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JANUARY 2023 | FREE

# MRH

MODEL RAILROAD HOBBYIST

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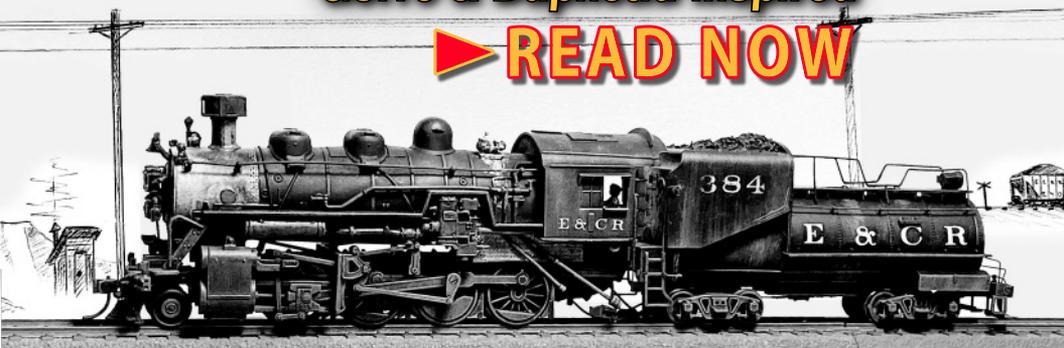
- Fascia-mounted control panel
- Build a rail yard diorama
- M.R. Snell's New Jersey Division, p3
- Do-it-yourself spray booth
- ... and more inside!

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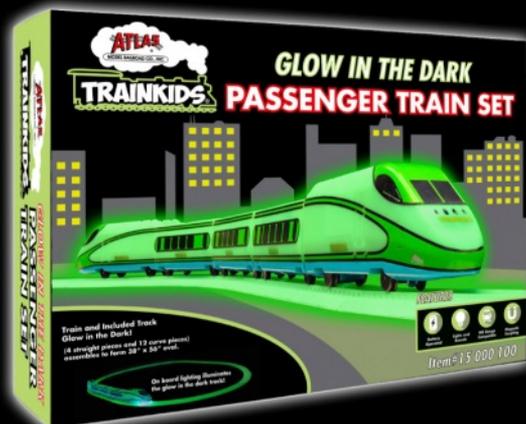
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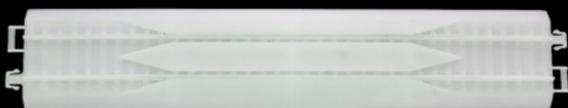


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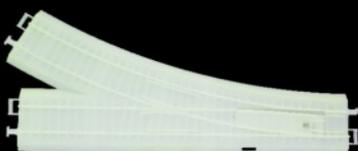
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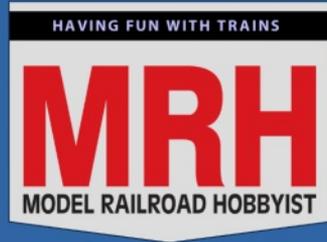


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## Advertising

Les Halmos, Account Manager

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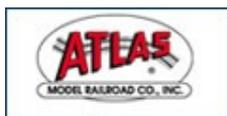
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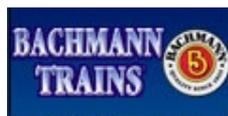
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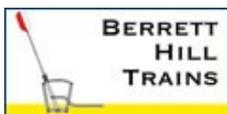
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*JOE FUGATE*



## **MRH Website this month: Painting truck door bars, ...**

*Compiled by JOE FUGATE*



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*KEN PATTERSON*



## **Electrical Impulses: Fascia-mounted control panel**

*BRIAN KRUPICKA*



## **One-of-a-kind-2-8-0 steam loco kitbash**

*CALDWELL BUTLER*



## **Going modern on the New Jersey Division, part 3**

*M. R. SNELL*



## **First Look: ModelU 3D-printed figures**

*JEFF SHULTZ*



## **Savvy Modeler online: Do-it-yourself spray booth**

*Compiled by the MRH STAFF*



## **January 2023 news and events**

*RICHARD BALE and JEFF SHULTZ*



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# PUBLISHER'S MUSINGS



Model Railroad Hobbyist | January 2023

JOE FUGATE ON MRH'S NEW 2023  
READER SURVEY ...



**OUR LAST READER SURVEY WAS IN 2018**, so we're long overdue for a new reader survey.

We'll be rolling out our new 2023 survey later in the month of January. Just [visit this 2023 reader survey link](#) and once the survey is active, this will take you to the actual survey instead of a temp landing page like it does now (as of Jan 14, 2023).

If you fill out the MRH reader's survey, we will enter you in drawing for a free 10" tablet. We'll give away three tablets in total. We'll also give away a grand prize to one lucky survey participant: a free lifetime subscription to TrainMasters TV and to MRH Running Extra.

We usually get several thousand readers participating in the survey, so statistically we get results that are plus or minus 2.5% of the actual value with a 95% confidence. Statistically, pretty trustworthy, in other words.

## **2023 reader survey most common questions**

Of course we will ask the typical questions such as what scale you model and what era you model. We also like to measure how serious you are about modeling the prototype versus how much you're willing to freelance. We also like to probe which

prototypes you prefer based on their geographic location on the North American continent, since that's our focus: North American railroading.

Of course if you model something offbeat or outside of North America, then we provide an other option with a write in comment so you can describe what it is you're doing that we don't list.

We also ask your age so we can determine how well we're reaching given age groups and find out if our audience is graying vs picking up new younger modelers on the front end.

It's also important for us to determine with some degree of accuracy the actual head count when it comes to our website traffic and magazine downloads.

### **Why head count matters**

We know many folks visit the MRH forum and other MRH Media sites like the MRH Store and TrainMasters TV using more than one device, typically. As an extreme example, someone could visit us on their home desktop, work laptop, tablet, and smart phone.

When you visit us with different devices, those each get their own IP address (internet protocol address) since that's how the webserver knows where to send the web pages you're visiting.

All we can see directly is how many hits we get by specific IP. How many actual heads that translates into isn't clear unless we have some validated formula we can use to de-dupe those IPs down into actual heads.

That's where the survey comes in. Using just a few questions, we can determine an accurate de-duping formula for the IP address hits we get.

Once we have the de-duped number based on our reader



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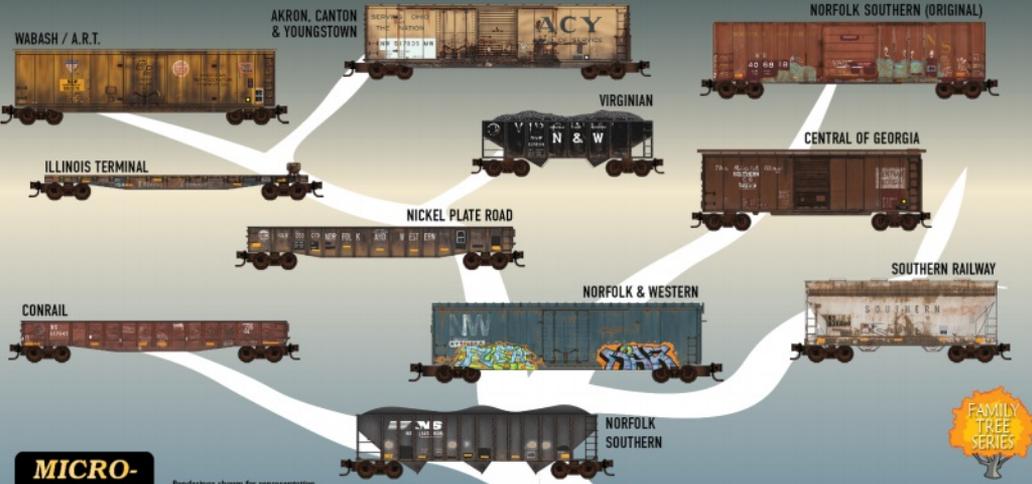
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## PUBLISHER'S MUSINGS | 3

survey, we can be pretty confident of the actual number of modelers visiting our website each month. Since a good part of our revenue comes from advertisers, we can report with some confidence the size of our monthly audience so they know what they're getting for their money.

Knowing our audience size with some confidence also helps us price our ads as compared to the other model railroading publishers. With an audience size count and the price of an ad, it's easy to compute the price per set of eyeballs for a given ad campaign.

Remember what we said earlier about the statistical accuracy of our survey? Knowing our registered reader size (33,000) and comparing that to our several thousand survey responses tells us our survey is plus or minus 2.5% with a 95% confidence, which means our reader survey is one of the most



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important things we do as to helping out our business.

That's why we hope you will participate in the survey, it's one of the best ways you can give back to MRH for the free magazine. Getting a lot of survey responses helps secure our business, making it likely we will still be here for some time to come.

## Other common survey questions

We also like to probe what modeling topics you're most interested in. Knowing this helps us in many ways.

First, we can compare the interest level of given topics to how much material we're putting out about those topics to see if we have it about right or if there's some hot interest area we're just not covering well.

Once we identify a mismatch in our topic coverage versus our audience interest level, then we can take steps to close the gap.

If the MRH Staff has knowledge of that area, then we can get the staff to put something together, either an article, a video or both.

There's also an MRH Staff member may have an interest in the topic area but not be as knowledgeable about it as they would like. The staff member can sign up to do a research project, delving into the topic more, hunting down topic experts and the like.

Plus MRH Staff member can take what they're learning, roll up their sleeves and do some hands on projects so they gain first hand knowledge of the topic.

The obvious follow-on to this is for the MRH Staff member to pull together their learning and to report back to the rest of us with an article, video or both. Plus now we have an MRH Staff



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You may also notice the new car looks like a stretched version of our 4300 cu ft Potash car. See illustration here.



each train having 112 cars and each car loaded with 90 tonnes of cargo

each train having 134 cars and each car loaded with 100 tonnes of cargo

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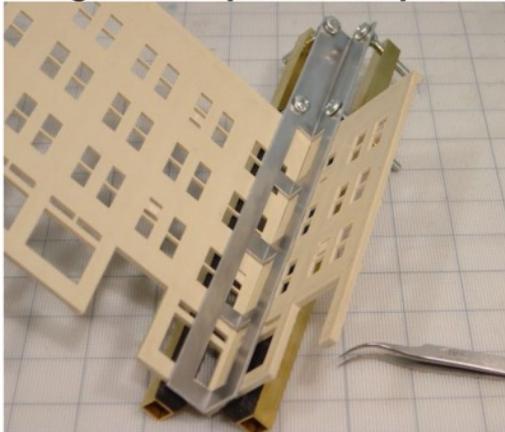
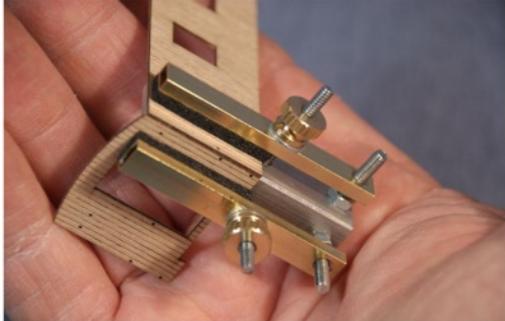
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member that's now well-versed in the topic, a win-win for us all.

Another course of action when we find a topic we're not covering to the level our audience would like to see, we can directly locate hobby experts and commission them to write an article, help us make a video on the topic, or both.

So doing the survey and taking the time to tell us your topic interests can pay big dividends to you as a subscriber by getting more of the topics you need to do the hobby well.

**Exploring how you do the hobby**

It can also be interesting for us to explore how you're doing the hobby.

For example, are you still using DC? If you're into DCC, how do you like to do that, with primarily non-sound locos or with sound? Or maybe you're into an alternative way of controlling your trains like using RailPro,

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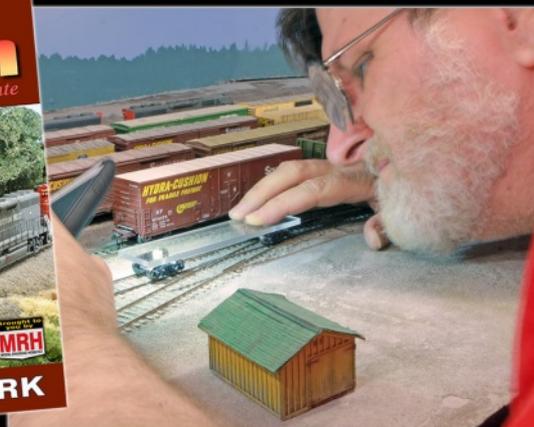
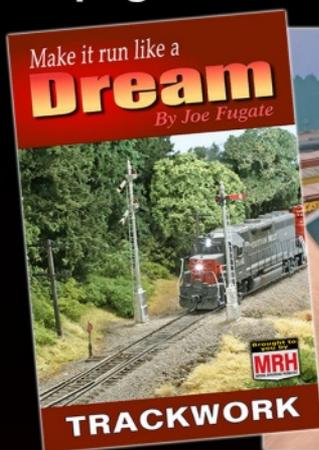
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DCS or another proprietary system. Or perhaps you're one of the folks who have started to explore Bluetooth or power-on-board using batteries? Or maybe you're doing something even more esoteric that you'd like to tell us about. If so we'd love to learn about it.

# Tell your friends about MRH!

**We depend on word-of-mouth to grow  
... if you don't share us, we don't grow**

The hobby techniques we can explore cover a lot of interesting territory. What's your preferred method of controlling turnouts? What's your favorite track laying method: handlaid, economy flex track, high fidelity flex track like Micro-Engineering, or sectional track?

We can also explore layout building methods to see which ones are most popular. Of course we'd like to see if anyone out there is doing TOMA as a way to build a home layout.

### **Exploring some MRH-specific questions**

We have a massive readership for the free MRH, somewhere north of 60,000 these days. One thing we're curious about is given that number, how come there are not more who will pay (as a paid subscriber) a dollar plus for *MRH Running Extra*?

Or how come more folks don't find the massive 500+ Train-Masters TV video library to be worth a paid subscription?



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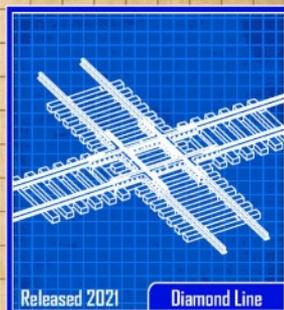
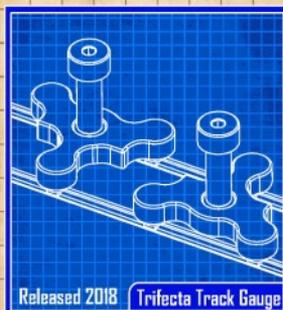
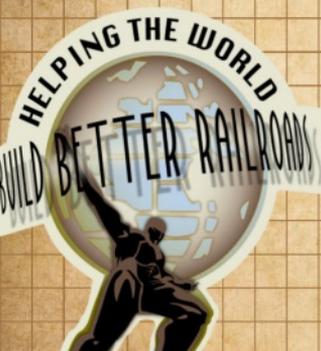
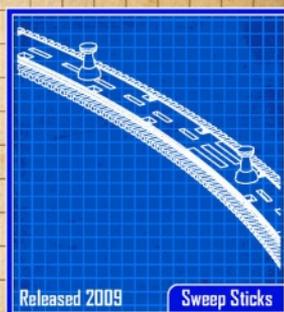
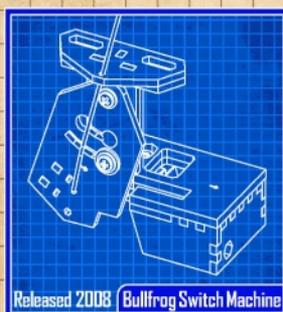
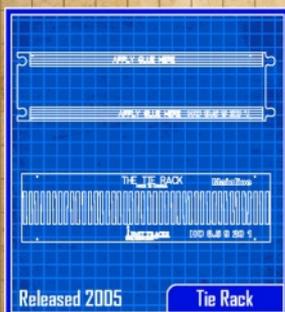
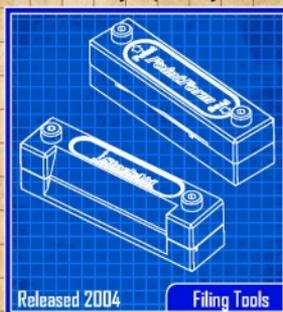
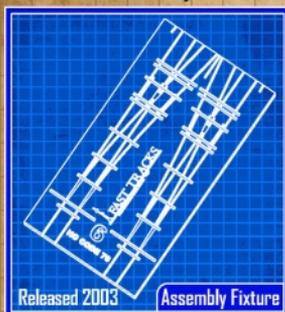
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Basically, the question goes like this: What would it take for the content in *MRH Running Extra* to be so compelling that you absolutely would not hesitate to be a subscriber? Same question for *TrainMasters TV*.

With either service, we're talking less than \$2 each per month if you get an annual subscription, and with the Black Friday special, you're getting them for closer to \$1 each per month. Phooey, most folks will drop that much money for a drink each day, so I have a hard time believing it's the cost that's stopping them.

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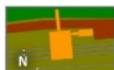
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Best of the

# MRH FORUM

Forum

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THIS  
MONTH

Model Railroad Hobbyist | January 2023

Compiled by **JOE FUGATE**



## Painting semi-truck door bars

MRH forum member **kirkifer** (Kirk W.) started a thread asking how to best paint the door bars on semi-truck trailers and containers. A number of great suggestions have been posted in the thread.

One of the most interesting suggestions comes from **scottypm** (Scott M.) who posted this photo above and discusses using fine-tipped silver paint pens. Read the full thread for details!



