the shelf at each pin location. Once the shelf was precisely leveled, I then finished seating the shelf against the wall.

Track and Trains

Laying the track was very straightforward. I used spray contact adhesive to hold down both the Woodland Scenics foam roadbed and GarGraves track. My track and roadbed were largely dictated by sound characteristics of the track as well as by the style and cosmetics of the layout. I based my use of O42 curves on knowing the requirements of the trains I wanted to run. I also wanted the corner shelves to impose into the room as little as possible. Through the closet and over the stove, I had the need for S curves (Photo 13). For these sections I used O54 track to ensure that the trains could handle these undesirable yet necessary curves.

As far as trains are concerned, I selected the Southern Pacific Daylight #4449 for the layout (Photo 14). Our house has jewel-tone colors throughout, and the Southern Pacific Daylight perfectly complements these colors.



12

I started with some basic beam calculations that factored in the shelving material strength, the load and distribution of the weight of my trains, a comfortable factor of safety, and stud spacing. I determined that 3/8" diameter steel pins on 32" centers set into the wall studs would be more than sufficient to support the shelves.

A doweling jig was used to drill holes into the shelves that would receive the steel pins (Photo 9). For drilling the requisite holes into the wall studs, I built a jig with a drill bushing that sat flush against the wall. The jig also featured an adjustment to assure that the drilled hole was level. Then I set the steel pins into the walls (Photo 10).

Even with these methods in place to assure level holes through the shelves and into the studs, slight variations, such as the clearance between the drill bushing and the drill bit, were adding up. The shelves were not seating level on the steel pins.

To resolve this, I put a bend of approximately one degree in the middle




About the Author

Glenn Gordon lives in Buffalo Grove, Illinois. He started tinkering with O gauge trains at age six. Other interesting projects he pursues today include constructing telescopes, restoring a WWII-era biplane, and building a two-seat RV-6 experimental aircraft. He also enjoys rock climbing, playing the piano, and spending time with Judi, his wife of 18 years, and their two sons, Sam age 15 and Andrew age 12.

Layout Operation

The layout is wired for MTH DCS. Using DCS marked my first venture beyond conventional transformer control and was something that I actually deemed very important. Beyond being able to carefully regulate the speed of the train, I wanted to be able to automate the train control and sounds.

In addition, I'm comfortable letting our sons run the layout. They enjoy showing it off more than our basement layout. Guests, young and old alike, enjoy seeing the trains running around the house. If you want to see a video of the layout in action, check out Grand Ledge Railway on YouTube. 



The Artist Who Preserves Our Toy Train Memories

Article and Photos by Jim Barrett



Angela, Bob, and the family pet, Lucy, are in Angela's studio.

Scranton, Pennsylvania, has produced many important things for our hobby like the Steamtown National Historic site, the Delaware and Lackawanna Railroad, and others. But perhaps the most important gift from Scranton as far as the world of toy trains is concerned has been a gifted artist we all know as Angela Trotta Thomas.

Angela was born in Scranton but moved a lot in her early years. "I attended 10 schools in 12 years because my father pursued a career with NASA," she recalls. That resulted in Angela experiencing many different cities and cultures.

Art had a big influence on her early on, and she fondly remembers making drawings as early as the first grade. Angela found that she was comfortable drawing on an easel. "Other kids liked my drawings, and that quickly became a way to meet even more and to fit in." They all wanted her to do more. "That was the first time I remember being influenced by peer group approval," she says. "It gave me the chance to make friends easily in a new location."

Angela still regards Old Forge, Pennsylvania, a town known as the pizza capital of the U.S., as her hometown. Her father served



The Coco Vivo art gallery at 25 Broad Street in Charleston displays a Lionel layout in the window.



Angela applies finishing touches to a small painting.

as the town's mayor at one point. One day during her teen years, she and some girlfriends went to a small restaurant called Revello's Cafe to get a pizza. It would have otherwise been just another relatively uneventful day, but on this day she saw a young man there and she later remembers thinking she was going to marry that man someday. Five years later that lucky day came. The fellow in question, her guy, was Bob Thomas, and she has gone through life with him ever since. Who would think that Angela's art and Bob's Lionel trains would collide there that day to the future delight of all of us?

Husband Bob became a train collector in the early 1950s and was heavily influenced by the art of the postwar-era Lionel catalogs. Bob told Angela about the effect those original Lionel illustrations had on him and a world of other kids during that era and he suggested that possibly she might like to look into that as subject matter for her artistic talents. Those catalogs introduced the artistic side of trains to all of us and they also intrigued Angela Trotta Thomas.

At Marywood University in Scranton, Angela became involved in a very unique master's degree program known as "Get Your Master's with the Masters." Sister Cor Immaculatum, founder of the program, was her greatest influence in both entering the program at Marywood University and creating the Lionel train paintings. Bob offered to help her on her master's research if she thought the vintage Lionel catalogs might be good subject matter for the project.

She was thrilled to have the help, never realizing that painting Lionel trains and their iconic memories would soon become her lifelong work. To thank Bob, she did a small Lionel painting for him as a gift. She researched historic materials for her painting at the library of the Train Collectors Association museum in Strasburg, Pennsylvania. Angela's painting was titled *Christmas Memories* and it featured three Lionel engines under the Christmas tree. Bob was so delighted that he had copies made of the painting and gave one to the librarian at the TCA museum library as a gift for helping Angela with her research on the old catalogs.

Angela received her master's and began to teach drawing classes at the college. Through this program, Angela was able to meet and work with master artists from all over the country.

Nick Ladd, who at the time was the marketing manager for John Wanamaker department store in Philadelphia, noticed Angela's painting on a visit to the museum and asked the librarian to put him in touch with the artist to discuss creating Christmas cards. He saw potential in the painting and asked Angela if they could meet, but he also asked her to do a few more paintings as a basis for a good selection of cards. Angela did a few more paintings as requested, one of which was titled *Window Wishing* and later became one of her trademark paintings.

She set a meeting with Nick at the head offices of John Wanamaker in Philadelphia. When he saw the new paintings, he was so excited about them that he told Angela that they should be limited-edition prints first. Nick influenced Angela to go from art for cards to doing full art prints of her original works and offering them for sale at the TCA Eastern Division York train show.

Nick also suggested that Angela write to Lionel to gain its permission to create the paintings of classic iconic memories of Lionel trains. So with encouragement from Nick, Angela sent

some unsolicited copies of her Lionel paintings to Richard Kughn, then president of Lionel, just to ask permission to pursue creation of these paintings. A week went by with no response from Dick Kughn, and Angela was on pins and needles waiting to see what he thought. Finally, she called and introduced herself to his secretary.

"Oh, yes, I know exactly who you are," she said. "He never lets them out of his sight." It turns out, she told Angela that he actually carried them around with him in his briefcase. She was soon licensed with the famed Lionel company and has been partnered with Lionel ever since dating back 22 years.

As a result of Angela's decision to send her work to him for his approval, Dick launched her professional career by licensing Angela to create paintings of so many iconic Lionel memories. Since that time, Dick and Linda Kughn have been devoted to Angela's work and have become her very dear friends.

"I can't say enough about how important the patronage of Dick and Linda Kughn were to my success," Angela asserts. "They and Nick Ladd launched me on my way to whatever successes I have enjoyed."

When asked about the source for ideas for some of her works, she very enthusiastically says, "I paint memories, and memories are history. Lionel is the history of toy trains. I am influenced by the stories people tell me of childhood memories of their own trains, their friends, and their families. When I hear the same Lionel



The Lackawanna Railroad China painting is behind a setting of real Lackawanna Railroad china.



Angela is at her easel in the studio.



A painting titled *Passing Engine* hangs above the fireplace in Angela's home.



Among the paintings in the art show at the gallery are *Dashing Through the Woods*, at the left, and *Imagination*, at the right.



Angela presented me with a gift of a small church steeple painting. The range of her subjects extends beyond just trains.

The *Mickey and Minnie* painting hangs in the art show. This painting depicts the famous depression-era item that, in large measure, saved Lionel from bankruptcy.



memory many times, I realize this is a very universal memory and would make a great subject for a painting.” These are the memories that so many of her collectors relate to and the ones she chooses to paint.

“When people describe their cherished memories to me,” Angela recalls, “I immediately get an image in my mind of what the painting should look like. The same thing happens whenever I talk to someone about creating a private commission painting for them. After I get the vision for the painting, I ask the client to gather all of the puzzle pieces: the photos, the actual train, or even the classic train boxes. I walk clients through the process of gathering everything I need to create the paintings. If I am working on a commission, I have them send me photos of their families. If I am working on a painting that will depict a memory for many collectors, I work with models depicting the subjects.

