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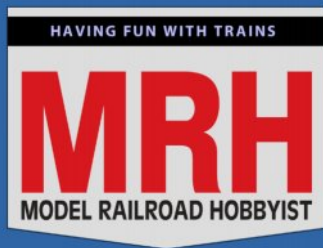


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Ken Patterson, Reporter-at-Large

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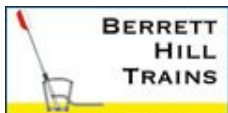
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*JAMES REGIER*



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*Compiled by JOE FUGATE*



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*KEN PATTERSON*



## Electrical Impulses: Back in the hobby - discovering DCC

*FRED VAN ASSEN*



## Mike Ross' Virginian Railway

*the MRH STAFF*



## First Look: Two new East Coast LED products

*JEFF SHULTZ*



## Savvy Modeler online: Building the CV double track truss

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## May 2023 news and events

*RICHARD BALE and JEFF SHULTZ*





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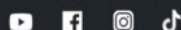


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# ASST EDITOR'S MUSINGS



Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023



**JAMES REGIER** DISCUSSES NIGHT LIGHTING  
AND FUTURE LAYOUT PLANS ...

**SPRING IS UPON US**, with summer around the corner. The warmer weather calls us out of the basement and into the outdoors. At our recently remodeled home, this involves a lot of finishing and landscaping projects – a screen for the patio to keep bugs and debris out, reshaping the vegetable garden, filling the ruts left by last year's construction deliveries. Softball, summer camp, and vacation all add on to that to make for a busy time.

Of course, the future model railroad is never far from mind. Among the summer's tasks are building and installing shelving to organize our basement and make space for a layout. As I design the bookshelves, I am also planning my benchwork to maximize storage and organization.

## **Layout night lighting**

When our pull-string light in the pantry gave out recently, replacing it was an opportunity to experiment with lighting for the future layout room. I want the layout space to be well-lit, but dimable for occasional night operating sessions.

I have really enjoyed challenging myself to light-up locomotives, passenger cars, and buildings realistically with

surface-mount LEDs. Why do all that LED lighting if the ambient light is too bright to see them, right [1]?

We have dimmable LED can lights elsewhere in the house that illuminate everything brightly, but can also be dimmed to near darkness. I bought a couple of dimmable LED panel lights to try, and they seemed to do all right.

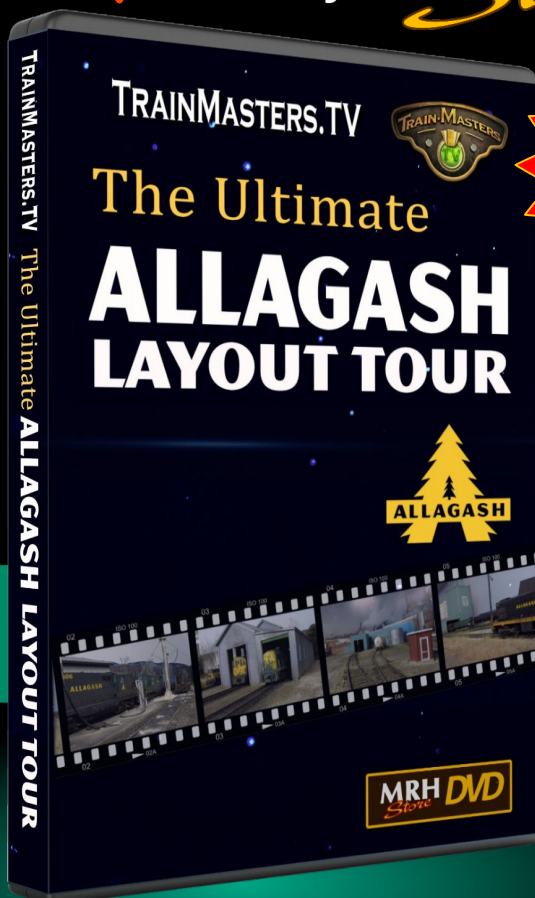
Simulating night lighting can be tricky, and simply turning off the lights won't do. You want the lights dim enough to achieve the feel of night, but you still want sufficient ambient light to see what you're doing. There are often more hues than just plain darkness [2].

Some setups I have seen have achieved the effect very nicely. Miniature Wunderland in Hamburg, Germany, has an automated system of dimmable and multi-colored fluorescent lighting to convincingly simulate a 24-hour daylight cycle in 20 minutes, complete with all the hues of dawn and dusk.



1. The Super Chief calls at Hutchinson, Kansas. I lit and detailed the Walthers Modern Brick Santa Fe Station to capture the Hutchinson depot as I remember it growing up. The locomotives are Intermountain shells on Stewart chassis that I lit up with surface-mount LEDs. This is all set on an empty module on Ken Patterson's layout.



