



# BANTRAK Newsletter

Volume 30, Issue 1  
January 2017

## The Engineer's Cab: Tim Nixon

Happy New Year!

Well, the ball has dropped on 2017 and BANTRAK completed another successful run at the B&O Museum. The B&O Museum management was very appreciative of our efforts again this year, and thanked us for bringing joy to the staff, volunteers and visitors. Our layout received numerous compliments from the public and everyone was impressed by the amount of work that went into the layout. I'd like to thank all who helped out, either by bringing a module, helping with set-up, or just running trains. I'd like to give special thanks to our coordinator, Alan del Gaudio, who did an outstanding job even though he was "railroaded" into the position in the first place, and to our co-coordinator and scheduler LeRoy Brandimore, who spent my hours at the museum filling open run slots. Thanks, Gentlemen!

While at the B&O Museum, the BANTRAK layout hosted the Mike McGrattan Memorial Train. Mike was a Canadian N-scale modeler who passed away earlier this year from cancer. To honor his memory, a special train was created to run on the N-scale layouts of the members of the Railwire forum throughout the U.S. and Canada, including those of several BANTRAK members. Since the train was currently in Maryland, I extended an invitation to run it on our layout at the B&O. Look for the article on page 10 of this newsletter.

Next on the show agenda is the February Great Scale Model Train Show (GSMTS), scheduled for February 4th and 5th, with set-up on February 3rd. Paul Diley will be coordinating this show. I know Paul already has 9 people who have volunteered to bring modules to this show, so we have a great start on a layout. Those interested in having a module in the show who have not yet volunteered should contact Paul to get your modules added.

The January meeting will be at Jack Walsh's home, 5534 Phelps Luck Dr. Columbia, Md., on January 15th starting at 2 PM. The major item on the agenda this month will be setting the 2017 BANTRAK events calendar, including shows with coordinators and meeting locations with hosts.

Happy Railroading!

Tim Nixon



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### ***Next Meeting..***

***January 15th***



## T-Trak Update / Editorial: Chris Hyland

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Wow, a New Year! There was tons of stuff under the tree, lots of cool new toys. And there will be lots of events where you can run those cool new toys.

Last month was interesting, for the first time in forever I had to pull the plug on an event. We got hit by one of those wonderful ice storms that like to visit the Maryland area. So taking my own advice, I hit the stop button on that one. It was a shame that we didn't get a chance to run, but I am even happier that no one got hurt or stuck out there in the brush canyons that surround Sykesville. Like I have said in the past, one of the duties of being a coordinator is taking care of your troops first.

But we hit the reset button and we were off to a Greenberg show down at Chantilly where it was cold, there was too much traffic, and we were booked alongside a Christmas craft show. Read the after action report on that one. Then there was running at the B&O. Add to that that the Hyland clan visited a lot of other pals during the "most wonderful" train running season of the year. I visited Miniature Railway Club of York, Pa., (plus I did some rail fanning of the old MA&PA and PRR lines); visited the Highland town train garden (saw the Patterson Pagoda and what's left of the Natty Bo' brewery as a bonus); the National Botanical Gardens downtown with their really cool display of national landmarks, including the display of Pierce Mill in Rock Creek Park where I worked as a miller at one point for the feds (now if I can only get one of the cool Christmas ornaments that they had); and our own MOCO Brookside Gardens with its G scale Glen Echo/Cabin John streetcar line. Not to mention a few others that I probably forgot. It was so busy that I had just enough time to put up a tree.

I am happy now that I can just sit back now and assemble kits and watch a three hour documentary on DVD about how a steam loco-

motive works, Good times!

I have some news about Plexiglas project and how we can keep kidzillas off your modules. We did a test of putting up some at the Chantilly show. The stuff worked perfectly, though there are some additional things to iron out. We should have some sort of standard coming up in the next month or so. Even better, availability of it is easy, just a trip to your local HD. So stay tuned.

