

BANTRAK News

A Monthly Newsletter for BANTRAK Members • Volume 33 • Issue 3 • April 2020



The Engineer's Cab: LeRoy Brandimore

Here's hoping this newsletter finds everybody doing well.

A month ago, we were hearing about COVID-19. There were reports of cruise ships being quarantined and major outbreaks in other countries. We heard of the increase in the number of cases happening in the USA. In a couple of weeks into March there was talk of social distancing and large Gatherings being discouraged. Soon came the lockdown orders.

Soon events were being canceled. TTrak was hearing that some of their events being cancel. Then the Great Scale Train Show in May was canceled. I heard that the NC&StL Preservation Society (which I'm a member of) Reunion held in May every year was canceled. Very soon after that the 2020 N scale Weekend was canceled, which was more likely because of problems with getting a venue as well as the virus scare.

Because of the lockdown, social distancing, and no gatherings of more than 10 people, our April meeting is cancelled. The next pending meeting is May 17, which Chris Quinlan has offered to host. There appears to be hope soon. The N Scale Convention schedule for late June in Nashville is currently still on. We have been contacted by a venue in Wheaton, Md which appears to be a good fit for TTrak. If we did do NTrak the setup would be more like the minicom in the church which we did in March of 2019. Also, the 2021 N Scale Weekend has a date and new venue, the Nittany Valley Sports Center in State College, PA. From the research I've done, this looks like a new facility
Keep Railfanning, Keep Modeling, and Keep Safe.

Happy Modeling,

LeRoy Brandimore



T-Trak Update & Editorial: Chris Hyland

Looking for good news, skip to the end of the column. And then there was March.

In the matter of days, six months of events up in smoke. Events were cancelled faster than balls leaving the stadium during the All Star Home Run Derby (I miss baseball). I am not complaining. Once again, when wellbeing is in the balance, I err on the side of caution. Usually bad situations have been reserved for weather-related things like snow. But this is something completely new. And we still don't know where it will go. But rest assured that I am always thinking safety first. It's a new world and the CDC is calling the shots. Cause ya can't run trains when you're sick.

So what is going on with TTrak? Right now, not too much. Almost everything is dormant. We are still negotiating for places. A lot of this is theoretical. None of it is set in stone. As I stated earlier, the health of my friends and family comes first. And seeing that I have always considered TTrak guys close friends, well you should have the answer to that. Unless it is safe to come out to do public events, I will not put anyone in harms way. We will be doing a poll on the TTrak list soon, to see what everyone's opinion is of when we should come out of the bomb shelters and come back into the public eye. Stay tuned for that.

That was my "We will fight them on the beaches" speech. Couple things. Even though I do not know what the fate of the club is or what is going on, as long as I am able, I will continue on this column once a month. Even if it is done through the mailing list. It will hopefully give a sense of normality in these times and as Ethel Merman says, "the show must go on."

Okay, enough of the bad news. The pause button has helped out with a bunch of stuff. Not having to organize events has led to getting around to planning stuff. And seeing that there seems to be no end for the foreseeable future, it looks like time to build. As long as the supply of glue and paint holds out at the local ACE hardware store in Kensington, we are good. We are planing on setting up in our own backyard sometime soon. I also see in TTrak's future modules with Pyramids. You have been warned.

Furthermore, been reading up on TTrak. It is always good to see what the competition is doing.

There are some guys out there really pushing the limits of what TTrak can do. One is close to home. Ed Kapuscinski, I saw your blog on the Ma & Pa and thought it was very good. His parent's modules up in the Philly area are first rate as well. Also I stumbled across the Blog "N Scale Notes" by Simon. He has been working on some interesting TTrak ideas for elevated railway modules set in Berlin as well as other prototype places. If you are looking around for something to do, check some of these sites out. You can see that TTrak is more than just toy train running. Makes me wonder what TTrak might have been if Matt Schaefer was still around. It probably would have taken 12 people to move a 2 ft. module....

Another thing I have been up to is adopting HO kits to N scale. The rumor has been for years that Walthers kits for HO were not Horribly Oversized, but in reality Horribly Undersized, and about the same price as N buildings or sometimes even cheaper. Recently I saw an HO Valley Cement Plant show up on a layout and it looked perfect. I have seen the Waterfront Terminal used as well. For \$20 assembled, I got an HO Union station, which if you look at it, might be the size of Penn Station up in NY. Furthermore I bought a Kibri box set of a German chemical plant. The shipping warehouse was definitely HO, but the rest fit. And with a Model Power boiler plant and some tanks and a bit of piping: Boom! Large industry for the German TTrak layout solved. So fear not the HO side of the shop. If Walthers won't make an N scale version of something and you want something big, feel free to check out the other side of the hobby shop.

Even though times are rough and tough right now, this too will pass. And if it seems like there is nothing going on, there is always something you can do. Build something. There are a ton of ideas out there. Remember this is just a pause button. Write an article about doing TTrak modelling for the newsletter. Heck, do an after action report of the golden spike events like the Backyard Patio Central, or the Kitchen Table and Western. It will at least keep Dave in articles. We happy members of TTrak are going to come out of this ready to go.



T-Trak Update & Editorial: Chris Hyland

So until the all clear whistle blows, and to paraphrase the most interesting man in the world:

Keep Running Trains My Friends,

Chris



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

May 17, 2020

Club Meeting (MAYBE?)

Location: Chris Quinlan's house

June 24-28, 2020

N Scale Convention

Location: Nashville Tennessee

October 3-4, 2020

Great Scale Show

Timoium Fairgrounds

Contact: TBD

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: Eric Payne



If you look closely you can see the newest Acela in the center

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