



BANTRAK Newsletter

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The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

Where did the summer go? The N-Scale Weekend is behind us, the kids are back in school, and we have reached the Labor Day Weekend. I hope all of you had a good summer, did some fun stuff, and got your batteries recharged, because we have a busy fall show schedule ahead of us.

Before I get to the upcoming schedule, I'll say a couple of words about the Altoona N-Scale Weekend. After 11 years in Bedford, 10 at the Pro-Care Sports complex, we knew that things would be different in Altoona; we just didn't know how different, and we learned a lot of lessons for the future. The first thing we learned was that Altoona is a larger town, and we need to be a little more precise when arranging where to meet. Prior to set-up the plan was to meet at the McDonald's "just down the street"; well, half of us went to the one on 17th Street and the other half to the one on Plank Road. We had the same issue at dinner; half went to the Hosse's in Altoona, the other half to the one in Duncanville. Second lesson learned was that it's a lot more fun when we're all staying in the same hotel and can gather in the evening; this year the BANTRAK crowd stayed in 4-5 different hotels and there was no central gathering point. So mission 1 for next year is to find a good hotel with a gathering point for after-hours socializing. The new venue had good points (great lighting, lots of room, plenty of parking, working air conditioning) and bad points (limited access for load-in/load-out, concrete floors), but overall I think most agreed it was an improvement from our previous location. I'd like to thank Martin for coordinating this year's show and also thank all who participated for your efforts.

Moving on, we have the Maryland Home & Garden Show at Timonium October 14-16 and the Great Scale Show, also at Timonium October 29-30. I will be coordinating the Home & Garden Show; Eric had agreed to be my co-coordinator, but had to back out due to a schedule conflict, so I am looking for a replacement. We need a coordinator for the Scale Show, so if you're willing to fill either of those positions, let me know. The First Call for Modules will hopefully have gone out for the Home & Garden show by the time you read this; please let me know if you can participate as soon as possible, since I'd like to get the layout finalized by the September meeting.

We are also still doing work sessions, both for the raffle layout and to get club equipment ready for the upcoming show season. Mark is coordinating the raffle layout, which is coming together nicely, and Paul is coordinating trailer work sessions. Look for emails from them announcing upcoming sessions and stop by to help if you can.

For September we're back to the normal 3rd Sunday meeting schedule; September's meeting will be at Mark Bandy's home in Ellicott City on September 18th at 2 PM. We will be working on the raffle layout, so feel free to come early if you want to help.

Happy railroading!
Tim Nixon

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Next Meeting..

September 18th



T-Trak Update / Editorial: Chris Hyland

Sorry for last month's crappy entry. When doing train shows I get clobbered all the time by these bugs. I seemed to keep catching them over and over. I am glad that it has passed now.

Well, it was an interesting August, don't you think. We had a lot of shows, including N-Scale weekend in Altoona. If you weren't there, you really don't know what you missed. We are heading into a new month that is going to be just as busy as the last one. We have Gaithersburg, Sykesville (2 of them), Kensington, and my favorite one: The Mainline Layout tour and open house.

I'm going to make a pitch for Brian's Mainline Layout tour. Are you stuck in a rut? Do you feel like when you pick up MR it is always the same old blah, blah, blah? Does the Ntrak newsletter go straight to your junk folder? Well get up off the couch, and head up to Mainline in Blue Ridge Summit, PA. Then prepare to road rally. Last year we visited layouts from PA to MD and wound up in the middle of West Virginia. Brian usually has over 200 layouts open their doors to folks like us. And not just N scale or large club layouts. On our trip last year, we visited a Steel Mill and On30 layouts that had been converted and back-dated from a standard gauge HO. Wow! All of these thanks to Mainline Hobby in Blue Ridge Summit, PA. Sept.17th + 18th. Be there!!!!

Coming up we have lots of opportunities to run trains, plus lots of chances to do other fun train-related stuff. You've just got to clear your calendar. Things only get busier from here on out, and if you say that you had no time to run trains, then that is your fault.

Here at Casa de Hyland it has been busy. This time of year does not usually give me the chance to work on anything outside of doing repair. Filling out forms is something that I have become expert at. I am always doing something with either filling out the

paperwork to get us into an event or writing articles for what seems like numerous rags now. So when you say "so what have you done lately" think really hard on the old episodes of "Victory at Sea" when they talk about Carriers and Battleships going no where because the tankers haven't refueled them. So think next time you run into me, Jeff, Ed, or David Clyde or Cliff or even Leon. Instead of that question, the real question is, "How can I help you so I can run on the layout?"

One last thing, it was also a sad month due to the loss of NVNTRAK's President Dale Rinker. Dale was a close friend of mine who always seemed to be getting me out of some sort of trouble when I was with his club. The Pennscalers had a nice memorial to him up at Altoona. I'm going to miss you, Bud. Also when you run into Al, wish him all the best for dogging the big bullet that took out the rest of Ellicott City.