So now we charge off into the New Year. We have lots of stuff lined up, even some events that were unexpected. You want more time to run at B&O? Well guess what? We gotcha covered! A two-day Greenberg show at the museum! A two-day Sykesville, Timonium show. There are lots of fun times ahead. So check out our schedule. Hanging out with your pals helps drive the winter gloom away. And as always, see you at the shows.

-Chris



## Chantilly Show (AKA) the Big Freeze: Chris Hyland

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On the second weekend of Dec., the T-Trak team crossed once again over the Potomac River into Northern Virginia. Greenberg had given us an 8 x 5 foot telephone booth to operate out of. This was not a problem, as it was thought that this would be a quite show and only 2 members of the Hyland Clan were operating the layout. We would use this show to test out our new Plexiglas sides designed to keep the little ones; hands off the layout. To avoid returning against Tysons Traffic, we booked a room to stay over Saturday night.

Well, it was not quiet at all on the Saturday. We rolled in at 8.30 and were set up at 10. The doors opened and a flood of people came in. Next door to us they had booked a Christmas Craft show so what better thing was there to do than have mommy go shopping and let the kid-dos loose on the train show next door. All things aside, we had a good time. We ran lots of trains, including our new Korean War era military train, stuffed to the gills with Sherman Tanks. We also ran some favorites like the Zephyr and the Alaska Railways passenger sets. And when the kids got too out of hand, out came the banger trains, the early Atlas WM 40ft boxcars and our cheapo Mech Refer train. The plexi for the most part kept the kids off the layout, unless they decided to swarm around the corners and try and take us out there. Your author spent most of his time sitting out in front of the layout saying: "Hands off there kids" and the perennial favorite: "Look with your eyes and not your hands." And that is pretty much how things went until close. We had some visits at the National Capital Trains table, with Bernie finding us all sorts of goodies that we couldn't live without. Otherwise the rest of the show was just so so. There were a lot of tinsplate, battery trains, and HO junk that looked like it should have been sent off to the great dustbin in the sky. The other thing that was not great was that being in front of a rollup door, we got all the cool breezes as they came by and it caused our feet to freeze.

Thus day one ended, and our evening consisted of going to Walmart for junk food, Willards for BBQ, and watching all the Star Wars movies on cable up in the room. The local news reported that it was really cold (duh) and that traffic was horrible

because they just opened the MGM casino. One was screwed either way when trying to get back to Maryland (oh what a joyous event!).

Sunday opened with us getting unexpected reinforcements in the form of Matt G-L. We let Matt run his heart out and he ran Amtrak, Santa Fe freights, and the original Zephyr with the Star Ship Enterprise, I mean the E5, on the front. That loco can fly like a bat out of hell. We added some trains of our own from time to time and caught up with him on current events. We ran until 4pm. The show attendance was smaller than the day before. We crossed back over the Potomac via Point of Rocks and came home the scenic way, and so ended our journey of discovery.

Thanks to Matt for helping us out, it was fun!