[View the full thread on the MRH website](#)

▶ **MRH'S MONTHLY GREAT MODELER POSTS**

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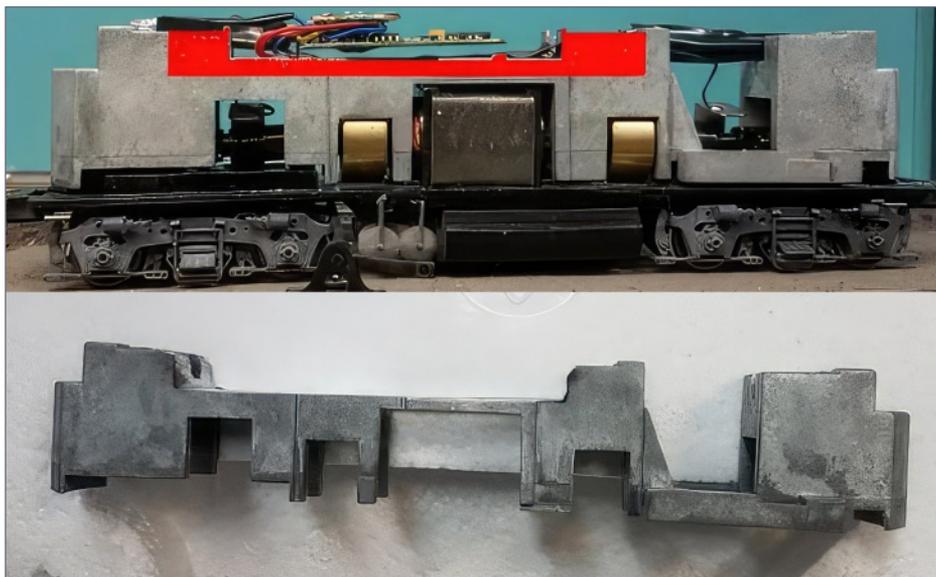


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2. *MRH* forum member **IronBeltKen (Ken L.)** asked for advice on how to mill the weight on his loco to make room for DCC. Details below.

## Milling the weight in a Life-Like Proto2000 GP9

*MRH* forum member **IronBeltKen (Ken L.)** asked for advice on how to best mill the weight for his P2K GP9 to install a decoder and speaker:

“The Scale Sound website says they have a Rectify speaker that can fit into the GP9 cab, but I’ll need to mill the weight to accommodate the ESU decoder. I’m not exactly sure how much of the weight I need to cut away, but the photo [2, top] shows what I think I’ll have to get rid of.”

Ken got lots of great advice and as you can see in [2, bottom half], he accomplished the task. See full thread for details.

[View the full thread on the \*MRH\* website](#)



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3. *MRH* forum member **CP Rail Vermont** (Neil S.) finished this Overland models Jordan Spreader. We particularly like the weathering!

## CP Rail's Newport & Lyndonville Subdivision

*MRH* author and forum member **CP Rail Vermont** (Neil S.) maintains a journal/blog about his CP Rail layout projects. One recent one involved this Jordan Spreader [3]:

*"I think this spreader will make a worthy model that can add some chaos to an operating session with 10 mph extras doing ditching work ... it's parked on the Agway spur at Newport Yard, a common location for storing plows and spreaders."*

Then at the next op session, the spreader saw some action:

*"Being the low end of the totem pole, I got the last job of the session, a lowly work extra heading south toward Orleans with S-2 7096 and Jordan Spreader for some ballast spreading at Barton."*

Read more details on Neil's full journal/blog thread.

[View the full thread on the \*MRH\* website](#)



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## How big is big enough: neat example ...

This time, some cool before and after photos on a thread about layout size caught our attention.

[View the full thread on the \*MRH\* website](#)

4. *MRH* forum member **BN1970** (Morgan G.) posted this photo of his modest layout that he's rebuilding after a major flooding incident in his house. On his BN Selkirk Division, he started up session as soon as he could even without much for scenery.



5. Fast forward six years and **BN190's** layout has come a long way with its scenery now 80% complete. He says he's run more than 40 sessions and learned a ton from his crew over the years, leading to a number of layout improvements. He's a big believer in fix-as-you-go, and it's paid off. The new layout runs great!



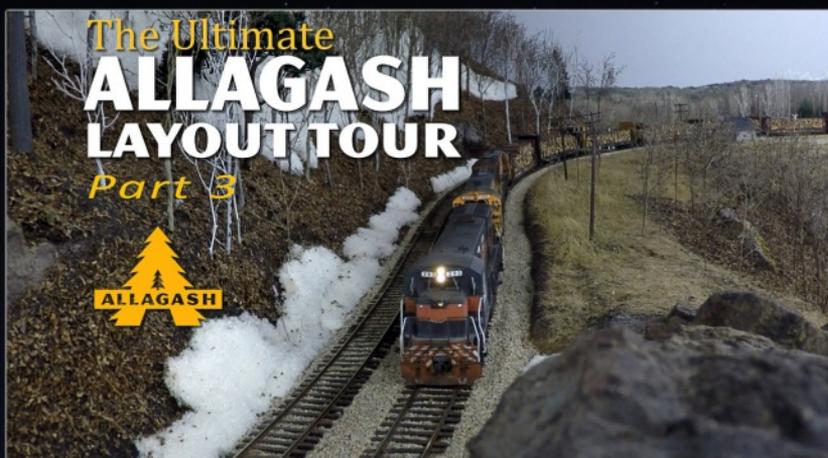
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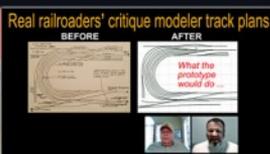


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# WHAT'S NEAT

column



Model Railroad Hobbyist | January 2023

**KEN PATTERSON** COVERS THIS MONTH:

- KEN DEMONSTRATES BUILDING A PHOTOGRAPHY DIORAMA
- KEN INTERVIEWS BACHMANN'S LARRY HARRINGTON

**THIS MONTH KEN DEMONSTRATES HOW HE BUILT A PHOTOGRAPHY DIORAMA** in three days for a new product photo shoot. Larry Harrington then joins Ken to show some new products that Bachmann has available.



*click to play video*

**PHOTOS AND VIDEO OF SUPERB MODELS**

## Building a photography diorama



1. Ken's usual photo diorama, created for an Athearn advertisement several years ago, has suffered from spending time between photo shoots in the uninsulated garage. It's time for a replacement.

in the **JANUARY 2023 MRH RUNNING EXTRA!**

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2. Ken uses a pull saw to cut through three of the corners of the foam base. This allows him to bring his camera flat up against the diorama for quarter-angle shots.



3. Ken seals the foam with dark latex paint, then starts roughing-in where the tracks will go. His original plan was to leave the space on the left empty to fill it with buildings or other scenery as needed.



4. The track is glued down with adhesive caulk and allowed to dry. While it goes on white, it will dry clear.



5. While the caulk is still wet, Ken inserts ties that he's filed flat in the gaps at the ends of the flex track.





6. As the track dried, Ken decided to change the left side of the layout into a concrete apron using Dap Concrete & Mortar Repair. Here he cleans out a flangeway with a hacksaw blade.



7. The concrete patch cracks as it dries. While some of the smaller cracks can be kept for the prototype look, Ken applies more of the concrete patch material to seal the larger cracks.



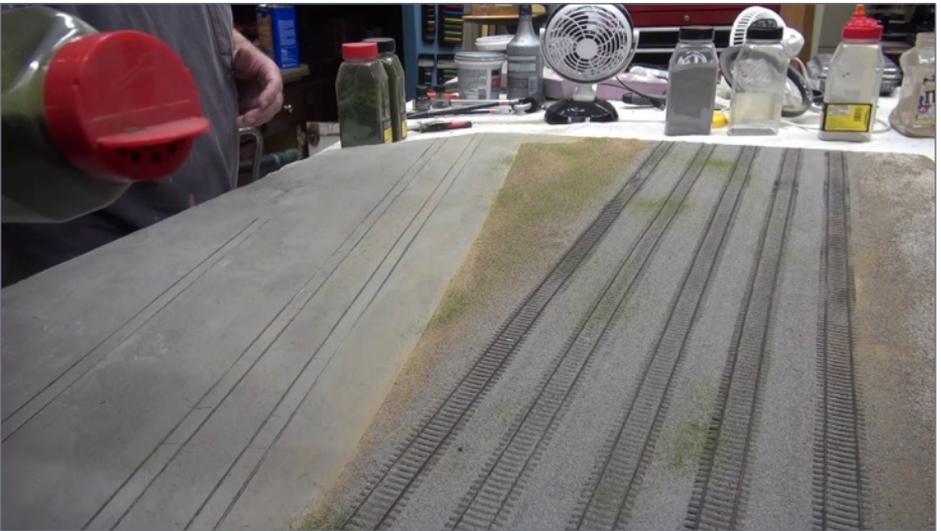
8. For the yard side of the diorama, Ken sifts dirt onto the layout to replicate the area between the concrete apron and the ballasted yard.



9. Ken uses Woodland Scenics fine ballast to ballast the yard. He'll go over the dirt and the ballast with artists' paint brushes to smooth it out and remove it from where it doesn't belong.



10. Ken uses a lighter shade of Woodland Scenics ballast to represent a limestone gravel access road.



11. Ken also scattered some green ground foam around the yard to represent weeds and other low-lying vegetation.



12. Ken uses Woodland Scenics Scenery Cement in a spray bottle to liberally soak the diorama. He'll spray the cement on until the area is white and then allow it to dry. He'll use a couple of fans to speed the process.



13. After the Scenery Cement dries, Ken lightly sprays the yard and road with rattle-can black spray paint to replicate spills and add a weathered look to the track and road.



14. With the diorama complete, Ken takes it outside to photograph Roka Models first product release, the Safe-Pak double- and triple-level enclosed auto racks.

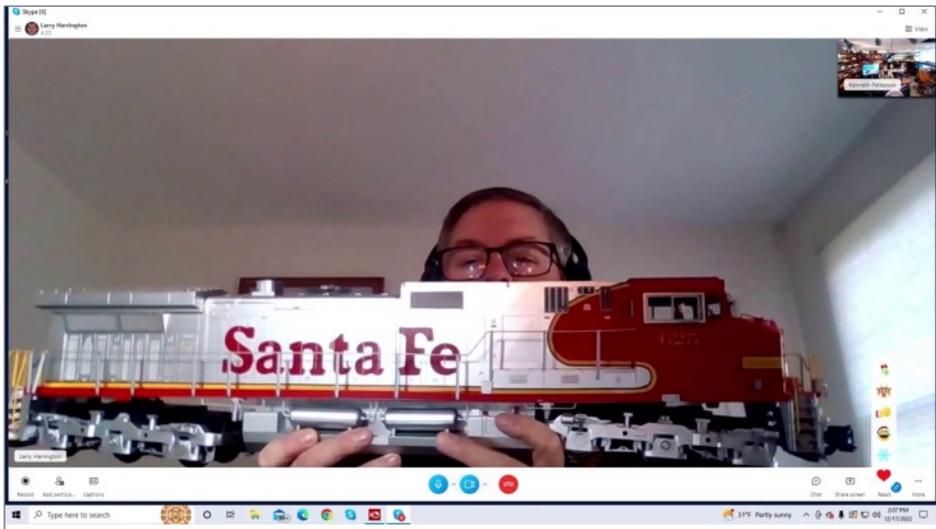


15. Here Ken uses a loading ramp scratchbuilt by Mike Budde as a prop for the photo shoot.

Info: [woodlandscenics.com](http://woodlandscenics.com)

Info: [rokamodels.com](http://rokamodels.com)

## Ken interviews Bachmann's Larry Harrington



16. Bachmann's Larry Harrington joined Ken via Skype to show some upcoming products from Bachmann, including this large-scale Dash-9 locomotive. Weighing 11 pounds, it has four motors.



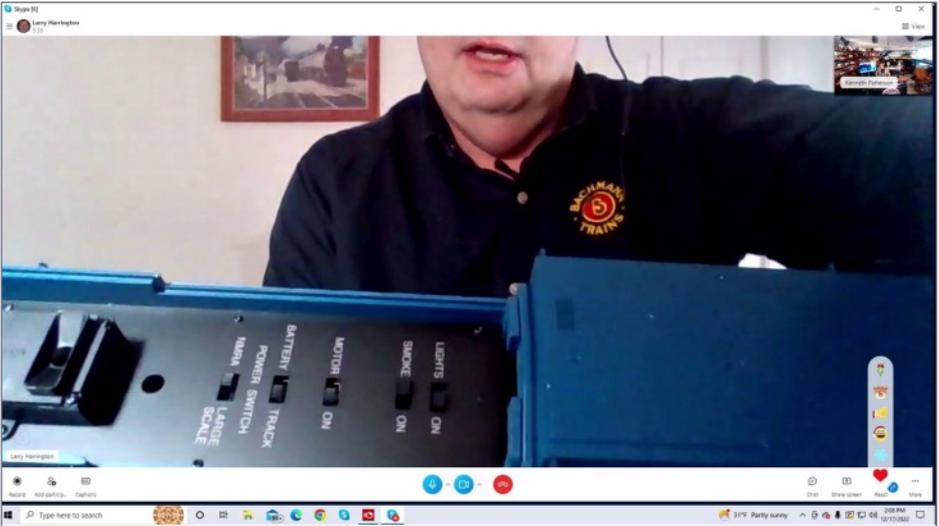
17. The Dash-9 also will be available in CSX.



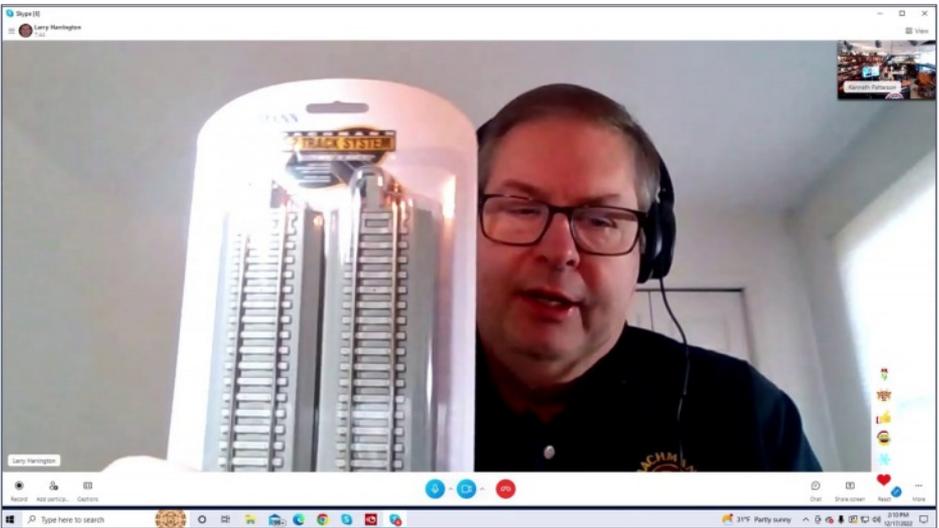
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18. The controls for the locomotive are accessed through a removable roof panel.



19. A newer E-Z Track system product is the concrete tie track, first seen in the City Sprinter kits in HO scale.



20. Here Larry shows off HO scale figures in the SceneScapes line. This set is good for populating passenger cars or buses. Info: [bachmantrains.com](http://bachmantrains.com)

To see the full video of Ken building the diorama and then conducting a photo shoot, as well as all the Bachmann products Larry presented, click on the video link at the beginning of the article.

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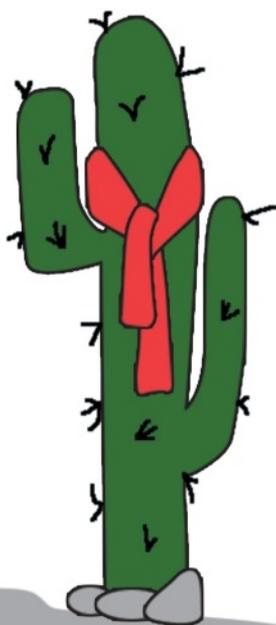
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# Fabricating a fascia-mounted control panel



Electrical  
Impulses

Model Railroad Hobbyist | January 2023

1. This control panel provides a readout of DCC and auxiliary power for my layout's four power districts. If the LEDs are lit, then the power districts are working properly.



**BRIAN KRUPICKA** USES TWO-GANG WALL PLATES AS FLEXIBLE, COST EFFECTIVE CONTROL PANELS ...

**MY LAYOUT HAS MANY ANIMATIONS AND FEATURES**, and I like to mount the control panels for them nearby on the layout fascia. I use one- and two-gang wall plates for these panels.

The wall plates are available at the local hardware store, and offer an attractive, flexible solution at a reasonable cost. They offer a blank canvas for whatever control panel I need, and designing

them is simple. [1, 2, 3] show a few samples around the layout to demonstrate their versatility.

In a recent project, I wanted to add a panel to my fascia to control the on/off functions for a set of carnival rides, with separate controls to turn the sound system on and off. I also have all the functions controlled via a DCC stationary decoder. The DCC stationary decoder, comprised of a 6N137 opto-isolator and an Arduino Nano, would be a topic for another article.

The first step is to draw the panel on grid paper in actual size to determine the best components and how I should arrange them. I try to include everything in the drawings, from the



2. This two-gang wall plate panel houses the speed and time displays for my Arduino speedometer (See “Building an Arduino Speedometer” *Model Railroad Hobbyist* June 2021).

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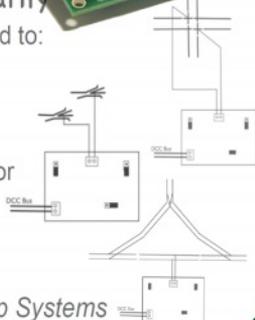
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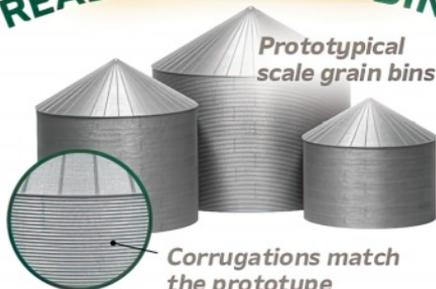
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3. This panel has toggle switches to control DCC power to the track, and to set up the track for programming. The terminal strip at bottom allows connecting directly to the DCC command station.

plate's screw locations to the screens, switches, and LEDs. This step also helps me determine whether I need a one- or two-gang panel.