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## ASST EDITOR'S MUSINGS | 3

The night lighting meets that tough balance of being convincingly dark while still allowing guests to find their way around. The lit and animated scenery really pops in such a setting [3, 4].

As I begin the layout, establishing good, adjustable lighting will be one of my first priorities. I have plenty of good inspiration to draw from, and have done much experimentation with LED strip-lighting in various settings, so I am looking forward to what I can accomplish. This month, check "The Limited Modeler" in *Running Extra* for some of Jim Six's ideas for maximizing lighting with an unfinished basement ceiling.

## Operating sessions are back

It seems that we have finally emerged from the pandemic this past year. Regular operating sessions at K-10's model trains in



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2. One of my favorite photos from Ken Patterson's backyard. The locomotive headlights illuminate the bridge, with the lights of Columbia, Illinois in the background. The water of the model blends almost seamlessly with the water of the Mississippi. Note the grays and dark blues. Shutting off the lights in a room does not achieve the same.

Maryville, Illinois have resumed, as have the bi-weekly round-robin operating sessions at layouts in the area. I had no idea just how much I missed this until I was once again switching cars and chatting with fellow model railroaders I had not seen in some time.

This re-introduces challenges in my endeavors to build my own layout. On the one hand, seeing and working on all these lovely layouts is inspiring. I am once again observing track plans and techniques I want to incorporate in my own layout.

On the other hand, it introduces the challenge of once again having plenty of opportunity to run trains, without having to lay my own rails. No worries. I am absolutely planning on ignoring that voice. I want to run trains without having to leave the house, but beyond that, it is now all too clear that it can all go away in an instant.



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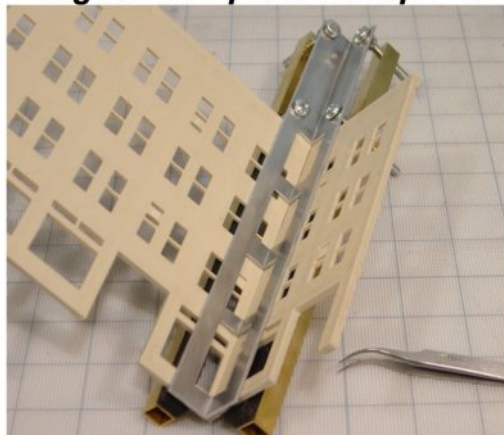
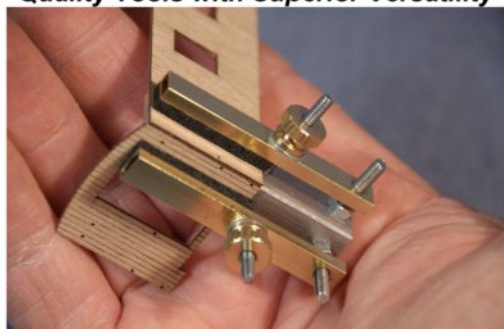
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Operating on these fine layouts also brings the reminder that creating a layout worthy of hosting operators and capturing their interest to come back is a serious endeavor and commitment. Several create a prototypical end-to-end run, complete with signature scenes that bring operators into the geographic location modeled.

I continue to struggle with tying together inspirations from multiple geographic areas. I love the wooden elevators of southern Manitoba, and the idea of three or four competing elevators in a single small town is compelling. I also love the slip-form concrete elevators of Kansas, and the Hutchinson depot makes that town an obvious place to start.

I suppose I'll have to find a way to do both. The common denominators are grain and agricultural products, so the trains would be of similar composition, if from different railroads. Perhaps this will be enough to overcome the geo-

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graphic disparity. Either way, the project is getting closer, and I am excited to get started. ☑

## James



3. A trio of BNSF executive-scheme locos, including the infamous “vomit bonnet” lead a coal train near Las Vegas about nightfall in Miniatur Wunderland’s American section. The simulated nighttime lighting makes the building lights pop.



4. This scene of the Alps at night illustrates a nice balance between capturing the feel of night time, but keeping things visible.



