



# BANTRAK Newsletter

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October 2017

## The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

This month's edition of the newsletter is a little later than usual, so there are a number of things to discuss this month.

First, I think the October Scale show came off pretty well. Martin had the trailer there and unloaded prior to noon and we made most of the modules set up and in place before one. The layout was clamped down and ready for testing before 5 PM and most of us were out of the Cow Palace by 6 PM. We had full run schedules for both Saturday and Sunday; things seemed to go well and I'm unaware of any major issues. We had a brief club meeting at 2 PM on Sunday and started teardown about 3:15. Trailer pulled out about 5:15 and I left about 5:30. I think the only major complaint from this show was that the weather was much warmer than usual, with high humidity on Sunday. There wasn't a lot of air flow in the Cow Palace and things got kind of uncomfortable, especially on Sunday afternoon.

For those who missed the show, we tried two new things at this show. First, Martin and Alan Del Gaudio modified their module sets to use special KATO expander track joiner pieces instead of regular Atlas sectional joiner tracks. Because these new joiner tracks expand, there are no gaps and no rooting around in the track boxes to find the correct track size. In theory, this should greatly reduce set-up time and make for smoother operation, so the club is considering implementing this club wide. These tracks seemed to prove out the concept, working perfectly at the October Show. Look for more information on this soon from Martin and Alan. Second, Martin and LeRoy deployed their new Digitrax LNWI at the show. These devices each allow 4 WiFi devices to connect to the system to act as throttles, independent of the JMRI computer/PS3/router system. We didn't use this system as much as we hoped, but we did learn a bit more about how it operates. We'll continue to test this system over the next few shows to see if we want to invest in it.

Speaking of October, I would also like to thank Paul Diley for getting the raffle layout ready in time to sell tickets at the Scale Show. While it still needs a small amount of finish work, the layout was about 95% complete and fully operational. Paul probably did something like 2/3rds of the work on it by himself, with further assistance from a small team who attended the 5-6 work sessions Paul held.

Next up is the November meeting, which still needs a home (hint, hint). The major topic of discussion for November is the club's FY18 budget. Those who were at the September or October meetings know that leadership has put two budget proposals on the table for discussion. Proposal A is a "business

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

***November 19th***



## The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

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as usual" budget derived from last year's budget. This budget shows a slight decrease in income due to few members and no Home & Garden show, which is offset by the elimination of the trailer storage fee. Proposal B assumes a change in the way the club generates income, eliminating the raffle layout and raising dues to cover expenses; this change results in dues approximately doubling. Leadership is presenting this option because we are having trouble finding people to volunteer to coordinate, host, or work on the raffle layout, and we want to let members know what the result will be if we don't get one done at some point in the future.

December will bring the Festival of Trains at the B&O Museum. We are scheduled to start set-up on Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of December and run from Saturday the 16<sup>th</sup> through Sunday the 31<sup>st</sup>, with teardown on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Martin and LeRoy will be coordinating this show.

Happy Railroading!

Tim Nixon



## Great Scale Show: Leon, Ryan, and Lauren

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## T-Trak Update / Editorial: Chris Hyland

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This month went by fast. We did two shows and are done for the month, Timonium and Ranson, WV. Given the size of both of them, two were plenty. We had a good turn out for both. New things were added and all sorts of electrical gizmos were upgraded. Even a few new modules were unveiled. Of course we have more on the slipways. It looks like things are going to be busy around here, and then there are the coming holidays.

It gave us a chance to take a good long look at where T-Trak is and where it is going. To say that we are in a state of transition is an understatement. I was sick for a while but during this time other members took the reins and assumed responsibility to become coordinators of our happy gang. I would like to give a shout out to David Clyde, David Balderston, and Leon for all the help that they have given recently for getting things back on course. But they are not the only ones and to the rest a big thank you, as well to all those who have helped out recently. It got us through the not so great times and now we are moving into the final part of the year still being able to do what we got to do: running and playing with choo choos and showing off T-Trak to the world.

So last month everyone was left supposedly scratching their heads by the column. And then the thing about “there they go, they are going to leave the club” raised its head again. This has gone hand-in-hand with “T-Trak is taking over the club”. I usually just ignore it and move on.

So rather than worry about T-Trak and what is going on with it, think on this: what have you done for the club recently? The raffle layout needs some helping hands, there are tickets that need to be sold. Have you helped to sell any? Leon and I did the last weekend. Wasn't much, but it was more than we started out with. Think of it like the

WWII Bond drives, if you are not recruiting people for the club, THEN PLEASE SELL SOME TICKETS!!!!!! Make Al's balance sheets happy, and while you are at it, B&O is right behind, so dust off the cobwebs, make sure that the green woodland scenics flocking is really that and not green mold and get ready. There is work to be done and only 58 shopping days left until set up.

Until then, we will be out there doing our thing. You do your thing as well. Make Bantrak a solvent club that will be around for years to come. Think Big picture, not small picture. SELL TICKETS.

Chris



## Heavy Acrylics – an alternate paint: Bruce Tharp

I use heavy acrylics for most of my painting and weathering. Using heavy bodied acrylics with an airbrush is simple, you just need to thin the paint properly.



I've settled on using the Liquitex Professional Heavy body because of the grind and content of the pigment. The grind is finer than the Liquitex Basic and there is more pigment. The Golden is good too; I feel the

quality is equal to the Liquitex Professional but more expensive, the wife disagrees being in the Golden only camp.



There is a proper way to thin the acrylic to get a good quality mix for an airbrush. I mix directly in the airbrush bottles. Adding not much more than a toothbrush full of paint into the bottle. (In the photograph shown I've put a bit too much paint in).



I removed a small amount prior to continuing. The amount of paint added is a trial and error process depending on the brand of paint.



# Heavy Acrylics – an alternate paint: Bruce Sharp



I then add not more than 10 drops of distilled water. I shake well for about 30 seconds. I then add another 10 drops and shake again. The next round I might add 20 drops, shake, then another 20 drops and shake. Each addition of water you can increase the ratio. The end goal is to break down the acrylic slowly.

Now is where one of the advantages to mixing like this comes. Acrylic paint has two flaws. It dries quickly and will clog up an airbrush when it dries too fast. When mixing, I add two additional items to the mix to slow down the drying process and better thin it for the airbrush.



Slow-dri fluid retarder is added for the sole purpose of slowing the drying process. It can be added and remain effective through storage as long as the container is sealed.

The slow-dri contains no pigment or acrylic resin so it will reduce the pigment content. When using the Professional Heavy Body Acrylics there is enough pigment so you don't have to be concerned with the dilution. I use maybe 30 drops. I have experimented with the mixes. It really does slow the drying process.



Airbrush medium is added as a thinner. I'm undecided about the effectiveness of this additive. I do use it but haven't experienced much of a difference when I don't use it. I still am experimenting with this. I do see difference if I use it in place of any water. That also make the mixes much more expensive.



Once mixed just add a few drops to the airbrush and start painting. No additional thinning needed. This example was sprayed with no additional thinning.

## Train Spotting: Ed Kapuscinski

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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 2017 CALENDAR

Date	Event	Location	Contact	Type
November 4th	Gaithersburg Artifacts show	Gaithersburg Fair Grounds	Chris Hyland	Show
Nov. 10-12th	Rockville Lions Club	Rockville MD	Chris Hyland	Show
November 19th	Club Meeting	TBD	Tim Nixon	Meeting
Dec 13-31st	Festival of Trains	B&O Museum	Martin & LeRoy	Show

## 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](mailto:newsletter@bantrak.net)  
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