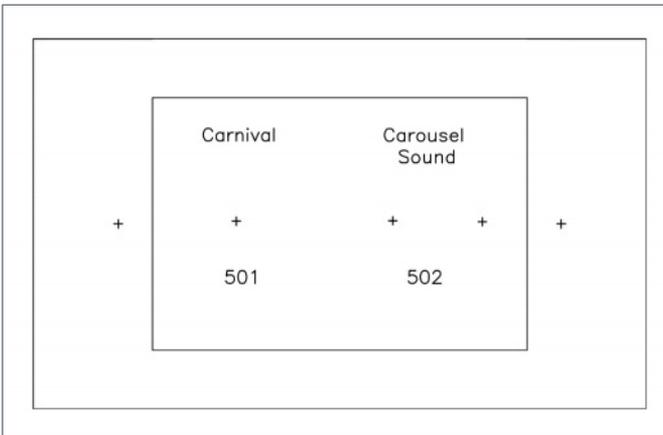
With all the components laid out in the drawing, I determine the size of the fascia opening I'll need, and even the size and placement of text. Once the drawing is complete, I cut it out and affix it in its place on the layout fascia to test for a few days [4].

When I am sure I have what I want, I make a full-size CAD drawing on my computer [5]. There are many programs that



4. In this sample project, I want to design a system to switch the carnival rides (top) on and off, with separate control for the carnival sound system. I have drawn two diagrams

full-size on grid paper to determine which components best fit the space. At left is a pushbutton setup, and at right is a toggle switch setup. I opted for the pushbuttons.



5. I use a full-size CAD drawing like this to determine spacing and placement for components. I am using a one-gang wall plate for the panel, with outer dimensions of 4-1/2" by 2-3/4".

With the panel's mounting screws centered 3-9/32" apart, I can cover a hole in my fascia of up to 2-3/4" by 1-7/8". I then arrange where on the wall plate I want to drill for the two pushbuttons, the marker LED, plus any text I want to include.

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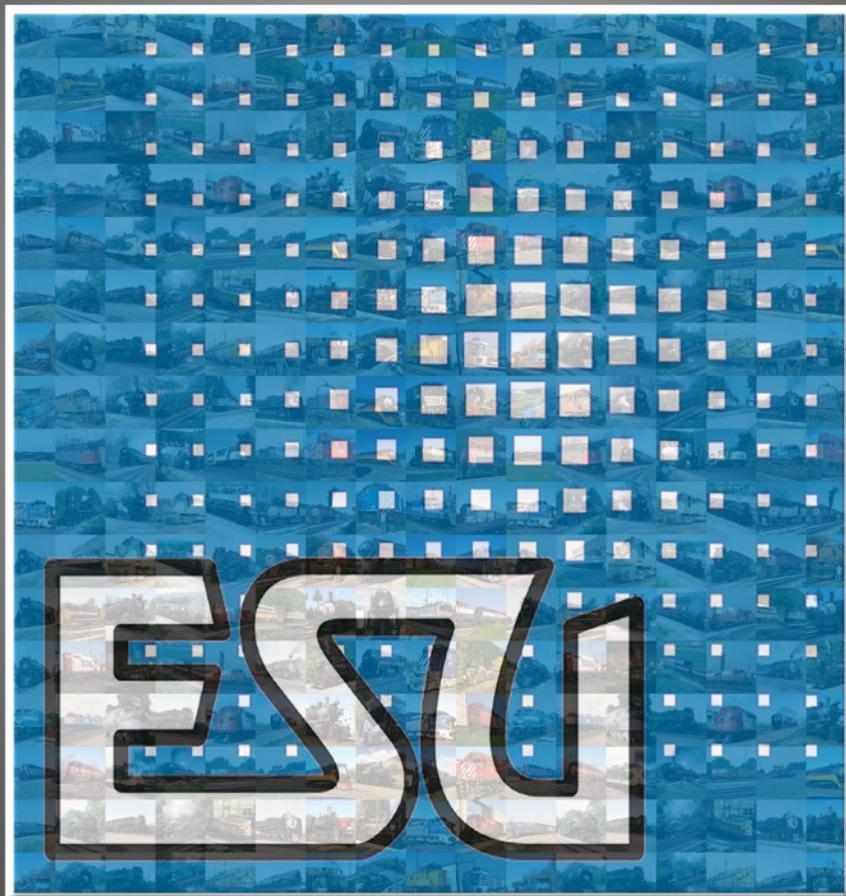
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will do the trick. You can even draw it up in Microsoft Word (Insert/Shapes/Lines).

Once satisfied, I print three copies. I cut the first slightly larger than the control panel and affix it to the fascia for a final check. I use the second copy to place and determine the size of the openings I'll need for the devices on the panel.

I tape the third copy to the wall plate, making sure the mounting hole marks are properly aligned with the holes on the plate. I then place a backer board behind the wall plate, flat to its back. Using a center punch and hammer, I tap lightly to mark the location of all openings.

With the centers tapped into the wall plate, I remove the paper and then cut or drill the openings as needed [6]. The wall plate material can be brittle, so it pays to first drill a pilot hole and then drill with progressively larger bits, using gentle pressure. Even better, use a taper reamer to minimize the risk of having a drill bit grab and break the plastic.

As a final step, I clean the panel and check it for irregularities or flaws. If everything is in good shape, then I am ready to proceed to the next step of adding text to the panel.



**6.** Holes for the two pushbuttons and the LED indicator are drilled.

To apply text, I duplicate my CAD file and save it under a different name. I then open it and remove all control panel size and opening markings, leaving only the positioning marks and text.

I print the file on Avery 8665 Clear Matte label. I use a paper cutter to cut the label 1/4" larger than needed around the text and openings.

I then apply the label to the control panel, taking care to center the device markers over their respective openings on the panel. When I have the label in place, I use an X-Acto knife to cut out the openings on the label [7].

The control panel is now a complete face. The next step is installing components and wiring. Then we are ready to mount the panel to the layout fascia.

## CONTROL PANEL MOUNTING

When I have decided the final control panel location, I place painter's tape on the fascia to cover an area larger than the panel size. I place a blank control panel in position on the tape and trace the outline edges and mask the masking holes. Finally, I mark the outlines for the fascia opening [8].



7. I have just applied the label and cut out the openings with an X-Acto knife.



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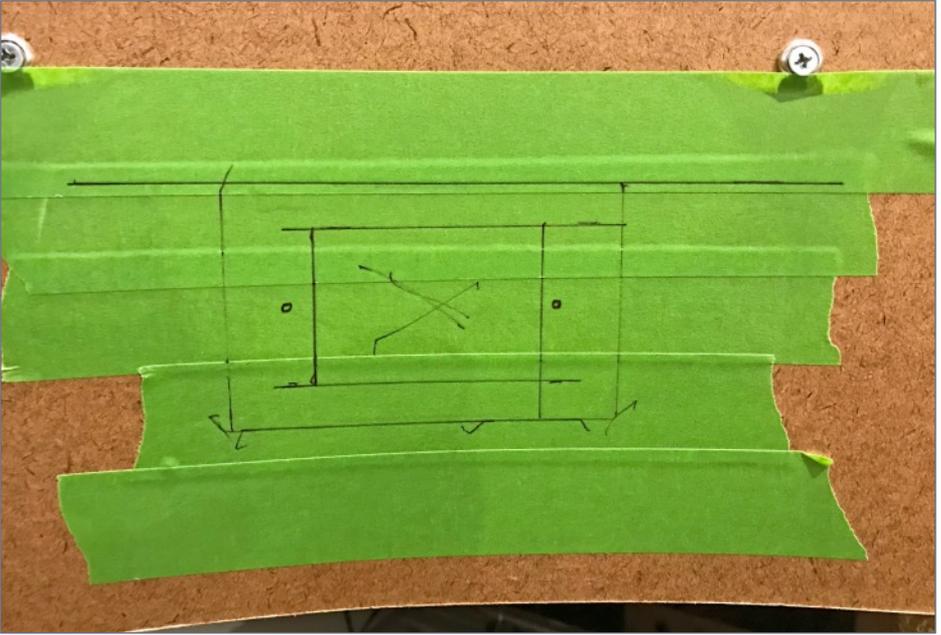
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8. The control panel is outlined, with mounting screw holes and cutout area marked. I generally like to wait a day or two before proceeding, just to make sure everything looks right.



9. The fascia opening is all cut out.

At this point, I take extreme care to make sure I have accounted for all item of the design. I drill the control panel mounting holes into the fascia and check again. Finally, I use a rotary cutter to create the fascia opening [9].

With all the openings cut out in the fascia, I am ready to remove the tape and install the completed panel. I use 6-32 screws, washers, and nuts to secure the panel to the fascia. ☑



10. Completed panel in place.

## BRIAN KRUPICKA



Brian and his wife live in Yorkville, Illinois and travel the country in an RV. They have several children, nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Brian has provided clinics at NMRA conventions and other gathering. He also belongs to three model railroad clubs. His primary HO interests are in 1970 and 1980 operations. He has over 30 animation and automation features on his layout. ■

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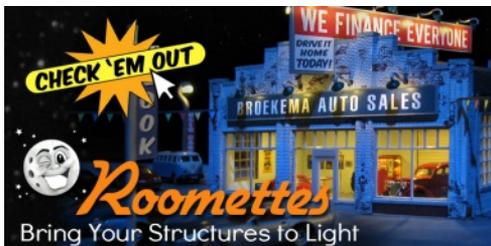


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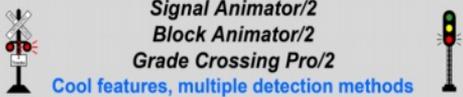
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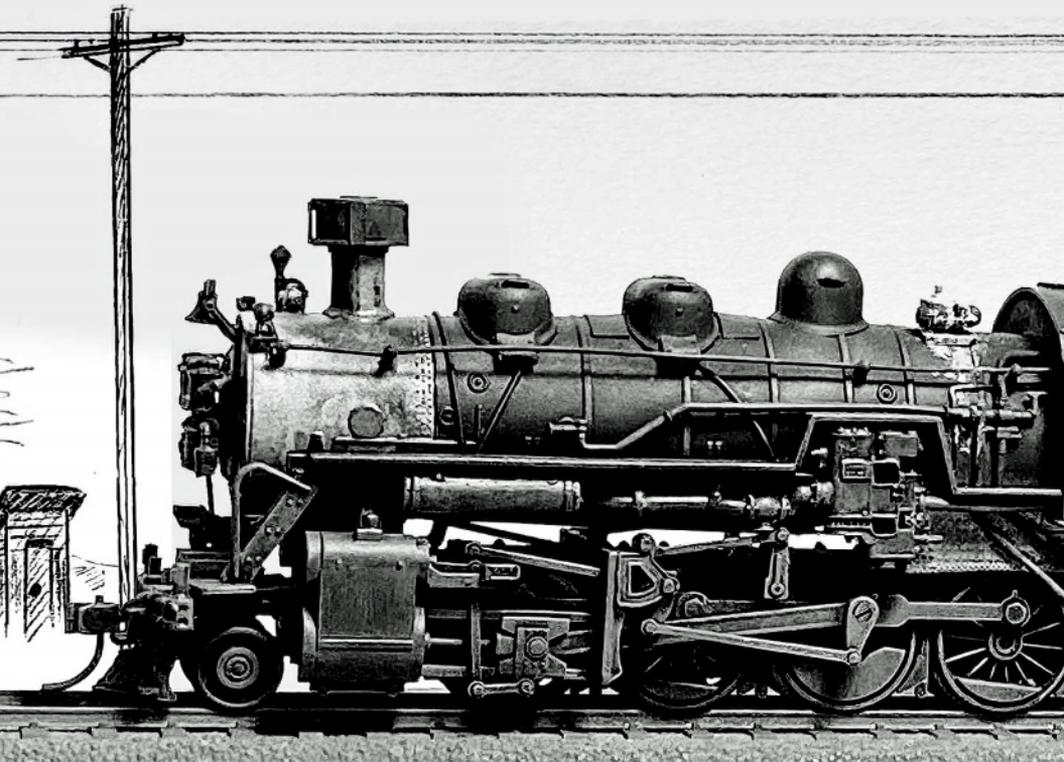


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# Building a **One-of-a-Kind 2-8-0**



**CALDWELL BUTLER** BUILDS A JOHN ALLEN-  
INSPIRED ORE HAULER ON A BUDGET ...



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1. Europa & Copperstone Railroad 2-8-0 #384 poses in front of a hand-drawn backdrop in a photo inspired by many magazine advertisements John Allen created for brass Importer Pacific Fast Mail using similar techniques.

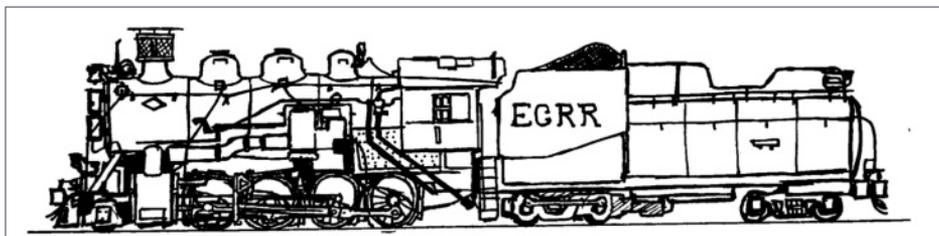


**WHEN I FIRST THOUGHT UP MY FICTIONAL EUROPA & COPPERSTONE** Railroad Company, I knew that I wanted a fleet of unique motive power inspired by John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid.

Before this project, I had never taken a hobby knife to a locomotive. I work at a small desk with limited tools and supplies, which made kitbashing my own power intimidating. But I didn't let this hinder me as I started working on used models I found on eBay.

For this project, I wanted to take a basic model and make it as singular as possible. This is how I built Europa & Copperstone #384.

The first step was preparing a list of goals for the model. I think every modeler should have goals clearly in mind before starting, particularly when building an engine.



2. I made a sketch of what I wanted the final product to look like. Dual smokebox-mounted air compressors, a feedwater heater, a new pilot, dual sand domes, an additional generator, new marker lights, a pilot-mounted headlight, and a tender booster resulted in a standout and powerful-looking engine.





### 3. The stock loco, new tender, and detail parts ready for the build.

I am not a veteran modeler, and my methods will likely make more seasoned modelers cringe. But I adopted this form of modeling when I started building engines.

I'm not setting out to build a model that is the best-running, the highest-detailed, the most-realistic, or even up to NMRA standards. All these parameters come second to my ultimate modeling goal: the engine must look awesome [2].

I wanted to letter the engine for my fantasy road, the Europa & Copperstone Railroad Company, and make it fit the world and purpose of that road. I avoided mechanical modification to the base model, instead focusing on my favorite parts of the modeling process: painting and weathering. The final product would be one-of-a-kind.

My goals for the build were:

- Lettering the engine for my fantasy road, the Europa & Copperstone.
- Making the engine fit the world and purpose of a Southwestern iron ore railroad.
- Keeping modifications to the model purely cosmetic so I could focus on painting and weathering.
- Making sure the final product was one-of-a-kind.

## BILL OF MATERIALS

**Loco:** Bachmann Spectrum 2-8-0 Consolidation.

**Tender:** Bachmann Spectrum DCC-ready Vanderbilt tender.

**Precision Scale Co. (PCS):** Franklin tender booster, Commonwealth pilot, Sand dome w/ sanders (2x).

**Bowser:** Feedwater heater, headlight, dual air compressors, dynamo, marker lights.

I found the main components of the build on eBay and Facebook Marketplace. My base model is the Spectrum 2-8-0. The additions were a DCC-ready Spectrum Vanderbilt tender and brass detail parts from Precision Scale and Bowser.

## STRIPPING THE BOILER

The first thing I did was strip the engine. I took clippers to those weird little bug-eyed marker lights that come standard on the Spectrum 2-8-0, a feature of the base model I particularly dislike.

I removed the remaining components to be replaced: headlight, bell, handrails, sand dome, and air compressor. I kept all those detail parts for future builds.

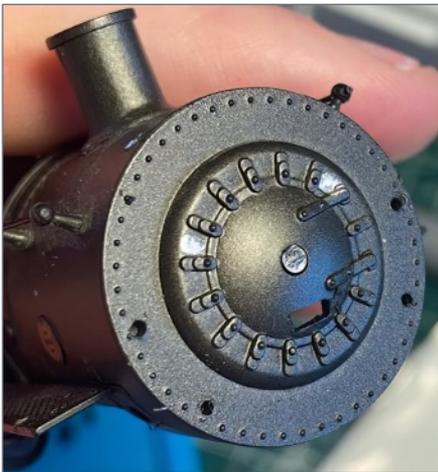


## ADDING PARTS

Once the boiler was stripped, I sanded the brass parts and grabbed my adhesives of choice: thin CA glue and Loctite gel superglue.



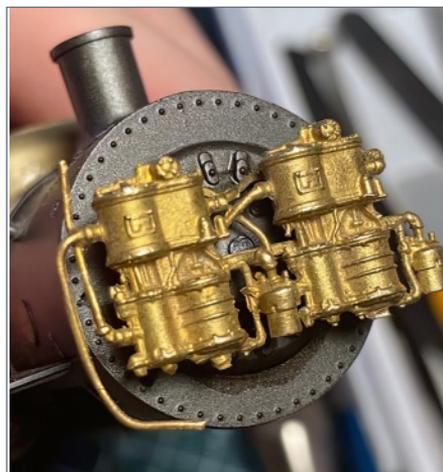
4. I removed almost all the stock details. I took the sand dome off to make way for the brass parts. I wanted to make the Spectrum 2-8-0 look as alien as possible from its original state.