“Then I set out to put the painting together. I do a detailed pencil drawing first to get the scene right. If I am doing the painting for a private commission, I then send the initial drawings to the client for approval before I start the actual painting. The client then keeps the pencil drawings as well as the finished painting.

“Many times I get my inspiration just watching people with their operating layouts. I see the passion and the enjoyment flowing from the person and I am grateful to have the ability to pass on those emotions, which seem to flow through me to the painted scene. It brings the person back to a cherished time. I derive great pleasure when I can move people in this way. I have had grown men cry on the



heart was. She realized that her style was in that very significant 1950s' time period and decided to stay with it.

Did the works of other famed artists such as Norman Rockwell influence her? "I'm not trying to do his work," Angela responds, "but I am strongly influenced by his attention to detail and his ability to make scenes talk directly to the observer."

Angela is now a fixture of the artistic side of our hobby in such places as the Orange Hall at the Train Collectors Association Eastern Division York train meet. She is also quick to add, "My works are sold through galleries, train shops, and even online through my website at www.angelatrottathomas.com."

One of her growing outlets is through private commissions, which come from people who have seen her work and want her to re-create a memory of their own. Angela continues, "I am always honored when someone thinks enough of my work to entrust me to create a private commission painting of his or her cherished memory. One client wanted his scene to depict him and his friends playing with their trains. But he also wanted to somehow include his own

Lionel made more than just electric trains. The No. 455 Lionel electric range is depicted in Angela's *Little Lionel Chef* painting.

phone when thanking me for bringing back that special moment for them. That is very rewarding."

After creating many of those Lionel paintings, Angela was thrilled to have been selected for the Alumni of the Year award from Marywood University. "The Marywood master's program really did change my life," she says. "I worked with so many famous and talented artists, and as a result found my own direction as an artist."

Fred Brenner, a renowned artist and teacher in the program, remarked, "You draw like an angel, but all of your paintings have a 1950s' feel. Can you update the feel of the scenes you paint?" Angela tried but soon realized she couldn't effectively do that—nor did she really want to. It just wasn't where her



Postwar treasures in this painting are Lionel trains and accessories, a Royal typewriter, and a *Collier's* magazine.

father in the scene. He supplied photos of his father as he looked when he was just a kid. My finished work depicted my client and his friends all playing together with his trains but with one more friend, his own father as he would have looked at the same age. Customers don't always want just train-related subjects. Some want scenes related to their homes, their antique autos, or just all kinds of different things."

Currently, Angela devotes her time more to the TCA York meet, the Lionel warehouse sale, and Lionel Collectors Club of America conventions. Now Lionel is licensing more and more Angela Trotta Thomas products. Lionel is now creating products such as ornaments, puzzles, flags, wall hangings, and so forth, all featuring Angela's paintings. These items will all be available this year.

Even the famed Smithsonian Institution has asked her to display her works in its Christmas traditions display. Her paintings all depict her now-famous scenes showing American Christmas toy trains. She also donates prints with painted remarques (small portions or parts of larger paintings) to train clubs such as the TCA, the LCCA, and others for auction. Those proceeds are then used to benefit the club.

In December 2013, Angela had her second annual Lionel Christmas art show at the Coco Vivo art gallery in Charleston, South Carolina. The opening was very well attended with Angela signing and giving away Lionel Christmas catalogs, which featured her painting *Santa's Letter* on the cover.

Bob created a Christmas layout in the gallery front window. Despite the small space, he was able to construct an 8' x 8' layout that featured two running trains, one of which was the Lionel Angela Trotta Thomas engine with many of the Lionel billboard boxcars featuring her Lionel paintings, including the Lionel Angela Trotta Thomas art gallery building set high on a mountain with Santa flying overhead. Ice skaters and Santa's helpers also adorned the magical wintery layout.

"It has been wonderful to see so many children of all ages press their noses against the gallery window to enjoy the trains," Angela says.

On December 13, 2013, Angela was a guest on WCBD Channel 2 NBC News in Charleston. During the two-hour morning show, Angela created a small painting depicting the 19th-century *General* steam locomotive in front of a station that features the Channel 2 logo on the roof of the station. It was unveiled at the end of the program and now hangs in the TV station's green room.

Every important activity in our society needs a great artist or icon to depict that activity and keep it alive and well. Those of us who value our trains as an important part of our history are lucky to have Angela Trotta Thomas to document our passion for posterity. 🚂



Several of Angela's paintings and Bob's Lionel layout are seen at her Coco Vivo art gallery show.



The Lionelville No. 60 trolley passes Thomas Station. All buildings in the painting bear the names of Angela's family including Lucy.



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20-3315-1	CANADIAN PACIFIC 4-6-4 ROYAL HUDSON W/PS2,0 M10V1	\$829.00
20-3363-1	NORFOLK & WEST J STEAM LOCOMOTIVE (HRW) W/PS2 M10V1	\$949.00
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20-3369-1	BRITISH RW DUCHESSE CLASS STEAM W/PS2 (HRW) M12V2	\$1,049.00
20-3370-1	BRITISH RW DUCHESSE CLASS STEAM W/PS2 (HRW) M12V2	\$1,049.00
20-3371-1	BRITISH RW DUCHESSE CLASS STEAM W/PS2 (HRW) M12V2	\$1,049.00
20-3386-1	NYC 4-4-0 EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS W/PS2 (70" HRW) M9V2	\$579.00
20-3391-1	LEVATHAN 4-4-0 AMERICAN W/PS2 (HRW) M10V1	\$579.00
20-3401-1	KBAYSTSB BR 18 EXPRESS STEAM LOCO W/PS3 HRW M12V1	\$1,049.00
20-3403-1	SCNF EST ERA II CLASS 241A STEAM W/PS3 HRW M12V1	\$1,049.00
20-3404-1	SCNF EST ERA II CLASS 241A STEAM W/PS3 HRW M11V2	\$1,049.00
20-3405-1	SCNF EST ERA II CLASS 241A STEAM W/PS3 HRW M12V1	\$1,049.00
20-3417-1	SOUTHERN 2-8-4 K-4 KANAWHA STEAM W/PS2 M10V2	\$1,049.00
20-3426-1	SNCF ERA II 241A STEAM W/PS3 (HRW) M12V1	\$1,049.00
20-3430-1	PENNSYLVANIA 2-8-0 H-3 CONSOLIDATION STM W/PS3 M11V1	\$649.95
20-3434-1	MD&PA 2-8-0 H-3 CONSOLIDATION STM W/PS3 (HRW) M11V1	\$649.95
20-3435-2	SANTA FE 4-6-4 BLUE GOOSE HUDSON STM W/PS3 SW M11V1	\$999.95
20-3453-1	PA 0-6-0 USRA STEAM ENGINE W/PS3 (HRW) M11V2	\$580.95
20-3465-1	SOUTHERN 4-6-2 Ps-4 STEAM ENGINE W/PS3 M11V2	\$810.00
20-3469-1	PA 4-6-2 K-4s STM ENGINE W/PS3 (HRW) M11V2	\$810.00
20-3471-1	PA 4-6-2 K-4s STM ENGINE W/PS3 (HRW) M11V2	\$810.00
20-3472-1	PA 4-6-2 K-4s MODERN STEAM ENGINE W/PS3 (HRW) M11V2	\$810.00
20-5509-1	CONRAIL 3R W/PR E-33 ELEC RECTIFIER ENGINE W/PS2	\$189.00
20-5556-1	CAN NAT'L EP-3 ELECTRIC ENGINE W/PS2 (HI RL WLS)	\$599.00
20-5558-1	NEW HAVEN EP-3 ELECTRIC ENGINE W/PS2 (HRW)	\$599.00
20-5571-3	GREAT NORTHERN ELECTRIC AUX B+B (NON POWERED)	\$189.00
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20-5633-1	VEOLIA TRANS GERMAN TRAXX P160 AC2 ELEC PS3 HW M12V2	\$405.00
20-5634-1	RAILION EUROPEAN TRAXX F140 AC2 ELEC PS3 (HRW) M12V2	\$405.00
20-5634-3	RAILION EUROPEAN TRAXX F140 AC2 ELEC (NP) M13V1	\$197.95
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20-5653-3	CARGO TRAXX F140 AC-1 ELEC (NP) M13V2	\$189.95
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20-5661-1	NJ TRANSIT ALP 46 ELECTRIC ENGINE W/PS3 HRW M12V2	\$419.95
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30-1278-1	VIRGINIA TRUCKEE 4-6-0 STEAM ENGINE W/PS2	\$329.00
30-1407-1E	MTHARC 4-6-0 TEN WHEELER STEAM ENGINE W/PS2,0	\$249.00

