



## The Engineer's Cab: LeRoy Brandimore

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Hello, and Happy New Year.

Well, who would have thought that 2020 would turn out like it did?

At this time a year ago, we were planning and getting ready for the Great Scale Model Train Show in February. We were just learning about this virus from China. People were encouraged to take precautions. The GSMT show was held. For our part it got interesting and took a little longer than usual. When the show ended, we were looking forward to the next GSMT show in May.

Then the pandemic started. It got difficult to arrange meetings. About the time of the March meeting the restrictions started. By April indoor meetings were limited to 10 people and you had to maintain 6 feet for social distancing. We couldn't find any place to have a meeting. The May GSMT show was cancelled. We had our next meeting at Chris Quinlan's house under the carport, maintaining social distancing. In July we had our first Zoom meeting, the first of many.

The N-scale Weekend in August was cancelled. There were other reasons besides the pandemic for it being cancelled. Then the October GSMT show. We kept having our Zoom meetings. Finally came December and our Showcase layout of the year, the B&O museum during the Festival of Trains.

We were able to do this because the Museum was able to reopen in June and remained so, but at reduced capacity. We designed the layout so that Social Distancing could be maintained, both outside and inside the layout. It was planned for easy setup so that a small number of people could set it up. We had a small number, the people who provide modules. The pandemic and the weather kept the numbers down for setup. We did get the layout together with joiner tracks in by the time we had to leave. The layout went well, and the museum was just as glad to have us as we were to be there. Most of the other clubs had backed out by early December.

This year we are having a weak start. The February GSMT show has been cancelled. The next one is scheduled for MAY 8 & 9. Then the N Scale Weekend is Scheduled for August 6 & 7 in State College, PA. Then there should be the GSMT show in October and then the B&O in December. With the coming vaccine things should hopefully get close to NORMAL again. Maybe we will be able to setup again before December.

