



BANTRAK Newsletter

Volume 29, Issue 7
July 2016

The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

Summer for BANTRAK is the time to kick back, relax, take some well-earned vacation time, and catch up on all those little projects that you don't have time for during the Train Show season.

This year some of us are taking vacation during convention season, which for N-Scale is the end of June and early July with the NSE convention in Kansas City and the NMRA convention in Indianapolis. If you're attending one of these shows, or doing some other train related activity on your vacation, please consider writing an article for the newsletter to share your experiences with the rest of the club; David is always in need of content.

Summer is also a good time to build a new module or refurbish an older one so they're ready for the new train show season, which starts in earnest for BANTRAK in October, with 5 major shows between October and April. To prepare, we will be holding a number of work sessions. Mark Bandy is coordinating work sessions for the raffle layout, which we'd really like to have ready for the Maryland Home and Garden Show in mid-October; email Mark if you can assist with the raffle layout. Martin & Paul are working to get the club trailer moved to Paul's townhouse, so we can work on club modules; more information will be forthcoming on dates and times of those sessions. Lastly, I'd urge you all to take a look at your own modules and give them a quick cleaning and refurbishment; give them a quick dusting, fix trees, touch up paint, etc. If there's anything you need help on, don't be afraid to ask another member for assistance. Since it's already been noted from the April punch list that there are a lot of dirty skyboards, we'll be organizing a skyboard painting party at some point.

Our July meeting will be the traditional summer picnic. Alan del Gaudio has once again graciously volunteered his home for the picnic; please thank Alan and Debby when you see them. The picnic will be Saturday, July 30th; Alan will be sending additional details and requests for people to bring dishes to share.

See you at the picnic!

Happy Modeling!
Tim Nixon

In the issue...

<i>The Engineer's Cab</i>	1
<i>Goodbye AEM7</i>	2
<i>T-Trak Update</i>	3
<i>New from Digitrax</i>	4
<i>Sykesville</i>	5
<i>NTS</i>	6-8
<i>N Scale Weekend</i>	9
<i>Train Spotting</i>	10
<i>Calendar</i>	11

Next Meeting..

July 30th



Goodbye AEM7s: Chris Hyland

On a lovely Sunday morning, I woke up to the feeling of having someone shove a hot poker into my head while at the same time hitting me in the throat. But nothing was going to stop me from attending the meet that day. For this was another final in what has seemed this year to be a bunch of finals. David Bowie, Prince, the last Prairie Home Companion with Garrison Keillor at the helm, the wrap up of Person of Interest on TV, the flattening of White Flint Mall, retiring of the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, and now Amtrak



was putting the AEM7's out to pasture. I am not immune to farewell, I saw the last GG1 at Union station in the 80's (got to go up in the cab for that one) and was plucked up off the platform to see inside of the last RPO (also at Union Station in DC and also ironically pulled by a GG1). So now it was time to see another old friend sail off into history, like pay phones and typewriters. Jeff Peck arranged a chance to see the loco off and what better way to do it then at Bowie Tower and with a T-Trak layout.

So our group consisted of Mat Chibarro, Tom Long, Leon and Francis, Jeff and Christian, the Hyland Clan of Ed, Pat and myself, Matt GL, Cliff Enz. We set up the layout by 9. Then waited for the trains to arrive. They did so a bit after 9:30. Two AEM 7's pulling corridor coaches of the last run special. After taking photos, we got to the business of run-

ning trains, and what better trains to run than Amtrak.

We ran lots of early Amtrak trains. E8's of the circus set. The new SPF40's from Kato pulling all sorts of lash ups and not just the ones that Kato just came out with. In honor of the reason AEM7 we were there to see, some of the guys brought out their scratch built versions of the AEM7's. At one point we had at least 3 of them on the line. Also making appearances were some of the new Amtrak locos, also by Kato, as well as some freights including B&O, PWV, and Conrail to add a bit of a change to a heavy passenger scene. Amtrak and Marc of course provided real trains on schedule behind us as well as the Bike Car of Marc making an appearance.