30-1568-1	NEW YORK CENTRAL 4-6-4 HUDSON STEAM W/PS3 M12V2	\$379.00
30-1569-1	RFP& 4-6-4 HUDSON STEAM ENGINE W/PS3 M12V2	\$379.00
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30-1576-1	W.A.R.R. 4-4-0 GENERAL STEAM W/PS3 M13V1	\$359.95
30-1580-1	PA 4-8-2 IMPERIAL M1-a MOUNTAIN STM W/PS3 M13V1	\$405.00
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30-1585-1	GREAT AMERICAN CIRCUS 4-8-4 TEN WHEELER W/PS3	\$405.00
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30-20009-1	ROCK ISLAND GP-7 DIESEL ENGINE W/PS2 M11V1	\$249.00
30-20009-3	ROCK ISLAND GP-7 DIESEL ENGINE (NP) M11V1	\$125.00
30-20013-1	WISCONSIN SOUTHERN MP15AC DIESEL W/PS2 M11V1	\$249.00
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30-20020-3	WESTERN MARYLAND RS-3 DIESEL NP M11V1	\$125.00
30-20050-1	ALASKA SD70Ac IMPERIAL DIESEL W/PS2 M11V2	\$270.00
30-20067-1	PITTSBURGH & LAKE ERIE SW-9 SWITCHER W/PS2 M11V2	\$249.00
30-20075-1	ILLINOIS CENTRAL E-8 AA DIESEL W/PS2 M11V2	\$289.00
30-20075-3	ILLINOIS CENTRAL E-8 B-UNIT (NON POWERED) M11V2	\$99.00
30-20085-1	CSX C30-7 DIESEL ENGINE W/PS3 M12V1	\$288.00
30-20087-1	SANTA FE C30-7 DIESEL ENGINE W/PS3 M12V1	\$288.00
30-20088-1	UNION PACIFIC C30-7 DIESEL W/PS3 M12V1	\$288.00
30-20097-1	MD & PA SW-1 SWITCHER DIESEL W/PS3 M12V1	\$259.00
30-20102-1	CHICAGO NORTHWEST E-3 AA DIESEL ENGINE W/PS3 M12V1	\$324.00
30-20103-3	SEABOARD E-3 B UNIT (NP) M12V1	\$108.00
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30-20106-1	NEW HAVEN GP-9 DIESEL W/PS3 M12V2	\$270.00
30-20115-1	SANTA FE SD-45 DIESEL W/PS3 M12V2	\$288.00
30-20117-3	NORFOLK SOUTHERN SD-45 DIESEL (NP) M12V2	\$144.00
30-20118-1	CSX SD-45 DIESEL W/PS3 M12V2	\$288.00
30-20124-1	JERSEY CENTRAL SD70Ac IMPERIAL DIESEL W/PS3 M12V2	\$288.00
30-20125-1	WABASH SD70Ac IMPERIAL DIESEL W/PS3 M12V2	\$288.00
30-20127-1	PENNSYLVANIA ALCO PA AA DIESEL W/PS3 M12V2	\$360.00
30-20127-3	PENNSYLVANIA ALCO PA B-UNIT (NP) M12V2	\$135.00
30-20133-1	LACKAWANNA SD70Ac IMPERIAL DIESEL W/PS3 M13V1	\$297.00
30-20147-1	PENNSYLVANIA SW-1 SWITCHER DIESEL W/PS3 M13V1	\$270.00
30-2229-3	B&O E-3 B-UNIT DIESEL ENGINE (NON POWERED)	\$39.00
30-2489-3	BALTIMORE & OHIO E-3 B-UNIT (NON POWERED)	\$49.00
30-2490-3	BURLINGTON E-3 B-UNIT (NON POWERED)	\$49.00
30-2491-3	MAINE CENTRAL E-3 B-UNIT (NON POWERED)	\$49.00
30-2514-0	PENN GG-1 MILLENNIUM (031) ELECTRIC ENGINE	\$499.00
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30-2913-3	KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN E-8 B-UNIT (NP) M9V1	\$89.00
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1

A Nice Little Set from 1946

If you are a train collector, wonderful things can happen when you start remodeling the basement train room. As I was carrying stuff upstairs to get it out of the way for the workmen who were putting in the new ceiling and floor, my eyes fastened on a bin that I didn't remember as being part of my "stash." Now that the government has officially acknowledged the existence of Area 51, it is no fun calling my secure storage area that anymore, so it has simply become "the stash." Opening the unfamiliar bin yielded several happy discoveries. Among them was a nice little passenger set that took me back to 1946, the start of the postwar years for Lionel (Photo 1).



2

Prewar Inspired

At first, the contents looked a lot like a prewar set with a 1666 steamer, whistle tender, and three tinplate passenger cars, but the postwar trucks and knuckle couplers on the tender and the passenger cars indicated something else. My find turned out to be a 1946 O27 passenger set numbered 1402W. The "W" at the end of the set number indicates it had a whistle tender.

The 1666 was a prewar design. It was one of three locomotives with the same body casting that joined the Lionel line in 1938, including the O gauge 224 and the 1666 for O27. The 1666 was cataloged for the last time in 1946.

In terms of features, the 1666 did not have postwar goodies in it like puffing smoke or Magne-Traction, but it more than made up for that with delightful details that gave it eye appeal that its O27 successors could not match.

My example is a little gem. Starting from the boiler top of this 1666, there is a movable cast bell mounted on a steel base; later production engines got along with a single piece bell riveted to the boiler (Photos 2 and 3). The handrails are black and appear to use a thinner gauge of wire than later versions, and the silver "1666" under the cab window is printed on a separate plate (Photo 4). The nickel-rimmed drivers set off the black boiler quite nicely and are complemented by the bright, highly detailed running gear (Photo 5).



3

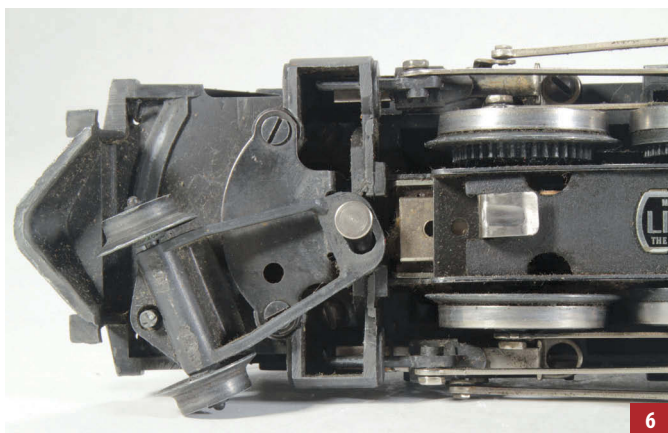


4



Turning the engine over reveals a die-cast pilot truck plus an elaborate art deco O27 Lionel nameplate with sliders used to pick up electrical current instead of rollers (Photos 6 and 7). The rear truck is a complex spring-loaded casting that was obviously too expensive to produce for newer, small Lionel steam locomotives (Photo 8). Also visible at the extreme right is the rounded rear cab floor, which marks my example as a postwar engine.

The 2466WX tender with the silver “Lionel Lines” lettering on its plastic sides is appropriate for the 1946 version (Photo 9). As you can see, together they make a very attractive toy train combination (Photo 10).





11

They Run

While I was writing this, I started idly moving the drivers of the 1666 back and forth. The action of the gearing was smooth, and that led me to wonder if this little 1946 jewel would still run. After all, nice as the engine and tender looked, the wear on the sliders indicated we were not talking mint here, so why not try to run it? I broke every rule of experienced collectors and operators by taking the engine and tender over to our test track and trying them out without a mechanical examination, lubrication, or any type of maintenance. I just applied current, and the 1666 went down the track smoothly as if it had just come off the production line. Not bad for a genuine geriatric! The whistle tender needed a little bit of lubrication and TLC, but then the whistle sounded clearly. That may not have been too bright a way to go about it, but it was a testimonial to the basic quality built into Lionel engines in the 1940s.

The Tinplate Passenger Cars

The two 2440 Pullmans and the 2441 Observation in the 1402W set are direct descendants of the prewar cars with the same numbers (Photo 11). The O27 Outfit Lionel produced in 1941, numbered 1190W, is an earlier version of the 1946 set we are discussing, complete with a 1666, two 2440s, and a



12



13

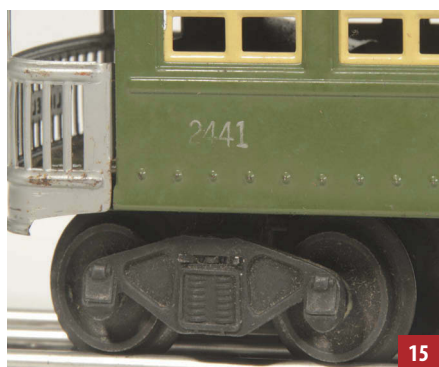
2441. This is relevant because the 2440-series cars were changed just before World War II to make them more compatible in appearance with the highly detailed die-cast locomotives that were pulling them.

