

# BANTRAK News

A Monthly Newsletter for BANTRAK Members • Volume 33 • Issue 10 • November 2020



## The Engineer's Cab: LeRoy Brandimore

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Hello Everyone,

Here's hoping November finds in you in good spirits as we get ready for the spirits of the seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas. As usual we will be set up in the B&O Museum for the holiday season. Setting up on December 16 and there until January 3. More later in the newsletter. The next show is the Great Scale Model Train Show scheduled for the weekend of February 6-7, 2021, at the Maryland State Fairgrounds Cow Palace in Timonium. We currently do not have a Coordinator for this show. Hopefully, you been able to do some model railroad projects during Pandemic. Maybe if you do a good enough job you may get it published in the NTrak Newsletter like our very own Ethan Bernstein! His article is about him scratch-building the coaling tower which he showed to the club at one of the GSMT shows last year, It is nice to see young members taking an interest in the hobby.

Happy Modeling,

LeRoy Brandimore



## B&O Museum Festival of Trains Update: LeRoy Bandimore

On October 25, Alan Del Gaudio and I went to the B&O Museum to meet with Eileen Blinzley of the Museum to discuss ground rules and to check out where we will be located at the museum.

Topics discussed were:

B&O MUSEUM COVID 19 protocols:

- Social distancing, masks to be worn while on premises indoors and outdoors. Okay to remove while eating or drinking only.
- B&O is limited to 500 people on its grounds.
- Trains and high-tech and Children's exhibits are sanitized regularly.
- Trains limited to 50% capacity
- Santa will be in a different place than near our layout space.

None of these are extraordinary. Our membership is well-informed, so we should observe all COVID 19 protocols and be especially sure that as guests, we do nothing to bring trouble upon the B&O Museum.

BANTRAK display:

- Bays 11 and 12 like we have had. Locomotives currently in those bays will be moved.
- Provide clearance for brown doors, their shop [bay 12] and especially the Gray Emergency Exit door on the back wall.
- Set up Dec 16, Wednesday at 8, Tear Down Sunday, January 3, we expect to be out before 7:30
- We will have 5 8-foot tables and 12 chairs, more can be provided if we need them.
- We told her we did not expect to have a raffle layout sales table due to COVID and concern of our staffing the train display and the raffle layout.
- We said we would use our rope barriers at 4 feet from the front of the modules. Added to the 2-foot depth, that's 6 feet. We may want to push the barriers out a little more as some of us run from the front, but maybe for this event we try to stay behind the modules.

We said we would keep social distancing in the layout.

There will be complimentary tickets for participating members.

We will have room for a lunch meeting, from 11:30-1:30 on Set-up day [Dec 16] COVID 19 protocols to be observed

Additional information:

American Flyer and Four Counties HO will have layouts. We know Four Counties from GSMTS. They have a nice layout, so we need to be up on our game as far as appearance. 4C will be near the entrance to the Roundhouse, sort of opposite us. No Lionel and No MTH O-scale displays.

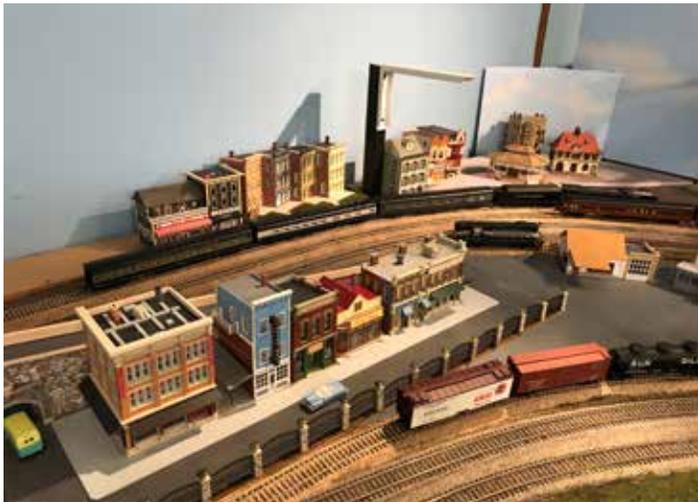


## My Pandemic Update: Alan Del Gaudio



### Creating a small street scene.

As is so usual in model railroading, this is an in-process diorama but most of the work is done. The article is written about an HO scene, but the thoughts



and planning are applicable in all scales.

