



BANTRAK Newsletter

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August 2017

The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

If it's August, it must be time for the N-Scale Weekend! Mike Phillips and his band of merry men are busy planning for the second year in Altoona and 13th overall weekend "for and by N-Scalers" in the wilds of Pennsylvania. Martin Myers will be coordinating this year's layout for BANTRAK. As in the past, we'll meet at McDonald's at noon and plan to caravan over to the convention site for set-up around 1 PM; hopefully this year we'll all gather at the same McDonald's. Since the N-Scale Weekend falls on the 3rd weekend of the month, BANTRAK's normal monthly meeting date, and since all the club officers will be in Altoona, we'll hold an abbreviated meeting during the weekend; for those of you who can't make Altoona, I apologize and we'll bring you up to speed on events at the September meeting.

Speaking of the September meeting, we still need a location; preferably one at which we can work on the raffle layout. If you can volunteer a location, let either myself or one of the other officers know. The September meeting will feature discussion on the club budget for 2018; if you want to make your voice heard on how the club spends its money, make sure to attend.

As for the raffle layout, we're making slow but steady progress. Paul built the frame, laid the cord and track, and wired the layout by himself. Since then he has had two work sessions at his home to do scenery. Unfortunately, those work sessions haven't been very well attended and it's been pretty much the same group doing all the work. I just want to remind everyone that this club has almost 50 members and it shouldn't be up to the same 5-6 people to build the raffle layout every year. Proceeds from the raffle cover a significant portion of the club budget every year, and no layout means no proceeds; without the raffle layout, club dues would have to almost double to meet the requirements of the budget. Bottom line is that everyone in the club should be able to spare at least a couple of hours to help out with the raffle layout once a year to help us keep the dues low. Paul will be holding more work sessions after Altoona, and the goal is to have the raffle layout complete enough to sell tickets at the October Scale Show, which is the FIRST weekend in October (6th, 7th and 8th).

I have volunteered to coordinate the October Scale Show, but I can use one or more co-coordinators. If you're interested in helping, let me know. Call for modules for October will go out after Altoona.

See you in Altoona!

Tim Nixon

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Next Meeting...

August 20th

T-Trak Update / Editorial: Chris Hyland

Well, I'm back, and what a strange short trip it has been.

To sum up recent events: First MARYLANDTTRAK is dead due to artistic differences. The website is still running, but under private hands that do not represent either the division or the club. An alternative is coming and I will let all know when it is up and fully running. We intend to continue on with the work that was started—getting the news out for those of us pushing T-Trak. We think that this time we have got it right. We have a new Webmaster who has a vested interest in getting things moving forward. The agenda will solely be pushing T-Trak, with accessible information to the masses. I, your humble author, am now handling the T-Trak-focused calendar. So if you have any events going on, send them in to me and I will put you on the schedule and make sure it gets out there. Furthermore, we will also be exploring all sorts of diverse things besides just your regular T Trak. One of the projects that I was working on and am glad to get back to is a column called “The Retriever” covering N-Scale traction. If you don't know what it is, you will find out, along with other things like line poles, anti climbers, and ploughs.

Times have been tough at the T-Trak division. A lot of old friends that I have known for nearly 20 years have decided to move on. I wish them the best of luck. As I have seen through the years, people come and go, but the big thing is that the division survives and goes forward. I know that even I too will someday pass on the torch, but I want to make darn sure that there is someone there to pick it up when I pass it. That is most of what I want to cover regarding this sad chapter in the history of Chris' adventures in the T-Trak world (which you can get for less than a buck at the B&N blowout bin and Amazon will even pay you to have it shipped).

Moving on to happy stuff, July was a busy month. Not a ton of N scale events, but we managed a Gaithersburg show and some time at Sykesville. We were on the road at other places, such as Lycoming, where we got to see CMR do their thing and we visited the home of Bowser. Even though they say they are HO guys, they have a lot of N scale at the shop. Now all we have to do is convince them they need to make more themselves....