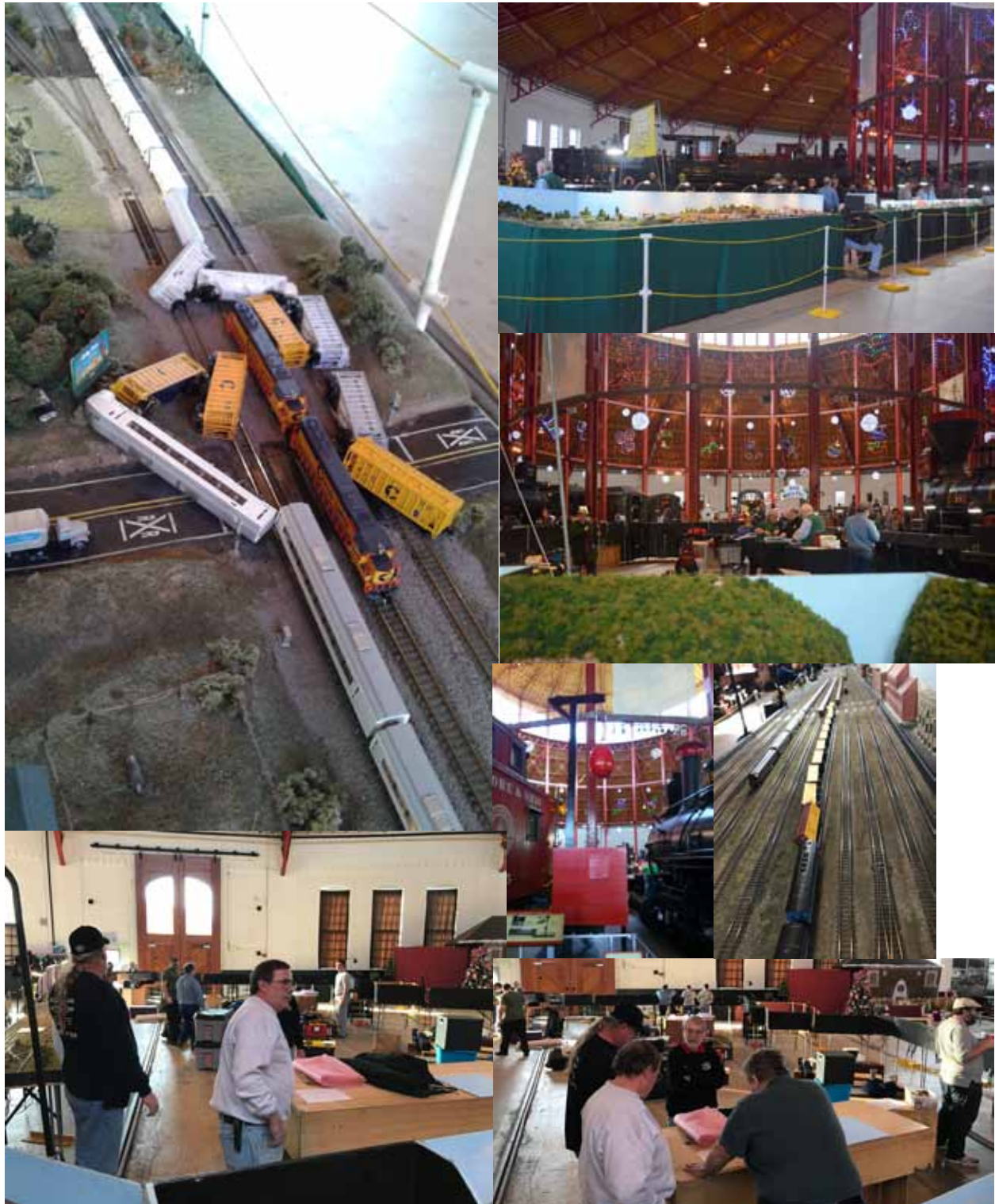
-Chris



# B&O Highlights:



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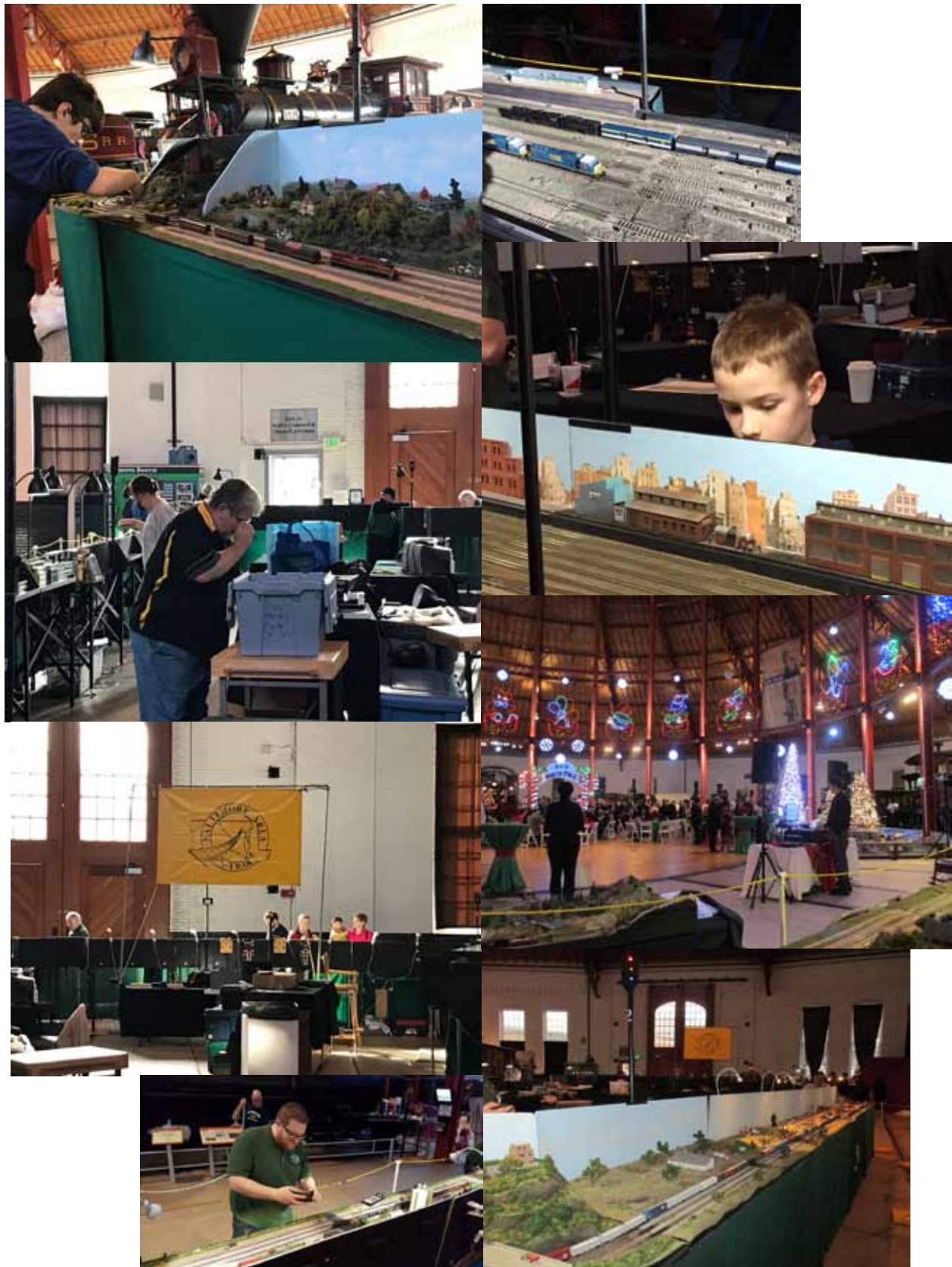
You can catch some videos from the show here:

<https://youtu.be/PTdrWf7yBDM>

<https://youtu.be/1HA92hpDjZo>

[https://youtu.be/j\\_F3-NxG9SQ](https://youtu.be/j_F3-NxG9SQ)

# B&O Highlights:



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## B&O Show Report: Al Del Gaudio

The 2016 B&O Festival of Trains aka The Magical Holiday Express was a great event for BANTRAK. With a rather inauspicious start, the first big day was weathered out, but the display was well done and very interesting from the spectator's point of view. Several folks mentioned it to me as they thanked and complimented the club.

How did it come together? A kick-off was a meeting with Travis Harry, the Chief Curator, and Martin Myers and myself in July. Travis noted we would gladly be invited and with the similar amount of space we've had in most of the previous years. Then Mark Bandy followed up by meeting Travis to be sure of the dimensions we would have.

Next we had a strong level of interest and support from the club and then the hard work was fitting the many multi-module sets into a layout plan. Lots of back and forth between Mark and me resulted in a nominally pie-shaped layout, but with a bump-in here and a bump-out there to accommodate Santa Claus. The layout plan is appended.