The intent for this particular location has always been to have several shops that might serve a railroad area bounded by a 2-track mainline with an extended siding at the top, a 2-track mainline and medium length siding [~12 x 40' boxcars] at the bottom and a siding for a warehouse with a run-around track on the right ending in a Wye having enough room for a road-switcher 4-axle to move between the tracks. At the Wye will be a refueling tank and small tool shed. Please excuse the top/bottom/right/left nomenclature

since I have yet to settle on N, S, E and W for this railroad. At the top, the 3 tracks make a 90-degree curve with radii from 34-40 inches. Directly above will be a warehouse run and to the right will be the village of Oakview. There is a ramp behind my described area leading to a bridge over the top tracks to the village of Oakview. To the left of this scene is a small freight house and/or switch tower, some woods and then a waterfall and the Oakview Viaduct.

The above descriptions provide some context for this diorama. It is a place for townsfolk to shop and a place for the railroad workers to grab some food and tools. Originally, the intent was for a hardware store, a luncheonette, a drug store and a gas station. The management of the Argyle, Oakview and Montclair Railway stipulated no bar rooms to be present within 250 feet of the railroad facilities to better improve productivity and safety.

A few years ago, I had bought 2 wood craftsman kits from Bar Mills; Amos Cutter and Honest Joe's Pawn Shop. The plan was to combine them with brick structures to have that "village-y" look. This scene is about 28 inches long by 7 inches deep and is bounded by the 24-inch long ramp to the bridge at the back. With the depth of the buildings being 4 inches, there was room for a sidewalk and 2 lanes of traffic.

The Honest Joe's had been started 4 years ago and I used a light blue color to be a counterpoint to brick structures. It's a narrow, 3-story structure just under 4 inches deep. The name Manda Moo's Ice Cream Shoppe is after my daughter. I added a large corrugated awning which will have some picnic tables



## My Pandemic Update: Alan Del Gaudio

and benches for folks to settle back,

The next kit, while I was on a roll with the wood kits, was Amos Cutter. As depicted on the box art, it's a plain white structure. Not what I wanted. I settled on a pale harvest gold [yellow] color with a red roof for this single story peaked roof kit. So, it has a small 2nd story. I reduced the depth from the original 6 inches to 3-3/4 inches. Here is a huge benefit of wood kits, they are so easy to modify. The two clever things I did were to realize the woodwork for the front bay window, spanning the width the front was layered using 3 overlays of wood trim. Rather than paint them, I brushed them with 3 coats of Future floor wax and that deep honey color works well with the rest of the palette. City Classics makes nice photo interiors of various shops and stores, so I used the bakery one and curved to fill the front of the store behind the window. I named the shop Debbie's Bakery for my wife. We never did get into the bakery business, but



this is hers.

Next up was the DPM Seymour Block kit. This is 7 inches long along the front and has a right corner facade. Here I added awnings using sheet plastic with eave supports from Tichy and City Classic window interior details for a little market and dance studio. These are named after granddaughters, Kylie and Alyssa.

The DPM Kelly's Saloon makes for David's Hardware store using the appropriate interior. For the end, my original intent was the Lunde Cal's (Corner

Café, but it's a little small. I could not resist the Lunde Sacco's Department Store and built this with awnings and interior and named it Joanie's for my mom. As a kid, I sure remember she liked department stores. Most likely, I'll relocate this when the city of Argyle and Montclair town are built and substitute a drug store. New projects off this block but in the area will be a diner and probably a gas station, so long as I like the geometry.

Planning

Oh yes, this was about planning. So now I had a 7 x 28 area to plan. Since the stores would be in a row, I did not want a monotonic rise to 3 stories and down. Some of the signage along the sides of buildings would be better presented with the immediate neighboring building providing less obstruction. So, the Debbie's Bakery offered a lower building with a little set back to see the Dance with Miss Allie signage on the side of the Seymour block building.