I am looking forward to getting some modeling done and some train running as well in between being out there on the road.

-See you at the shows.

-Chris



Chantilly Show: Chris Hyland

Seeing that Bantrak is now one of the Biggest Ntrak clubs on the East Coast, we occasionally slip outside our normal operating area. One of these is the Greenberg show at Chantilly. Because this is now the show for what the hipsters call the DMV. (Why do they call it that? It makes it sound like I live in Fire base Kensington.) It gives us a chance to see if we can pick up new guys, see what the competition is up to, and hey, IT'S A TRAIN SHOW.

We set up an 8 x 5 L, that's right 8 x 5. It was a bit like being in a phone booth. But we really didn't need any more than that. So Saturday morning we quickly unloaded our stuff at 8am and were up and running by 9. We had a good turn out of members to run the layout. The Hyland clan, Dave Balderston, Jeff and Christian Peck. Leon, and last but not least, our new member Chris showed up and got to run the layout.



All sorts of trains were run. Amtrak, PWV, DRGW, SP and the Zephyr (with Burlington, Rio Grande, and WP on the front) running around. Your author got a chance to run some European equipment and the train that he has dubbed the Gene Autry Express (an SP cattle train with F unit Black Widows on the front). When the kids got too crazy, we ran a WM 40ft. Old Atlas Red Boxcar train that if they damaged anything, it was no big deal.



After being at Altoona, we were looking for special stuff. The show itself has shrunk to use the new small building. This gives it the feel of the Summer/Winter Timonium. We did find some gems out there amongst the busted Lionel engines and the dented American flyer coaches. There were PRR intermountain P85s were to be found, also B&O F unit number plates, SP furniture cars and other assorted trinkets. So there was stuff, you just had to blow the dust off it. The most important thing was the pilgrimage to Willard's, the barbecue joint next door, which has doubled its size! This is the primary reason for going to the show, once again, a gem in the gravel field of NOVA suburbia.

Sunday was a repeat of the previous day. We had lots of friends drop by the previous two days. We got a chance to even meet the new president of NVNTRAK. May he prove a good leader and get the club back on track. So the end of the day came and it was time to leave. Leroy shows up. He helps us load the trailer and we are on the road once more returning via Point of Rocks to avoid Tysons. Our total extraction time was 20 mins. Not bad. Thanks Leroy!!!

Big thanks to all those who came out and see you again this winter.

-Chris

Altoona T-Trak: Chris Hyland

Okay, by now you have all heard that this show was THE SHOW. It was Barnum and Bailey with the three rings, big cats, and all the elephants. This is true. Like Elvis said in “Viva Las Vegas,” How I wish that there were more than 24 hours in the day. I could have printed money and still not have had enough to get everything. Bargains aplenty. So as others will tell you how they melted their credit cards, hit ATM’s all over town and even begged for change in down town Altoona, we will spare you this and just go to the good parts. T-Trak at Altoona.

BANTRAK T-Trak was one of many clubs there. We tried to run a layout with our best modules and I think that we succeeded. Also we had, like one of the other clubs, a bit of continuity. People who showed up and ran or brought modules were: David Clyde, The Hylands, The Pecks, Cliff, Leon, Matt Whiting, Dave Balderston, David Betz, and Lauren and we got a chance to welcome aboard again Bruce Tharp. So this was a decent turn out for a first time in a while. We were not without problems though. The Zephyr in the magical box melted down, which meant we had to go all DC for the most part. But we had fun, did our bit and got out alive.

The important part at Altoona is we get to meet the other T-Trak clubs and see/steal what they do. And there were about five clubs present. They covered everything from indoor circuses to the Cornish landscape. Others covered big industry, like steel mills and power plants. We also got a chance to see good layout design. One of the best things that I saw was the Ohio club’s use of Junction modules in an interesting way to cause a branch line. Now I despise Junction modules cause I knew the guy who designed them and said to him, “Dude, this looks like something off your computer, can you think of something not so, well, bland?” Ohio changed all that and I am willing to be quite and start loving Jackson Junctions. Maybe they do have a place in my world. Variety is the spice of life. Though I do not plan on making the plunge and doing Irish Nn3 like a pal of mine.

So all in all, catch the T-Trak convention, err, N scale weekend next year and see what you have been missing.

Thank you, Mike, for having us and here is looking to next year.

-Chris



NMRA Convention: Al Del Gaudio

I had the opportunity to go to the National NMRA Convention last month. My main focus was layout tours and the National Train Show. While there were a number of paid workshops/seminars, I passed on them and likewise, the bus layout tours. Self-guided tours are \$5/day and if you have a car, it's a great way to go!

Tuesday was a travel day to Ohio, going to Entertainment Junction near Cincinnati. That is a great venue to be covered another time. Likewise, I have a number of photos, so I thought to split this into two articles, one each for Wednesday and Thursday.

