

BANTRAK News

A Monthly Newsletter for BANTRAK Members • Volume 34 • Issue 11 • November 2021



The Engineer's Cab: LeRoy Brandimore

Hello fellow Bantrak members,

Here we are already in November. Last month we started out shaking the dust off as we participated in our first train show since February of 2020. The club set up a large N-Trak layout that we managed to keep running all weekend. We also set up a small T-Trak layout which ran most of the weekend. Additionally, we did well with sales of collections that we had received the past year.

October was a busy month. For our second event of the month we set up a small N-Trak layout at the NMRA Mid-Eastern Region (MER) convention where we allowed people to do operations. Alan DeI Gaudio seemed pleased with how this event went. The MER group presented the club with a Certificate of Appreciation for our participation. I hope they gave Alan one for all of the work he did for the convention. I happened to be visiting Kimball Tennessee during the time of the convention and there were a couple of people there who knew about the MER event in Baltimore.

Our next event setup should have been at B&O Museum, but unfortunately the B&O has decided not to have us participate this year. We can only hope that they change their minds for December 2022.

So this pushes us to the 2022 season. Our next scheduled train show is the weekend of February 5th and 6th, with set-up on Friday the 4th. We are looking for volunteer coordinators for this show, so please don't hesitate to help the club.

The November meeting will be at Chris Quinlan's house on the 21st.

Happy Modeling,

LeRoy Brandimore



Mount Clare Junction MER 2021 Convention : Alan Del Gaudio

During the weekend of October 21-24, BANTRAK set up a nice 26 x 16-foot layout to provide operational possibilities for convention attendees and our members. It was the stated goal of the convention chair for Mt. Clare Jct. to be as inclusive for all forms of model railroading as possible; HO, N and O-scales, Lego, Virtual, Traction (under catenary) and larger scales. The live steam loco was not able to make it, but all others were represented in layouts and/or clinics.

I would like to thank those that made this possible; Martin, Al Potter, Bob Bunge, Arthur, and I set up the layout. Running and tear-down teams included the above plus Tim, Ethan and Josh Bernstein, Paul, and Vicky. Additionally, Paul and Ethan presented clinics.

For the convention, it was important to present operational possibilities. Eric Payne guided me through devising a simple Operations plan switch list while he was rolling across Pennsylvania in his 1:1 scale train. We had to create ad hoc names for the sidings during Eric's lesson plan which was...interesting!

We started to set up at 10 AM and finished by 5 when all tracks were checked for both DC and DCC. Aside from an hour -plus lunch break, everyone was busy and focused. So, this is what 5 people can do in 5-1/2 hours. The layout looked great and ran well!

We had fewer Ops takers than I had hoped but I took a shot at it to re-spot several cars. It is important in working with the switch list to walk the layout with the list to figure out which direction your train is to be heading before you start to pull cars out of the sidings. Run-around tracks are not always immediately present. In some places, trackage was tricky so one might want to have a smaller consist, either getting those cars first or cutting the train before "grabbing" them.

In keeping with the KISS principal, all the cars were from one person, marked with their colors and using MT couplers. Rolling stock were selected for unique colors and road names to make identification easy as even HO road numbers can be difficult to read! Train length for Ops was 10 cars. Motive power sets were double-headed 4-axle locos that were closely speed matched.

In addition to the Blue line sidings on many of our modules, we ganged each of my 4-footers with one of Martin's 2-footers to provide 2 Red-line sidings out of the Orange lines with short orange line team tracks.

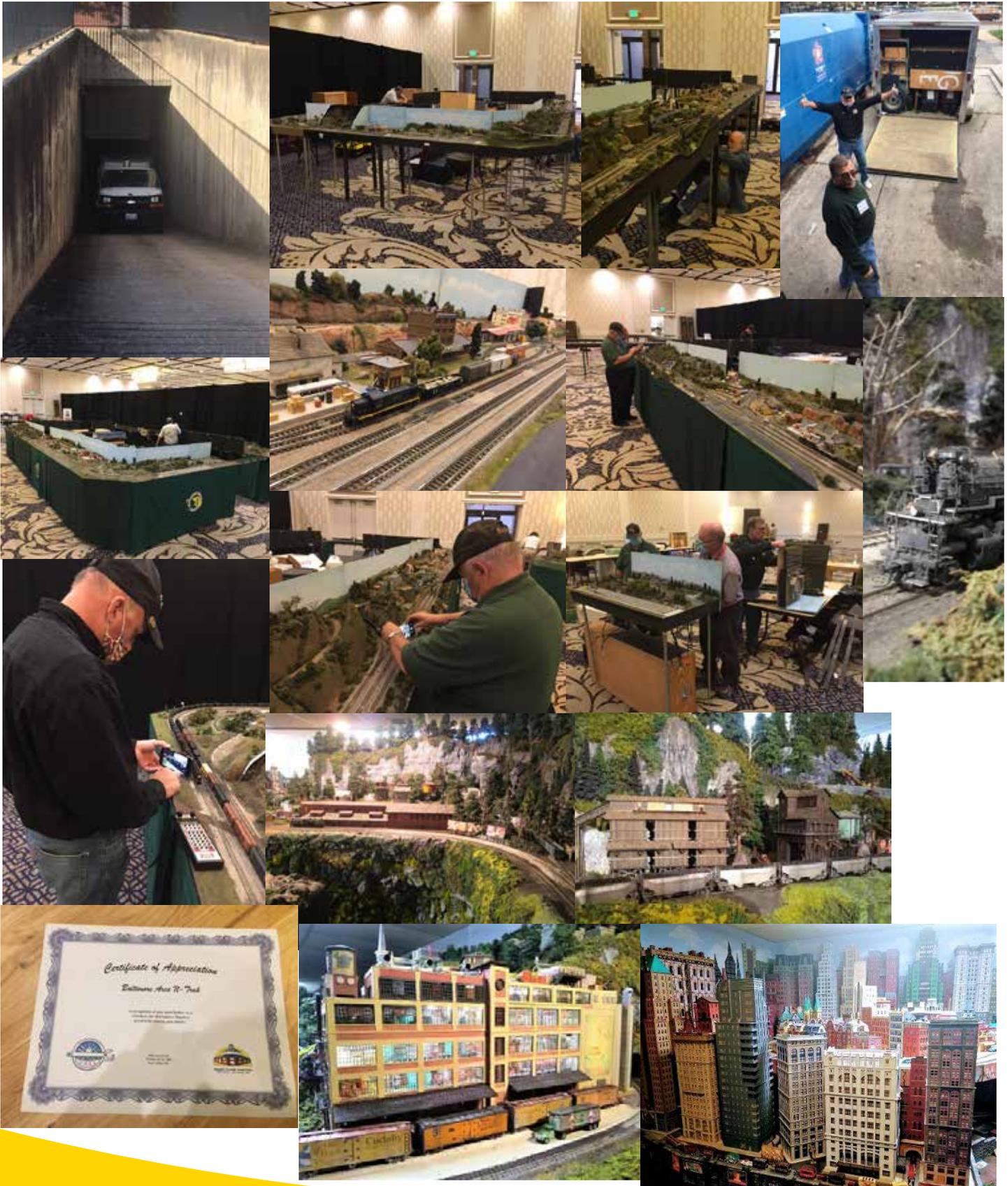
While thematically these combinations looked weird, operationally, they offered options for run around or storage. Scenic flow was otherwise good. If anyone is thinking of building two modules, we could use a Yellow to Red crossover and return. Martin has Blue-to-Yellow crossovers.