The hardware store was to the left, the Manda Moods with Joanie's providing a fine 3-story corner department store.

Okay, so the buildings are about 4 inches deep out of the 7 I had. We need a sidewalk and then we need the street. And where, with this nice little run of "shoppes", will cars park? Using 2 HO trucks side by side, the street was defined to be about 1-1/2 inches wide. I settled on 3/4 inches deep for the sidewalk. So, then it hit me. Put a tunnel through the ramp to the bridge and make the street in front of the stores a 1-way lane plus a parking lane. I covered the ramp with Noch "Dolomite stone" paper. Since the stores are in front of it, I thought using stone sheet instead of coloring sheet of plastic stones or a hydrocal wall. The time spent on coloring stones would be a time drain with not much visibility and there is so much more to do on this layout. Fortunately, I had an N-scale arcade wall which I cut out for the portal. Cars go through the portal and turn right to return. This is bounded by the three top tracks.

## My Pandemic Update: Alan Del Gaudio



To separate the diorama village scene from the 3 RR tracks in front, I used the Walther's [Busch] Wrought Iron fence. This has stone posts every ~2-1/4 inches topped by lanterns. I've gotten a few compliments on this.

The HO railroad will have an N-scale level 16 inches above. Some of that is in place, but not yet over this scene. What is nice with this arrangement, is that it frames the HO scene sufficiently to prevent inquiring minds from seeing the doctrine of selective compression has been invoked on the other side of the ramp.

The test:

Enter my [just turned] mighty mite 5-year granddaughter who brings her stool over and says she likes the village. She is at eye level with the tunnel portal and says, "Grandpa, these cars have to go on the railroad tracks." Realizing that arguing the intricacies of selective compression may not be fully appreciated, I said, "The cars turn before the tracks and come out on the other side of the ramp."

To which she replied, "I don't think they can, the train tracks are there". I said, "Well, you just have to pretend they do" and showed her at the end of the ramp on the far side where I was able to fit a delivery van. This was acceptable. At least I did not have to tell her to stop messing with my illusion 'cause there ain't no more space.



## Quarantine Time = Modeling Time! : Ethan Bernstein

### Step-by-Step: Build a Concrete Pipe Load for a Lowboy Flatcar in Under an Hour

This month, I will share how I built a simple concrete pipe load in under an hour for about \$17, including the flat car itself. I had said at the end of last month's column that this article would be about converting some D&RGW open hoppers to modern CSX hoppers, but that article has been postponed to next month, so stay tuned!

We all love unique flat car loads, and an excuse to buy excessively large train cars. Well, here is the excuse you have been waiting for, or an idea to finally put those old lowboys to work. While at a local hardware store, I stumbled upon some small PVC pipe in the plumbing isle. With a diameter of about an inch and length of around one and a half inches, the pipe looked suitable to represent a very large concrete pipe load (around 13ft in diameter) in N scale.



At only a few cents apiece, I grabbed about a half dozen assorted sizes of PVC pipe, and off to the work bench I went. I knew from the beginning that I wanted to use the PVC to make a flatcar load, as I had two Bachmann six-axle lowboy flatcars without loads. Follow along as I explain converting PVC pipe into a flat car load in under an hour.

1. The first step is to prepare the PVC pipe, which involves sanding off the molded branding on the bottom and gently removing the barcode. The

branding comes off easily with 120 grit sandpaper, which I followed with 220 grit to even out the surface. Keep in mind that concrete pipes are not perfectly molded, so a little scuffing on the ends of the PVC would actually make the load look more accurate. To remove the barcode, use 220 grit sandpaper, applying very little pressure and moving slowly across the barcode. It should come off with fairly minimal effort. I did not bother to smooth out the surface after the 220 grit, however, as this side will be the one I glue to the flatcar. Do not sand the molding line running down the center of the PVC, as this actually simulates poured concrete well and is a detail that should be kept. If desired, company decals or banners could be added to the exterior of the pipe.