The prewar 2640 Pullman shown here in blue with a silver aluminum roof has been modified to make it look longer and lower, the trucks have been moved closer to the ends of the car, the steps of the earlier models have been removed to accommodate the changed position of the trucks, and diaphragms have been eliminated (Photo 12).

In addition to these changes, the 1946 model 2440 also wears new die-cast metal trucks with remote coil-actuated knuckle couplers (Photo 13). The two 2440 Pullmans and the 2441 Observation have one-piece dark green roofs and medium green sides (Photo 14). The letters and numbers are rubber stamped in silver and are more delicate than the coats of medium green paint that cover the sides and ends of the cars (Photo 15). The contrasting yellow-painted doors, window frames, and benches help brighten up the dark green colors of the three cars.



14



15




16

The Boxes

Here are some images of the boxes, which indicate they all came from the same set with one exception. The printed label for the 2466WX tender box is blank where it ought to be stamped O27. The tender that was inside is correct for the 1402W set, but it may not have been originally packed with it (Photo 16). Still and all, the trains make a nice consist, and that is not too bad for an accidental “bin find.”

Final Observations

It was fun bringing this set to you, especially since I did not even know I owned it. Its significance is that it marked another step toward a more realistic look for Lionel trains. Even though the tinsplate passenger cars served as brief placeholders in the postwar Lionel line until the new 2400 series of plastic-bodied streamline passenger cars were produced in 1948, the tinsplate cars had a certain elegance and charm the new cars did not have (Photo 17). 



17

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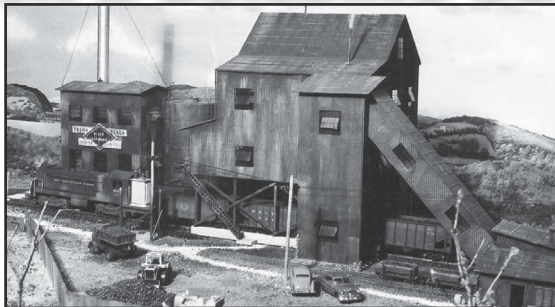
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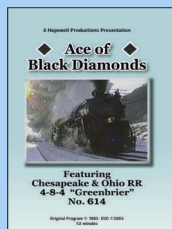
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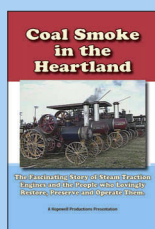
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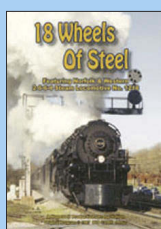
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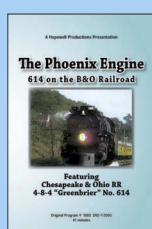
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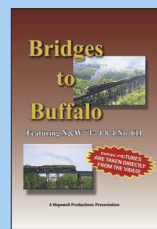
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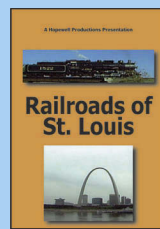
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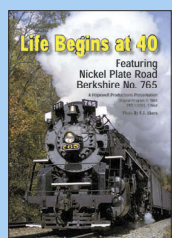
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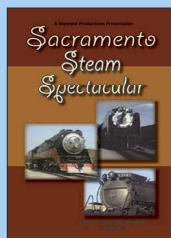
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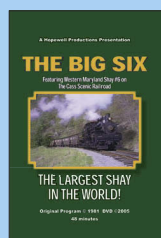
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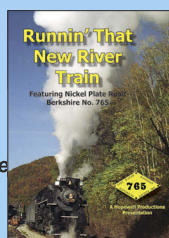
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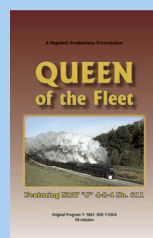
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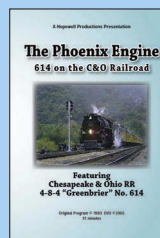
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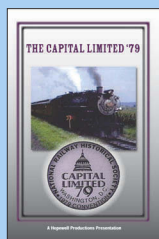
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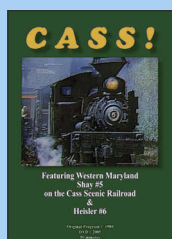
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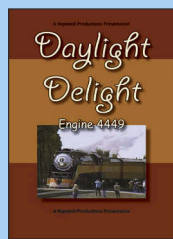
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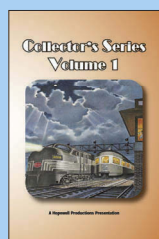
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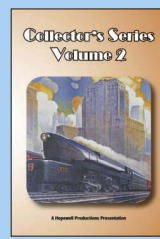
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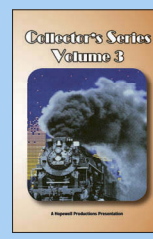
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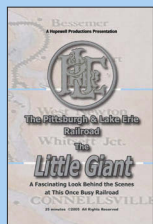
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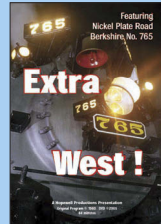
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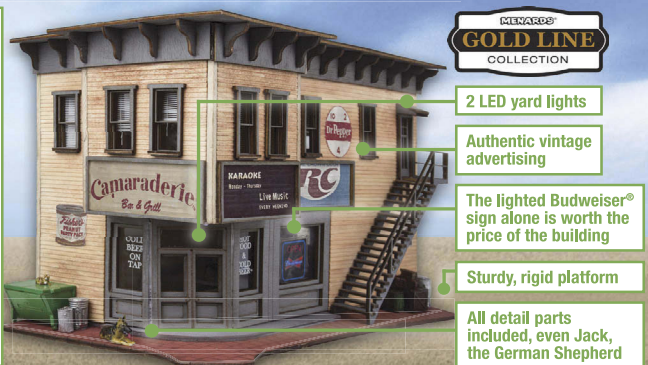


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Farmer Bill toils long and hard to cultivate the area's finest pumpkin crop.

Beawslaiw's Annual Pumpkin Harvest

Article and Photos by Matt Bushong

Beawslaiw is a rural town located along the Southern Pacific main line situated in the fertile agricultural region that lies between San Francisco and Los Angeles. The town's small depot provides passenger service for both the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Brisbane and Bushong short line railroad with the SP Coast Daylight ranking as the star visitor.

Back in the early 1950s, farmer Bill still owned a small pasture adjacent to the SP tracks and not far from the local depot. Years before, the old farmer had tried to make a go of that land with a pumpkin crop, but it was never a profitable venture. Nevertheless, every year he continued to plant pumpkin seeds, tend to the plants as they grew, and then harvest the crop. Because Bill never fenced off the pumpkin patch, his prize bull would on rare occasions wander out there strutting and foraging among the pumpkins.

Still, Bill's pumpkin patch was regarded as something of a seasonal local attraction by area residents, and when harvest time

rolled around, Bill would invite the citizens of Beawslaiw to come to his colorful patch and pick pumpkins. It was a splendid way to get together with friends and neighbors, engage in small-town gossip, and harvest the bountiful crop for jack-o'-lanterns, home-made pumpkin pies, and even some hearty pumpkin soup.

In October 1950, just a week or so before Halloween, an especially large crop of pumpkins populated the patch. Most of the townsfolk came by to gather pumpkins and, as an added benefit, watch the SP Coast Daylight train as it slowed down and pulled into the station situated farther along the line. With only a brief stop at the depot, passengers aboard the Daylight did not have time to do any pumpkin shopping, but that was probably just as well because the locals rather quickly plucked the patch clean. One thing was certain though, there was definitely going to be some great carvings and prize-winning pies at the Beawslaiw Harvest Festival that year. 🍂



As picks from the patch are loaded for transport, locals gather to exchange some gossip.



Eager pumpkin pickers scarcely notice as the SP Daylight coasts into the nearby depot.



When Bill's prize bull wants to roam in the pumpkin patch, you can be sure nobody is going to try to stop him.



Headed in opposite directions, the SP Daylight heads north while a young couple and their load of pumpkins head south.

