



The Engineer's Cab: Chris Quinlan

Hey BANTRAK Family! I hope everyone is enjoying the fall so far. At the time of my writing, we are preparing for our next show in Timonium and are hot off the heels of a great show up in Altoona! A heartfelt thanks to Martin and Tim for being our show coordinators and keeping us in line to make these events an absolute pleasure. I wish the Air Force would quit getting in the way of me attending these shows! Big Blue must be punishing me for something.

Speaking of the Air Force, I have a little buddy named Noah Bohan, the son of one of my wingmen. Noah was diagnosed with Batten disease about four years ago when he was six. Fortunately, Batten disease isn't well known, so here is the gist of it: it's a congenital, progressive disease that is terminal. Currently, Noah is blind, and he has started slowing down quite a bit in the last few months. It's heartbreaking to watch, but the Bohan family inspires thousands, including me, as they meet this challenge head-on.

Noah and his family strive to get as many experiences and memories in before it's not possible anymore. In this spirit, three great human beings and close friends at Amtrak, including Matt Donnelly, Kyle Nembhard, and Philip Shaw (many of you know these fine gentlemen, so give them a pat on the back next time you see them!), took Noah on a tour of Washington Union Station. Noah got to tour trains, sit in seats, smell food, make announcements, and listen and feel the rumble of an electric-to-diesel locomotive swap, among other things.

Noah was most interested in how the toilets work, and that discussion lasted for about 15 minutes. Haha! I would have asked the same question as his age. It's wonderful to be a part of a community of people who love trains and to watch them come together to grant a small wish to a child and his family who need a little extra tender love and care. The crew gave Noah and his brother a K5LA train whistle and an Amtrak stuffed dog named Choo-Choo, which is a play on words for Chew-Chew (for those in the house who don't appreciate dad jokes). It was a small gesture, but it greatly impacted Noah's life. There is a great story about Noah and his family at the following link below. It's worth the seven-minute watch and will tug at your heartstrings. If the link doesn't work, search for: "Noah's Journey: Maryland family crafts lifetime of experiences for son with rare genetic disease"

Thanks for letting me share that experience here. Trains are a big part of our lives, so it's great when they can have meaningful impacts on our friends, families, loved ones, and those less fortunate. Be good to each other, and see you soon!

<https://foxbaltimore.com/news/maryland-moments/noahs-journey-maryland-family-crafts-lifetime-of-experiences-for-son-with-rare-genetic-disorder-batten-disease-maren-dorsey-bohan-fallston-harford-county-ice-rink-maryland-zoo-national-guard>

Chris



Altoona Show report: Martin Myers

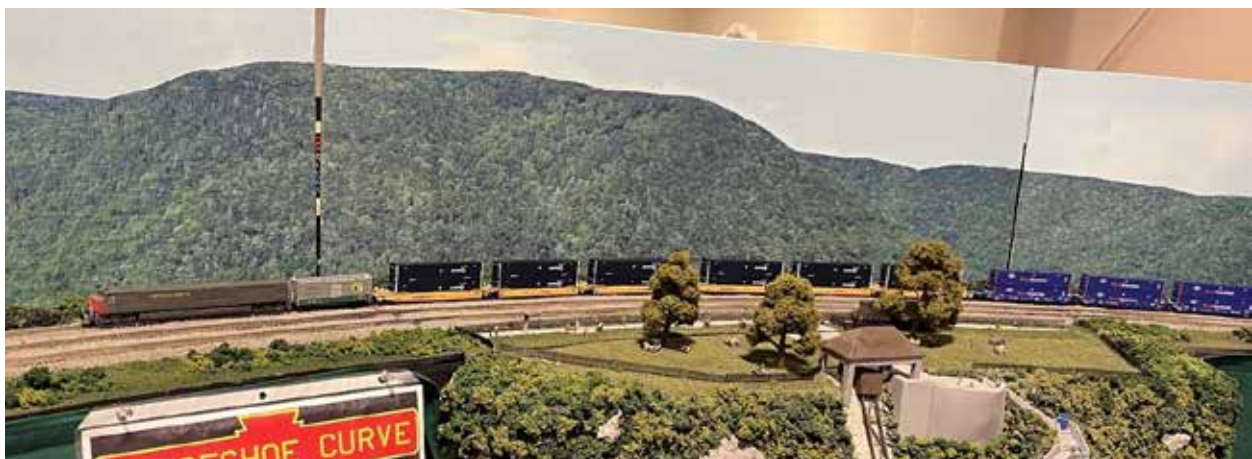
N Scale Weekend 2023 is over. We arrived in Altoona on Friday afternoon and began set up. By 6 pm our 20' x 40' layout was up and test running. Our traditional dinner at Hoss's Steak house followed.