Towards mid day we had a cookout with dogs and other snacks with Leon manning the grill out back. These were both appreciated and seemed to help put out the fire that had been brewing in my skull all morning. Though I never got any of the chocolate chip cookies, hummm??

We ran until 4 pm and then we tore down. All had a good time taking part in this historic occasion. Big thanks to Jeff for running the event, the City of Bowie for having us, and Leon for not just getting some great pictures of the train, but also his cooking skills as well. See you at the shows

-Chris



T-Trak Update / Editorial: Chris Hyland

Happy fourth everybody!!!

Last month we had some interesting events. We said goodbye to the AEM7's and hosted a BANTRAK meeting at one of our set-ups after we ran trains. We hope all enjoyed all that was there.

Things are about to move really fast in the upcoming months. Instead of July being a quiet month, we have a Timonium planned as well as the picnic. Then we are off to the races again in August with a Timonium, an Altoona, a Chantilly, a Gaithersburg, and probably an S&P in there somewhere. So forget about the "Dog Days of Summer". T-Trak is where the action is. one convention, 3 train shows and a picnic plus other smaller events. If you don't get run time, you have to be sitting at home on your couch.

And now to unhappy stuff, we said goodbye to Silver Spring last month. People have asked me why ever since. It was not an easy decision. In fact it was made for us. The other side did not want to negotiate nor work out things. Quite simply put, we didn't get an invite and we got no answer as to why. Now I hate, hate canceling things. But Silver Spring had gotten to be a bit of an abusive relationship. We put up with a lot of stuff and had to jump through more and more hoops. It is rare that we cancel an event and when we do, it is usually because the people on the other end don't have their act together or its weather. And why beg to someone who does not want us. We still have a lot of other events to do. We already had another event that weekend. RIP Silver Spring, you should have had better owners at the helm.

Once again in honor of our revolutionary forefathers: Votes for N-Trak, Votes for T-Trak. If we get no representation, we should leave or have limited exposure to N-Trak National. Heck, one of us could pay the 5 bucks a year and pass it amongst ourselves. Why fund guys who don't take input from anyone but their own inner circle. Ask yourself this, do they do things to further the hobby or are they in it

for themselves. When was the last time they asked you your opinion. Our elected club officers do it all the time, because they care about the membership and the club. We are going to talk about this at the next BANTRAK meeting, make your voices heard.

All right enough bad news. We have lots of trains to run, friends to see, a picnic and a pig roast. Summer time is also time for rail fanning and getting inspiration for new modules. It is time for sprucing up your battle worn modules with new scenery. Summer is a time for fun and frolic and with T-Trak you can do both. So have a good time because remember: FALL IS COMING. Also we may have some new surprises coming up as well.

Before I leave and wind up this patriotic rant. I would also like to give thanks to a true American. On the 4th a new world record was broken. Joey Chestnut devoured 70 hot dogs at the 100 anniversary of the Nathan's contest on Coney Island. Chestnut, from San Diego CA., showed what a real American can do when you put your mind to things. So here's to you, Joey! A man who makes this nation great! Gosh, I think I am going to build a hot dog stand on my layout right now! Think of him when you build your modules!!!!

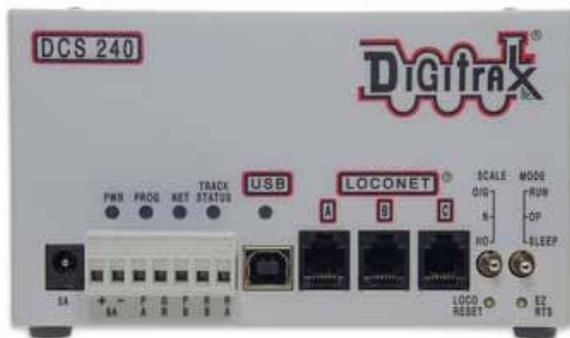
-See you at the shows

-Chris



New From Digitrax: DCS240 Advanced Command Station

The Digitrax® DCS240 Advanced Command Station is perfect for layouts that are looking for more operational capabilities. With the ability to control 400 locos and support for 400 throttles you can run more trains than ever. Run it as a 5 Amp or 8 Amp Command Station/Booster based on the input power supply used. The DCS240 is great for large layouts, clubs, and modular groups that love to operate prototypically with many operators.