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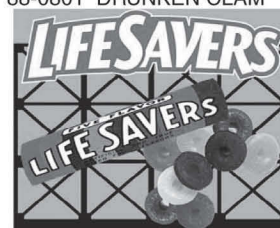
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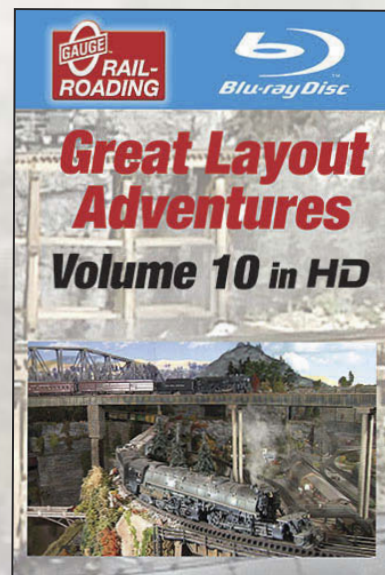
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Scene Along the Rails



The 1225 Steams Again

Article and Photos by Jim DeVleeschouwer

The small town of Owosso, Michigan, is home to one of the largest operating steam locomotives in the country. Pere Marquette No. 1225, a 2-8-4 Class N1 Berkshire, has a very colorful history. After its first career pulling freight for the Pere Marquette Railroad ended in 1951, it was put on display at the Michigan State University campus in 1957. MSU students started the engine's first restoration, with the restored 1225 pulling its first train in 1988. The 1225 is now operated by the Steam Railroad Institute (SRI), a railroad museum in Owosso, Michigan.

In 2004, the 1225 really roared into the national spotlight. Warner Brothers used the engine's blueprints to create the iron horse star of *The Polar Express* movie. The production crew also

spent several days in Owosso recording the locomotive's sounds for the movie. The tender remained painted in Polar Express livery for several years, and children young and old riding the North Pole Express holiday season trains throughout those years were able to ride behind the *real* Polar Express.

In 2009, the 1225 was pulled from service for restoration and the required 15-year Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) boiler inspection. The 1225 passed the FRA inspection on November 7, 2013, paving the way for 15 more years of service. Kevin Mayer, SRI's chief mechanical officer, stated that over 26,000 hours of work and \$900,000 was put into getting the locomotive back together and up to specs. According to Ron

Polcyn, an OGR On-Line Forum member and SRI volunteer, the crew replaced most of the firebox and all the associated stay bolts, replaced all the tubes and flues, performed necessary repairs to the boiler, and replaced the ash pan.

The SRI's first public viewing and excursion for the overhauled 1225 took place on November 20, 2013. Before the engine was unveiled, Aarne Frobom, the institute's board chairman, told the crowd, "We are the only people in the world waiting for a 200-ton steam locomotive right




now and we have the right to feel a little special.” Its whistle blew and bell rang as the 1225 pulled out of the yard promptly at 5 p.m. to the cheers of the assembled crowd.

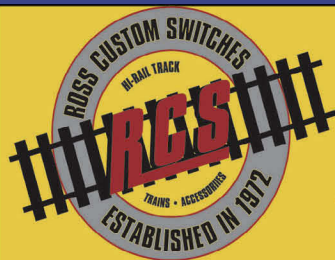
The locomotive’s admirers were able to spend about an hour inspecting and photographing it before the 6 p.m. excursion departure. A favorite activity of theirs was climbing up the stairs to get a view of the cab and to ask the engine crew questions about the locomotive. It was a chilly night, so standing next to the firebox was a great way for visitors to warm up for a few minutes.

Passengers boarded the train at 6 p.m. I sat in the car immediately behind the locomotive so I could hear every chuff as it steamed ahead and could savor the whistle blowing at each grade crossing. I had ridden behind the 1225 several times in the past, but being on the first excursion after its rebuild was a special experience I will never forget.

The Steam Railroading Institute has a great future planned for this Berkshire. On March 15, 2014, the LCCA is hosting a special trip for its members behind the 1225, and the biggest event of the year will be Train Expo 2014 to be held in Owosso on June 20–22. Visit www.michigansteamtrain.com for full details. Locomotives from across the country will visit Owosso for this event that will also feature vintage automobiles and airplanes. Last but certainly not least, the big Berkshire will head the always-popular North Pole Express trips in November and December.

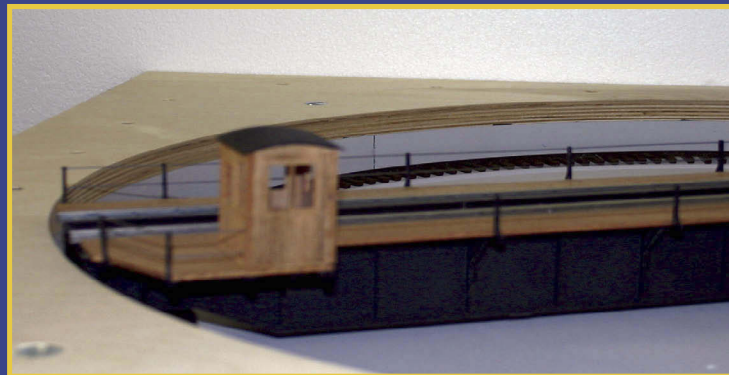
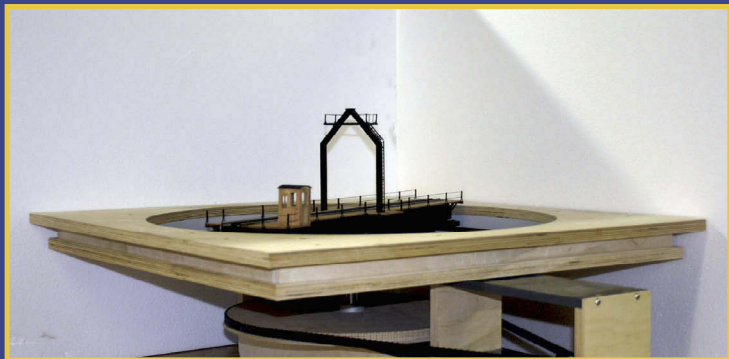
The 1225 is one of a handful of steam locomotives of its size still running. Make plans to join it on a trip you will never forget. 





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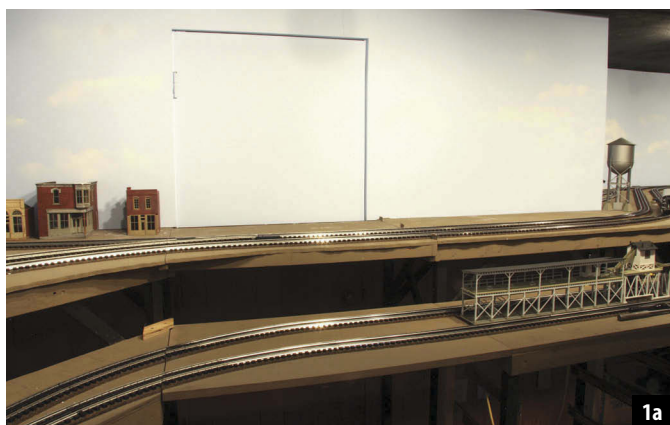
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Building a Layout: Making Hinged Sections



1a



1b

Hinged sections on my layout are movable parts of the train table's surface that can easily be lifted up or dropped down, allowing you to gain access to interior parts of the layout or even to pass completely through it, if necessary. Photos 1a and 1b show a lift-up and a drop-down door allowing passage through the layout into a storage closet.

When done right, these sections, complete with track, layout structures, scenery, and wiring, can be repeatedly hinged open and then returned to their original exact location every time. Some of them may not even be used when the layout is completely finished, but they sure do come in handy during construction and landscaping, making those tasks much easier. I used to hinge only the track bridges, but that has obvious limitations. When I found out that it is indeed very easy to hinge whole sections of the layout, I learned how versatile this trick becomes when solving problems building layouts in confined spaces. In O gauge, confined spaces mean almost all spaces.

Lift-Up Sections

Any portion of the layout table that opens by lifting up poses a singular problem. If there is track on the panel to be lifted up, the hinging point (hinge pin) must be just at or above the tops of the rails to keep the track from bending back against itself, as shown in the illustration. I've not been successful finding a cheap, ready-made hinge that solves that requirement, so I devised a way to modify a simple hardware store 3" leaf hinge that will do the trick (Photo 2).



2



3

You will need a bench-mounted vise, a small hammer, and some hands-on practice to do this. Turn the hinge upside down with the hinge pin side down (Photo 3). Using a sharp-pointed felt-tip marker, draw a line between the two mounting holes closest to the hinge pin as shown in the photo. Mount one end of the hinge in a vise with the line you drew aligned with the top of the jaws (Photo 4). Using a hammer, slowly bend the portion of the hinge sticking up above the vise back against the top of the vise jaws (Photo 5). Make the bend right on the drawn line very sharp right on the top of the vise. Use the hammer to sharpen the bend precisely at that point. Be sure that the hinge pin ends up on the top of the bend, not underneath it.