Saturday morning we started running trains by 9 am. A couple of gremlins were quickly dispatched and operation was good for the rest of the day. With a full run schedule everyone was able to run trains. A large FremoN layout was also set up in a ballroom upstairs. John Hale, Eric, and John Bunge also had modules in that layout so running a train or three was no problem. This year's show was the largest by far. It was dedicated to Mike Phillips who started this annual tradition back in 2004.

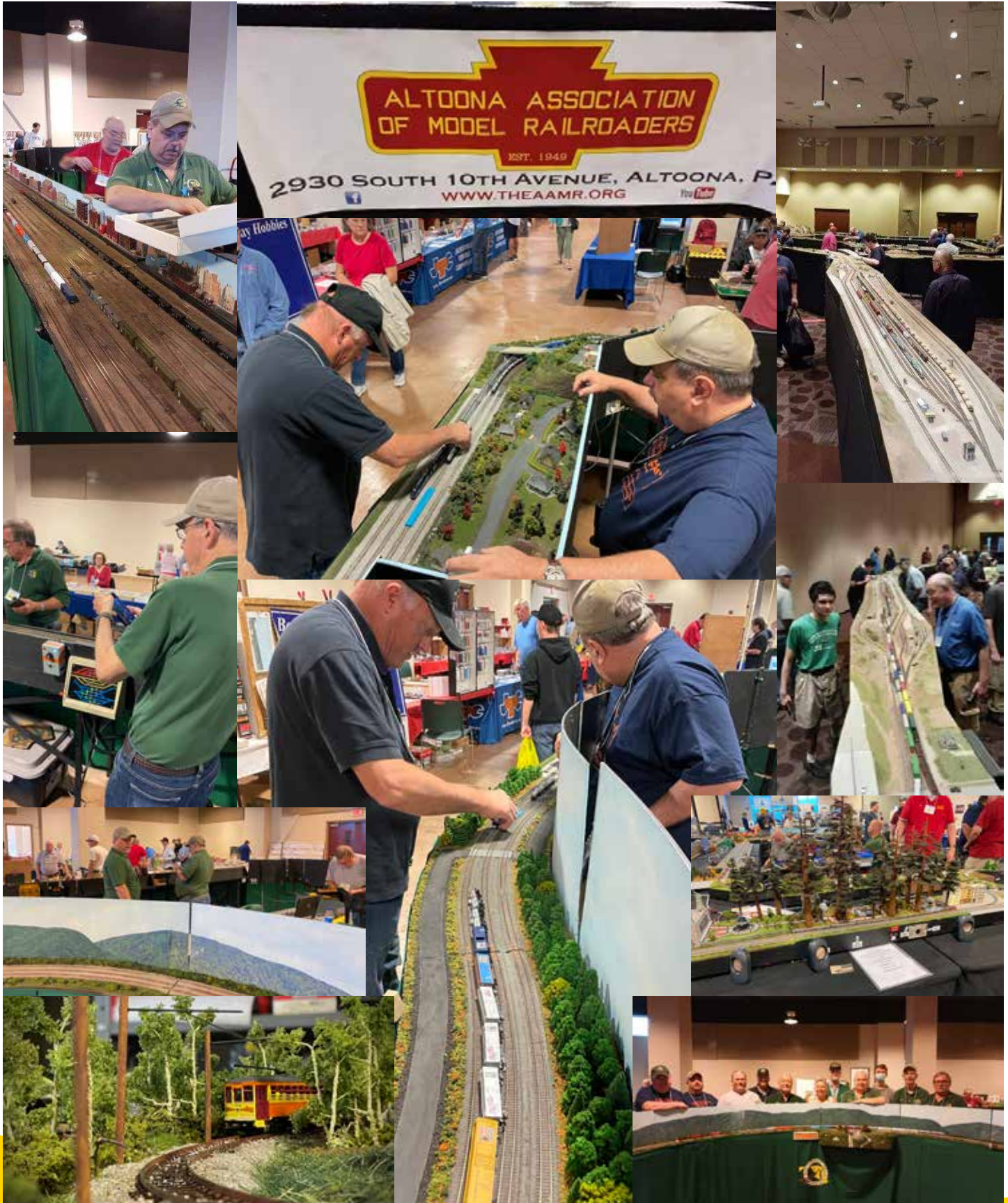
On Sunday morning we again started by 9 am. I was fortunate enough to get a chance to run the infamous Cotton Brute engine on our layout first thing on Sunday. John Wallis stopped by carrying the recently restored engine and offered me the chance to run it on our layout. Jim Fitzgerald built the behemoth 50 years ago. It is rumored to be machined from depleted uranium. Not sure if that is true but it is the heaviest engine I have ever picked up. Its original weight was 25 oz. It's a little lighter now as the updates included machining some metal to make space for a decoder. The engine runs flawlessly. I only wish there had been more time to add cars to the train it was pulling. Originally it pulled a 300+ car train on an NTRAK layout. Here it is pulling a train with one of our club cars around Horseshoe Curve.

