



BANTRAK Newsletter

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The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

Well, summer is officially over; Labor Day has come and gone, the kids are back in school, and BANTRAK completed its 13th annual trip to the wilds of Pennsylvania for another N-Scale Weekend!

Once again Mike Phillips and his crew put on another great show. For the second straight year the show was in the Jaffa Center in Altoona; not quite as homey as Bedford, but one with a lot of advantages that were missing at the Pro Care Sports Complex. This year's show was a little smaller than last year, with fewer vendors and all the layouts downstairs. BANTRAK incorporated a lot of lessons that we learned last year; we coordinated meeting locations so we all showed up at the same McDonald's and the same Hoss's, and a core group snagged rooms at the same hotel so we could do some socializing and strategizing in the evening. Alas, there was no pool or hot tub, but we coped. Martin coordinated this year's show and put together our standard "small" (Bedford) layout. Martin loaded his van with the club yard, 3 outside corners, his pair of 2' modules and his newly built 3-module 7' corner set. Paul Diley (3 modules), Alan Del Gaudio (2 modules), LeRoy Brandimore, Lauren Baker and myself (all with 1 module each) also contributed modules, in addition to dragging along the stuff we took to Pittsburgh. In addition to those named above, Vicky Diley, Jack Walsh, Bruce Tharp, John Hasson, Skip Hayes, and the whole Palewicz clan made an appearance at the Ntrak layout. Meanwhile, Dave Clyde, Leon Sorge, and the Hyland family set up their T-Trak layout next door; I'm sure Chris will provide more information on that elsewhere in the newsletter. Overall the layout ran well (with the exception of some WiFi issues) and I think everyone had a good time. In addition to everything that went on inside the Jaffa Center, there were also things going on outside. Several members of the club took advantage of the excellent weather to pay a visit to Horseshoe Curve and see real trains, some of us rail fanned downtown Altoona, and Jack and I paid a visit to the Altoona Model Railroader's club on Saturday night.

Okay, that's the good news, now time to switch gears and talk about some not so good stuff; I need to say a word about club mailing lists and email etiquette. Email is a wonderful tool when used properly; it's great for things like sending newsletters, letting people know dates and times of shows, or coordinated places to meet and what to bring. But the one thing I've learned in my years in BANTRAK is it's not good for is solving complex issues. When there is a disagreement that raises tempers, email is the last method that should be used to resolve the issue, because it's too easy to misunderstand what the writer is saying; things like body language and sarcasm

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Next Meeting...

September 17th



The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

are lost. What the writer intended as a joke can be taken as an insult, and without the filters that come from a face to face (or at least a phone) discussion, can quickly spiral out of control, especially if there are multiple people involved. Over the years we've had several of these email exchanges that quickly got out of control and resulted in a minor issue escalating into a major problem. To prevent future repeats of this issue, I'd like you all to follow a couple simple rules with regard to emails. First, don't "reply to all" unless it's absolutely positively necessary that everyone on the mailing list needs to know what you have to say. Send the message only to those that need it. Second, try resolving problems face-to-face or by phone before resulting to email; most of the recent email flame wars could have been avoided with a 5 minute phone call. Third, never send an email in the heat of the moment. If you feel an email response is necessary, go ahead and write it, but instead of hitting send, save it as a draft and walk away for an hour (or 2 or 8) to cool off. Then re-read that email and make sure you still want to send it before launching it into the ether; if you're like me, 9 times out of 10 you'll delete the email or give it a major rewrite before you hit send.

I am coordinating the October Scale Show, which is the first weekend in October (6th-8th). The first call for modules has already gone out; if you didn't see it and want to bring a module, let me know. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

Tim Nixon

My Trip to Altoona: Leon Sorge



T-Trak Update / Editorial: Chris Hyland

Hi Guys, back again. Last month was interesting and kind of emotional, more on that later.

August was a busy one. We had an event at Gaithersburg, but more importantly we had the Altoona show. This was a great show. If you didn't make it you don't know what you missed. It is like a convention and a retreat all rolled up into one, also a great chance to also see where the other clubs are going with T Trak. Plus there is always enough N-Scale stuff that you can't go home unhappy. Heck, I got two more PEMEX tank cars. That along with some other good deals made me, as the great TR used to say, happy as a bull moose. Yes there was plenty of stuff to go round (like an SP runner pack for 40 bucks). And if you got tired with the show there was always rail-fanning the NS. You could also fly on a sugary haze at the Mallo cup factory right down the street. Tom and Joe's served up a great breakfast in downtown Altoona. We got a chance to sit in the booth right under the trolley car signs (bonus). There was tons of stuff to do, so mark your calendar for next year.

