



# BANTRAK Newsletter

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February 2017

## The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

Another February Great Scale Model Train Show is in the books! We've completed yet another show in this year's busy train show season, with one show more to go before we get to our "summer break". This show was another solid effort for BANTRAK; the layout wasn't especially big or flashy, but the trains ran well for the most part and we got our usual number of compliments on the quality of our layout. For those of you who didn't make it, this was probably the best attended GSMTS in several years; at 11 AM on Saturday there was still a long line of people waiting to get in the doors, and all the halls were crowded! The crowd was a bit sparser on Sunday, but still very respectable. Thanks to Paul Diley for coordinating the layout!

Next up will be the April GSMTS, which is scheduled for April 7th-9th; Lauren Baker will be coordinating, assisted by Eric Payne. Look for more information on this show soon. The 35th Anniversary Club Car project is proceeding, and hopefully by the time you read this we'll have placed an order with Fox Valley Models to do a Baltimore Belt Line Wagon Top Caboose for us using a modified Chessie paint scheme. We had hoped to do two road numbers, with the second in a different paint scheme, but unfortunately there wasn't enough interest to justify ordering a second car, so we will be doing only one with a 2018 road number. We're ordering based on the commitments placed by members; there will be a few extras but the supply will be limited. Thanks to Alan Del Gaudio for putting in all the work to make this happen!

Location of the February meeting on the 19th is still TBD; look for an email announcing the location. As an FYI, we still need meeting locations and hosts for the March, May, July, September, and November meetings! If you can help out by hosting, please let me know! Note that the meeting does not have to be in your home; if you can make arrangements to use the local library, your church, or any other available space that has sufficient space and is semi-private, that works too.

Happy Railroading!  
Tim Nixon



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### ***Next Meeting..***

***February 19th***



## Bob Mohr: A farewell to our friend and mentor at BANTRAK



“All I can say is Bob is the reason I’m striving to improve my modelling skills. He and I had a great one-on-one talk about quality when here in

Oakland. I am thankful I got to tell him that very thing the last time I saw him! “

Bruce Tharp

“Bob was a fine modeler, great musician, a spot-on engineering mind and, most important of all, a great friend and example to us all. God Bless!” Phil Peters

“Rest in Peace, Bob. When I first joined BANTRAK, Bob made it a point to make sure I felt welcome. He was an awesome modeler with an eye for detail and an all round nice guy.” John Berger

“I have know Bob for more than 30 years and during this time we have travel all over the east coast and central US. I would say that together we traveled some 10,000 miles to conventions and trains shows . We worked together building the club yard, inside corners,bridges,and the transitions. He was there to keep everything just right.

He started me collecting and each month either he or I would put the order together for the new MicroTrains car.

There is so much I can say about Bob, but this is about Bob and he would not want too much to be said.” Skip Hayes

I remember when I joined BANTRAK and went to the first show in April, 2003, probably a Greenberg show. I just was looking to

be useful and met many great people in the club, some have moved on like Dr. Ted Niznik with that puckish twinkle in his eyes and Jerry Mulford, another cheerful soul and fellow NYC aficionado. Then Bob introduced me to Tom Hoover, whose quiet demeanor belied another sharp engineering mind. Another story.

Seeing for the first time, the wonderful City module set Bob built, struck a chord with me as it was something I aspired to build since getting my first N-scale equipment. Eventually I came up with a passable version of my own machination. But every time I looked at Bob’s city [Davidson City], I saw another little detail. Great models, modelers and artists do that. So, Bob became an iconic figure in my world.

Skip has been a towering figure in Bantrak, and the Bob and Skip show was, for me, at its zenith when we built the Ellicott City B&O layout. The good-natured byplay between two very accomplished modelers was a lot of fun. Different styles, great results. And then Bob told me how much Skip taught him about wiring and building modules. I was amazed.

I had a background in scale modeling, so that came easier for me, yet so much was learned from Bob. Sometimes I disagreed, but always saw the other side of the coin he presented. Bob set a standard I hoped to approximate. In more than model trains. In life. He often told me how lucky he was to have met and married his wonderful wife, Denise and got put in the right direction. He was proud of his sons, David and Jason, and their daughter Jennifer. I do wish I could have heard Bob sing and play guitar when he was doing gigs in his “wilder” times.

Over time, Bob and I developed a good friendship and we had a great time planning and constructing the scenery on an N-scale layout representing Harper’s Ferry for a client. Constrained by a track plan already laid down and specific requirements as to where it



## Bob Mohr: A farewell to our friend and mentor at BANTRAK

needed to go, we came up with a pretty-darn nice package. (A bargain too one of my friends who is a terrific RR scenery modeler was appalled we weren't selling it for 3-4 times more). Looking back, it's hard to realize some things you are doing may be golden moments, but I had a sense I would treasure that experience for a long time.