5. I dotted the smokebox with a silver pen to mark where to drill holes for the air compressors.



6. I drilled the holes with a hand drill.



7. I fitted the compressor assembly to the smokebox.



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8. The sand domes didn't fit the contour of the boiler perfectly, but I liked the "tacked on" look it gave them. It left the impression that they were additions the ECRR made

sometime after acquiring the engine. Unfortunately, the hole from the original sand dome was visible under the rearmost brass part, so I patched it with some 0.10" black styrene.

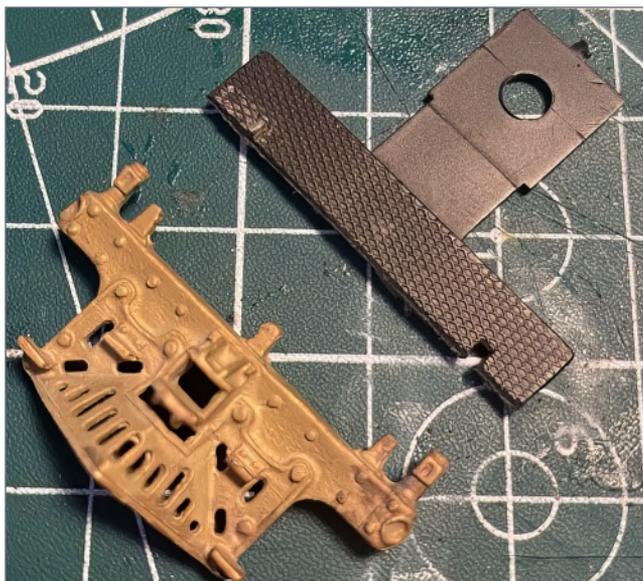
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9. I added the feedwater heater to the fireman's side. The part fit perfectly in the section of running board where the original air compressor was mounted. Adding a few

extra droplets of CA on top of the part once I mounted it allowed extra glue to flow into the cracks and crevices I couldn't see or access easily, further affixing it to the boiler shell.

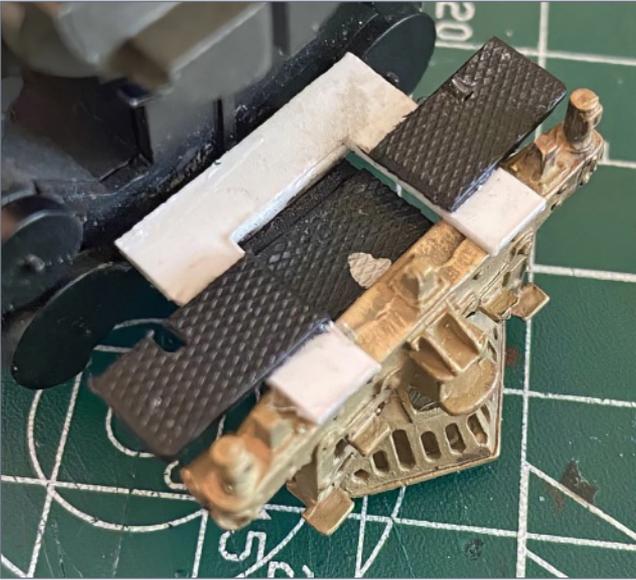


10. I removed the original pilot. The tab piece held it in place. This is where the Commonwealth pilot would be mounted.

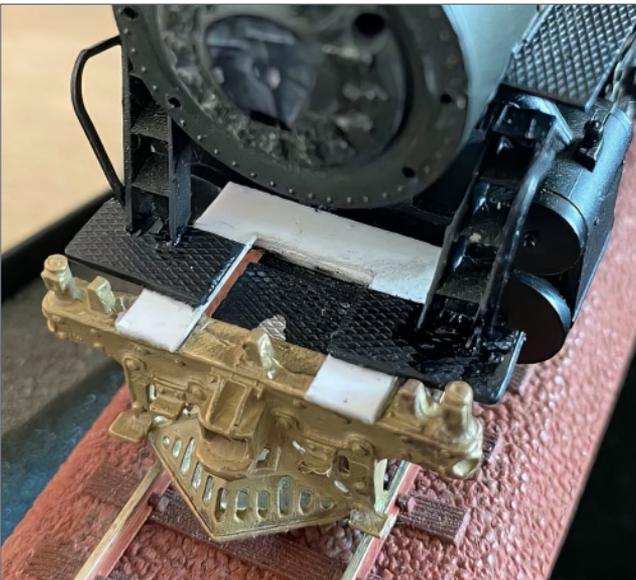


11. Mounting the brass part to the plastic pilot was tricky, but some cutting on the pilot and styrene supports helped.





12. I saved pieces of running board from the original pilot and added them back on. The mount is flimsy, so careful handling is required.



13. The loco was missing one of its ladders, so I used two from an old Bachmann Reading 2-8-0 shell.



14. I added a small, cone-funneled dynamo above the smoke box and a bell from a Spectrum Russian 2-10-0.



15. A short air tank left over from an MDC/Roundhouse kit fills space between the cylinder and feedwater heater. The model was beginning to resemble my original sketch.

## ARRESTING SPARKS

Next came a procedure I give many ECRR locomotives. Like several of John Allen's GDRR engines, my locomotives feature spark arrestors on their stacks because of their arid



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stomping grounds. Mine are scratchbuilt and required very little time and materials.

The necessary supplies and tools are simple:

- Fine mesh material (I have a couple of rubber-ringed filters that have proven perfect for this purpose).
- A plastic axle from an old rolling stock truck
- Thin styrene (I used 0.10").
- Gel super glue.
- Sprue cutters or wire clippers.
- Scissors.
- Hobby knife.
- File or emery board

I've detailed the build process here so you can follow it yourself [16-20]. The addition costs almost nothing, is quick to make, and gives use to all those plastic wheels taking up drawer space.

The locomotive was truly starting to come to life at this point, and she absolutely stood apart from the standard-looking model I started with. Everything was going smoothly until...

## FAILURE TO BOOST

I reached what would turn out to be the one major hurdle, and the only real disappointment of the overall build: the Franklin booster engine that would replace the front tender truck.

I purchased a PSC brass booster engine kit knowing it would be a challenge to assemble, and I did not have the correct tools. My good friend Tom Hokel (Pine Ridge RR) said, "What you really need is a resistance soldering tool." Despite all of this, I dove in head-first.

My main material for adhering the parts was thin CA glue, which was not the best way to go. I initially was pleased to find



16. Cut the wheels from the axle and glue them together, insides facing out.



17. Cut a strip of mesh material as wide as the space between the flanges.



18. Glue the mesh to the wheels (it may take a few attempts to get it to stick).

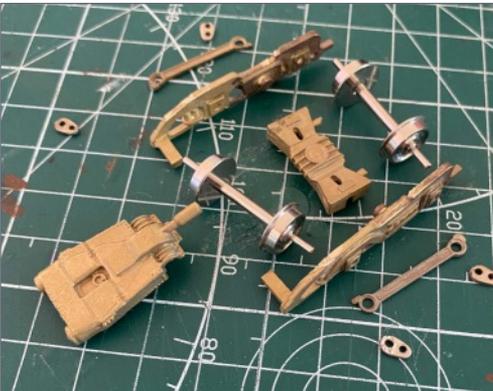




19. Cut four styrene strips and glue them equally spaced around the edge of the wheels.



20. Voila! A homemade spark arrester for your cinder-belching ore mover! The custom piece fits perfectly on the Spectrum shell's stack.



21. The doomed booster kit laid out for my attempted build.



22. The partially assembled booster in its planned position under the Vanderbilt tender.

that after sanding off brass flash and roughing up the pieces, the kit assembled reasonably well with the glue. I managed to assemble the truck, with the wheels in place, well enough that it wouldn't fall apart.

The side rods were another story. The holes on the rods and mounts were microscopic, as were the screws. Some light drilling was necessary, and my basic hand-drill kit proved to be a bit too clumsy for the booster.

I drilled some holes too large, and the screws would not thread. What followed was a ludicrous attempt at affixing the screws and side rods with CA glue that ultimately resulted in fusing the wheels to the truck, ruining the kit. *Soaking the brass kit in acetone should dissolve the CA while leaving the brass intact. No need to scrap the kit! ed.*

If anybody has successfully assembled the Precision Scale brass booster engine, I'd love to see how it's done properly.

While disappointed, I knew going into this stage of the build that if anything was going to fail: 1) it would likely be the booster, and 2) this was probably the LEAST important part.



The booster is the one component that is not integral to the rest of the model and can be easily added later. Booster engines I use in the future will almost certainly be sourced from other models.



23. The last photo taken before moving, showing the wire I glued to the compressor.



After several months, I got back to the project. I added marker lights, the headlight, and front coupler. Note I added a running board under the air compressors, but this was later removed for easier assembly.

## PAINTING ON THE BALCONY

After I added some wire plumbing to the air compressors on the smokebox, the project took a pause while I moved from Los Angeles to the San Fernando Valley [23]. The new apartment had a balcony, and I was excited to try it as a painting venue. I assembled the locomotive and completed the detailing [24].

My method of painting might make seasoned modelers cringe. I always planned to invest in an airbrush, but did not have the funds when I opened the ECRR's new paint shop. My applicator of choice was a rattle can of flat black automotive primer, which worked well.

My first experiment spray painting a loco was a Bachmann Reading boiler shell. I did not expect my first attempt to turn out as spectacularly as it did. All the individual parts I added beautifully married to the main body with the paint, with no loss of detail whatsoever.

Unlike my first paint job, I decided to not disassemble the locomotive before painting, and the results were concerning at first.



25. My state-of-the-art painting booth: a simple cardboard box and an old rotating makeup organizer. The breeze on the balcony provided ventilation. The black automotive primer provided good coverage, and I brushed any missed spots with Vallejo black primer.



Paint was thick in some areas, and I was worried the rods and drivers would suffer because of it.

I ran the running gear by itself sans motor and it rolled just fine. Any issues with the base layer of paint were easily remedied.

## SCENIC PAINTING... MY FAVORITE!

Weathering has always been my favorite part of modeling. I love taking a piece and making it look old.

My ECRR has a habit of buying used equipment and running it until the wheels fall off, whether literally or figuratively. I used simple acrylics and brushes from an art supply store for weathering.

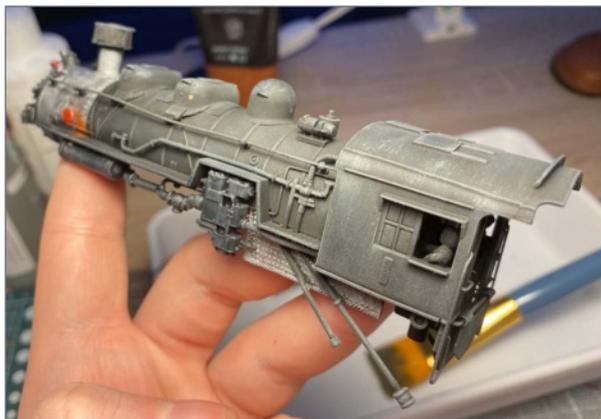
The first pass of paint was a very light dry-brush of gray all over the model to define the details. After that, burnt sienna was lightly dabbed and dry-brushed in desired areas to resemble rust. The last model I made turned out very rusty, so I was more lenient with it on the #384.

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26. After the base coat, the smokebox and firebox were carefully brushed with silver acrylic, and then the whole model was dry-brushed gray.



27. As you can see, the ECRR keeps their crews about as clean as their engines.



28. While marker lights are traditionally green or white based on what kind of train is running, the ECRR's equipment all get dabs of red oil paint to resemble beady little eyes.

## LETTERING

I realized that I had gotten ahead of myself and had not lettered the engine. It was at this point that my partner, Tori, got involved.

According to the cliché, a model railroader's partner is perpetually exasperated by their hobby, showing little interest. My wonderful partner wholeheartedly supports and shows interest in my hobby.



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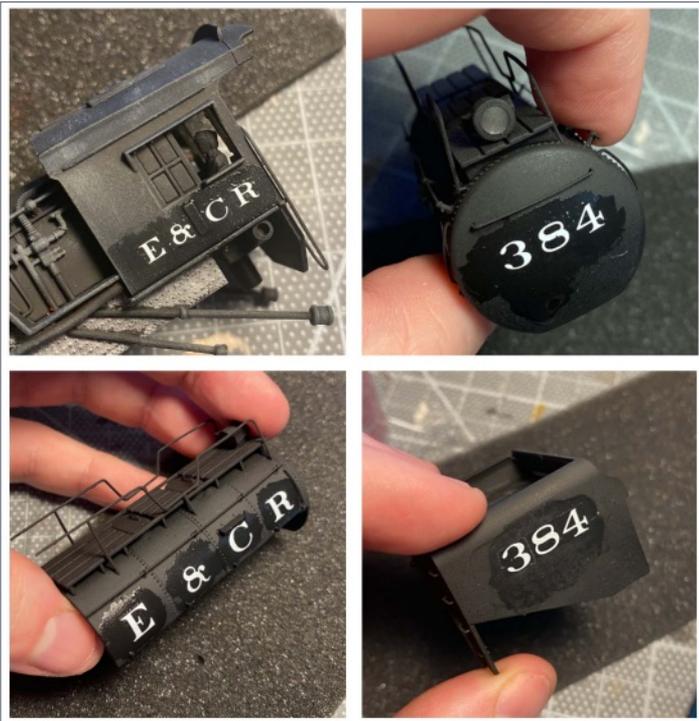
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I showed her the engine in its semi-painted state and asked what number she thought would be fitting for it. Her response? “384.” Thanks babe!

But why E&CR versus ECRR? The true reason is I only had two Rs left on the decal sheet instead of the needed four. However, I created a backstory about a petty feud between the workers at the road’s two main paint shops, each thinking they had the “proper” abbreviation.

It was not until management intervened that the dual lettering stopped. While not a necessity, this kind of storytelling can make modeling a lot of fun (and give you some leeway when you run out of letters) [29].

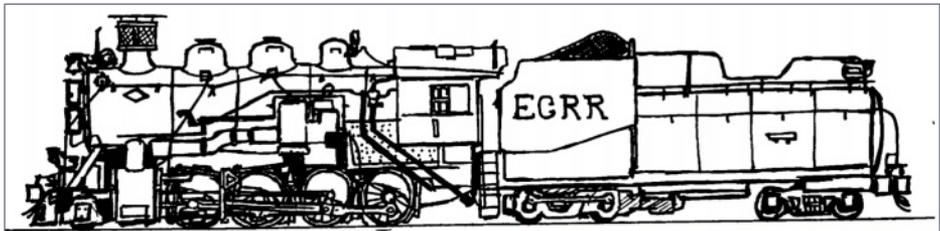
I sealed the decals to the model with matte spray-on finish.



29. The results of the paint shop feud are seen applied to the cab and tender. Tori’s chosen road number is added to the sides of the coal bunker and the back of the tank.



30. The running gear was thoroughly dirtied with muddy, dusty browns. The smokebox and stack got brushed with black for soot, and white was later brushed on to resemble scaling from the steam.



31. There are some minor differences, but the final product strongly resembles the concept art drawn nearly a year earlier.



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With the engine and tender decaled, I started reassembling the model. The Spectrum Vanderbilt tender went back together with one handrail needing a little Loctite to hold it in place. After that, I dry-brushed the engine with browns, blacks, and whites to give it the weather of the road [31, 32, 33].



**32.** One weathering detail I love including is the white scale around the pop valves, generators, and anywhere else steam escapes.



**33.** The lettering, red lights and builder's plate, and small patches of rust stand out against the dusty blacks and grays.

## DONE (?)

E&CR #384 does not have a headlight bulb. The wheels need cleaning. She has not even had a test run.

With all that in mind, how can I possibly call this project “done?” Much like a model railroad, I don't think projects like

this are ever truly finished. I want to add a DCC sound system with an LED headlight, and there's still that tender booster I might tackle in the future.

But for the time-being, the overall goals for the project have been met:

- I have a new addition to the Europa & Copperstone RR roster.
- The loco fits perfectly in the world I have in mind.
- I did not have to mess with anything internal or mechanical.
- I got to focus on painting and weathering.
- And I know for a fact that the #384 is a one-of-a-kind engine.

E&CR #384 sits on a shelf between the living room and master bedroom. I can't go from one space to another without giving her a glance. She sits next to two other locomotives I built for the ECRR: the 2-6-0 MDC/Roundhouse kit and a Bachmann Reading shell affixed to a Spectrum Russian Decapod chassis. I'm extremely proud of all three locomotives, and can't wait to continue building more power for my railroad and others.



34. Daltrey, one of the road's new-yet-faithful shop kitties, supervises the #384's photography session.

## CALDWELL BUTLER



Caldwell grew up in Cumberland, MD when Baldwin 2-8-0 #734 was under operation at the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. His infatuation with trains began when he was less than a year old and continues to this day.

Caldwell's efforts in model railroading took a hiatus while attending high school at Mercersburg Academy in Mercersburg, PA, college at Columbia College Chicago, and moving to Los Angeles in 2018. It wasn't

until the onset of the pandemic in 2020 that he was able to return to the hobby.

Discovering John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid, as well as the world of kitbashing, inspired Caldwell to begin building his own self-designed locomotives in HO scale. His fictitious Europa & Copperstone Railroad Company (ECRR / E&CR) is heavily inspired by the GDRR, as well as prototypical railroads such as the Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range. The ECRR has become the subject of models and drawings as well as several original fiction stories.