I also got a chance to hang out with friends, a rare occurrence these days. It was nice to be in a room with people not shouting at you or screaming on line. Which goes into some stuff that has been going on. With all the crap going on in the world (hurricanes, North Korea, my cat getting angry at not getting the right flavor of kitty chow) some people forget that we are running model trains, but with that we are also part of a club and that club has rules and procedures. We are a (gasp) nonprofit corporation in our beloved state of Maryland. And that when you are out at shows with the public, the world is watching. This isn't your basement empire anymore. So before I rip off the scab too much, I want to share a story. In 1961

some French Legionnaires thought themselves above the nation to which they served. When it all ended, the Legionary Paratroopers of the 1st REP were disbanded. Permanently. But that did not end the Legion. They are still part of the French Army. Mean as ever and offering free citizenships if you last out 5 years. T-Trak has gone through a similar problem. But we are still here and we are moving forward with events. In some ways our division has become all the stronger for it. The only thing that was regretful is that some wished to take private matters into a public forum, and that is all I have to say of that matter. We are moving forward, and I want to thank all my friends who stuck with me and more importantly, with the T-Trak Division. You are what keeps the machine going here.

So where are we with Midatlantic T-Trak? It is still coming. When it gets ready to go out to the general public, you will be the first to know. The one thing that is always a problem is buying time. Like Elvis sang: How I wish that there were more than 24 hours in the day.

Now we come to the busiest part of the year. By the time this gets published we will have completed the Kensington Show, a big Gburg event, and a stop at Sykesville, plus the Mainline hobby layout tour. By then it will be October with a Timonium show, a Ranson show, and other events. And it keeps going on until Christmas, just in time for the big B&O event. Can I buy a week for 500, Alex? The music daily double; what is Non, Je ne regrette rien by Edith Piaf?

See you at the shows,

Chris



N-Scale Weekend: Martin Meyers

The 13th annual N Scale Weekend is history. BANTRAK continued its support of this show again this year with a 14 x 38 foot layout.



About a dozen club members met up at the McDonald's just a few blocks away from Jaffa Shrine at noon on Friday. It took a while to get together due to a raging downpour that couldn't have been timed worse if it had been planned. The rain let up, lunch was completed and we headed down to the hall to unload and set up. Fortunately the rain stayed away during our load in.



Set up was casual with everyone knocking out the chores required to get the job done. We were up and test running in about 4 hours. The simple two block/ power district layout ran well from the start. A couple of submarined rail joiners found early on Saturday morning were the extent of any problems encountered all weekend. I introduced a new 5 module set that makes up a 7 x 7 corner. Scenery was sparse due to the three week build time. I tried something different by running the Micro-Engineering code 70 track right up to the ends of each of the curve sections. There were no joiner tracks. Fortunately they worked first time and we didn't have to pull them out and reconfigure the layout with a spare club corner that was on hand. (Just in case). Long trains really look good traversing this large curve.



Friday dinner was of course at Hoss's. This year we actually managed to meet at the same restaurant. We were seated in a special "Train Room" decorated with lots of artifacts from the curve and PRR artifacts.

Saturday morning the show opened and our layout was up and running first thing. While there was no actual run schedule, everyone got plenty of run time on Saturday and Sunday.

N-Scale Weekend: Martin Meyers

Each line always had at least one extra-long train or multiple short trains running.

Saturday evening the Pig Roast was held. Food was excellent and plentiful. Hint: Wait until the food line dies down to get dinner. Mike always has plenty of food and desserts. Run trains for an extra half hour or so while waiting.



After dinner, the annual auction was held. BANTRAK offerings dominated the auction items so a couple of us continued to run trains as we had already had our chance to buy up some of the best items earlier in the day.



There was a good supply of vendors. Mike gets a few that we don't see on a regular basis at Timonium so this show always has something different to see. Fox Valley and

Microtrains were also set up. Matt had a ton of cars and engines on his tables and the prices were down right reasonable. I picked up a dozen unique numbered B&O wagon top cars at a nice discount and no sales tax. Sunday running went as well as Saturday with tear down commencing about 3 pm. Tear down went as well as set up and we were all pulling clear of this year's show around 4:30.



Train Spotting: Ryan Jones



Ryan and AJ @ Mammoth Cave RR

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
September 17th	Club Meeting	Severna Park Public	Tim Nixon	Meeting
September 24th	Show	Gaithersburg Station	Chris Hyland	T-Trak
October 6-8	Great Scale Show	Timonium Fair Grounds	Tim Nixon	Show / Meeting
November 19th	Club Meeting	TBD	Tim Nixon	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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