The DCS240 incorporates SoundFX Programming and acts as a Loconet to computer connection and translator through its built-in USB Connection. Smart PR3Xtra functionality is fully built into the DCS240. This means that when using the sound programming capability with Digitrax SoundLoader II™, the unit will automatically assign your programming track to PC access during programming. Once you finish programming, your programming track is automatically returned to throttle access and the DCS240's USB port resumes MS100 Loconet® access mode.

The DCS240 offers full advanced read/write programming with separate programming outputs to program all your decoders with ease, even those equipped with Digitrax Power Extenders and sound decoders that need extra power to program successfully.

Track voltage for each scale setting is fully customizable with the DCS240 so you can adjust voltages to match all the power districts on your layout. This helps maintain consistent locomotive speed when crossing gaps. You can also use this feature to set your preferred track voltage for things like; controlling top speed of locos on your layout, limiting accessory decoder output voltage, and adjusting track powered lamp brightness. Customizable track voltage also allows the N scale setting to be adjusted downward to run Z scale, too! Welcome to the party, Z Scale! Voltage adjustments no longer require opening the command station!

All command station state information, including customized settings, are stored in non-volatile memory without the use of batteries. So no more issues with changing command station batteries!

The new hardware loco reset button lets you easily clear all mobile decoder information in the command station so you can start every new session fresh. This is an alternative to resetting OpSw36=c that is used by many operators at the end of each session.

Another new hardware feature is the EZ Routes button that makes setting up routes simpler than ever before with your DCS240. This reduces the steps necessary to set up routes for your layout.

For modular clubs, we added the automatic command station collision detection feature. This feature helps identify and eliminate intermittent problems caused by having multiple active command stations on the layout. This means that if there is more than one command station present on the layout, the DCS240 will shut down the system to prevent operational issues until the con-

New From Digitrax: DCS240 Advanced Command Station

flict is successfully resolved by removing extra command station(s) or by setting them to run as boosters.

The DCS240 sends refresh packets to Functions 0-28 continuously for improved function responsiveness and operation.

Digitrax LocoNet system architecture makes it simple to upgrade your layout with this next generation technology. Just substitute the DCS240 for your existing command station, update your DT402 series throttles to

the latest code and you're good to go. You can use your existing command station as a booster on your layout so it won't go to waste!

It's all part of the Digitrax Complete Train Control® System!

Sykesville: Chris Hyland

So once again we were at the Sykesville tower. We set up a small layout made up of modules from the Hyland clan and David Clyde. We set up at 9 am and were ready to run at 10. We ran all manner of trains on the layout. We also had Cliff visit us and show us his 3D printed items. Even though the farmers market was busy, it was kind of quiet topside. We had a lot of people on vacation, so that gave plenty of run time to who was there.



Thanks for all who came out to the show and then later joined us for the business side of things.

-Chris

That of course changed at 2 pm when the rest of the club arrived for the meeting and many things we did discuss. Like taking control of the world, no wait that was the meeting on Tuesday night, sorry!

National Train Show: Tim Nixon



Alan in the Crown Plaza hotel. The Crown Plaza is built in the old Indianapolis Union Station. The cars to the left have been converted into hotel rooms; 2 rooms per car.

Central Lobby of the Crown Plaza hotel.



Ntrak model of Indianapolis Union Station



Eric manning the NKP Historical Society booth

National Train Show: Tim Nixon

Manufacturers Update for NTS 2016 in Indianapolis

Athearn – Had pre-production models of the Tank Train on display.



Atlas – Released the July-December 2016 Catalog. Catalog features 2 new N-scale models; a double door version of the 5077 boxcar released last year and a Trinity 5660 covered hopper. Atlas was also displaying their new HO scale NJ commuter train; I was told they were surprised by the number of people who had already requested they do it in N-scale.