Caldwell works for The URL dr, an online company specializing in E-Learning courses. He aspires to write for the film industry, and lives in Valley Village, CA with his partner Tori and their two cats, Moonie and Daltrey. ■

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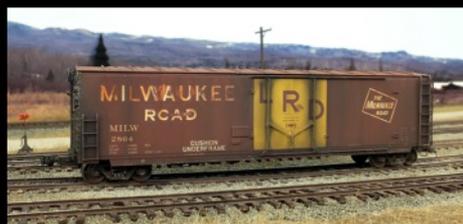
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# Going modern on the New Jersey Division Part 3



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Having protected the crossing, the conductor of local MA-01 is now riding the engine while they put their train back together for the return trip west.

The red caboose they are passing is now a shoving platform assigned to Manville Yard & has repainted into the red scheme of Norfolk Southern, yet has been given the full Conrail graphics standard to its former owner. Small details like this can provide interesting backstories about the equipment on our railroads.



## M.R. SNELL TAKES US ON A TOUR OF THE LEHIGH LINE...

**WELCOME TO THE THIRD INSTALLMENT OF OUR JOURNEY ACROSS THE** New Jersey Division. In December, we explored the east end of the Lehigh Line, the mainline that gets the

freight in and out of the Division. Today we will be starting at the west end and working eastward, ending where we had left off at CP Potter in Edison.

Although the line starts at Port Reading Junction in Manville, NJ, that is a staging yard (see the map in “Going Modern on The New Jersey Division” in *Model Railroad Hobbyist*, November 2022). [online](#).



2. Unlike the crowded urban areas we previously explored, Columbus Park offers an almost rural feel with astounding views of trains. The equipment cabinet for a defect detector is along the tracks at right.



3. Eastbound NS 24V rounds the curve at New Market as it passes Columbus Park, eastbound to Portside. This is the first location to view eastbound

trains entering the Division.



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4. Although Columbus Park and its pond of still water are prototypical locations, their inclusion on the layout was by design. While planning a

layout we should always include one or two locations that will lend themselves to photography of our models.



5. CSX Q413 is passing westbound on its journey to Philadelphia. It will leave the Division, and proceed onto CSX trackage at Port Reading Junction.



M.R. Snell

## DEFECT DETECTORS

Just west of Columbus Park at Middlesex, there's a defect detector. With the closure of wayside stations and towers, there was no longer anybody to view the train for defects.

Railroads developed defect detectors to compensate. Defect detectors have sensors to measure journal and wheel temperatures as the train passes to detect overheated wheel bearings – hotboxes. They also have a series of paddles mounted inside and outside the rails to detect dragging equipment or anything hanging too low.

The first detectors used a big digital readout beside the tracks that the conductor or brakeman in the cabooses could read. As cabooses were phased out, defect detectors transmitted the information over the radio using a computerized voice.

If there are no issues, the crew gets a 'NO DEFECT' message. If the detector finds a problem, it sends an alarm tone and description of the problem [6, 7, 8, 9].



6. A defect detector installation is made up of several components mounted on the track, with the electronics housed in an adjacent equipment shed. This installation

has a security light, presumably to deter vandalism.

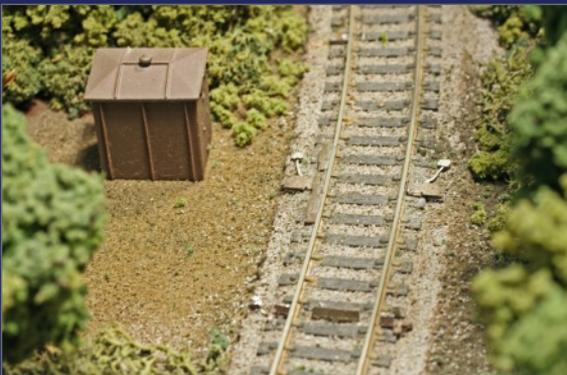




7. Closeup of an axle heat sensor.



8. The modern radio alarm defect detector uses a group of sensors to measure journal temperatures and a series of upright paddles to detect dragging equipment.



9. Modeling the visual components of a modern defect detector is easy using castings from Details West. Making it come to life requires a bit more work, but can be done using prerecorded

sound chips or technology available from Trainboss.

[fliphtml5.com/buups/gfzx/index.html#p=85](http://fliphtml5.com/buups/gfzx/index.html#p=85)). We will begin in the New Market section of Piscataway instead. Columbus Park in New Market is one of the more photogenic places along the Lehigh Line [2].



10. South Plainfield Yard was once a base for local traffic, but has been transformed into a rail-truck transfer facility, a variation on the old-style

team track.



11. Maintenance-of-way equipment can add variety, color, and interest, while also providing non-revenue moves. Modeling a small MW facility can be done in minimal space, allowing us to display the

unusual equipment we are drawn to.



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12. This CNJ car gives a nod to the history of the area, even if it resides along ex-Lehigh Valley Rails. Modeling a small rail park requires only

a short section of panel track, and with periodic changes to the equipment on display, we can use models that would otherwise remain in drawers.



13. Westbound CP257 holds the main at Oak Tree awaiting an eastbound train. CP inherited Delaware & Hudson's trackage rights between Allentown and Oak Island.



14. CSX Q300 passes the waiting CP train as it enters the controlled siding at Oak Tree. Sidings on a single-track railroad allow trains to pass each other and

provide operational flexibility.



15. NS 9251, displaying special Operation Lifesaver 25th Anniversary livery, leads a double-stack train west near Potter. Operation Lifesaver has been working to prevent collisions between trains and motorists since 1972. [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org)



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## SOUTH PLAINFIELD

South Plainfield features a small maintenance-of-way yard and a transload facility. All this represents former Lehigh Valley trackage.

## THE MANVILLE JOB



16. A former Conrail GP15-1 switches the large Oakite building near the end of the Perth Amboy Running Track in Metuchen. Branches still exist in the modern era even if they are far

fewer in numbers or lengths than the transition era of the 1950s.



17. CSX 1547 eases across the unprotected crossing in Metuchen on its way back to the Lehigh Line. Details such as narrow roads, plank-style crossings, and older-style crossbucks

reinforce that the line is very lightly used.



18. MA-1 passes by Sherban's Diner, en route to Manville. In the distance are covered hoppers delivered at the South Plainfield transload facility.

Manville local MA-01 handles the west end of the Lehigh Line between Port Reading Junction and Potter. It works the transload and MW yard in South Plainfield, then it works Central New Jersey Cement, and heads down a truncated branch known as the Perth Amboy Secondary to work Lowe's, Mid-State, Handicap, and Oakite before reaching the end of the branch.

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19. Raritan is typical of most outlying transit stops, with a station and platform surrounded by the houses of a suburban neighborhood.



20. To save deadhead moves, some outlying commuter terminals such as Raritan have small facilities for servicing equipment assigned to the line. While these can provide daily service, major repairs usually require a trip to the transit system's main shops.



21. Not all commuter operations involve trains full of passengers. Many moves are deadheads of empty trains to position them for rush hour runs.



22. NJ Transit train 5436 crosses over Conrail's Lehigh Line en route to Newark. Adding a simple back-and-forth operation can add a job that allows visitors without railroading knowledge to participate in a session while learning about railroad operating practices.



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23. NJ Transit train 5436 enters Amtrak's Northeast Corridor at Newark for its final stop at Penn Station. The large background high-rise office

buildings are N scale, but their size and background placement make them suitable for HO.



24. At Newark Penn Station an F40PH diesel idles alongside an ALP-44 electric. Modeling a commuter road can offer all sorts of possibilities for unique equipment that would be out of place on a freight-only layout.



25. Amtrak GP7 771 works a MW train as a background scene for the Northeast Corridor. Trains as scenery? My Northeast Corridor is only 24 feet long, but it

provides a place to display my small collection of Amtrak alongside the active tracks used by NJ Transit commuter trains.



26. A good visual trick is to hide trackage to avoid the “spaghetti bowl” look that older layouts often had. Beyond WC tower the track runs through and behind the backdrop, yet the angle of view makes it appear as if it recedes into the trees.



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27. The bridge-mounted signals guarding CP River stand tall against the large crane of Raritan River Steel. Tight scenes such as this lend themselves

well to layout photography and should be considered while sketching layout plans.

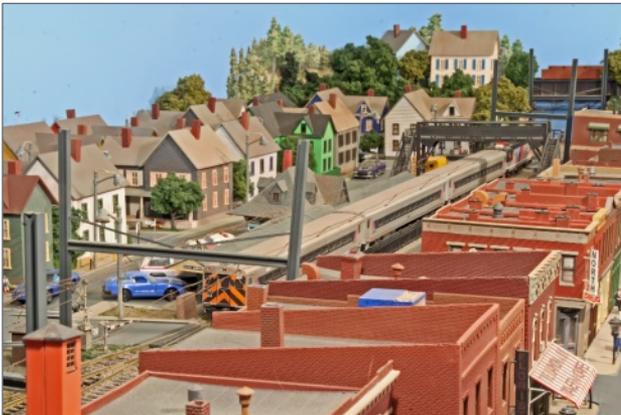


28. The massive Raritan River bridge is a signature structure on the North Jersey Coast Line. Although selectively compressed, it immediately gives visitors a sense of location.



29. The old shop building still stands at South Amboy, although no longer used. By leaving the old yard and shop intact, I've created an interesting vignette I can use to store maintenance-of-way equipment such as this wire train. This keeps it

on the layout, and provides another facet of operations.



30. Modeling a busy suburban area does not necessarily require massive amounts of space. Modeling only one side of the Main Street stores (to the right of the train) implies that the aisle is the other side. This entire scene is only

30" deep and 72" long.

## RARITAN

New Jersey Transit has handled commuter operations across New Jersey since 1983. NJT Rail is made up of two divisions: Hoboken and Newark. The Newark Division is made up mainly of ex-Central Railroad of New Jersey lines that head to Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, where NJT has trackage rights.



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31. Cab car 5110 pulls out of South Amboy for a return run to Penn Station. Push-pull operation is favored on commuter roads and some Amtrak routes because it eliminates the need for turning the train on wyes or loops, saving time and money.

I hope this series has shown modern operations doesn't need to be only boring point-to-point runs. Heavy mainline railroading, local trains that still make the final delivery, and even short lines complete with power from the past add interest. Seven railroads work together on the New Jersey Division to get the job done. ☑

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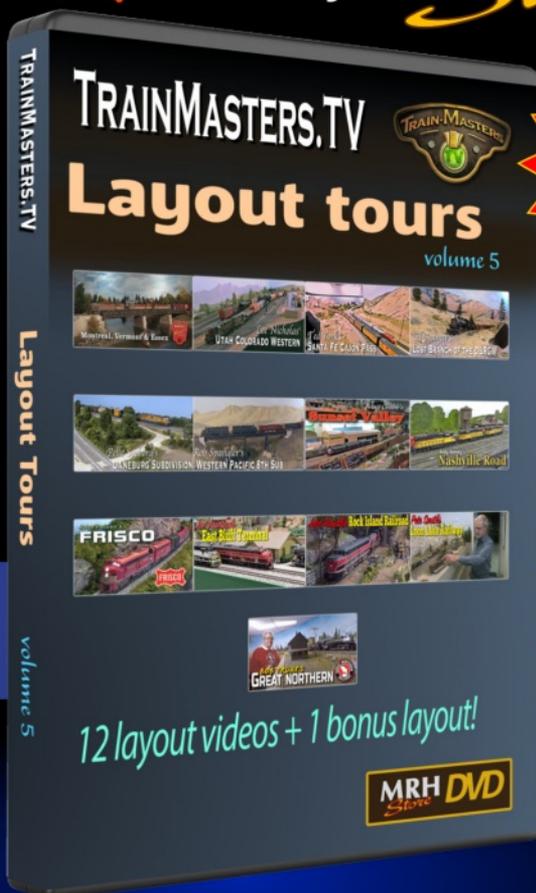
## M.R. SNELL



M.R. (Matt) Snell has been a model railroader and railfan for 30 years. His interest in railroading grew while growing up in New Jersey surrounded by freight and passenger rail lines.

Presently residing in Ohio, Matt and his wife Debie share the hobby, modeling the area he grew up in: north-central New Jersey.

Their "Conrail New Jersey Division" layout has been featured in *Great Model Railroads*, *Rail Model Journal*, and in the Allen Keller *Great Model Railroads* DVD series. Matt has had articles in *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *RailModel Journal*, *Scale Rails*, and *Model Railroader*, as well as online at [railroad.net](http://railroad.net). ■

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# LOOK

## column

Model Railroad Hobbyist | January 2023



## ModelU 3D-printed figures

**JEFF SHULTZ** SHOWS SEVERAL SETS OF CREW FIGURES FROM **MODELU ...**

**MODELU OF GREAT BRITAIN FIRST ATTRACTED MY ATTENTION SOMETIME LAST** year as modelers started mentioning their high-quality resin 3D-printed figures from scans in multiple scales. ModelU figures in the North American Modern Era Crew Bundle can be ordered in up to 28 different scales from 1:10 to 1:160 (US N scale). If your scale is missing from the list for a particular figure or bundle, contact them.

ModelU's figures are created from high-definition body scans of actual people. They are categorized both by the type of figure, such as Engine Crew or People at Rest, and by era.

Figures from Transitional Era (1940-1970) feature the Engine Crew wearing jackets and "railroad engineer hats" and Mill Workers wearing period appropriate hats. Modern Era figures (1990-present) are more likely to wear ball caps and high-

visibility vests or suits. Figures from 1970-1980 have ball caps but no high visibility gear.

ModelU sent me several packages of their figures, including Transitional Era, Modern Era (1970-1980), and Modern Era (1990-Present). These included Crew Bundles in both HO and O scales [1], and four individual O scale figures: a hobo [2], two engineers with left hands raised to the regulator [3], and a man lighting a cigarette.

I recommend looking at the photos on the website, as sometimes it can be difficult to tell where a support ends and a detail begins. Yes, I damaged a couple of figures this way – the details on the HO scale figures can be incredibly fine, such as a sheet depicting a train order.



HO and O scale North American Crew figures from transitional and modern eras. Some have been primed, others are raw resin.



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2. O scale Hobo figure #22401 with supports.





3. O scale Seated Engineer using Regulator #22050 with supports.



4. O scale Hobo and Seated Engineer with supports cut off.

All ModelU figures arrive in plastic bags stapled to cardboard backs, still attached to their 3D-printing supports. The supports need to be carefully removed [4].

ModelU also recommends soaking the figure in hot water before removing the supports to make removal easier. I primed several of the figures with Badger gray Stynylrez airbrush primer [5, 6].

ModelU has recently added a line of mill worker figures that include the mill foreman, several mill workers moving large sacks, and others resting or doing typical tasks from sweeping to sleeping with a sack as a pillow.





**5. HO scale Crew with train orders #23105, Crew with kig bag #23107, and Conductor with train orders #23103 figures without supports and primed.**

The engine crews include figures for engineers, conductors, brakemen, signalmen, and an operator holding a train order hoop. Many are generic “crew” doing various things such as carrying a drink, leaning on the handrail, or carrying a grip (kig bag). Other figures are available on the website.

ModelU has stated that they will be expanding the US ranges and adding Golden Era figures. Since they are in the UK, items on the ModelU website at [www.modelu3d.co.uk](http://www.modelu3d.co.uk) are priced in pounds sterling, with single HO scale figures generally priced at £3.75 (USD \$4.53 in late December 2022), and bundles at £15

# FIRST LOOK | 6

(USD \$18.12). 0 scale is £6.25 and £25. Worldwide shipping is via Royal Mail Tracked International and orders over £75 (USD \$90.62) include free shipping. ☑

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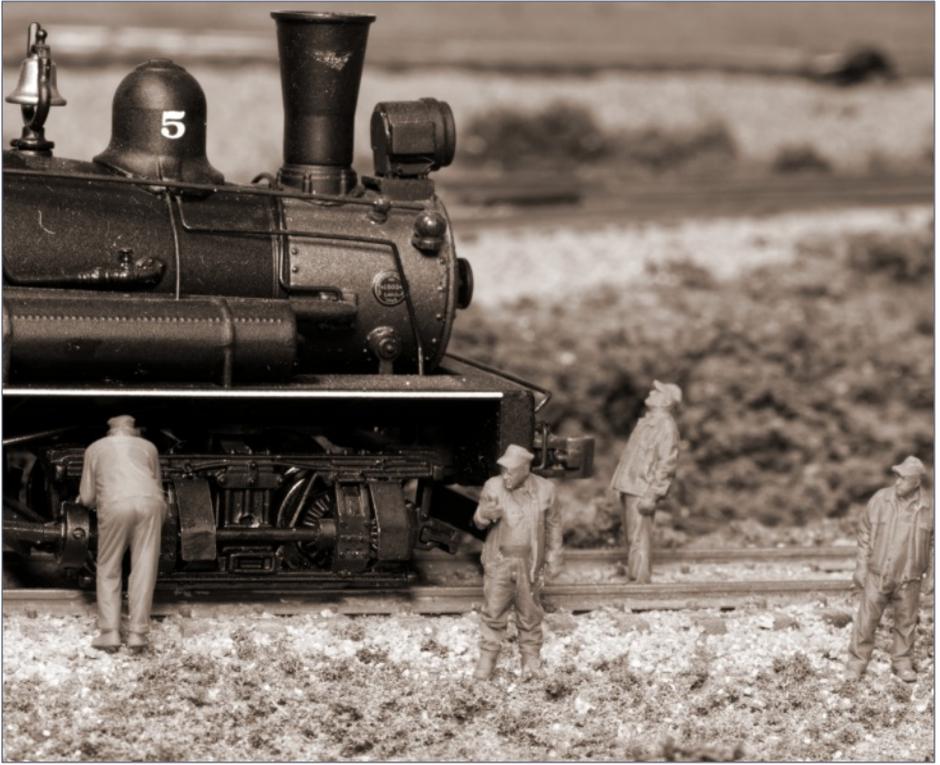
6. HO scale Conductor leaning #23100 and Conductor #23102 figures without supports and primed.