Remove the bent side of the hinge from the vise and remount the remaining end of the hinge into the vise (Photo 6). Repeat the process (Photo 7). You should end up with a finished hinge shaped just like what you see in Photo 8.

You'll need two or three hinges identical to this for every lift-up panel you plan to have on your layout. The finished height of the hinge pin is what's important in this process. In my case, I use cork roadbed and GarGraves or Ross track. Using a 3" leaf hinge, the finished height of the hinge pins will end up just above the tops of any future track rails, allowing the panel to lift up and back without binding the ends of the track against themselves.

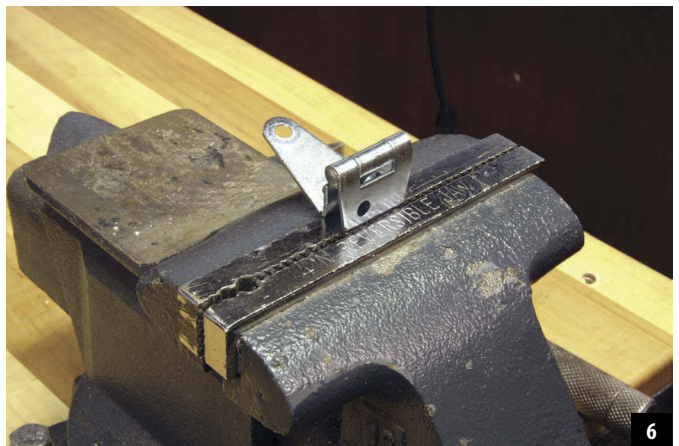
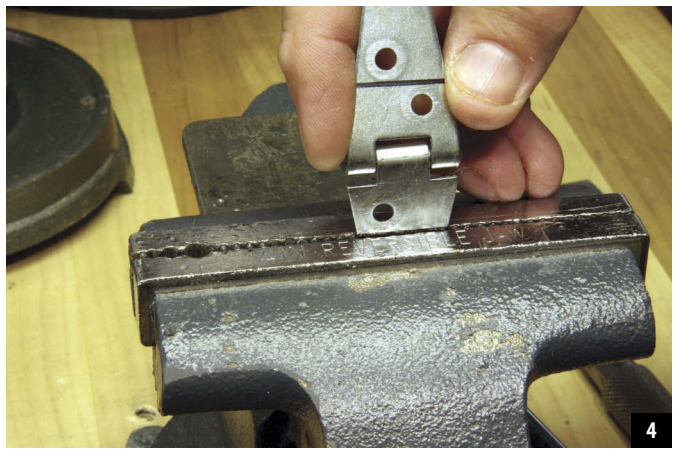
If you use any track and roadbed combination that makes the tops of your rails higher than what I used, be sure your hinge is the next size up from the example shown here. The end result of bending the hinge will need to put the hinge pin high enough to keep it at or above the height of the track and roadbed combination you use. Photo 9 shows what the hinged side of the lift-up panel looks like.

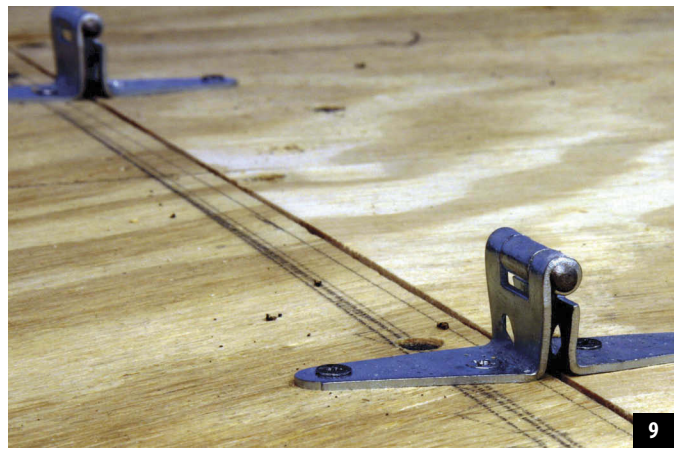
Photo 10 shows an opening in the table that will accommodate a lift-up panel I plan to make. Carefully measure the opening and then make a plywood panel to fit into it (Photo 11). Make the finished panel exactly 1/8" narrower than the opening and plan on mounting it with a 1/16" gap at the rear of the opening. Mount some scrap pieces of 1x2 on the top surface of the opening and trial fit the plywood panel into the opening, but don't install it yet (Photo 12). Just check the fit. Make sure you have a clear 1/8" gap on the opening side of the panel with the other edge, the future hinged edge, flush against the opening.

On the underside of the panel, mount some lightweight, narrow 1x2 framing to keep the panel totally flat (Photo 13). Be sure the framing of the layout is flush with the hinged edge of the panel and 1/8" in from the swinging edge of the panel. You will need that gap to allow the finished frame to swing up without rubbing the edge of the train table when the panel opens.

Return the finished lift-up panel into the layout table opening, leaving the scrap wood still mounted on top of the panel. Be sure to keep the panel flush against the hinged side of the opening and add some temporary screws to the ends of the scrap wood to keep it flush with the tabletop.

Now is a good time to note future locations of track, scenery, and structures to help determine the locations of hinges you are about to install. Keep in mind that only the hinge pin portion of the odd-shaped hinges you made will show above the rails in finished scenery so any roadways that make a grade crossing on the finished layout will also be at the height of the rails. Locating such roads right on the edge of the opening is a great way to disguise the hinges of the lift-up panel where possible. That's





obviously not the only way to hide the hinges; something so simple as a strategically placed bush will also do the trick.

The hinges you made are for swinging the finished panel up and down only. They might not be structurally able to support the finished weight of the panel when it is at rest in the opening. For this, you need to install some supports along the underside of the frame, both on the hinged side and on the swinging side of the panel.

With the scrap wood still installed on the top side of the panel, locate a load rest under the hinged side of the lift-up panel (Photo 14). Note that when positioning the load rest, be sure to allow a slight gap, for example the thickness of the cardboard flap from a box of screws, between the bottom of the hinged panel frame and the load rest. This is necessary to prevent the hinges from binding when opening and closing the panel. Photo 15 shows the finished result.

When installing the load rest under the swinging side of the panel, attach some thin felt pads to the surface of the rest bar and position the load rest bar up against the bottom of the frame of the lift-up panel (Photos 16 and 17).

When you have determined that the location of the hinges won't conflict with any track or scenery on the finished layout plan, install the hinges with the pin portion of the hinge exactly above the crack between the table and the lift-up panel. Install the hinge leaf on the door side first. Then install the leaf of the hinge on the table making sure that the side of the hinge on the table is not pulling the panel down as you install it. If it is, put a shim under the hinge leaf on the table.

Now you can remove the scrap wood from the top of the panel and gingerly test the panel by slowly swinging it up and down a few times. Note how quietly the door closes on the felt pads. If you encounter any binding on the hinges, remove the screws on the table side of the hinges, slip a piece of thin cardboard between the hinge and the table, and then reattach. That will likely clear up any binding.

Then install something to keep the lift-up panel open so you can work with it open and out of the way. I used a simple chain-and-hook method including a turnbuckle so I could adjust the chain for a specific opening (Photo 18).



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18



19

Drop-Door Sections

If your layout has more than one level, you may need drop doors or even a combination of lift-up and drop doors. To make a hinged drop door, start by carefully measuring the same way as done for a lift-up section. Since any framework under a drop-down panel would pose a host of problems, don't use a thin section of plywood to fill the opening like for the lift-up section. Instead, I like to use Aspen shelving wood, available from home improvement centers. Aspen is a smooth white wood that is glued edge to edge in such a way as to virtually eliminate any warping.

As before, make the finished panel exactly 1/8" narrower than the opening with a 1/16" gap at the back of the opening. Mount some scrap pieces of 1x2 onto the top surface of the Aspen panel and trial fit it into the opening (Photo 19). Make sure you have a clear 1/8" gap on the swinging side of the panel with the future hinged edge flush against the opening. Fasten the scrap wood ends to the tabletop keeping the hinged edge flush with the opening and the 1/8" gap on the swinging side of the panel.



20



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As anyone who knows me will likely tell you, I believe that piano hinges are a wonderful thing. They solve all kinds of problems. They are available from hardware stores in various lengths up to 3' or 4' long and can be cut with a hacksaw to any length needed. Photo 20 shows a cut hinge being installed onto the underside of the swinging panel and the layout table frame opening. The nice thing about a piano hinge is that it is structurally strong enough to support the drop-down panel without any further framing needed.