2. With the sanding of the pipe complete, it is now time to build the necessary wood supports on the flat car to stabilize the load. I had some small strips of wood on hand that I purchased in bulk from a local crafts store. Matchsticks would also work for this step. Cut two strips each slightly longer than the length of the pipe. Sand down one side of each strip to an angle to support the curvature of the pipe.

3. Weathering should now be applied to both the pipe and the flat car at this step if so desired by the modeler. I opted not to weather the pipe as I wanted to mimic the appearance of a freshly sanded and smoothed pipe ready for installation.

4. Securing the load: first, approximate the center of the pipe and the center of the flat car deck. Determine which side of the pipe will be glued to the flat car, as this side will need to be sanded lightly with 220 grit to allow the glue to hold onto the otherwise smooth PVC. Since I opted to use the side formerly with the barcode, no extra sanding was necessary. Apply wood glue, CA, or white glue to the bottom of the pipe, and carefully position it on the flat car. Hold the pipe in place until the glue is dry enough to keep the pipe from shifting (I would recommend a fast-drying glue-like wood glue or white glue to avoid finger cramps).

5. Next install the sanded wood strips along the base of the flat car, securing them against the pipe. Test fit these parts before gluing to ensure that the contour on the sanded side closely supports the curvature of the pipe, and if needed, sand them again.

6. The final step is to add some straps or chain

## Quarantine Time = Modeling Time! : Ethan Bernstein

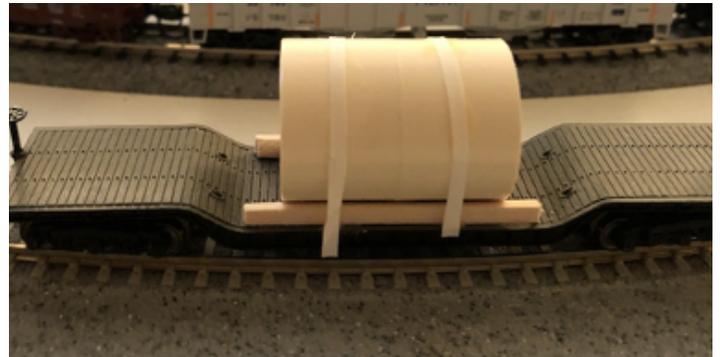
securing the pipe to the car. I used some thin scrap material left over from a twisty-tie that I cut to thin strips to resemble thick straps. I applied a dab of glue on top of the pipe, centering the strap, then folding each side down around the pipe and securing the ends to the sides of the flat car, trimming off any excess. If lots of weathering was applied to the pipe and car, a coat of Dullcote would complete the look and prevent weathering from “wearing” away.

This was a quick, simple, and best of all, cheap project that was quite enjoyable, and one that could be repeated to create a very unique consist (an excuse to use a lot of diesels to haul a small train, and incorporate a caboose custom-detailed for the shipping company hired to move the pipes). That’s all for this month’s column. Check back next month to finally read about converting two D&RGW three-bay open hoppers into worn CSX prototypes in under two hours! Thanks for reading! As always, feel free to reach out with any questions or comments. I really appreciate all of your support and feedback!

Happy modeling,

Ethan Bernstein

The (almost) finished model below. This is a picture of the car on a test run, and I had not yet finished detailing the model (for example, the untrimmed strap, lack of weathering, etc.). Some weathering would really make the load stand out, as would scale chains securing the load to the loops on the flat car deck.



## Train Spotting: Eric Payne



Pittsburgh, PA, Station October 4, 2020

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)  
Editor: David Betz

# BANTRAK 2020 Calendar

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## November 15, 2020

Club Meeting

Location: Zoom Meeting

## December 16, 2020

B&O Museum Setup and club Meeting

Location: B&O Museum

## December 17, 2020 - January 3, 2021

B&O Museum Festival of Trains

Location: B&O Museum

## October 21, 2021 - October 24, 2021

2021 NMRA MidEast Region Convention

Location: Mount Clare Junction

See Alan Del Gaudio for details

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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 [Tim Nixon](#) 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.