My time in the club is barely more than 1/3 of our existence. Folks like Jack and Skip have a great sense of history and can recall far more of Bob's many highlights and contributions to the club. But I'd like to share a couple.

Martin, a new member in 2004, was a driving force for DCC. Bob jumped in and pushed for more redundancy meaning more cash outlay, while Martin, well beyond competent and enthusiastic, was new to the club and this new-fangled technology was not going to be adopted easily, let alone embraced without strong support from key veteran members. Bob, as the seemingly eternal treasurer met that elder statesman role. (My apologies to anyone I left out, in my sketchy memory of this keystone event.)

The introduction of the "Peacekeeper" switch boxes, particularly the selection of DC or DCC by plug in vs a toggle switch, which could be flipped erroneously, was a great thing. A unique BANTRAK thing!

Another is how much he assisted in writing articles and instructions. I'm saddened



that I never sent in the Ellicott City Article Bob co-wrote with me to one of the N-Scale magazines.

But I am hugely thankful for Bob's insistence in building my model RR to use L-girders and cross bracing. I was so pleased when Bob noted how impressed he was with solidity of the layout without using much heavier materials. Finally, I felt I graduated from padawan learner.

A measure of a person is not so much as how they handle the good times, but the trials in life. Bob took in his mom during her well-advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease and dealt with providing constant attention and dealing with the stress that brings. He seemed to accept the shocking news of his brain cancer without any "why did this happen to me", though that would have been most anyone's reaction, certainly mine.

In that vein, Denise has been supportive to a level beyond belief during the past 3 years with Bob and his mom. Saintly! Please keep Bob's memories alive and pray for Denise. Denise, you are always welcome to come visit us. Let us know what we can do.

And Bob, "Keep safe in the gentle, loving arms of God"\*

•May the Road Rise to Meet You, Lori True

Alan Del Gaudio





## SUPER DETAILING A BACHMANN K4S

IMAGES BY JOSH SURKOSKY AND ED KAPUSCINSKI

TEXT BY JOSH SURKOSKY

The day the K4 was announced I was in Bedford, Pennsylvania for the N Scale Weekend. BANTRAK members had just finished dinner, and I walked over to Sheetz for a Red Bull, checked Facebook for the first time that day and saw that someone had posted the Bachmann announcement. I called Ed Kapuscinski first to share the moment, and he called Dave Vollmer. Not only was a K4 announced, but it would actually be in stores a month later!

Upon receiving my Bachmann K4, I realized that the detail was pretty good, but my GHQ/Kato L1s conversion set the bar pretty high, so I knew I had to do something to improve the looks of the engine. Luckily, my friend Chris Broughton had already started posting pictures of his improvements and that inspired me to begin the project. (See <http://www.facebook.com/groups/PRR.N.Scale.Modeling/>)

The list of materials used begins with three kinds of wire, .015 phosphor bronze: .010 brass wire, and .008 Ernie Ball Custom Gauge 8 (#1008) guitar string. Additionally, I used Gold Medal Models N 160-42 Steam Locomotive Detail Set parts for my tender ladder and handrail stanchions. I used Alkem

Scale Models' PRR Locomotive Number Plates (<http://alkemscalemodels.biz/hostructures-2-1/>) for the number plate. Since I am modeling 1361, adding this photo etched brass detail was important.

I found color reference pictures here:

<http://www.railpictures.net/viewphoto.php?id=281051>

<http://www.railpictures.net/viewphoto.php?id=351431>

The locomotive is pretty dirty for a passenger engine. A lot of pictures of 1361 exist, but be careful using them. I am modeling this engine in 1954. Many photos exist of 1361 in the 1980s, and many details have changed.

### Cab and Boiler

None of the existing molded metal detail was shaved off of the engine, as I figured that once weathered and painted the additional detail I added would blend in with the molded detail.

First remove the shell. Two additional screws hold the cab in place. I drybrushed the cab interior with some steel paint to bring out the details. The cab roof color has been hotly debated over the years. Was it black, Pennsy dark green, box car red, or a 50/50 mix of black



Photo 2: Cab roof painting and boiler piping

and box car red? Even with color photos, the pigment is hard to tell for sure. I painted mine with straight zinc chromate primer for two reasons: it would establish a uniform look within my own fleet, and it would be heavily weathered anyway.

