

# BANTRAK News

A Monthly Newsletter for BANTRAK Members • Volume 35 • Issue 11 • November 2022



## The Engineer's Cab: Chris Quinlan

Hello BANTRAK!

OMG! What an exciting month we have had as an organization. Our show a few weekends ago was remarkable. I don't have to tell you, but we had three high-quality layouts and an excellent "premier" of our Free-moN display. Thanks to John for rallying the troops to get this FreemoN thing going. As always, I'm blown away by the quality of work, craftsmanship, knowledge, and dedication to our hobby and each other our members show. I liked Gannon's neighborhood/construction site module on the T-Trak layout the best. Good work, buddy! You model with the best of them! And finally, thank you to Paul for putting our show together. It takes a lot of energy, management, and talent to pull it all together, and you made it look easy!

We have many activities coming up shortly that will be exciting. We received an invitation to return to the B&O Museum for the holidays, and we'll have a T-Trak set up at Arthur's apartment complex. A massive shout out to Alan for getting our foot back in the door at the B&O. Check out your emails for more details.

On a serious note, let's take some time to look around and see who has been less active with the club lately. Maybe they just need one of us to reach out and check on them. A few people have been on my mind lately, and I need to follow through with my own words. We had a friend from church take his own life this last week. He was lonely, but nobody knew just how lonely he was. I don't know if reaching out to him more often would have changed anything, but I wish I had. I don't mention this for sympathy but as a reminder that sometimes people need to hear a kind word. The holidays, for some reason, are a rough time for many. I'm so grateful I get to spend part of this season running trains with you and spending time together as friends.

I hope to see everyone at Paul and Vicky's on November 20th. We can't wait to see all the work you guys have done on the house!

See you soon!  
Chris



## Free-moN: John Hale

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Hello fellow Bantrakers!

In late December of 2021, I dropped by Eric Payne's house. The discussion started with the fact that I was thinking of starting a Free-moN club. Eric quickly responded with the fact that the people we would encourage to participate are already members of Bantrak. We should approach Bantrak with the idea of forming a Free-moN (special interest) group within the club much like we have with TTrak.

We made several phone calls from Eric's kitchen that night. To see if there was interest. The response was fairly positive with some normal reservations. We followed that up with a video conference call in January, where several of us suggested we bring the idea of Free-moN to the club at a club meeting with something tangible that we could use to show the benefits.

In the March club meeting, the group showed off four demonstration modules to highlight the benefits of Free-moN along with the detractors (such as no backward compatibility with NTrak modules). The club agreed to create a Free-moN sub group, and at the April show we demonstrated the four modules along side our NTrak and TTrak layouts.

The group continued to meet both virtually and physically as we started to target the October show for our first Free-moN layout setup. The next six months included building new modules, converting legacy oNe-Trak modules, wiring, testing, and learning.

On October 14th, we assembled our first Free-moN layout for the Great Scale Train Show in Timonium, MD, from October 15 to October 16th. We assembled 24 modules in our first layout in just under 2 hours. highlighting one of the key tenets of Free-moN (ease of set up).

Various members of the club ran on the new layout along with running on our NTrak layout and our TTrak layout at the show. While we chased and resolved some small issues (electrical drops, derails at joints, etc, for the most part the layout ran well all weekend.

Some show participants had traveled from New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, with the sole purpose to see Bantrak's Free-moN layout. Feedback from the folks passing by was all positive. Most loved the fact that the height of the modules made it easier to see the details.

Paul Diley's bridge stole the show (agai), as almost every person who came by asked about it and wanted to know more details. If you run on Free-moN in the

future you should know the history of that module as you WILL get asked!

Overall the layout met or exceeded our expectations. It has created a new buzz within the club with more members planning on building modules and /or participating in future layouts. At the end of the weekend, we met and came up with a list of almost two dozen items we need to add/improve/fix/etc, to make the Free-moN layout even better next time we set up.

The club's efforts were recognized at the national Free-moN level as a picture of our layout adorned the Facebook homepage for Free-moN shortly after the show. The praise from the national level and the folks who attended was very motivating. Free-moN is supposed to "raise the bar" in model railroading, so through peer pressure, the Free-moN layout will become more and more scened and polished with every opportunity to setup.

Regardless of your desire the Free-moN layout should be able to accommodate. Want to run a train roundy round? The double track mainline and balloon loop ends will facilitate that. Want to perform some switching? The branchlines and industries will provide that. Want to do some ad-hoc operations? The entire Free-moN layout can support that also.

John Hale and Eric Payne are your primary points of contact for how Bantrak is implementing the Free-moN standard to both meet our modeling needs and still conform to national standards to improve interoperability with other Free-moN clubs. If you are interested in participating, contact one of us and we get you everything you need to be successful.

John

See photos on page 3.



# Free-moN: John Hale



# BANTRAK 2022 Calendar

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## December 06, 2022

Newsletter content deadline

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

## November 20, 2022

Club Meeting

Location: Paul and Vicky Diley's home

900 Martell Court Bel Air MD 21014

2-5PM

## December 04, 2022

T Trak Show

Roland Park Place Retirement community

830 west 40th , Baltimore MD 21211.

9-5PM

Cordinators: Author Boyd & Lauren Baker

## December 21-31, 2022

B&O ( FOT)

B&O Roundhouse.

Cordinator: Alan Del Gaudio

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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: David Betz

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Santa Fe N.M.

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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