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7. HO scale Transitional Era engine crew figures Crew leaning #22004, Crew using radio #22008, Crew looking up #22002 and Crew #22007 without supports.

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## DIY paint booth safe for solvent paints

When building your own paint booth, you need to make sure you do not use an open-frame motor fan with solvent paints, otherwise you can get explosions or fires. YouTuber **Wes McDowell** shows how he added an explosion proof fan to his DIY paint booth in this video.

The explosion-proof fan is a lot safer when spraying solvent paints. The fan Wes shows has almost 2000 CFM, making for superb suction out the back of the spray booth.

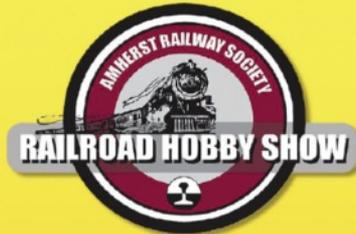


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# JANUARY NEWS

column



Model Railroad Hobbyist | January 2023

**RICHARD BALE AND JEFF SHULTZ**  
REPORT THE LATEST HOBBY  
INDUSTRY NEWS ...



## INDUSTRY NEWS

### **Atlas acquires River Point Station HO vehicles**

Atlas Model Railroad Company has acquired the HO scale vehicle tooling from River Point Station Fine Scale Models (RPS) of Warwick, RI. Atlas purchased the N scale line of vehicles from RPS in 2020. The recent acquisition includes tooling and fixtures to produce more than two dozen HO scale models of Ford trucks including three versions of a Ford F-250, eight versions of the F-350, six versions of the F-450, three versions of the F-550, and three Expedition SUV vehicles. River Point Station Fine Scale Models was founded in 2006 by Ron Elsdoerfer.

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## O SCALE PRODUCT NEWS

**Tangent Scale Models**, an independent producer of well-regarded HO scale plastic injection models of exceptional quality and prototypical accuracy, has entered the O scale market. Tangent's initial O scale offering is a group of General American 1928-design 6,000 gallon triple compartment tank cars. A

**THE LATEST MODEL RAILROAD PRODUCTS, NEWS & EVENTS**



limited number of models, handcrafted in brass by Sam Model Tech, are available now.



Decorating schemes on the introductory models include COSX-Cosden & Company (Mid-Continent Petroleum), MPCX-Magnolia Petroleum, GATX-

Celanese Chemicals, GATX (black 1958+ scheme), GATX (black 1968+ scheme with ACI labels), and PDAX-Protex Industries. A black car with no lettering is also available.

The models come with sprung 50-ton spring-plank trucks with 33" wheels and Kadee #740 O scale couplers.

Info: [www.tangentscalemodels.com](http://www.tangentscalemodels.com)

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R. Bale

## SAM MODEL TECH CO., LTD.

Sam Model Tech is a Korean-based manufacturer of precision brass models. The company is located in Siheung City between Seoul and Incheon City. Sam Model Tech was established in 2002 by Mr. Chan Hur, the former head of the brass division of Samhongsu. The 12-man core staff at Sam Model Tech includes designers, engineers, production managers and quality assurance supervisors formerly employed by Samhongsu and Ajin Precision. In addition to Tangent, Sam Model Tech currently builds brass models for Key Imports, Coach Yard, and Global Outlet Corp., of France.



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## HO SCALE PRODUCT NEWS



New economy priced HO scale freight car kits coming from **Accurail** include a special 3-car set of Illinois Central Gulf, Pullman Standard covered hoppers. Each of the ICG cars has different graphics.



This APPX-Agar Packing Co. 40' all-steel refrigerator car was built in 1962. Note the narrow 4' hinged loading doors.



Accurail's HO kit for this 36' Fowler wood boxcar is decorated for the Saint Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway, a subsidiary of the Missouri Pacific. The XM class boxcar was built in 1914.



Accurail's HO scale version of this Chicago, Burlington & Quincy twin-bay covered hopper is based on a prototype car built in 1968 by ACF.

Accurail is releasing this same ACF covered hopper decorated with data only.



The prototype of this 40' Milwaukee Road rib-side automobile car with double doors was built in 1943.

Accurail's HO scale kit shows the car after it was repainted in 1959 with MILW's billboard lettering scheme. All Accurail HO scale car kits come with appropriate trucks with Delrin wheelsets and Accumate knuckle couplers.

Info: [www.accurail.com](http://www.accurail.com)



**Arrowhead Models** is selling three versions of Penn Central Committee Design triple-bay coal hopper. The prototype emerged from a

committee formed in the late 1950s by Pennsylvania Railroad, Chesapeake & Ohio, and Norfolk & Western. Arrowhead's HO scale model accurately replicates the prototype design of a 70-ton car with 13 posts. The model comes with Arrowhead's all-new 70-ton ACF Ride Control plain bearing trucks.

Info: [arrowheadmodels.com](http://arrowheadmodels.com)



R. Bale

## GP40-2, GP40P-2 AND GP40-2L

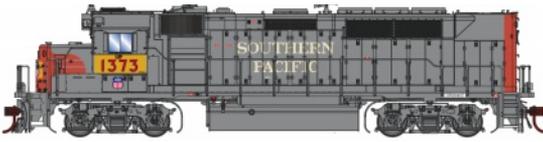
The EMD GP40-2 is a four-axle diesel-electric locomotive introduced by General Motors Electro-Motive Division as part of its Dash 2 line in 1972. The locomotive's power is provided by an EMD 645E3 16-cylinder engine that generates 3,000hp. Spotting features of the GP40-2 are three large radiator fans and a turbocharger stack. Variations included GP40P-2s built with a steam generator to support SP commuter service running south from San Francisco. Following the merger of the two western lines, UP patched the former SP units and removed the steam generators. The GP40-2L designation identifies units built with a wide cab by General Motors Diesel (Canada). During the mid-1970s Canadian National took delivery of a total of 268 GP40-2L locomotives. Although the GP40-2 was among EMD's most successful models, with a total of 1142 units being built, production ended in 1986 as interest in high-powered locomotives shifted to six-axle models.



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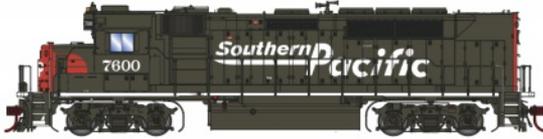
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**Athearn** has issued a long-term list of new models scheduled for release in February 2024.

The list begins with three versions of EMD's venerable GP40-2. The rare GP40P-2 with a steam generator for passenger service, will be available decorated for Southern Pacific, and patched for Union Pacific subsequent to UP's acquisition of SP.



Both UP and SP road names will have the big 3,600 gallon fuel tank, large front plow, and AC units mounted on the roof. After the merger, UP removed the SP light package from the newly acquired GP40P-2s.



Units decorated for CSX will be basic GP40-2s with large fuel tanks, extended front anti-climbers and a Chessie-style rock plow in the front.



Athearn's version of the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton GP40-2 has a Xenon beacon light, small fuel tank and extra grab irons on the nose.



The ON Rail-Ontario Northland Railway GP40-2 is an ex-B&M unit with a 3,600 gallon fuel tank and both front and rear ditch lights.



The models decorated for Guilford, Maine Central and Quebec, Gatineau Railway are GP40-2L units with Canadian cabs.

Units decorated for CSX will be basic GP40-2s with large fuel tanks, extended front anti-climbers and a

Athearn's version of the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton GP40-2 has a Xenon beacon light, small fuel tank and extra grab irons on the nose.

The ON Rail-Ontario Northland Railway GP40-2 is an ex-B&M unit with a 3,600 gallon fuel tank and

The models decorated for Guilford, Maine Central and Quebec, Gatineau Railway are GP40-2L units



Features shared by all of the Genesis GP40-2, GP40P-2 and GP40-2L locomotives in this release include

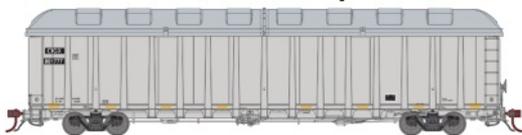
coupler cut levers, trainline and MU hoses, MU stands, tread on walkways, windshield wipers, lift rings, wire grab irons, etched metal fan grilles, sanding lines, lighted number boards, a fuel tank detailed with fillers, fuel gauges, and breather pipes; and Kadee compatible McHenry knuckle couplers. Road name variables include Blomberg-B or Blomberg-M trucks as appropriate to the prototype being modeled.

Athearn locomotives mentioned in this report will be available as DCC models and with a DCC decoder with SoundTraxx Economy sound. DC models will be DCC-ready with a 21-pin plug.



The list of HO scale freight car models scheduled to be released by Athearn

in February 2024 includes an all-new Genesis NSC 6000 cu. ft. gondola. In addition to new body tooling, Athearn is preparing a new 100-ton Barber S-2-E truck with machined metal wheels and rotating bearing caps. An impressive new feature is the road number of the car will be printed on each truck.



The cars will come with a removable scrap load. Four road numbers each will be available for AIMX-

American Iron & Metal, TLPX-Texas-Louisiana Producing & Carbon, and IMRX.



Athearn is also developing a model of a National Steel Car 6,400 cu. ft. gondola.

The Genesis model is based on a prototype NSC introduced in



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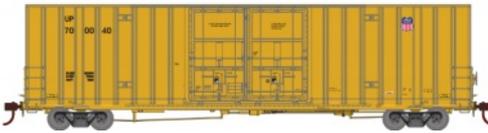
2006. The model will be available individually, with a scrap load, or with a cover. Road names will be CDEX, CIGX, FWTX and WCTX. Variations in details will include multiple ends, top chords, and ladder placement. The model will come with Athearn's new 100-ton Barber S-2-E truck with rotating bearing caps and printed road numbers.



Athearn has included a 33,000 gallon LPG tank car in its February 2024 production schedule.

Details on the HO scale Genesis model include separately applied walkway platforms, manway, outlet, ladders, brake rigging detail, safety rail supports and tank saddles. Brake details will be body-mounted or truck-mounted per the prototype being modeled.

Three road numbers each will be available for GATX, PROX, TILX, UTLX, CPDX, and SIRX. The model will come with 100-ton trucks with rotating bearing caps and printed road numbers.



This 60' Gunderson high-cube boxcar with double plug doors is included in Athearn's February 2024 schedule. Although

not a Genesis model, this Gunderson car will have separately applied wire grab irons and etched end platforms. In addition to the Union Pacific version shown, road names will include Canadian Pacific, BNSF, Lancaster & Chester, Cotton Belt, Mississippi & Tennessee, and TBOX. Athearn identifies this release as one of their Legendary Liveries, aka Foobies, which means the road names used may never have owned this Gunderson car.



The fifth and final new HO scale freight car coming from Athearn in February 2024 is a Thrall high-side gondola. A removable

load will be included with the model. Details include wire and plastic handrails, stirrup steps, ladders, and 100-ton trucks with

36" wheels. Underbody details include separate brake gear, air reservoir, and brake cylinder. Road names will be FPPX-Fayette Power Project, NORX-Northern Indiana Public Service, DJJX-David J. Joseph Company, Canadian Pacific, HZGX-Herzog, and SEPX-Southwestern Electric Power. All Athearn rolling stock mentioned in this report will come with machined metal wheelsets and McHenry knuckle couplers.

Info: [www.athearn.com](http://www.athearn.com)

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**Broadway Limited** has released two new HO scale freight models including an all new AAR 70-ton triple-bay coal

hopper. Road names include Santa Fe, Baltimore & Ohio, Canadian National, Missouri Pacific, Nickel Plate Road, New York Central, Southern Pacific (T&NO), and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. Unlettered hopper cars will be available in both black and oxide red.



Also new from Broadway Limited is a 6,000 gallon tank car decorated for Merrimac Chemical, Brown Co., Pittsburgh Plate Glass, Virginia

Smelting, Hooker, and Niagara Smelting.

Info: [www.broadway-limited.com](http://www.broadway-limited.com)

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**Intermountain** has released three new HO scale freight cars to its dealer network. Leading the group of ready-to-run models is a 50' PS-1 boxcar with two

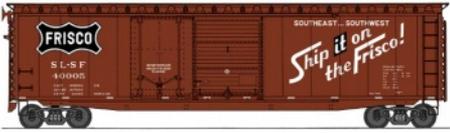
combinations of double doors. Cars with two Youngstown sliding steel corrugated doors on each side are available decorated for Southern Pacific, New Haven, Southern Railway, and Denver & Rio Grande Western.



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PS-1 boxcars with one plug door and one sliding door on each side are available for Rock Island and SL-SF Frisco.

The models come with etched running boards and trucks with 33" machined metal wheels.



Intermountain's December release included an HO scale Center Flow twin-bay covered hopper car based on a 2,980 cu.

ft. series introduced by American Car & Foundry in 1973. Spotting features include the corrugated panel at the top of the sides.



Road names include Norfolk & Western, Denver & Rio Grande Western, Winchester & Western, Chicago & North Western, and Burlington Northern.

The HO scale model features an etched-metal roof walk and roller-bearing trucks with 36" machined metal wheels.



Completing Intermountain's December release of ready-to-run models is a 70-ton

flatcar. The HO scale model is based on cars built in the 1940s and rebuilt in the 1970s. A notable feature is a laser-cut wood deck.



Road names on this release include Santa Fe, Central of New Jersey, New York Central, Wabash, Chesapeake & Ohio, Pere Marquette, Baltimore & Ohio, Chessie System-B&O, Delaware & Hudson, and Western Maryland.

All Intermountain models mentioned in this report come with metal knuckle couplers and appropriate trucks with machined metal wheels. Each road name is available in six numbers.

Info: [www.intermountain-railway.com](http://www.intermountain-railway.com)

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R. Bale

## AAR 50-TON OPEN HOPPER

A variety of twin-bay coal hoppers were built during the first half of the 20th century. One of the most popular designs was the AAR standard 50-ton twin-bay open hopper with offset sides introduced in 1935. It was designated class HM, which is defined as an open top car with two divided self-cleaning hoppers, fixed ends and sides, and doors hinged crosswise to allow dumping between the rails. Between 1934 and 1960, more than 127,000 hopper cars were built to the AAR design. Construction was riveted; however, a few welded cars were built. Some were home-made, but most were built by car builders including Pullman-Standard, Standard Steel, American Car & Foundry, General American Transportation, Bethlehem Steel, Mount Vernon, Pressed Steel, Greenville and Ralston. For modelers, the spotting feature of the AAR 50-ton twin-bay design are nine unevenly spaced stiffeners at the top of the offset sides.



**Kadee's** newest offering is an HO scale model of a 1935 AAR 50-ton twin-bay open hopper car with offset sides. The model faithfully replicates a prototype built in 1948 for the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad. The ready-to-run model comes with Bettendorf-type plain-bearing trucks, Kadee couplers, and a removable coal load

Info: [www.kadee.com](http://www.kadee.com)

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**Moloco** has completed a new production run of General American RBL Plate C insulated boxcars with offset plug doors.

Road names include CGW (with DF loaders, stenciled return to Libby and Gerber), Conrail, Erie Lackawanna, N&W-American Refrigerator Transit, TPLX-

American Refrigerator Transit, Rock Island, and The Rock.

Info: [www.molocotrains.com](http://www.molocotrains.com)

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issued in 2017. Tooling for the 2023 version has been significantly updated.

**Rapido** is working on a major upgrade to the CN/BCR Dash 8-40CM budget-priced model it



Utilizing original factory blueprints, Rapido has completely revised numerous details including the air filters, added separate pipes and traction motor cabling and relocated the bell and horns. The fuel tank and trucks have both been retooled.



Also new are single or double rear headlights, upgraded optional battery boxes behind the cab, and new working CN- or BCR-style ditch lights that will be applied per the road name being modeled. Operating lighting features include white classification lights, step lights and track inspection lights. BCR locomotives will have operating rock lights.

Of special note are new CN-style split cooling radiator panels that will be included with the model for hobbyists to install if desired. The split radiator panels will also be available as a



separate purchase. Decorating schemes will be Canadian National (stripes), CN (website), CN (large noodle) CN (North American), British Columbia Railway (red/white/blue), BCR (red/white/blue with frame

stripe), and Quebec North Shore & Labrador Railway.

Rapido's Dash 8-40CM will be available in DC/Silent (DCC Ready) or with DC/DCC/Sound (ESU LokSound) with twin sugar cube speakers.



Otter Valley Railroad ([info@ovrtrains.com](mailto:info@ovrtrains.com)) will be offering two exclusive

schemes from this run including faded BCR versions of locomotives numbered 4604 and 4620 with the latter having the unique replacement number board and door.



Rapido is preparing another run of its HO scale Alco PA and PB

locomotives. The run will include the famously unique Santa Fe No. 51 L-A-C set which had an extensively modified roof line to accommodate a EMD 567C prime mover that replaced the original Alco engine.



The modified Santa Fe units were also given EMD-style fans and dual exhausts.



In addition to Santa Fe, other decorating schemes in this run will be Alco (demonstrator), CN (demonstrator), Erie Lackawanna,



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Missouri Pacific, Missouri-Kansas-Texas, New Haven (orange), New Haven (McGinnis), Union Pacific, and Gulf, Mobile & Ohio.



An order deadline and estimated arrival date are pending.



Rapido is developing E8 executive units for Illinois Central and Canadian National. The HO scale models replicate units IC acquired from Metra in the mid-1990s.



Ex-Metra E8s No. 100 and 101, and several business cars, were given an

attractive silver, white and black paint scheme that resulted in one of the best looking executive train sets in North America.



After acquiring Illinois Central, CN painted two of the E8s in the traditional green and yellow heritage scheme. They were later fitted for executive service including receiving

CN's corporate colors scheme of red, white and black with the CN noodle logo.