To keep the swinging side of the drop door latched up, a simple dead bolt, like for screen doors, will do. But if you plan on using the drop door frequently, you'll need something more



21



22

elaborate. Photo 21 shows what is called a transom catch. Many hardware stores still carry them, but if you can't find these catches near you, go to www.houseofantiquehardware.com. There you will find examples of all kinds of transom catches complete with striker plates. The finish isn't important since you will not see the catches when everything is closed. Buy the cheapest ones that will do the trick.

I used these on my drop doors with an added operating mechanism I've devised to make opening and closing the doors very dependable and easy. Photo 22 shows two transom catches installed on the underside of the drop door, complete with my cable system joining them together so both can be operated simultaneously with the movement of the opening lever. Two transom catches per door are necessary however deep or shallow the door might be to ensure that the whole panel will remain flat when closed and encountering the weight of the trains above them.

The cable is standard hardware store cable of 1/16" or .063" diameter mounted through some 5/32" diameter holes drilled into the transom catch pull levers. The cable is quite easily soldered with rosin core solder used for electrical connections to ensure that the cable connections will stay connected. No additional flux is needed beyond what is already in the rosin core solder.



23

Photo 23 shows plastic wheels that guide the cables mounted into the board with threaded bolts that match the diameters of the holes in the wheels. Drill the holes into the board with a diameter slightly smaller than the bolt threads and secure the bolt with CA glue once it is screwed in. The wheels are standard replacement wheels for sliding screen doors, also available at hardware stores. The metal bar, wooden knob, return spring, and washers can also be found at the hardware store.

Once the cable is routed and secured with solder, also secure the cable with T-25 staples acting as wire guides. It's a very simple but elegant solution.

Photo 24 shows the striker plates for the two transom catches mounted in the table frame. Take care of this before installing any track. We'll cover the reasons for that in more detail in my next "Backshop." Install the striker plates flat onto the wooden frame of the table opening. Locate it by drawing a line on the underside of the transom catch right where the bolt of the catch will contact the frame wood of the table. This will serve as a guide where you will mount the striker plates.


If you have left enough gap between the drop door and the frame, it won't be necessary to recess the striker plates into the wood of the frame. If not, you'll need to clear out a space for the thickness of the striker plates using a wood router or a router attachment for a motor tool. If a striker plate isn't flat on the transom catch you have, flatten it out on the top of a vise or steel plate using a hammer.

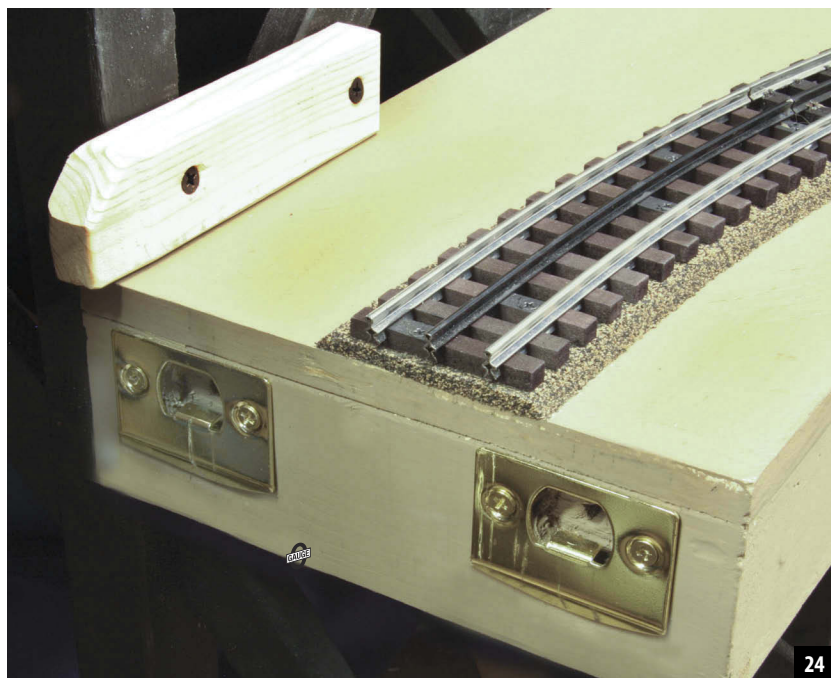
Shim the actual location of the transom catches under the underside of the drop door to allow the catch bolt to extend into where the striker plate will be. Mark the exact location where the catch bolt will contact the table frame. Trace the location needed for the striker plates to be for the catch bolt to contact the striker plate correctly. When you have traced the opening of the striker plate on the table's frame, drill a relief hole into the wood of the frame with a 7/8" spade bit to allow the catch bolt to extend through the striker plate. Mount the striker plates on the frame of the table and shim the transom catches until there will be an even, flat surface between the top of the door and the tabletop.

Check your final assembly to ensure the drop door closes and latches back to the exact same location every time. Shim or adjust where necessary to make the drop door come back to the same level as the table surface. Finally, install a stop block to prevent the drop door from coming up past the top of the train table when closing.

Keep in mind that transom catches were never designed to close like a door. In fact, you must hold the opening lever open while you lift the drop door up to the closed position and then let it latch. You cannot close it like a door by simply lifting it up and forcing it to latch.

Once you have installed all your drop-down and lift-up sections, paint them and let them thoroughly season to the humidity of your train layout location and then check again for fit. It is important to let the installation conform to the humidity levels it will be in for a while before doing any further work on the layout.

Once that is complete, you're ready to begin laying roadbed and track. That's what my next "Backshop" will be about. 



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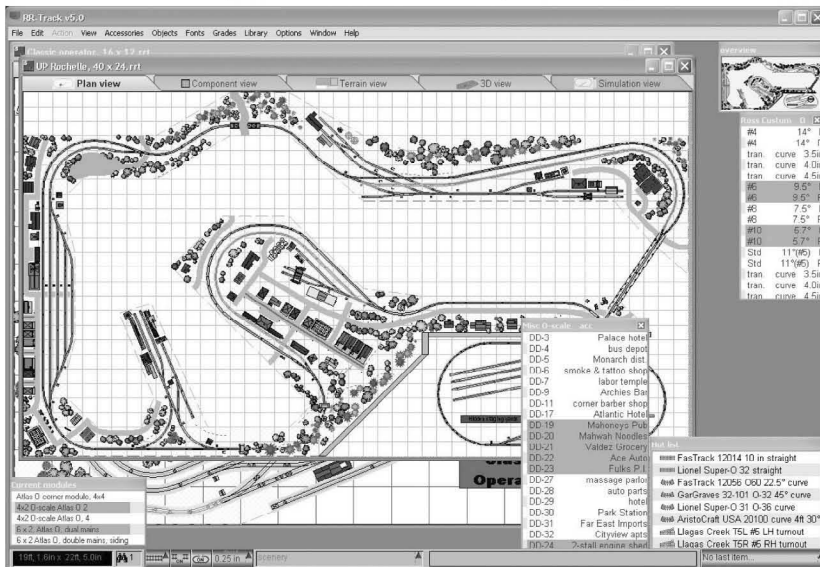


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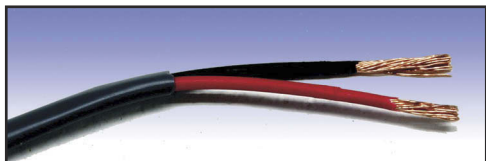
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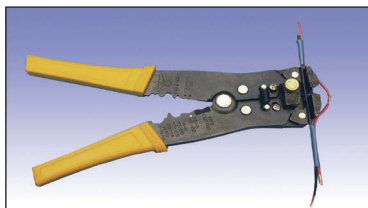
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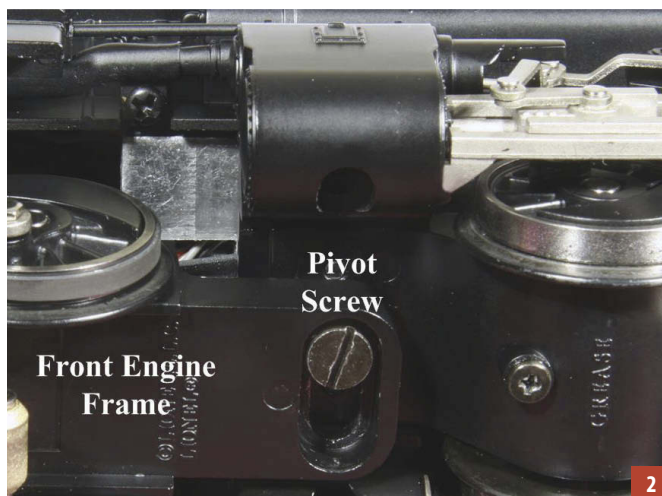