Happy Modeling,

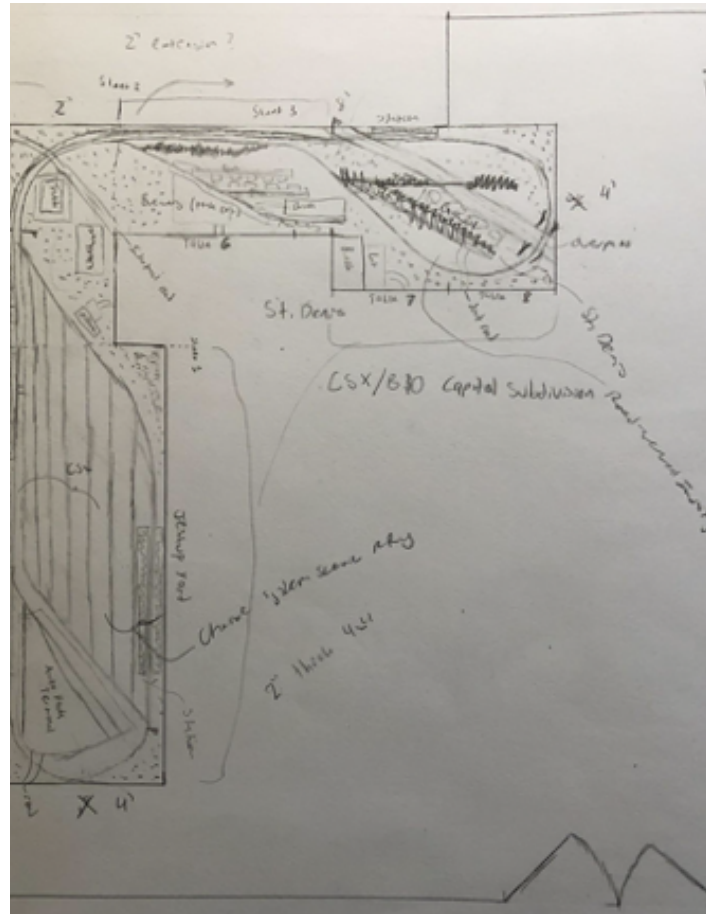
LeRoy Brandimore

## Quarantine Time = Modeling Time! : Ethan Bernstein

### New Year, New Layout

I hope the Holidays treated you all well and brought lots of new trains! A New Year has begun, with 2020 finally over. With social distancing restrictions still in place, what better time to start a new layout? My family and I are moving into a new house, and my new train room provides a much more usable space for my next modeling endeavor: the CSX Capital Subdivision in N-scale. My previous six layouts have not been much more than track on a table, as I very much enjoy just watching the tiny model trains go around and around, and find them to be an exceptional source of relaxation. With the advent of the pandemic last year, I was “forced” to spend more time running my trains, and just watching my trains run across a tabletop around a few scratch built structures with minimal surrounding scenery started to bother me. My father and I began railfanning locally, and watching the massive CSX diesels roar through lush East Coast scenery made me realize I wanted to create a scenicked layout, specifically one which provides a miniature railfanning experience similar to what I have experienced on the prototype.

The new layout will be proto-freelanced, based off of the CSX Capital Subdivision, set in the modern era. The prototype CSX Capital Subdivision, originally the Baltimore and Ohio Washington Branch, is a busy, double track mainline connecting the Baltimore Terminal Subdivision (which serves Baltimore City) with Washington D.C., stretching further south via the Alexandria Extension. This line, originally constructed in the 1830s, has lots of history and is a very important artery in east coast railroading both in the past and present, seeing a variety of unit and manifest freights, as well as some passenger traffic. The line also has a wide diversity of scenery, from dense foliage and dramatic crossings over the Patapsco and Patuxent Rivers, to historic neighborhoods, and several rail-served industries. With a focus on scenery and prototype operation, this stretch of the CSX is perfect for both railfanning and modeling.



I have begun preliminary planning and sketching of the layout, deciding what industries and rail features and scenery aspects I want to incorporate. For my railroad’s industries, I decided on the Guinness Brewery, one of the largest rail-served customers on the line (I know I am underaged but the 1930s-era structures and extensive track network make this too cool of an industry to leave out), and the autorack facility in Jesup, MD. The line will also feature the St. Denis and Dorsey Marc Stations, two of my favorite railfanning locations, and Jesup yard, which will be staging. The majority of the scenery will be reminiscent of the Patapsco State Park area, though I will not be incorporating the magnificent Thomas Viaduct due to space constraints. The layout will be L-shaped: 10’x12’ (a big upgrade from my previous layout), and have a continuous mainline run of about 50’ (see drawing for a visual representation). Despite my passion for modern equipment, I cannot prevent myself from purchasing steam and early diesels,

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so my layout will also feature a fictional historical railroad, the Chessie System Scenic Railway, based out of Jesup Yard. The scenic railway will be funded and granted trackage rights by CSXT, and is part of a fictional system of historic Maryland rail lines including the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad (this way I have an explanation for EM-1s running alongside intermodal trains and under modern interstate overpasses). The layout will be all DCC, and almost every consist will feature at least one sound-equipped locomotive. I also hope to include illuminated signals, buildings, street lights, and signs, as well as lots of scratchbuilt trees and structures.

In the coming months, I plan to provide updates and mini projects from my progress on the railroad to provide a different perspective on layout construction and scenery, and offer helpful money-saving tips and tricks that I learn along the way. Stay tuned for the first installment of “Building the CSX Capital Subdivision!”

Stay safe and run trains,

Ethan Bernstein



El Capitan approaches a station during the B&O FOT show.

# BANTRAK 2021 Calendar

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## January 17, 2021

Club Meeting  
Location: Zoom

## February 6, 2021

Newsletter content deadline  
*We need content please submit your articles by the deadline.*

## February 21, 2021

Club Meeting  
Location: Zoom

## March 21, 2021

Club Meeting  
Location: Zoom

## 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.





## Train Spotting: Ethan Bernstein

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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