Bachmann – Their NMRA new announcements include DCC/sound version of the 2-8-0 Consolidated and Dash 8-40CW, 3 lighted streamlined passenger cars ((72' baggage, 85' coach, 85' observation), 40' wood-sided reefers, and PS-2 covered hoppers; all in 5 road names.

Bluford Shops – Bluford made a surprise announcement of an 8-panel 2-bay hopper; test sample arrived between the NSE and NMRA conventions and they decided at the last minute to announce it instead of their previously scheduled announcement.

Digitrax – Had the DCS 2400 on display

Fox Valley – Fox Valley announced they were doing Intermodal equipment. They had preliminary samples for 6 different 53' container types and a CAD drawing for a 53' well

car. Containers are scheduled to be out later this year, and the well car mid-2017. Additional containers and container chassis are planned. Fox Valley is also updating the Red Caboose tooling they purchased late last year; updates include body mounted couplers, FVM wheels, and etched metal walkways where appropriate. 5-bay open hoppers will come later this year, followed by covered hoppers, autoracks and centerbeam flatcars. Red caboose had 20 body styles; Matt intends to update 4-5 per



year to the new standard.

Intermountain – Was displaying a sound-equipped SD40-2; supposedly the production issues with the sound board have finally been resolved and production on the SD40-2 will start soon. They had a flier for an "all new" 52'6" corrugated gondola.



Kato – Had decorated versions of their ONP Christmas train on display

National Train Show: Tim Nixon

Micro-Trains – Airslide hopper & 48’ containers coming in October, 48’ well car coming in February. NASA series will start when Per-Diem series ends; NASA cars will be weathered. First 3 NASA cars are locked in; other 9 TBD.

Scaletrains – Announced their first N-scale locomotive, the UP Big Blow Turbines. Also had on display decorated samples of their previously announced N-scale containers.



TomyTec – Displayed their new American operating bus set. Battery operated bus chassis (recharged via USB connector) follows a wire embedded in plastic road sections. Road follows US prototype (drive on right) instead previously offered Japanese versions (drive on left), and include US markings. Chassis fits their GMC Old Look bus TDH-4512 from the World Bus collection.

Walthers – Were displaying kits for vintage and modern Dairy Queens’s, plus a new Merchant’s Row 1.

Woodland Scenics – Displayed their new lighting system. Vehicles with lights designed to work on the new system are coming later this year/early next year.

Cheap NScale buildings from China: Ed Kapuscinski

I was recently browsing eBay for some of the IHC “Homes of Yesterday and Today”, and came across some N scale buildings I didn’t recognize. Having been in the hobby for so long, this doesn’t happen often, so my interest was piqued.



Turns out, like a surprising amount of stuff, they’re being sold directly by a Chinese manufacturer (or so it seems). I bought the “Logistics Building”, but it looks like a bunch of their line can be useful to North American N Scalers, especially at under \$10 each with free shipping.

Here’s the user I bought them from:

<http://stores.ebay.com/outlandmodelsnc/>

The building I bought is far from perfect (notice the holes where the assembly “posts” poke through), but is a super quick build, and with a little work, can be made into something really great and unique.



N-Scale Weekend:

12th Anniversary Show

“2016 N-Scale Weekend”

Model Train Show

Saturday August 20th, 10 AM till 5 PM

Sunday August 21st, 9 AM till 3 PM

ALTOONA JAFFA SHRINE CENTER

BROAD Ave. & 22nd Street, Altoona, PA 16602

General Admission: \$5

Under 12 Free w/adult

Participant & Vender registration forms see below or,
e-mail: weekendnscale@yahoo.com Web: www.n-scaleweekend.com

Bedford Model Railroaders c/o Mike Phillips

773 Barclay Drive, Bedford, PA 15522

Phone or Text: 814-977-4933

N-Scale Model TRAINS & SUPPLIES

TEXNRAILS, HB PETERSON, WINGARD'S TRAINS, THE N-CELLAR, PAUL DICKASH, JOHN DRAKE
KENRAY MODELS, THE N-SCALE WEEKEND BOSTON & ALBANY HOBBIES, JAMES OMLOR
NEALS N GAUGING, CONRAIL THOMAS 519, DELUXE INNOVATIONS, CHARLIE STRINGFELLOW
CHALMERS TRAINS, RANDGUST, CRAZY TRAINS, JOHN WOODS, DWIGHT HITCHENS, RICK SHAWLEY
SCOTT CHARLESWORTH, SELLECK TRAINS, MIKE BENCs, RICK PELTZ, BERGEN NATIONAL LASER