Next, was additional piping. My method was simply to pipe over molded on detail. On the fireman's side, I used .010 brass on the firebox after drilling holes through the walkway. I used .015 wire around the steam dome and the air pump. I used .008 wire and stanchions on the smokebox. I also used .008 wire for the grab

irons on the rear of the cab. On the engineer's side, I used .015 wire on the firebox, and .008 wire and more stanchions on the smokebox.

The big problem with the model is the sand dome. I asked my friend and fellow NTRAK steam contributor, John LeMerise, for help as I knew he had the ability to cast parts, so I asked him to cast me a metal sand dome from the GHQL1s shell. He did this and mailed it to me. It looked good. Then John decided to design one from scratch and sell it on Shapeways. (see [http://www.shapeways.com/designer/keystone\\_details](http://www.shapeways.com/designer/keystone_details)) It is fantastic.



Photo 3: Right side piping with original cast metal replacement sand dome



Photo 4: Original Bachmann sand dome (left) vs. replacement provided by John LeMerise

These construction photos show the metal sand dome (see Photo 3). It wasn't until I nearly finished weathering that I received one from Shapeways. Photo 4 is a comparison shot between the stock Bachmann sand dome and John's Shapeways dome.

Also the Bachmann number plate is not accurate. The font and size are incorrect. Luckily, there's an easy solution from Alkem Scale Models. I sprayed some red paint on this plate and lightly sanded it to expose the raised brass areas (Photo 5). Perfect!

## Tender

I painted the tender deck and coal basin with zinc chromate primer after adding two pieces of



Photo 5: Replacement number plate

.010 brass for the supports on each side of the ladder (Photo 6). Since the shell is plastic, I shaved off the molded grabs and replaced them with .008 wire. The steel wire is a good choice for the grabs on each corner since it will flex, but not bend like brass. The class lamps were relocated from the tender deck to the rear wall using thin strips of brass bent in an L-shape. I drilled slots on the wall and glued the brass from the inside and then sanded the lamp's base flat and glued each lamp to the brass. A third lamp was added in the center. It was a leftover part from my GHQ L1s kit. A small block of strip styrene was used for the conduit box and run .008 wire to the lamps. Finally, I added the brass Gold Medal Models ladder.



Photo 6: Tender paint and details

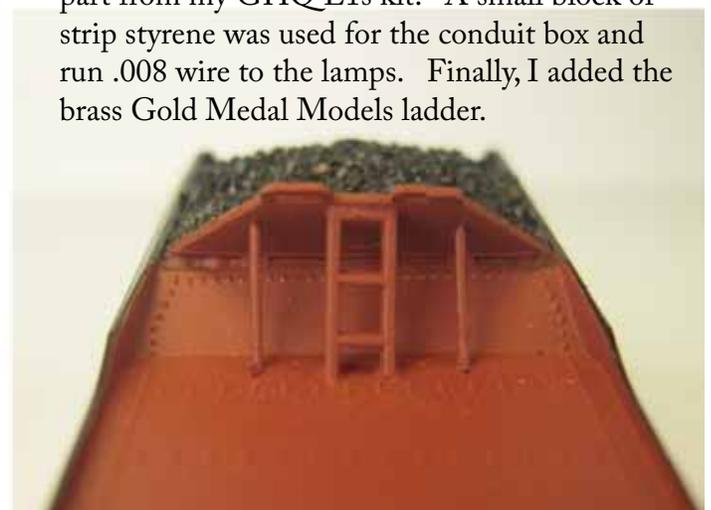




Photo 7: Weathering and Neolube highlights on boiler

## Weathering

A Vallejo Acrylic Paint Set was used for weathering the locomotive (PN #85836). (I have only seen this set sold by Micro-Mark). Used were Vallejo Surface Primer, black (PN #73.602) and Vallejo Airbrush Thinner (PN#71.061). Windsor & Newton Artisan Water Mixable Oil Color, Ivory Black, Burnt Umber, and Burnt Sienna were also used.

First, I washed the shells with a toothbrush and some Dawn dish detergent and let them dry. My goal was to build up many thin layers of oversprays and streaks.

Using my dual action airbrush and started with Vallejo Rust thinned with the airbrush thinner; 70% thinner to 30% paint. Remember it's important to use rust colors first because rust forms on metal and paint and not on top of dirt, grime, and dust.

I sprayed some rust streaks on the boiler first and on the bottom of the tender and made some streaks on the sides. Be very light with these coats. It should almost look as if you did nothing. Keep in mind this is only the first coat.



Photo 8: Streaking effects around stack

Later come back and blend these streaks with other colors. Put the loco upside down in a foam cradle covered with plastic wrap. Clip leads to the tender and set the wheels in motion in order to give the underside a few healthy mists of rust.

Next use Vallejo Dark Gray as an overall "grime" color also thinned in a 70/30 ratio. I sprayed this on every surface with the loco right side up and running.