Philadelphia was also on our places to visit schedule. We saw a massive O scale and triple decked HO elevated layout, all running classic DC. It was a sight to see, and retail therapy was had by all as well. Nicholas Smith has been recently trying to clear out “Stuff in the back”. He has tons of N-Scale new old stock sitting around and priced to move. It is worth visiting if you are in the area. Ask me for his information if you would like to visit. While you're there don't forget to stop into Thunderbirds for a cheese steak afterwards right next door.

Altoona is coming upon us now. I for one am really looking forward to it. We should have a nice layout this year. If you plan to come, come in peace. Drama Queens can go elsewhere. This is a vacation; please leave your egos behind. Mike is saying it is going to be a great show, but isn't it always. The weather is looking good and all systems are go!

Looking forward to seeing you all in PA,

Chris



Just Another Day in Paradise: Bob Bunge

John and I last visited Strasburg four years ago when he was ten. We drove up, rode the open car, soaked in the sounds and smells of decapod #90, smashed some pennies by the cabooses motel, chased a couple of trains and headed home – spending about four hours on location. That about stretched his attention span. It was a great trip.

Saturday, we left the club picnic early in order to make it home in time to head to Saturday evening church. This allowed us to leave Bowie early Sunday for another Strasburg run.



Upon arrival and parking, John, now 14 and two years experienced in Bantrak, immediately was struck by the new freight trans-loading facility they have built. We walked the tracks, and came up with how they switched cars around into the different sidings and loading areas. What an interesting area to model someday.

From there, in plain sight of many RR employees, we proceeded to walk their entire “back 40,” looking at the various steamers in storage and the cocooned passenger cars. We examined a small Plymouth critter, wandered through piles of stored parts and scrap. We identified steam locomotive tires, a cow catcher, firebox grates, firebox stay bolts, switch stands, fancy iron fencing, examined worn out switch frogs and found a “speeder” that is a dead ring match for one

on our modules.

We checked out their ash pit, the coal pile, peaked into the engine house, examined the truss rods under one of the wooden passenger cars. We then watched the machinery of the hand pump car, traced out the route of their 15-inch Cagney steam train and checked out the 12-inch gauge “cranky cars.” We admired the big PRR steamers and GG1 “Old Rivets” across the street, looked and talked about the purpose of the switch tower (which also matches one on our modules) and examined a two axle “bobber” cabooses that is more than 100 years old. All the time the steam trains were coming and going like clockwork, the whistles, the bells, the smoke and smell of coal.

Skipping lunch, we then chased trains across the Amish countryside; at one point sitting on a stone fence near a group of Amish boys as they called out to friends passing by on foot, on scooters and in horse drawn buggies.



We smashed pennies at Groff’s, and watched them run #90 around the train at Leaman Place. We ended the day up on a rise near Rt 741, watching a train pass by in the distance; soaking up the entire big picture vista before leaving to get home well after dinner.

Just Another Day in Paradise: Bob Bunge

When I was growing up, my father was an active member of the Ohio Railroad Museum in Worthington, Ohio, where, most weekends, I explored their back 40, rode in the street cars, watched and rode behind their then operating N&W #578 (a class E2 Pacific). After the museum closed, I'd ride with my Dad in the steeple cab #2 as he switched cars. Our family cat was a kitten adopted when the museum mouse cat was killed in an accident.

Is there anywhere else where a 14-year old can get such a real world experience today? I'd be hard pressed to think of one.

It was an amazing day for Dad. I hope it will be a life time memory for John.

Bob



Train Spotting: Eric Payne



Caught this GP60 local in Emeryville CA.

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 2017 CALENDAR

Date	Event	Location	Contact	Type
August 18-20th	N-Scale Weekend	Altoona PA	Martin Meyer	Show
August 20th	Club Meeting	Altoona PA	Tim Nixon	Meeting
September 17th	Club Meeting	TBD	Tim Nixon	Meeting
October 6-8	Great Scale Show	Timonium Fair Grounds	Tim Nixon	Show
November 19th	Club Meeting	TBD	TBD	Meeting

BANTRAK CALL BOARD

CLUB WORK SESSION 2017

Contact Tim Nixon, Eric Payne, Paul Diley, 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
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