



The Engineer's Cab: LeRoy Brandimore

Hello everyone. I would like to start off with congratulations and welcome to Robert (Bob) Bunge as the new 2nd Vice President. Bob's son, John, often accompanies him to the shows where they can be seen running B&O freight trains, trains hauling dinosaurs, and military trains with tank loads that Bob has made with his 3D Printer. 3D Printing is something we are likely to see more of in this hobby—one example being the ice breakers for the Micro-Trains B&O ice breaker car that came the past year.

Bob was the coordinator for the latest show in Feb. I thought I would talk a little about this show and cover some of the upcoming events. This year's February show was challenge. Bob had an ambitious layout plan featuring Paul's 'Horseshoe Curve' and a dogleg bend in it. We also had a few key people who couldn't make it or couldn't stay. Setup didn't go smoothly. When it came to putting the final modules together things didn't match up. We spent a good amount of time trying different fixes to get the ends to match up. We spent so much time on this that we were only able to test DC power before the last of us left for the evening. The next day while running DDC the Booster kept shutting down because a wheelset in the yard was causing a short. Because of a missed power connecting for the equipment, we weren't hearing an alarm. This finally got fixed the next day. Most shows go more smoothly than the February show and I hope it was a learning experience. I know I learned a couple of things.

Our next show is the Great Scale Train Show May 2 & 3. Yes that's May not April. We still need a coordinator for this show. Our next show after that should be the N Scale Weekend in Altoona in August. The details for this show are currently up in the air. I enjoy this weekend because it's all N Scale and we have a chance to get together in the evenings. Also, you have a opportunity to check out The Railroad history of Altoona area.

One event I won't skip is the N Scale Convention in Nashville, Tennessee, June 24 – 28. The convention has different layouts in the hotel, a model contest, auctions, clinics and a Swap-a-Rama that have almost all the manufacturers there. There are also tours that include a trip to the Jack Daniels Distillery, a tour of the County Music Hall of Fame, and a riverboat dinner cruise. I'm excited about this convention because Nashville was the home of NC&Stl which my grandfather, and his brothers-in-law worked for.

Our February meeting is the 16th at Jack Walsh's house. We still need a host for the March meeting.

Happy Modeling,

LeRoy Brandimore

T-Trak Update & Editorial: Chris Hyland

TTrak is once again moving forward. After a quiet January we took part in our first event for the year. Timonium. At first things were looking a bit sketchy. We were down a bunch of members able to help with the set up of the layout. Dave was on vacation in California and trying to get back to the east coast, Leon had the flu, and Clan Hyland was worried that our prime mover was out of action and that we might not make it at all. Nonetheless we were able to put together a 20 x 25 layout.

What was even better was that we had one of our largest turnouts of people so far. We had plenty of train runners. This also gave us a chance to break in some of the new guys on TTrak and how we roll. We had lots of questions about TTrak, particularly in using TTRAK and doing operations.

I would like to thank all those who showed up to make the layout a success, especially David Clyde,



Leon, Gannon and his parents for helping make a layout that was held together by string and bubble gum into a set up that was really enjoyable. I would also like to thank both our Pres and VP, Leroy and Chris, for the assistance that they gave. Last but not least I would like to give a big howdy to Jack and Al P. for making the jump to our happy little band and a welcome aboard to Chris' coworker Aaron, who we hope to get to know a bit better in upcoming set ups and hope that he enjoyed running on the layout.

That is the good news. Here is the bad stuff. As I

constantly harp every month, BUILD SOMETHING. The last show turned out okay, but it could have been a disaster. So if you are just showing up to run trains, you need to step up on your game. We were lucky this time to hammer together a layout. We also were lucky that a member showed up when he really should have been in bed and that we had one trailer available. More modules available means that we can share the load and avoid showing up and finding that there is a very very small loop or even worse, nothing.

We are still waiting for some dates to firm themselves up. But by next month we should have a calendar up and running. But right now it is an exciting time to get into TTRAK. Think of it like the old recruiting posters. Join BANTRAK TTRAK Division and see the world.