I arrived at Indianapolis on Wednesday before lunch and looked over the schedule to see what no-cost seminars were available. There were a few that interested me, but I chose some of the layouts, which took up from 3-9 PM on Wednesday and noon to 5 on Thursday.

I've selected a few pictures of each. It's always worth noting that some model railroads are completely awesome and many are in process. In all cases, they represent the hard work and love of their builder(s) and no matter which scale, era or level of scenery or operating sophistication, they should be appreciated in the most positive manner. Armed with this mantra, I set out. There were 3 layouts I wanted to see in the Bloomington area, about 75 minutes south of Indy.

Robert Talbot has an impressive 16 x 38 HO layout based on the L&N Laurel Division. It features all hand laid track and turnouts, a huge staging yard mounted 2 feet under the operating RR and a 7 turn helix! He set up the helix top level so trains can exit in either the northbound or southbound directions. It has a mix of mountains, some in process, towns and industries. I think he mentioned there are about 7-10 people in an operating



session. One is in the helix hole and they have a pretty high tempo of trains coming from the lower staging area up the helix and down. Robert mentioned that his friend's layout, minutes away, (Paul Surburg has a 25 x 25 Pennsy fully scenicked layout) was unavailable due news that morning necessitating him traveling east. Bummed out not to see this one but prayerful, I headed to Jim Koryta's O scale layout 15 minutes away.



NMRA Convention: Al Del Gaudio



Jim has a nice 9 x 14 O-scale layout and a small trolley loop which is powered by the overhead wires. It would have been easy to gloss over this 6 x 2.5 layout, but when he told me the trolley lines are energized and the work it was to get good connections and clean up the soldering flux residue, I had to give it some thought. My hat's off to him. I'm not sure if I'd rather broken rocks instead of doing that. The O-scale layout is very cohesive with several nice, more detailed vignettes worked into it.

Thankful for a soda and cookies, I headed to the western suburbs of Indianapolis for a couple more layouts.



Steve Poe's Doctors' Orders RR is a terrific N-scale layout [8 x 23] in an "E" shape. Featuring the Union Pacific in the mountains, it has scratch-built everything, detailed everything and weathered everything. It is there with some of the more detailed HO layouts! You can guess I was really impressed! I wish I

had a tripod for my camera to take better pictures. You would not easily notice it is N-scale. Steve's doctor ordered him to work on a hobby to take his mind of a medical condition, hence the name. What great work!



Just a few blocks away is Bill Moore's HO Allegheny and Western RR layout featuring Cass, WV. It's a 20 x 14 layout built in a garage. When the weather is nice they pull out two 16 foot extended yards. It has a very nice switch back going up [I'd guess 12-14 inches]. Being somewhat familiar with Cass from my visit and my friend's layout, it was like seeing an old friend. With the 2 extended yards out, it is a local attraction.



Raffle Layout: Mark Bandy

The raffle layout construction is in progress and so far appears to be on schedule and within our budget.

Martin started the project by donating a door for the base and he attached the road bed and track. The track plan is based on the classic figure eight folded back on itself. This has been the same design we used previously and seems to attract the most attention.

This year we received building donations from John Cook. John has allowed Tim to choose some buildings from his vintage stock. John's buildings and many others were distributed to members at Alan's house at the club picnic.



I believe that all of the buildings are almost finished and ready for attachment to the layout. So many thanks to John and Martin for their material contributions and to those who have been helping with the layout construction or the buildings so far. We couldn't do this without your contributions of material, time and effort. I will be expecting to collect all of the completed buildings at the next meeting.

With that said, the next meeting offers a tremendous opportunity for other members to show off or share with others their well-honed modeling skills. So we will be setting aside time at the next meeting to make this layout the pride of Bantrak. Don't miss out on

this opportunity to keep the project rolling, add some of your special touches, sharpen up or show off some of your special skills.

No worries if you can't muscle in on this session to add your own touches, there will be opportunities each week afterwards until this most important fund raising project is complete. Foliage and other detailing work are needed to make this a spectacular layout that any train enthusiast would want to have as their own!

I will be sending around a sign-up sheet at the next meeting for the other layout sessions with the activities scheduled for those sessions so folks can plan accordingly. Let's have fun and make this a great club effort!



Train Spotting: Ed Kapuscinsky



Altoona Action

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
September 17	MainLine Hobby Tour	Gettysburg PA	Chris Hyland	Other
September 18	Club Meeting	Mark Bandy's House	Mark Bandy	Meeting
September 24	Gaithersburg	Gaithersburg 9-2	Chris Hyland	T-Trak
September 25	Syskesville Tower	Syskesville	Chris Highland	T-Trak
October 14-16	MD Home and Garden Show	Timonium Fairgrounds	Tim Nixon	N-Trak
October 29-30	Great Scale Show	Timonium Fairground	TBD	Show

BANTRAK CALL BOARD

CLUB WORK SESSION 2016

Contact Tim Nixon, Eric Payne or Paul Diley for work session information.



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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