Special details for the executive E8s include correct HEP muffler and

hatch, correct side grilles, modified pilots, blanked sides with appropriate grille details, roof-mounted cooling coils, and non-skirted fuel tanks.



The lighting package includes headlights,



Additional E-units scheduled for release by Rapido are Head End

Power equipped units, including those decorated for Amtrak (Phase I & II), Metra (ex-Amtrak Phase II), Burlington Northern (Commuter and Executive), and Conrail Officer Car Special.



Rapido has announced that their next passenger car will be the Budd Gallery

Commuter Cars with Head End Power. Designed from original blueprints, design drawings, and field measurements, the cars include track-powered flicker-free lighting, free-rolling trucks with metal wheelsets, full underbody details including HEP conduit and equipment, metal side grab irons, sprung diaphragms, and a complete interior.



Models will be available decorated for Burlington Northern, Metra (Burlington

Nameboard), Metra (BNSF nameboard), Metra (No nameboard), and painted but unlettered. Minimum 22" radius curves are recommended.

Info: [www.rapidotrains.com](http://www.rapidotrains.com)

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in the **JANUARY 2023 MRH RUNNING EXTRA!**

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R. Bale

## SAFE-PAK AUTO CARRIERS

In 1973 the first fully enclosed autorack railroad cars were designed by competing manufacturers to address the problem of increasing vandalism to new automobiles in transit. The first production of fully enclosed autorack cars were delivered in late 1974 and early 1975. They were delivered with trifold doors and low profile roofs which accommodated the low overhead clearances on most, but not all Eastern routes. By 1980 fully enclosed racks already comprised half of the rail industry's tri-level fleet and many of these older Safe-Pak cars had their roofs and doors removed, with some of them also converted to bi-levels for van and SUV service. In the mid-1980s several roads rebuilt their cars with by then standard radial clam shell doors and new taller roofs. The Whitehead & Kales company design, named Safe-Pak, were delivered to the ATSF, SBD, CSXT Patch, UP/WP, UP, WP, NW, SCL, FEC, and CAAA. The Safe-Pak autorack cars were in service on US and Canadian railroads until the late 1990s. Robert Stears and Jim Eager.



**ROKA Prototype Models**, a new manufacturer of high-end ready-to-run models, has entered the HO scale field with a wide selection of Safe-Pak cars, a fully enclosed auto carrier built by Whitehead & Kales. Based in Billings, Montana, ROKA is owned by Robert Stears, a former partner at San Juan Model Co. Stears also owns the tooling for American Limited Models RTR products.



Variations in the initial offering include the roof and end doors. Safe-Pak cars with a low roof and Tri-Fold end doors will

be available in multiple road numbers for Santa Fe, Norfolk & Western, Western Pacific, SCL, and Union Pacific.



Road names for cars with high roofs and clam shell end doors include Santa Fe, CPAA-Canadian Pacific Railway, SBD-Seaboard System, and Norfolk & Western.



Cars without a roof and no end doors will be available decorated for Florida East Coast and UP/WP.

Info: [rokamodels.com](http://rokamodels.com)

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**Scale Trains.com** is accepting preorders for the next production run of Rivet Counter HO scale ET44 Tier 4 GEVO

locomotives. Availability is planned for this spring.



Road names will be BNSF (Heritage III), CSX (YN3 boxcar), Canadian National (EJE Heritage, 100th Anniversary), General Electric (Blue demonstrator), KCS (Southern Belle), Norfolk Southern (Horsehead), Union Pacific, and Wabtec.



A special run of Rivet Counter HO scale ES44 GEVO will also be available this spring. Road names will be Ferromex

and BNSF's 25th Anniversary scheme with Heritage logos in 10 road numbers.



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After refreshing its logo and corporate colors in 2021, ScaleTrains conducted a paint scheme design contest. The winning scheme, created by Jesse Gahring, will be available on this



run of Rivet Counter ES44 locomotives.

Info: [www.scaletrains.com](http://www.scaletrains.com)



**Tangent Scale Models** has completed another production run of HO scale GATC 10,000 gallon tank cars. Shown here is an IOX-Imperial Oil Limited car. Built in

1918, it is still fitted with its original K brakes. Tangent is offering this popular road name in 12 numbers.



This UOCX-Union Oil of California tank car also has K brakes. It was built in 1920 and was repainted in 1937. It is available in six numbers.



This Barrett Tarvia –BMX tank car is also available in six numbers. The model replicates a prototype built in 1917 with K brakes. The car was repainted in 1938.



Six road numbers are available for this silver Alaska Railroad tank car built in 1919 and updated with AB-brakes in 1955.

This ACDX-Allied Chemical tank car has AB-brakes. The prototype received the paint job shown here in 1964. Tangent is offering the HO scale version in two road numbers. Additional



a black D&GRW MOW car.

Tangent's 10,000 gallon \*radial course tank body features circumferential rivets, see-through cast knees above the bolsters, separately applied air hoses, tank strap details, and wire grab irons and uncoupling bars. The hand brake and brake system (K or AB) will vary depending on the prototype car being modeled. The models come with Kadee couplers and ASF cast steel spring plank trucks with 33" machined metal wheels and separate brake beams. \*(A radial course tank is one in which the steel panels overlap each other.)

Info: [www.tangentscalemodels.com](http://www.tangentscalemodels.com)

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II versions of the prototype EMD produced with high short hoods during 1955-1957.



**Walthers** is planning to release a GP9 engine during the spring of this year. The Mainline series HO scale model will be based on Phase II versions of the prototype EMD produced with high short hoods during 1955-1957. The economy priced model uses the same drive system as WalthersProto series models.



Variables appropriate to specific road names include front and rear footboards or front plow and flat rear pilot, and dynamic brakes.



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An undecorated model will be included in this release.



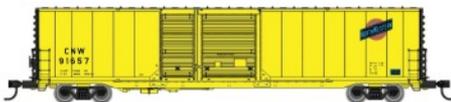
Coming from Walthers next summer is a 72' centerbeam flatcar model. The HO scale Mainline series model will be available with both standard and oval opera window centerbeams. Models with a standard centerbeam arrangement will be available decorated for BNSF, Illinois Central, McCloud River, and Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific.



Road names for cars with oval window openings in the centerbeam will be available for CRLE-Hampton Lumber Sales, TTZX-Trailer Train, NOKL-Northwestern Oklahoma Railroad, and Union Pacific. Additional details include 100 ton trucks with 36" machined metal wheels.



New road names will be available for this 60' Pullman-Standard auto parts boxcar that Walthers plans to release this spring. The Mainline series model represents a prototype built with a 10' and a 6' Youngstown sliding steel door on each side.



Road names will be Chicago & North Western, Norfolk Southern, Conrail, Southern Railway, Missouri Pacific, and Southern Pacific. The model represents auto parts cars in service from the 1960s to about 2000.



Also due from Walthers this spring are four variations of a wide-vision caboose based on prototypes built by the International Car Co. Caboosees with no end ladders, an X-panel roof, a single side window, and an extended cupola with narrowly spaced windows will be available for Northern Pacific, Santa Fe, Detroit, Toledo & Ironton; Chesapeake & Ohio, Great Northern, Soo Line, and Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range.



International cabooses decorated for Northern Pacific, Burlington Northern, Great Northern, Detroit & Toledo Short Line, Gulf, Mobile & Ohio; Illinois Central Gulf, and Northern Pacific will have three windows on each side, Sunray overhanging diagonal panel roofs, end ladders, see-through running boards, and non-extended cupolas with narrowly spaced windows.



Cabooses with the same features except for widely-spaced cupola windows will be available decorated for Norfolk Southern and Norfolk Western. All of the International cabooses in this run will come with Barber roller-bearing trucks with 33" machined metal wheels. The injection molded plastic bodies have molded drill starter points for grab irons sized for Walthers Caboose Detail Kit (#910-201) sold separately.



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R. Bale

## EMD's SD9 ROAD SWITCHER

The SD9 is a 1,750hp six-axle diesel locomotive built by GM's Electro-Motive Division. Between 1954 and 1959, 471 SD9s were built for North American railroads, with an additional 44 produced for export. The SD9 was the second model of EMD's SD (special duty) line of locomotives, following the SD7. Just as the SD7 was a lengthened GP7 with two additional axles, the SD9 was a lengthened four-axle GP-9. The additional axles in the SD series provided more tractive effort and better distribution of weight on the rails. The last phase of SD9 construction had a carbody similar to the SD18 which replaced it in the EMD catalog in 1960.

After a pause of more than four years, Walthers has scheduled an upgraded version of its Proto series EMD SD9 road switcher for release in the fall of 2023. The HO scale ready-to-run model will feature cast brass air horns, LED constant and directional headlights, a 5-pole skew-wound can motor and numerous road specific details.



Chicago, Burlington & Quincy units in the Blackbird paint scheme will have a Gyralight,

Pyle dual sealed-beam headlights, a small winterization hatch, dynamic brakes and a CB&Q-style generator intake.



SD9s decorated for Chicago & Illinois Midland and Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range will have footboard pilots, MU boxes, and drop steps. The DM&IR



unit will also have dynamic brakes.



winterization hatch.

Great Northern units will have Pyle dual sealed-beam headlight up front, drop steps and a large



Widow). Shared details will include dynamic brakes, drop steps, Mars dual sealed-beam headlights, cab sunshades, and SP-style pilot plows in the front and rear.

Two Southern Pacific schemes will be available on this release (Gray & scarlet and Black



Walthers is preparing four-car numbered sets of 24' Minnesota taconite ore cars for release

during the winter of 2023. Road names for the HO scale Mainline series models will be Burlington Northern, Milwaukee Road, Great Northern, and three different paint schemes for Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range. The short ore cars will have the special trucks with the correct 5' wheelbase.



Also coming next winter is another run of 40' ACF modernized welded boxcars with 8' Youngstown steel sliding doors. The Mainline model represents a ten-panel

prototype from the 1960s and 1970s that has been updated with Improved Dreadnaught 4/4 ends and a Stanray diagonal-panel roof. The running boards and roof mounts have been removed and the A end of the car has short ladders. Full height ladders and molded roof mounted grab irons are on the B end of the car.



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Road names will be Erie, Atlantic Coast Line, Detroit & Mackinac, and Rock Island.



This 53' gondola is based on one of the 1000 cars Railgon ordered from Thrall Co. in 1979. Walthers initially released this HO scale Mainline model in

Railgon paint in 2020. After serving in the Railgon system for several years, many of the gondolas were repainted by railroads that leased or purchased the former Railgon cars.



In addition to an original GONX-Railgon scheme, Walthers will release this model next winter decorated

for CRLE-COE Rail, Canadian National, Milwaukee Road, Transportación Ferroviaria Mexicana-TFM, and Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern.



Fifty-nine foot cylindrical wheat hoppers are also on Walthers winter 2023 production schedule. The HO scale Mainline series model is based on a 4550-

cu. ft. prototype built in the early 1970s by National Steel Car.



Decorating schemes on this release will be Canadian National, Canadian Wheat Board, Canadian Pacific, Chicago & North Western, CGLX-Potash

of Saskatchewan, SCOX-Scoular, NdeM-National Railways of Mexico, and Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo.

Info: [www.walthers.com](http://www.walthers.com)

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## N SCALE PRODUCT NEWS



Athearn has announced details on new N scale models scheduled for release in February 2024. The list begins with an all-new NSC 6000 cu. ft. gondola. Features include separately applied metal grab irons, formed wire uncoupling levers, screw-mounted 100-ton trucks, and a removable scrap load. Four road numbers each will be available for AIMX-American Iron & Metal, TLPX-Texas-Louisiana Producing & Carbon, and IMRX.



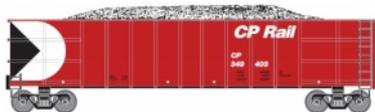
Athearn is also developing a model of a National Steel Car 6,400 cu. ft. gondola. The N scale model is based on a prototype NSC introduced in 2006. The model will be available individually, with a scrap load, or with a cover. Road names will be CDEX, CIGX, FWTX and WCTX.



Variations in details will include multiple ends, top chords, and ladder placement.



Athearn has included a 33,000 gallon LPG tank car in its February 2024 production schedule. Details on the N scale model include photo-etched metal walkways and end platforms. Three road numbers each will be available for GATX, PROX, TILX, UTLX, CPDX, and SIRX. The model will come with screw-mounted 100-ton trucks.



The final new N scale freight car coming from Athearn in February 2024 is a Thrall high-side gondola. A removable load will be included with the model. Details include wire and plastic handrails, stirrup steps, ladders, and 100-ton trucks. Underbody details include separate brake gear, air reservoir, and brake cylinder. Road names will be FPPX-Fayette Power Project, NORX-



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Northern Indiana Public Service, DJJX-David J. Joseph Company, Canadian Pacific, HZGX-Herzog, and SEPX-Southwestern Electric Power.

Info: [www.athearn.com](http://www.athearn.com)

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**Rapido** has announced plans to re-run its N scale Dash 8-40CM locomotive. Road names will include both Canadian National and BC Rail. Road name specific

details on the N scale model will include bell position, single or double rear headlights, with or without battery boxes behind cab, horns, and CN or BCOL style ditch lights.



All units will feature detailed air filters, separate air/control piping, molded traction motor cabling, factory-installed grab irons and handrails, operational headlights and rear lights and ditch lights, and rock lights on BCOL locomotives.

Operating system will include DC-silent (DCC Ready) or DC/DCC/Sound with ESU LokSound. The deadline for preorders is April 17, 2023. A firm release date is expected to be announced soon.

Info: [www.rapidotrains.com](http://www.rapidotrains.com)

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**ScaleTrains.com** has completed the first release of the former Fox Valley

ES44 GEVO. The N scale model comes with ESU-LokSound 5 DCC & sound pre-installed from the factory.



Decorating schemes include CSX (Seven schemes: Pride in Service, Armed Forces,

First Responders, Law Enforcement, Safety Train, Spirit of

West Springfield, YN3 Boxcar), BNSF(Heritage III), Florida East Coast, GE (Next Fuel), and Iowa Interstate.



ScaleTrains.com has released a group of N scale ET44 Tier 4 GEVO locomotives. Road names are KCS (Southern Belle),

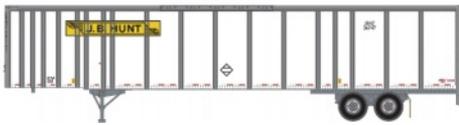
BNSF (Heritage III), CSX (YN3 Boxcar), Norfolk Southern (Horsehead), Canadian National, and Union Pacific.

The Operator series model has the same motor and drivetrain as the Rivet Counter version. Features include operating LED number boards and ditch lights, walkway tread plate, snowplow, trainline hoses, MU clusters, and uncoupling levers. The model is DC/DCC ready with a Next18 connector. It is also available with factory installed ESU-LokSound 5.

Info: [www.scaletrains.com](http://www.scaletrains.com)

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## NEW STRUCTURES & SCENIC SUPPLIES



**Athearn** has included a 53' Wabash Plate trailer in its February 2024 production schedule. The HO scale

model is based on a trailer Wabash manufactured in the 1990s. Spotting features are the unique, unevenly spaced exterior ribs. Carrier names will be XTRA, JB Hunt, Alpis, Dirksen, and TripleCrown. An undecorated owner/operator version will be included in this run.

Info: [www.athearn.com](http://www.athearn.com)

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**Broadway Limited** has scheduled a March release for another production run of its operating water tower with sound effects and a motorized fill spout. Sounds effects include squeaking



spout movement, water hatch squeal and clang, water filling, and a talking engineer. The model requires a standard 12 volt DC power supply which is not included. The water tower will be available decorated for Santa Fe, Chesapeake & Ohio, Burlington Route, Rio Grande, Great Northern, Milwaukee Road, Norfolk & Western, Northern Pacific, Pennsylvania, Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, and Western Pacific. Unlettered versions

will be available in weathered brown and weathered yellow.

Info: [www.broadway-limited.com](http://www.broadway-limited.com)

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**Ipswich Hobbies** is selling smokejacks patterned after those used by the Boston & Maine Railroad on crossing shanties, yard offices, and section houses. The 3D printed jacks are available now in N, HO and O scale.

Info: [IpswichHobbies.com](http://IpswichHobbies.com)

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**Jacksonville Terminal Company** has released three-packs of N scale 20' container chassis decorated for China

Shipping, South Atlantic Consolidated, and Flexi Van. The chassis are fixed in length, with two locations for the wheel bogies, 10 lug wheel hubs, rotating wheels, up and down landing gear with wheels or pads, Inter-Box Connector holes, and metal plates built into the frame to interface with JTC's standard container magnet system.



Two-packs of 40' container chassis decorated for Matson, Yang Ming, and TMX Intermodal

are also available, with the same 10 lug wheel hubs, rotating wheels, up and down landing gear, separately applied mudflaps, and Inter-Box Connector holes and metal plates built into the frames.



53' fixed length container chassis are available in three packs of mixed road names, with one

three-pack containing chassis for BNSF, Schneider, and MaxAtlas, and another with Trac Lease, Pacer, and Union Pacific. Info: [jtcmmodeltrains.com](http://jtcmmodeltrains.com)

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**Mine Mount Models** has released a new craftsman kit, UTOPIA Café. Created with Mt. Albert Scale Lumber, Tichy doors, simulated metal roofing, and laser cut windows, the kit includes 3D printed resin details and a sandwich board sign with two

different sets of prices. The café kit is 4" x 2" in size.

Info: [minemountmodels.com](http://minemountmodels.com)

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This Three Story Storefront structure is the newest craftsman-style kit from **Monster Model Works**. A bonus in the kit provides free custom text of the buyers choice engraved on the cornice on the front wall.

In addition to the stone cornice, components in the kit include 3D laser-engraved walls with matching engraved brick overlays, brick corner pieces and a 3D printed roof vent.