Chris



Show Recap: Bob Bunge

Armed with a list of available modules, John and I in short order came up with a somewhat novel layout design; perhaps a bit too novel. After Martin helped us tweak it, and a few other minor adjustments, we were set to go.

On the day of set up, we ended up missing some key individuals, especially in the area of making sure all the parts of the electrical system were in place. In addition, the layout didn't go together quite the way the CAD drawing suggested, so time was spent making adjustments. While that was going on, kudos and thanks to the folks who keep the ball rolling, setting up the command stations, pulling the loconet cables, AC power, skirts, ropes, etc.

When I arrived Saturday morning, just before opening, trains were running on DCC and the usual pace was settling in along with the usual early debugging - submarine joiners and the like. Sitting by my own modules, I observed a nice variety of trains passing by on the main, from a healthy sounding B&O EM-1 to a long double stack train. At one point, I hooked the inside loop on my own modules up to the DCC green line and used an iPad to run three short trains. But later, the DCC system failed and it was unclear what the problem was. A switch to DC was made, but DCC was operational again later in the day. Nonetheless, it was a slightly different experience for me not to run trains on the main, but just sit by the modules and interact with perhaps a 100 different people as they came past to see our work. This interaction, is for me, a rewarding experience, from hearing their complements, to questions about how something was done, to various family stories of Grandpa or Uncle Joe.

On Sunday, discoveries were made: The PM42's - the boxes where you switch from DC to DCC - didn't have their power cords installed, so the layout wasn't "beeping" when a short took place. When this happened, the trains would stop, but since there wasn't a beep, it wasn't clear where the short was, leading to the false impression the DCC system had crashed. The green ground wire between the stations hadn't been installed. This was made somewhat more difficult because some newer and some older modules were missing the green wire. If you have

a module, please make sure your module(s) has the green ground wire. If not, ask for help. Many thanks for Lauren for digging through totes and stringing a long green wire around the layout on Sunday. There was a phase issue between two blocks that was tricky to solve since reversible modules were on either side of the command station and the proper connections were not as obvious as plugging wires together by color.

I know I have not learned the details of the electrical set up over the course of my six years in the club, something I will pay more attention to in the future. I urge other newer members to also learn the wizardry of the electrical set up so we have more collective talent on the floor. One additional suggestion is to label the power supplies for the test/computer box so it is more clear what powers what device. I figured out Sunday the Broadway programmer was actually plugged into the Digitrax PR4 computer interface power supply and vice versa. This had caused the Broadway device to act funky, sometimes giving an "OPPS" error.

Tear down seemed to go well. We accidentally discovered if the last folks running DCC are using wifi, much of the DCC rig can be torn down without impacting operations. Martin had acquired inside lights for the trailer, which perhaps contributed (along with Martin, Dave and Lauren's unmatched Tetris skills) in a more compact packing of the trailer than normal leaving some of us wondering what we had forgotten as we headed home to watch the football game. I guess we'll find out at the May show!

Many thanks to all who showed up for set up as well as tear down. A special thanks to Martin for his CAD design help and for LeRoy for his advice and wisdom.

Bob



Timonium Show:



Dues for 2020:



Baltimore Area

Dues Invoice

Payable to: Baltimore Area N-Trak

Invoice Date:
February 5, 2020
Due Date:
April 3, 2020

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)

→ **\$45.00**

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		



BANTRAK 2020 Calendar

February 16, 2020

Club Meeting
Jack Walsh's House
5534 Phelps Luck Dr
Columbia MD 21045-2554

March 15, 2020

Club Meeting
Location TBD

April 19, 2020

Club Meeting
Location TBD

May 2-3, 2020

Great Scale Show
Timoium Fairgrounds
Contact: TBD

May 17, 2020

Club Meeting
Location TBD

June 24-28, 2020

N Scale Convention
Location: Nashville Tennessee

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 and 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.



Train Spotting: Ed Kapucinski



What do you do after a day of client meetings? Meet the train at the station! One of Amtrak's westbound Wolverine trains is making its Ann Arbor station stop while I got a great taste of true Michigan weather.

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
Editor: David Betz