We had a goodly number of compliments and did a fine ambassadorial job for the Baltimore Area N-Trak and N-scale in general! Thank you all once again!

Alan Del Gaudio



Mount Clare Junction MER 2021 Convention : Alan Del Gaudio



Spooky Layout: Lauren Baker

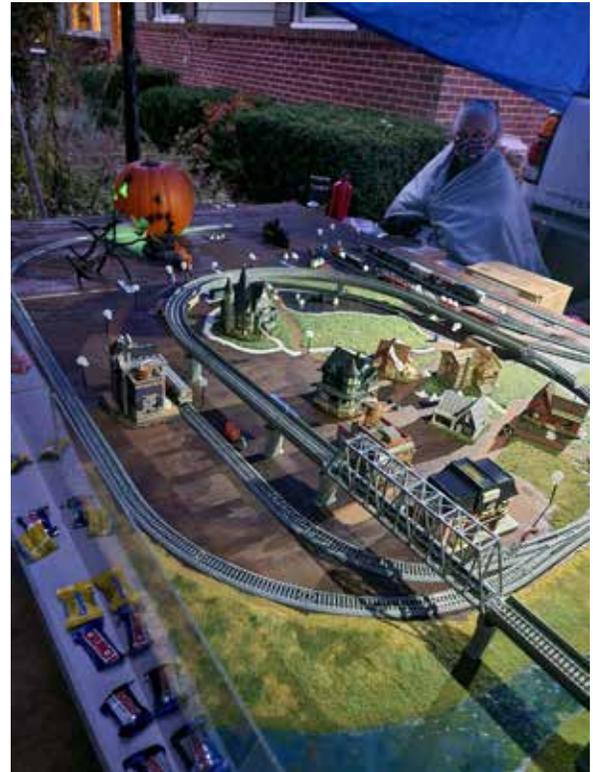
This is the second year for the layout. Last year it was just 4 pieces of 2x4 sheets of birch plywood painted and spread out on two 6 foot folding tables staggered, 3 boxes of Kato track, buildings from microtrains haunted hamlet, and a few ghosts.

The plywood being a bit warped presented some track issues so this year a frame was constructed and the deck was screwed down. Some scenery was added as well. Since the idea is for a portable easily assembled layout the scenery has to remain flat on 3 of the 4 boards. Since one of the track boxes is viaduct with a bridge I did elevate the terrain and add a river on the left board.

This year in addition to the scenery I added vampires, witches, clowns and a headless horseman. I also constructed a microtrains structure kit for a Halloween Forest carnival ride that was difficult but came out well. The piece de resistance was a pumpkin tunnel a friend created.

Setup on Sunday was delayed by unexpected rain that was to clear up about noon. I rigged a temporary tarp to get started with assembly which takes about 3 hours. The rain stopped and the wind was causing issues with the temporary tarp as I was trying to get the buildings and figures in place so I took the tarp down.

Of course it began to rain just as I finished and I had to rig the tarp again. Unfortunately the rain had already covered the layout so it had to be dried. The track drying took a bit longer so train running was slightly delayed. No more rain but the tarp continued to give issues in the wind until my nephew arrived to see the layout and helped to provide some better anchorage. The taller second pair of hands was sorely needed. Pop up tent is in the works for next year.



Spooky Layout: Lauren Baker



BANTRAK 2021 Calendar

December 6, 2021

Newsletter content deadline

We need content please submit your articles by the deadline.

November 21, 2021 -

Club Meeting

Location: Chris Quinlan's house

500 East Maple Road

Linthicum Heights, MD 21090

December 19, 2021 -

Club Meeting

Location: 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 [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: Ed Kapuscinski



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
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