The exterior walls are engraved with English Bond, a unique brick pattern which is available only in this kit. An awning kit and the windows and

rear door are all laser-cut peel & stick. The decorative concrete lintels, cornice and coping are also laser-cut. N, HO and S scale version of the Three Story Storefront kit are scheduled for



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release this month.

Info: [www.larkspurlaserart.com/structure-kits](http://www.larkspurlaserart.com/structure-kits)

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**Showcase Miniatures** has released an N scale kit for a Mack R tandem-axle truck. Introduced in the 1960s, many of these trucks remained in service for decades. The kit includes positionable front wheels, stainless steel photo-etched details, 3D printed parts, pewter detail parts, and a vacuum-formed windshield. Decals are included for Monroe Trucking in both black and white. The sleeper is available as a separate purchase.

Info: [www.showcaseminiatures.net](http://www.showcaseminiatures.net)

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## ELECTRONICS



**Iowa Scaled Engineering** has introduced the ATOM DCC block detector. A single-channel DCC block detector compatible with other block detectors on the market, the ATOM includes two outputs with optional pull-up resistors, single button sensitivity adjustment, and an onboard detection indicator LED. The detectors are available with a choice of terminal blocks, wires, or a C/MRI DCCOD compatible connector.

Info: [www.iascaled.com](http://www.iascaled.com)

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## BRIEFLY NOTED AT PRESS TIME ...

**Berkshire Valley** has HO, S and O scale craftsman kits for a old Telluride residence ...

**The Great Northern Railway Historical Society** is selling 40' HO scale boxcar models decorated in five different historical GN schemes ...

**ScaleTrains.com** has released Fox Valley brand scale and semi-scale N scale machined metal wheelsets with .540, .553 and .563 axles ...

**Eastern Seaboard Models** has officially entered the HO scale market with the release of an insulated boxcar. Road names include the iconic red-white-and-blue State of Maine scheme ...

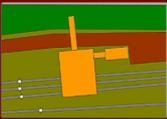
New HO scale items coming from **Walthers** this year include a Jordan spreader, a 36' chemical tank car, a 40' AAR modified 1937 boxcar, a 57' AAR mechanical reefer, and an EMD SD60M diesel locomotive with a three-piece windshield...

**Deluxe Materials** has a new catalog celebrating 50 years of business. Along with their established products (many with new packaging), the 32-page catalog lists 20 brand new products. Download from from [www.deluxematerials.com](http://www.deluxematerials.com). You can also learn more about the catalog in this short video: [New-DM-catalog](#). ■

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# SELECTED EVENTS



Model Railroad Hobbyist | January 2023

JANUARY

***Please check with any organization hosting an in-person event for the latest status of the event.***

## Ongoing 2023

**ONLINE, Zoom**, dates vary, see website. Operation Special Interest Group Meetups – limited attendance available.

Info: [www.opsig.org/Virtual](http://www.opsig.org/Virtual)

Archive: [www.opsig.org/Virtual/Past](http://www.opsig.org/Virtual/Past)

**ONLINE, Zoom & YouTube**, Wednesday & Saturday, see Facebook page. “New Tracks” Meetup, hosted by Jim Kellow, MMR.

Info: [newtracksmodeling.com](http://newtracksmodeling.com)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCMA\\_VhPb5pjdkAYTdXLceJA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMA_VhPb5pjdkAYTdXLceJA)

**ONLINE, Facebook & YouTube**, dates vary, see Facebook page. “NMRAX” organized by Gordy Robinson, Martyn Jenkins, Gert Muller, Jordan Kramer.

Info: [www.facebook.com/groups/nmragroup](http://www.facebook.com/groups/nmragroup)

**ONLINE, YouTube**, every other Saturday. 4th Division, Pacific Northwest Region, NMRA hosts online layout tours and clinics.

Archive: [www.youtube.com/c/4DPNRMovies](http://www.youtube.com/c/4DPNRMovies)

**ONLINE, Zoom**, Second Tuesdays, 8pm Eastern. “Off the Beaten Track” featuring Narrow Gauge layouts, clinics, and manufacturers.

Info: [groups.io/g/NNG](https://groups.io/g/NNG)

**AROUND THE USA, IN-PERSON**, Various dates. ScaleTrains.com Road Trip.

Info: [www.scaletrains.com/roadtrip](http://www.scaletrains.com/roadtrip)

## January-February 2023

**CALIFORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO AREA**, February 3-5, 2023. Bay Area Layout Design and Operations Meet. Hybrid event – online and in-person, multiple locations.

Info: [bayldops.com](http://bayldops.com)

**ILLINOIS, MATTOON**, January 21-22, 2023. Cross County Mall Train Show. 700 Broadway Ave East.

Info: Jim Ruef, (217) 317-3009

**KANSAS, MCPHERSON**, January 14-15, 2023. Model Train Convention & Expo. McPherson Community Building, 122 E Marlin St.

Mailto: [staff@mcphersoncountymakerspace.org](mailto:staff@mcphersoncountymakerspace.org)

**MASSACHUSETTS, WEST SPRINGFIELD**, January 28-29, 2023, Railroad Hobby Show, sponsored by the Amherst Railway Society. Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds, 1305 Memorial Avenue.

Info: [www.railroadhobbyshow.com](http://www.railroadhobbyshow.com)

**MICHIGAN, FARMINGTON HILLS**, January 22, 2023, 2nd Annual Model Railroad Sale, hosted by Division 6, NCR-NMRA. Costick Community Center, 28600 W Eleven Mile Rd.

Info: [www.ncrnmra.org](http://www.ncrnmra.org)

**MICHIGAN, SALINE**, February 18-19, 2023, 53rd Annual Train Show and Sale, sponsored by the Ann Arbor Model Railroad Club. Saline Middle School, 7190 N Maple Rd.

Info: [www.hvrrhs.org/annual-train-show.html](http://www.hvrrhs.org/annual-train-show.html)



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**MISSOURI, PACIFIC**, February 18, 2023. Pacific Eagles Train Show. 707 W. Congress St.

Mailto: [floraselectrictrains@yahoo.com](mailto:floraselectrictrains@yahoo.com)

**OREGON, EUGENE**, February 18-19, 2023. 34th Annual Model Railroad Swap Meet & Train Show, sponsored by the Willamette Cascade Model Railroad Club. Performance Hal, Lane Events Center, 796 W. 13th Avenue.

Info: [www.facebook.com/events/1629314617488653](http://www.facebook.com/events/1629314617488653)

**TEXAS, PASADENA (Houston)**, February 18, 2023. The Greater Houston Train Show, sponsored by the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club. Pasadena Convention Center, 7902 Fairmont Parkway.

Info: [sanjacmodeltrains.org](http://sanjacmodeltrains.org)

**TEXAS, PLANO**, January 21-22, 2023. Dallas Area Train Show, 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway.

Info: [dfwtrainshows.com/page/dallas-area-train-show-january-21-22-2023](http://dfwtrainshows.com/page/dallas-area-train-show-january-21-22-2023)

**WASHINGTON, RIDGEFIELD**, January 14-15, 2023, Great Train Show, Clark County Events Center, 17402 NE Delfel Road.

Info: [www.trainshow.com/shows/ridgefield-01-23](http://www.trainshow.com/shows/ridgefield-01-23)

**WISCONSIN, MADISON**, February 18-19, 2023. 55th Annual Mad City Model Railroad Show and Sale. Exhibition Hall, Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way.

Info: [www.nmra-scwd.org/scwd-events.html](http://www.nmra-scwd.org/scwd-events.html)

**WISCONSIN, STEVENS POINT**, January 21-22, 2023. Arctic Run - Central Wisconsin Model Railroader's 25th Annual Model Railroad Show. Holiday Inn Convention Center Hotel, 1001 Amber Ave.

Info: Jim Miller, (715) 340-0265 [jimbrow67@gmail.com](mailto:jimbrow67@gmail.com) or Don Anderson (715) 340-8105 [crm114@tds.net](mailto:crm114@tds.net)

## Future 2023 by location

**NEW ZEALAND, MOSGIEL, DUNEDIN**, May 6-7, 2023, Dunedin Model Train Show. Taieri Bowling Club, Wickliffe Street.

Info: [dunedinmodeltrainshow@gmail.com](mailto:dunedinmodeltrainshow@gmail.com)

**ALABAMA, MOBILE**, March 4-5, 2023. SWARM Model Train Show, sponsored by the South West Alabama Railroad Modelers. Mobile Via Health, Fitness, and Enrichment Center, Arlene F. Mitchell Campus, 1717 Dauphin Street.

Info: [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100070094629309](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100070094629309) or Glenn Samuel [Gasamuel@aol.com](mailto:Gasamuel@aol.com)

**ARIZONA, FLAGSTAFF**, June 7-11, Grand Canyon Special, Pacific Southwest Region Convention, High Country Conference Center, 201 West Butler Avenue.

Info: [azdiv-nmra.org/psr2023convention/index.php](https://azdiv-nmra.org/psr2023convention/index.php)

**CALIFORNIA, SACRAMENTO**, April 26-30, 2023. Rails By The River 2023, Joint Pacific Coast Region/Feather River Rail Society Convention. Courtyard By Marriott Sacramento Cal Expo, 1782 Tribute Rd.

Info: [pcrnmra.org/conv2023/index.html](https://pcrnmra.org/conv2023/index.html)

**CALIFORNIA, HEMET**, April 15-16, 2023. Model Railroad Festival of modular layouts, including California South Coast On30, Orange County HO, ZoCal Z scale, and Puerta Margarita mini-layout. Exhibits include Riverside and Chula Vista Live Steamers, SoCal Railroad Museum, and a Mini Car show. Four Seasons, 237 Seasons Blvd.

Info: Dave Balsler, [on30man@gmail.com](mailto:on30man@gmail.com) or 760-436-6139

**GEORGIA, CARTERSVILLE**, March 11-12, 2023. The 2023 Piedmont Division 25th Anniversary Model Train Show. Clarence Brown Conference Center, 5450 Georgia Highway 20.

Info: [www.themodeltrainshow.com](http://www.themodeltrainshow.com)

**GEORGIA, CARTERSVILLE**, September 14-17, 2023. Cartersville Express, 2023 South East Region Convention. Clarence Brown Conference Center, 5450 Ga-20.

Info: [2023serconvention.org](https://2023serconvention.org)



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**ILLINOIS, DUPO**, April 8, 2023. The Sons of The American Legion Spring Train Show. Dupo American Legion Post #485, 200 S 5th St. Mailto: [comptrain2002@yahoo.com](mailto:comptrain2002@yahoo.com)

**ILLINOIS, ST. CHARLES**, June 11, 2023, Kane County Railroadiana & Model Train Show and Sale. Kane County Fairgrounds (Front Building), 525 South Randall Rd. Info: [www.kanecountyrrshow.com](http://www.kanecountyrrshow.com)

**ILLINOIS, SPRINGFIELD**, March 12, 2023. Springfield Train Fair, sponsored by the Springfield Model Railroad Society. Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, 66 4H Road. Info: [www.springfieldtrainfair.com](http://www.springfieldtrainfair.com)

**INDIANA, FT. WAYNE**, October 19-22, Fort Wayne Rails, 2023 North Central Region Convention. Holiday Inn Purdue Fort Wayne, 4111 Paul Shaffer Dr. Info: [div3.ncrnmra.org/fort-wayne-rails-2023](http://div3.ncrnmra.org/fort-wayne-rails-2023)

**KANSAS, OVERLAND PARK**, July 27-29, 2023. 2023 Mid-Continent Region Convention. Holiday Inn, US69 & 87th St. Info: [www.mcor-nmra.org](http://www.mcor-nmra.org)

**KENTUCKY, LOUISVILLE**, March 18, 2023, 33rd Annual Division 8 Train Show and Sale. Holy Family Parish Saffin Center, 3938 Poplar Level Rd. Info: [div8-mcr-nmra.org](http://div8-mcr-nmra.org)

**MINNESOTA, BLOOMINGTON**, May 18-21, 2023. 2023 Thousand Lakes Region, NMRA convention. Best Western Plus Bloomington-Mall of America, 1901 Killebrew Dr. Info: [www.thousandlakesregion.org/2021-bismarck-con](http://www.thousandlakesregion.org/2021-bismarck-con)

**MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS**, March 11, 2023. Boeing Employees' Railroad Club – St. Louis Railroad Swap Meet. Greensfelder Recreation Complex at Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Rd. Info: [www.berrc-stl.com/V3.0p/index.html](http://www.berrc-stl.com/V3.0p/index.html)

**NORTH CAROLINA, NEW BERN**, March 4, 2023. Carolina Coastal Railroader's 27th Annual Train Show. Riverfront Convention Center, 203 South Front Street. Info: [carolinacoastalrailroaders.org](http://carolinacoastalrailroaders.org)

**OHIO, WEST CHESTER**, March 11, 2023. 2023 Annual Division 7 NMRA Spring Flea Market. Lakota West Freshman Campus, 5050 Tylersville Rd.

Info: [cincy-div7.org](http://cincy-div7.org)

**OREGON, CORVALLIS**, March 18, 2023. Winterail 45 railroad photography exposition and rail collectible sale. Corvallis High School, 1400 Northwest Buchanan Ave.

Info: [www.winterail.com](http://www.winterail.com)

**OREGON, ELSIE**, March 4, 2023. Pacific Model Loggers' Congress. Camp 18 Restaurant and Logging Museum, Milepost 18, 42362 Highway 26.

Info: [pacificmodelloggerscongress.org](http://pacificmodelloggerscongress.org)

**OREGON, PORTLAND**, March 11, 2023, Willamette Model RR Club Annual Swap Meet. Kliever Armory, 10000 NE 33rd Drive.

Info: [wmrrc.com](http://wmrrc.com)

**PENNSYLVANIA, ALTOONA**, October 19-22, 2023, Round the Curve to Altoona, 2023 Mid-Eastern Region Convention. Altoona Grand Hotel, 1 Sheraton Drive.

Info: [mer2023.org/index.html](http://mer2023.org/index.html)

**PENNSYLVANIA, MARS (Pittsburg area)**, May 4-7, 2023, Rails to Pittsburgh, Mid-Central Region NMRA Convention. Doubletree by Hilton, 910 Sheraton Drive.

Info: [www.keystonedivision.org/convention/index.html](http://www.keystonedivision.org/convention/index.html)

**TEXAS, GRAPEVINE (Dallas Area)**, August 20-26, 2023. NMRA National Convention, Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center, 1501 Gaylord Trail.

Info: [www.2023texasexpress.com](http://www.2023texasexpress.com)

**TEXAS, GRAPEVINE (Dallas Area)**, August 25-27, 2023. National Train Show, Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center, 1501 Gaylord Trail.

Info: [www.nationaltrainshow.org/2023/ntsdfw.html](http://www.nationaltrainshow.org/2023/ntsdfw.html)



**VERMONT, ST. ALBANS**, March 11, 2023, Vermont Rails Model Railroad Show, sponsored by the Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Association. Collins Perley Sports & Fitness Center, off Exit 19 of I-89.

Info: [www.nwvrailroad.org](http://www.nwvrailroad.org)

**WASHINGTON, TACOMA**, May 10-14, 2023, Prairie Line Experience, 2023 Pacific Northwest Region Convention. Comfort Inn & Suites Downtown Tacoma, 2611 East E Street.

Info: [pnrtacoma2023.org](http://pnrtacoma2023.org)

**WEST VIRGINIA, CHARLESTON**, March 11-12, 2023. 17th Annual Train & Craft Show, sponsored by the Kanawha Valley Railroad Association. The Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center, 200 Civic Center Drive.

Info: [www.kvrailroad.org](http://www.kvrailroad.org) ■

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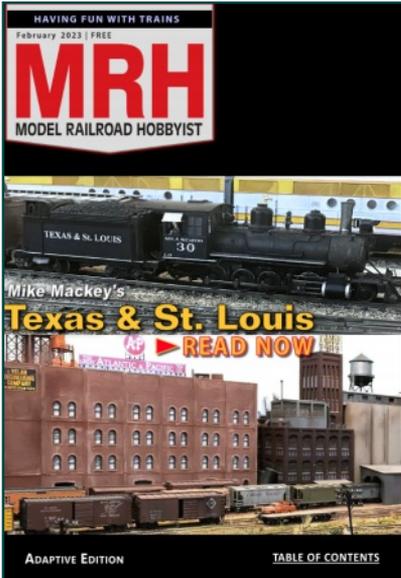
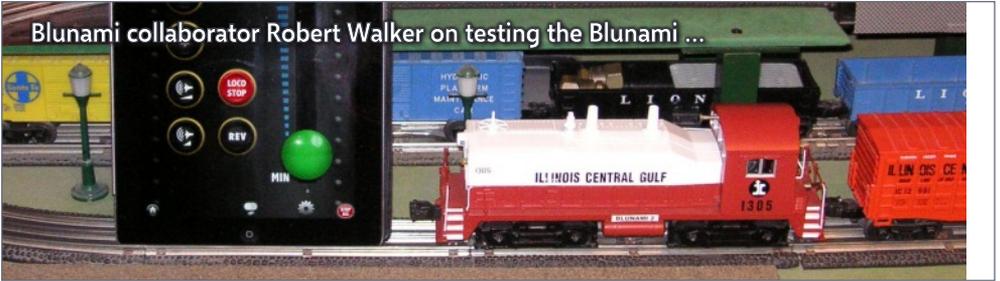
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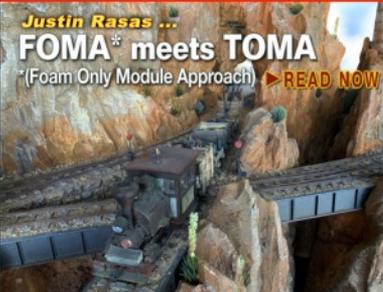
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