December 14, Set Up day went, as the Brits are wont to say, swimmingly well! Oh yes, we had the usual amount of tugging and shifting of modules segments to "fit" the prerequisite wedges into place. One thing that helped was we kept groups of modules in segments for as long as we could, which was a lot less stress on them as we shifted them in position by a foot or two this way and that. Clamp down was accomplished by 12:30. Joiners and wiring took from about 1:30-3:30. We had tested everything and it was essentially done by 4.

Many hands made light work or at least fast work. Thank you to all those who came on December 14, especially those who did not bring a module!

Running the layout: Give yourselves a big hand. You did it. Sure some ran a lot more than expected, but I am not aware of anyone feeling they were overtaxed or not able to get the run slots they wanted. That translates to a fun show from my point of view.

Daily reports told of Limited passenger trains, bullet trains; coal drags, Thomas and Friends, container unit trains, various tanker and merchandise trains and small peddler freights of

all eras plying the layout.

Next time, lots of videos please.

The team: And here is an overdue huge note of appreciation for the team. Mark Bandy patiently and painstakingly working on multiple versions of a layout to come up with the winner we had. Al Potter cheerfully filled the breach with run slots and raffle table sales whenever needed (and for the first week, it was often). Last but by no means least, LeRoy Brandimore was a huge help; updating the run schedule daily, filling in as Day Captain quite often and then writing up a nice summary of each days' highlights. Yeoman work indeed!

Raffle Layout: This is a huge undertaking. Mark Bandy headed up the project. Martin Myers made our lives very easy by delivering a wired and ballasted layout to us. Mark can discuss the project in greater detail. At the risk of offending someone by an error of omission, a number of us worked out the theme and executed the basic landform and scenery. The buildings that were "farmed out" in the July meeting came back looking terrific and Mark added some MJB Models magic with a unique station, switch tower and signage.

Having it ready for both the Home and Garden Show and GSMTS October show was a great reward for our hard steadfast work. It would have been easy to procrastinate and miss the deadline. With more than half of the club's expenses carried by the raffle layout sales, and losing 3 weekend holidays as the museum was closed, plus a feared, but unexpected snow day, we still came in pretty close to budget.

Thank you to those manning the raffle sales table. Great work! And, it's great to chat with visitors admiring the many wonderful museum displays.

For a number of years, BANTRAK has been honored to furnish our modular layout at the B&OL Festival of Trains. This 2016 edition was another wonderful and successful chapter in our story with one of the finest Railroading resources in the country.

Thank you all!