Once the misting was dry, I made some more vertical streaks. Next I sprayed the wheels (again, while running) with Vallejo Mud Brown. Originally I thinned this to 70/30, but I later came back with a 50/50 mix to match the photos.

Using photos I tried to match dirt and dust placement.

Next I used the Vallejo Black Primer thinned to 70/30 for soot effects. I misted the entire loco and tender with this. It helped blend the other colors so one doesn't stand out over the others. This step magically makes the engine look real. I sprayed more coats on the top of the boiler since this received the most soot.



Photo 9: The painted, weathered tender deck

I used Neolube on the smokebox and all piping. This helps the added details pop out just a little bit and not blend in a sea of black. I hit the smokebox pretty heavy with Neolube, also. It is very easy to streak using a small brush. Photos 7 and 8 show the streaking and Neolube effects.

The tender deck was a happy accident. I had shot the entire model with some Dullcote (my standard practice before using washes), and I went to puddle on some dark gray for the tender, but when I thinned it the Dullcote reacted and frosted up. Luckily, this effect looked like my photograph (Photo 9). Additional Dullcote would make it go away, so I left it alone. I also used a little bit of Future (applied with a toothpick) around the water hatch on the tender deck to simulate spillage.

Some more spots on the boiler were sprayed with dark gray and dirt colors. My plan was to spray this on, but I intended to remove a lot of the paint with a damp brush, pulling downward to create streaks.

Next I used Windsor and Newton paint for a wash. I used distilled water and a flat brush and applied a heavy wash. I didn't use an exact

formula; I just poured water in a bottle cap and dabbed in some paint. This helped increase the randomness of the wash.

After a few hours I came back to it and cleaned up obvious water spots. I applied a very heavy wash under the smokebox, and again, after it was dry, I went in with a small wet brush and tried to create streaks.

Finally, I used Arizona Rock and Mineral fine coal for the tender. With matte medium as a base, I sprinkled coal on top and sealed it with drops of gloss clear.

## Compromises

The classification lamps are wrong for this era. The model comes with the claw foot lamps, but the tombstone or bulls eye style marker are what I have seen.

I didn't add the grab irons to the sand dome, because my models are handled a lot, and I thought these too fragile to add.

I didn't add the whistle pull cord. If I do later decide to model this, I will use EZ line.



I still haven't decided what to do about the pilot coupler. Three options are: (1) Use a Z scale coupler. It will look great, but it is harder to work with. (2) Use an N scale coupler. It is larger but not as ugly as the stock Bachmann coupler. (3) Use a Kato Mikado dummy coupler and model it in the folded down position or the new MTL True Scale couplers. I will have to evaluate my current needs further

before I decide. Am I really likely to pull any cars from the pilot of my K4?

### **The Finished Product**

Overall I am pleased with the look achieved on my K4 (Photo 12). With the details I have added and the finish of the locomotive, it looks like an appropriate mate to my other Pennsy steam engines.



# Dues Invoice:



## Baltimore Area Ntrak Club

### Dues Invoice

Payable to: Baltimore Area N-Trak

Invoice Date:  
February 3, 2017  
Due Date:  
April 7, 2017

Remit to:  
Mr. Alan Del Gaudio  
2905 Montclair Drive  
Ellicott City, MD, 21043  
Or pay at February or March meetings

Annual Club Dues  
(Including National N-Trak Membership)

→ **\$30.00**

Member Name:  
Please Print \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

N-Trak Member Number:

Please print a copy of this invoice and submit with payment.

#### For Treasurer's Use

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Member's Receipt

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alan Del Gaudio



## Train Spotting: Ryan Jones

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## BANTRAK Membership: Al Palewicz

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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
February 19th	Club Meeting	TBD	Tim Nixon	Meeting
Feb, 25&26	Greenburg / B&O	B&O Museum	Chris Hyland	T-Trak
March 5th	S&P Tower	Sykesville Tower	Chris Hyland	T-Trak
March 19th	Club Meeting	TBD	Tim Nixon	Meeting
April 1st	Ranson Show	Ranson WV	Chris Hyland	T-Trak
April 8&9th	Great Scale Show	Timonium MD	Lauren Baker	Full Show
June 21st-25th	National N Scale Convention	Pittsburgh PA	Alan del Gaudio	Show
August 18-20th	N-Scale Weekend	Altoona PA	TBD	Show

## BANTRAK CALL BOARD

### CLUB WORK SESSION 2016-2017

*Contact Tim Nixon, Eric Payne or Ed Kapuscinski 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](mailto:newsletter@bantrak.net)  
 Editor: David Betz