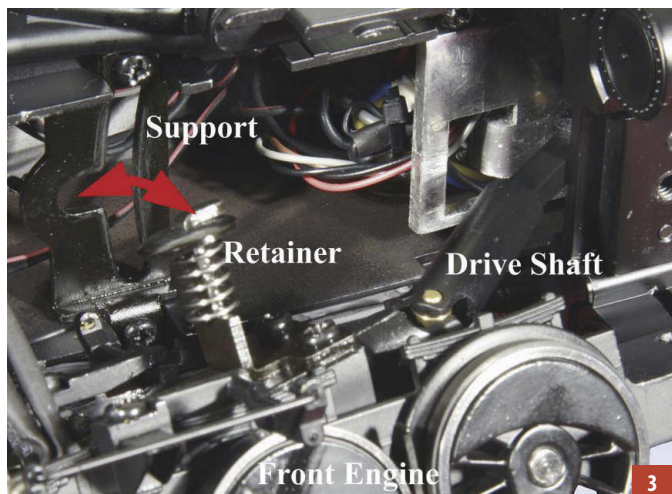
Rod Run

When I received the sample Y3 2-8-8-2 from Lionel for review in this issue, the drivers and side rods for both the front and rear engines were aligned as shown in Photo 1. As I mentioned in the review, a single motor drives the wheels and rods on the rear engine with a drive shaft and universal coupling extending the mechanical power to the front engine. Over the past many years of my reviewing locomotives, all but a few of the articulateds powered by a single motor arrived with their drivers and rods aligned, regardless of manufacturer. After one of the manufacturers explained how to easily set up the front engine on his products so its two sets of rods would run out of time with each other, he remarked that aligned drivers and rods were the result of the oriental factories' proclivity for precision. They usually assembled an articulated's two engines with their rods and wheels perfectly aligned.

To me, aligned rods and wheels on an articulated locomotive are not only unrealistic, but they are downright boring to watch. The fun of running an articulated is seeing the rods and drivers for each engine rotating in what appears to be an independent action for each engine, front and rear. Of course, that's not possible with one motor driving both engines. But changing the rotational position of the front engine drivers and rods by a number of degrees from those for the rear engine gives the illusion of the two engines running independently of each other. On the Lionel Y3 as well as other articulated locomotives that use the same or similar architecture, all that was required to change the rod run was a flat-blade screwdriver and about 15 minutes.

I found laying the locomotive on its side for this short project works a lot better than setting it upside down in a cradle. The front engine is held to the rest of the locomotive in two places. One is the large, shouldered pivot screw located between the cylinders for the rear engine (Photo 2). The other is an inverted L-shaped retainer on the front engine frame that rides in a slotted support mounted inside the boiler (Photo 3). The large notch in the center of the slot in the boiler support is for disengaging or engaging the front engine retainer.






Here's how you can set up the front engine's drivers and rods as you'd like.

1. Remove the pivot screw holding the front engine to the rear engine.
2. Hold the front engine centered under the boiler and move it slightly forward to disengage its retainer from the boiler support. With the front engine disengaged from the locomotive, its drive shaft is then visible. This plastic shaft is actually two pieces with the square rear half telescoping inside the larger front half.
3. Set the front engine down and allow the two pieces of the drive shaft to separate. Be careful to not damage the wiring to the headlight and pickup rollers. Also, if simulated pipes are between the front engine and the boiler, use an appropriate amount of caution to not damage them. The Y3 didn't have such pipes, but the Lionel H7 2-8-8-2 I reviewed in Run 267 did in the form of a casting and long, small diameter springs.
4. Rotate the drive shaft or the front engine drivers to the position you want. On our sample Y3, I rotated the front engine drivers to about 140 degrees from the position of the rear ones. I don't recommend 90 or 180 degrees because the two sets of rods will again appear somewhat symmetrical in their action.
5. Put the front engine more or less into position under the boiler to join the two halves of

the drive shaft. You'll likely have to rotate the front half of the shaft slightly to align its square hole with the square rear shaft, but the drivers won't move much. Once the two halves of the shaft are aligned, move the front engine frame rearward so the rear shaft slides into the front one.

6. Set the front engine into position centered under the boiler and engage the L-shaped retainer into the boiler support. On some locomotives, you may have to also insert the front cylinders' steam exhaust pipe into a receptacle inside the smokebox. Again, the Y3 didn't have this type of pipe.
7. Install the shouldered screw that holds the front engine frame to the rear engine and set the engine upright on its wheels.

A simple change like this yields the results shown in Photo 5. Although the preceding steps might seem like a lot of work, it's actually a simple project with both Lionel and MTH single-motor articulateds. Those of you who have an articulated locomotive from 3rd Rail, the process for changing the front engine rod position is completely different but is actually much easier. If I get enough requests, I'll show how it's done in a future column. 



Scheduled Meets

Scheduled Meets listings cost \$25.00 per issue. Listings may be placed via e-mail at info@ogaugerr.com or by regular mail. For more information, visit www.ogaugerr.com and click on "Train Meets" in the menu displayed in the left-hand column.

April 6, 2014

HAWLEY, PA – Hawley Fire Department Model Train Show & Sale, 17 Columbus Ave. 9a-3p, Adm: \$3, under 12 free w/adult. Info: Bill Delling, 618 Fern St., Hawley, PA 18428; (570) 226-3206.

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SAN ANTONIO, TX – TCA 40th Annual Spring Train Show, Garden Ridge Community Center, 9500 Municipal Pky. 10:30a-4p, Adm: \$6 per family. Info: Pat Halpin, (210) 661-4238, pthalpin@aol.com.

June 7-8, 2014

OMAHA, NE – 42nd Ne-Ia Railroaders Train & Toy Show, Ramada Inn, 3321 72nd St. June 7th, 9a-4p, June 8th, 9a-3p, Adm: \$5, 12 and under free. Info: Bob Schaffer, 13606 S. 131st St., Springfield, NE 68059, (402) 253-8885, or Ron Bond, (402) 292-3392, ronsuzbond@cox.net.

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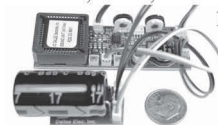
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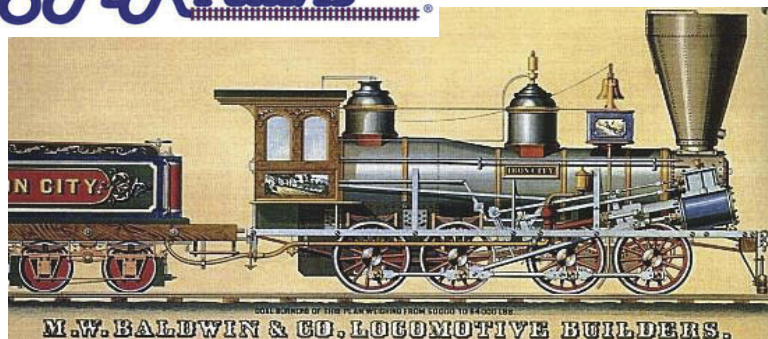


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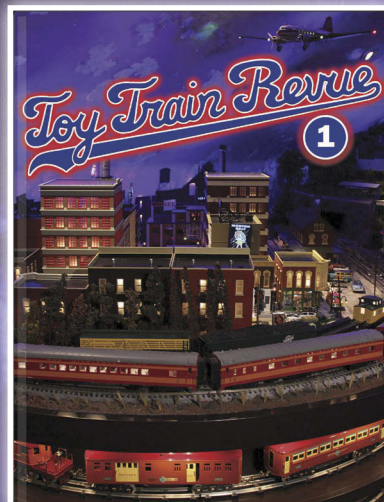
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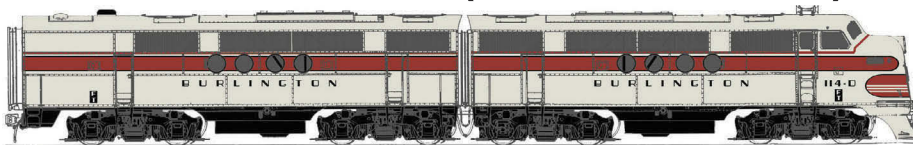
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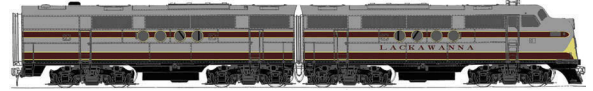
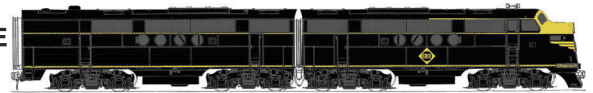
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