

BANTRAK News

A Monthly Newsletter for BANTRAK Members • Volume 37 • Issue 07 • August 2024



The Engineer's Cab: Bob Bunge

Summer is usually a slow period for Bantrak activities, but not this year. Last month, many of us gathered at Al Del Gaudio's house for great food and many stories, most of them about the National Convention.

For me, the convention was a great experience. It was also a great experience for Bantrak. Our layout was in a prime location and looked amazing. Two reworked club corners were on display. The lift bridge, reworked by Paul, looked and ran great. Carefully set up by Tim Nixon on carpet, the bridge performed better than ever. Our members well represented the club in many ways. Two club members, myself and Ed Kapuscinski, gave clinics. A module of the Mount Royal Station in Baltimore in the Bantrak layout by former member Mark Bandy won the Microtrains best module contest. Bantrak members Skip Hayes and Tim Nixon were involved in the organization of the conference. Chris Quinlan and Freddy Mitchell won several awards for their models. Chris won 1st place for a custom Amtrak MoW baggage car. Freddy placed for his custom-made B&O gondolas loaded with people - based on an actual end of steam event pulled by a B&O EM-1. By the end of the show, at least one vendor, Bachmann, was running a pre-production sample of a model on our layout. At the convention, it was announced that next year's convention will be in Kansas City. Hey, it is only a 16-hour drive and the Jack Stack BBQ place across the BNFS main from the KC Union Station is world class when it comes to burnt ends, traditional KC BBQ with pickles, and a piece of white bread served in a large hall with wooden tables.

At the picnic, we learned that John Hale has cut wood for a new lift bridge. Ed Kapuscinski has purchased hardware and started to assemble the T-Trak in a box control system for our T-Trak layouts. Eric now has enough module leg pockets to be able to get the Bob Mohr city modules on legs so we can start to work on them.

The next club meeting is August 18th, 2pm at Chris Quinlan's house, 500 East Maple Road, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090.

September is N Scale weekend in Altoona. Under the oversight of Martin, we will be setting up a layout very similar to the one we had at the national. Even if you can't make it for the weekend, consider coming up for a day. Run a train and see the vendors and tables. Rarely will you find more N scale stuff in one place than this weekend.

Happy modeling!

Bob

PS: We are always looking for content for the newsletter. If you have any ideas for an article, do not hesitate to write it up!

N Scale Convention



N Scale Convention



My Model Train Story: Chris Quilan

To help provide fun and quality content for our newsletter, I suggested a few months ago that we each share our stories about how we got into the railroading and model railroading hobby. Additionally, after a person shares their story, they should nominate the person who will do it next month. Since it was my idea, it was my responsibility to go first! So, here we go!

I was always destined to love trains. Before I knew what a train was, I was obsessed with construction and farm equipment. The backhoe was my favorite tractor. As a toddler, I lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico. A neighborhood was being built adjacent to my boyhood home. My parents would take me over to the construction site to see the progress on the homes, but I was most interested in all the heavy machinery! It was like a gateway drug!

I remember seeing a commercial for an HO-scale Tyco G.I. Joe Trainset before Christmas around 1985 and decided I wanted one from Santa. It looked impressive in the commercial, and I was so excited when I got it on Christmas morning! It was a great gift, but it didn't run well because it was a Tyco, and eventually, it got set aside. However, the seed was planted!

The following summer my mom took my brother and I to Hutchinson, Kansas, on Amtrak's Southwest Chief (Train 4) to visit my grandparents. I was too young to remember while I had been on Amtrak a few times prior. I would remember this trip for the rest of my life. I can still see perfectly well the F40 with its loud horn and rumbling prime mover pulling into the station. It quickly became a core memory.

From that point on, I was utterly obsessed with Amtrak. The following Christmas, I asked Santa for an HO-scale Amtrak train. I got two Life-Like F40s, an Athearn baggage, an Athearn coach, and a Bachman full-dome. Now, the dye was cast. I would love Amtrak and trains for the rest of my life.

While I loved trains for the rest of my life, my enjoyment ebbed and flowed throughout my youth as different things popped up. My mom and dad were always happy to help me with the hobby and took me to the various hobby shops in Albuquerque to work on new projects and get new train cars and engines.

In the sixth grade, my mom suggested that I switch to N-scale. That was a great idea. For my birthday that year, I got a Modelpower F40 and four Con-Cor Superliners. Before my middle school years ended, I found and joined an N-Trak club, The New Mexico RailrunNers. I was heavily involved with this club until the end of my freshman year in high school when I became more interested in driving and dating girls.

I've mentioned it before, but the guys in this club really took me under their wing and taught me a lot about actual modeling. I learned to decal, paint, kitbash, and do all manner of model railroad stuff. Although I was more interested in doing typical teenage things between my sophomore year of high school and college graduation, I still regularly touched base with the club. I still do to this day. Many of them are cherished friends and mentors.

After I graduated from college and had established myself in the Air Force, I got hot and heavy back into the hobby. Aside from our assignment in Alabama, there was an N-Trak club for me to join in every state we were stationed in. I fine-tuned my painting, decaling, and kitbashing skills (I still am!) and started expanding on aspects of the hobby. I still have much to learn about layout construction, trackwork, and DCC, among other things.

I am beyond glad to be a member of BANTRAK, and the members here have made me feel right at home. We have a great thing going on here in Baltimore!

That's my story. I nominate Freddy Mitchell to tell his story next month! Haha!



My Model Train Story: Chris Quilan



Above:
Chris at the helm of a Dash
8-32BWH at the Beech Grove
Shops in Indiana



Left: Chris and his first N-Scale
locomotive at age 10

BANTRAK 2024 Calendar

September 06, 2024

Newsletter content deadline

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

August 18, 2024

Club Meeting

Location: Chris Quinlan's house

September 13-15, 2024

N Scale Weekend

Blair County Convention Center

Altoona PA.

Coordinator: Martin Myers

October Scale Show 12-13, 2024

Timonium Fair Grounds.

Set up Friday October 11th

Coordinators: Eric Payne and Lauren Baker

BANTRAK Membership: Eric Payne

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 [Eric Payne](#) 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



Western Maryland Scenic July 2024

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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