17 Large Operating N-Scale Train Layouts + Several Small Layouts

BALTIMORE AREA N-TRAK, TWIN TIERS N-TRAK, JERSEY CENTRAL N-TRACK
CAPITOL PENNSCALERS N-TRAK, CENTRAL OHIO N-TRAK. GENESEE & ONTARIO MODEL N-GINEERS
THREE RIVERS ASSOCIATES N-TRAK, NEW JERSEY SOUTHERN N-TRAK, CANTINGTON N-TRAK
NORTHERN NEW JERSEY N-TRAK T-TRAK DIVISION, RALEIGH N-TRAK
PITTSBURGH LITE TRAK, & BEDFORD MODEL RAILROADERS



MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: **BEDFORD MODEL RAILROADERS**

\$25.00 FEE FOR ALL RETURNED CHECKS.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL OR FAX: _____

“Weekend Participant” \$10 _____ Pig Roast w/All the “Fixins” \$12 _____

Event T-Shirt: \$12 S M L XL \$14 XXL XXXL Circle Size

Total enclosed: \$ _____ 10th Anniversary Decal \$1 _____

EXHIBITORS & PARTICIPANTS ACCEPT FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOST AND OR INJURY TO THEMSELVES, FAMILY, STAFF, AND PERSONAL PROPERTY WHILE ATTENDING THIS SHOW. THEY EXPRESSLY RELEASE THE SHOW MANAGEMENT FROM LIABILITY FOR ANY LOSS AND/OR INJURY. Aug 19, 20 & 21, 2016



Train Spotting: Ed Kapuscinski



I happened to notice that some containers were moving south toward the port. It was only when I got ahead of the train that I realized the silliness of modern CSX: it was being led by a long hood forward C40-8W.

BANTRAK Membership: Al Palewicz

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

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

Please contact Treasurer [Alan Del Gaudio](#) for more information regarding your membership status and roster questions or contact [Al Palewicz](#) with general questions.

Member Benefits:

- Sharing of your knowledge (railroading & modeling) with others of similar interests
- Access to railroading and modeling knowledge of other members
- National exposure and recognition of your endeavors in modeling
- Hands on activities: Club modules - track, wiring and scenery. Raffle layout - track and scenery Members' layouts
- Recognition as being part of a Nationally known club.

BANTRAK 2016 CALENDAR

Date	Event	Location	Contact	Type
July 23	Work Session	Paul Diley's	Paul Diley	Work Session
July 30	Club Meeting/ Picnic	Al Del Gaudio's	Al Del Gaudio	Meeting
August 5-7	Greenberg Show	Timonium	Chris Hyland	T-Trak
August 19-21	N-Scale Weekend	Altoona PA	Martin Myers	Show
August 26-28	Greenberg Show	Chantilly VA	Chris Hyland	T-Trak
September 24	Gaithersburg	Gaithersburg 9-2	Chris Hyland	T-Trak

BANTRAK CALL BOARD

CLUB WORK SESSION 2016

Contact Paul Diley about a work session he is hosting July 23rd at his house!!!!



BANTRAK was founded in 1983 as the Greater Baltimore N-Scale Associates. Begun as a “round robin” group to share skills and experiences, we have expanded our focus to include participation in many diverse activities to promote model railroading in general and N-Scale model railroading in particular. Activities include participation in local, regional and national shows, meets and conventions. BANTRAK membership includes membership in the national NTRAK organization.

The BANTRAK Newsletter is the official publication of Baltimore Area N-TRAK (BANTRAK), Inc. This is your newsletter! Please send articles, photos, and suggestions to newsletter@bantrak.net
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