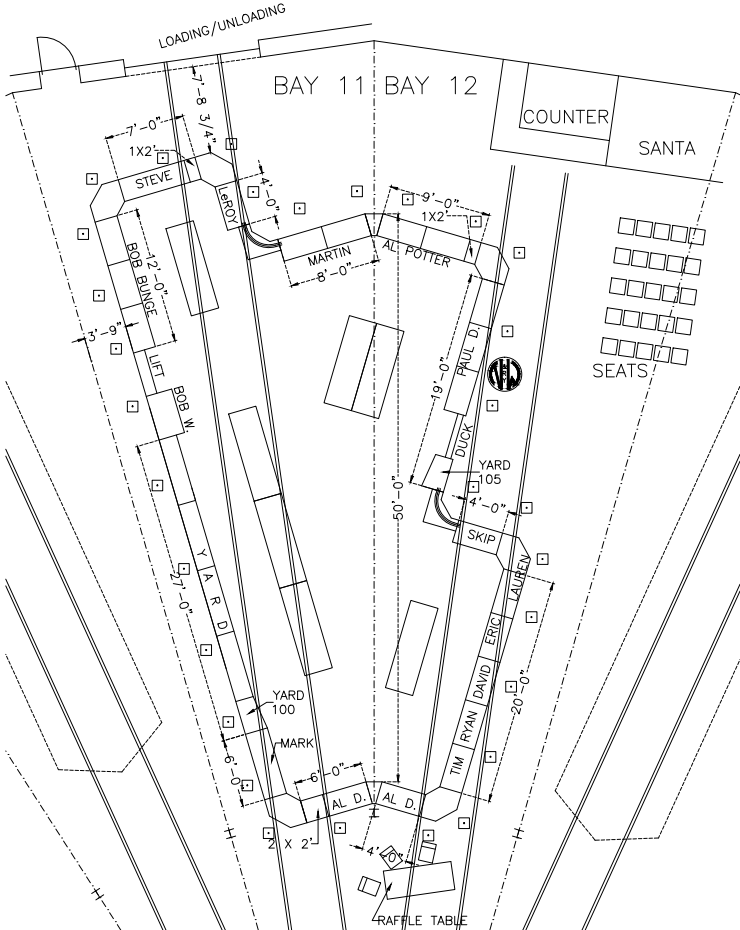
Alan Del Gaudio

BANTRAK 2016 MHE/FOT Coordinator





# B&O Show Report: Al Del Gaudio



## Raffle Layout Winner:

The 2016 Raffle layout winner was Chris Wiseman

Chris was able to pick up the layout within a few hours of being notified.



## Mike McGrattan Memorial Train: Tim Nixon

During our 2016 stay at the B&O Railroad Museum, the BANTRAK layout hosted the Mike McGrattan Memorial Train. Mike was diagnosed with cancer a couple of years back and succumbed to the disease back in June. Mike was a Canadian N-scale module railroader who served as a project consultant for Rapido Trains and was a well-known poster on many model railroading forums, including the Railwire, Atlas forum, and Scale Rails Online. Mike modelled the Canadian Pacific railway, and his home layout was the Puddington Division of the CPR. Mike was probably best known for sending a Canadian Pacific boxcar, nicknamed Little Puddington, on a tour of layouts throughout the US and Canada. The boxcar was mailed from one forum member to another, with each person “adding” something to the car at each stop; some added weathering, some decals, some graffiti, and a couple people even replaced the doors, resulting in a one-of-a-kind car. Little Puddy did a turn around the BANTRAK layout at the B&O as part of its tour.

To honor Mike, the members of the Railwire forum created a special memorial train, and sent it out to replicate the journey of Little Puddington. The base train consisted of 4 cars; a CPR baggage car, a CPR coach, a CN sleeping car (donated by Mike’s employer Rapido Trains), and a CPR observation car. The train started its journey in British Columbia back in July and by December it was in Maryland, where several BANTRAK members hosted it, including Ed Kapuscinski, David Betz, Eric Payne, and John Berger.

Since the train was in Maryland, I sent out an email to those scheduled to host the train letting them know that we would be glad to host the train on the BANTRAK layout while we were at the B&O Museum. The current custodian, Lee Weldon, brought the train down on Sunday the 17th and shared a run slot with Ed K. Both Lee and I took photos, me with a camera and Lee with his iPhone; surprisingly (at least to me), the iPhone pictures in general came out better.

For those interested in learning more, the train’s journey is being documented online at the Railwire, and is also going to be the subject of a special section of N-Scale Magazine, starting with the January/February 2017 issue. The plan is to present the train and package documenting the train’s journey to Mike’s wife and son at the conclusion of the trip.



## Train Spotting: Josh Surkosky

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Sweet Toot

## 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 [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 & 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.

# BANTRAK 2016 CALENDAR

Date	Event	Location	Contact	Type
January 15th	Club Meeting	Jack Walsh's home	Tim Nixon	meeting
Feb 4&5th	Great Scale Show	Timonium MD	Paul Diley	Show
April 8&9th	Great Scale Show	Timonium MD	Lauren Baker	Show
June 21st-25th	National N Scale Convention	Pittsburgh PA	TBD	Show
August 18-20th	N-Scale Weekend	Altoona PA	TBD	Show

## BANTRAK CALL BOARD

### CLUB WORK SESSION 2016-2017

*Contact Tim Nixon, Eric Payne or Ed Kapuscinski for work session information.*



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)  
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