Teardown started around 3pm on Sunday and everyone was on their way by 4:30. Our trailer repack had to be pushed back one week due to inclement weather. The repack went well and all is ready to go for the October Scale Show. See you all on the 13th.

Martin



Altoona Highlights:



Club Car Kits: Bob Bunge

The kit, representing the 40th anniversary of the founding of Bantrak, is a 3D printed 70 ton American Association of Railroads hopper car. These cars were first built in the 1930s, made all the way into the 1960's and were class one service into the 1980's. Each kit includes the car body, Microtrain roller bearing trucks, Bantrak Decals, a 3D printed coal load, BB's to be used to weight the car, ground up coal that can be glued on top of the printed load and instructions to assemble the car.

After the August meeting, a work session assembled boxes, used hobby knives to clean up the car bodies and the printed coal loads. The bulk ordered trucks were divided up and put in bags, and coal and BB's were put in bags (until we ran out of bags). A cover for the box was printed, cut out and glued onto the boxes.

Continued work at Bunge house included completing the rest of the BB/coal bags, cutting the instructions and placing in the boxes, final priming and painting of the car bodies.

Painting became a challenge when rattle can Rustoleum yellow gloss paint required several coats of paint to obtain a good coat that was compounded with a 2-4 hour drying time (with fan blowing!). A test was made using Tamyia yellow spray. It also required several coats and would be pricey. A fix was found using Rustoleum rattle can white (the cars were originally primed using gray/auto body filler to help fill the printing lines), followed by a single coat of Rustoleum yellow.

Following painting, the holes for the brake wheels and trucks were cleaned out using a drill bit, followed by airbrush painting of the brake wheels (the rattle can paint fills in the small gaps in the brake wheels) and gluing of the brake wheels onto the body.

Decals were designed and ordered by Dave Betz. Dave cut the decal sheets and shipped them to Bob. Bob used one set of decals

for a test car.

The final bit of kit was to wrap each car body in some tissue paper and put them and put the decals into the boxes!

Many thanks to Ethan Bernstein for printing 20 of the cars and tweaking my design a bit to make it print cleaner and faster. Also thanks to Dave Betz for designing the decals, arranging for them to be printed and designing the box cover.

A note. These cars are painted in a material called PLA that is commonly used for 3D printing. PLA melts at about 330 degrees F (180C), but starts to deform at a much lower temperature. Do not leave these cars in an automobile in the hot sun or you will risk warping. Over the past four years, I've made more than fifty cars that have run at many shows. With normal care these cars will perform well and last many years.

As of this writing there are six kits left over. If you are interested, please see Tim or Bob.



BANTRAK 2023 Calendar

November 06, 2023

Newsletter content deadline

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

November 19, 2023

Club Meeting

Hosted by the Dileys

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: David Betz



Richmond VA.

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
Editor: David Betz