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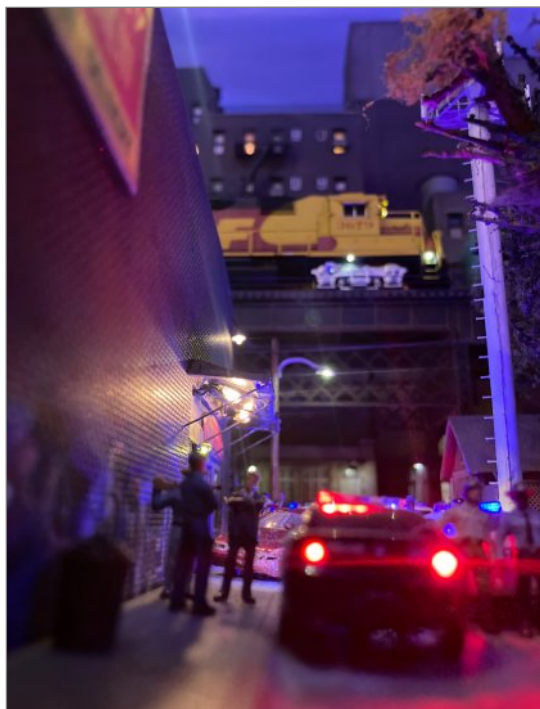


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5. Santa Fe GP39-2 no. 3679 passes above one of the street scenes on Vic Smith's City's Edge. Vic's layout lighting technique adds some nice hues to the darkness of the scene. The police cars from East Coast Circuits and the streetlights pop. The 3679 is an Atlas locomotive I detailed and lit up with LEDs.

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- 1st** Publisher's Musings: Revisiting TOMA
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*Best of the*

# MRH FORUM



Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023

Compiled by **JOE FUGATE**



## Bear Creek & South Jackson scenery - a work in progress

MRH forum member **bear creek** (MRH editor emeritus, Charlie Comstock) has a running journal of his Bear Creek & South Jackson layout progress. Here's a nice street level photo of Junction City.

It's fascinating to watch Charlie's experiments and ultimate victories as he explores different options for finishing his layout scenes. Follow along on this thread!



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1. *MRH* forum member **gregamer** posted how he used a Cricut to cut out adhesive vinyl in fine matrix patterns to get the window framing and the door framing in response to the question posed on this *MRH* forum thread.

## The sticky label technique for windows

*MRH* forum member **jimcubie1** posted a video illustrating the use of adhesive labels to make fine window framing on model structures. Watch the video Jim references to see exactly how it's done – the technique will surprise you with how easy it is to do.

*MRH* forum member **gregamer** weighed in with his version of how to do this technique using a Cricut cutter:

"I cut adhesive vinyl on a Cricut, stick it to clear styrene, then cut the styrene to fit the window opening. Also did the doors this way. See [1]."

Check out the full discussion for more.

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



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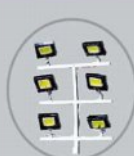
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2. *MRH* forum member **NorthWoods Bill** shows how he used a CNC machine at his cabinet shop to cut out his layout benchwork outline.

## Central Vermont layout journal

*MRH* forum member **NorthWoods Bill** (Willam R.) has a new journal detailing his layout building journey. Bill describes the process:

“[The layout space has] six support columns. We managed to bury three in benchwork and the other three are in the middle of walkways with enough room to get around either side. Full size templates proved the benchwork would actually fit. We cut them on our CNC at the cabinet shop I own. The CNC definitely allowed me to cheat on the benchwork.”

Follow Bill’s layout journey on his new *MRH* forum journal!

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



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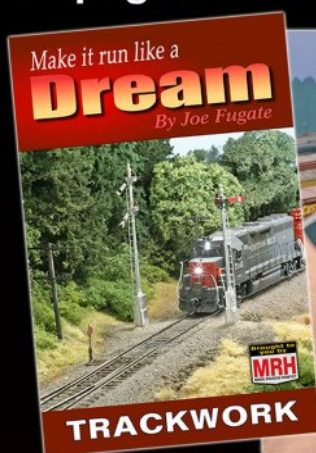
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3. *MRH* forum member **J Emerson** added new scenery in front of his photo backdrop. Can you spot where the photo backdrop starts?

## The other side of the Emerson Coast

*MRH* forum member **J Emerson** started a new thread as he moves to the opposite side of the layout. He placed a photo backdrop and then worked to add real scenery in front. However, he has techniques that help add depth:

*"I've never liked to run background scenery right up to the backdrop—I just never seemed to make it look good. For instance in this area I had about 2.5" between the sky and the roadbed. So to try and give a bit of depth, I attach any photo backdrops to black foamcore and attach those to the sky with Velcro, which makes them removable and reusable."*

Check out the full thread for more on **J Emerson's** new construction.

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



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## Weekly photo fun thread ...

Each month, our forum has a monthly what's on your workbench thread. It's always fun to see forum members' workbench projects.

View the full thread on the *MRH* website



4. *MRH* forum member **CP Rail Vermont** (*MRH* author Neil Schofield) often posts some amazingly realistic photos of his model railroad on the photo fun thread. Stunning!



5. *MRH* forum member **RMM** (Robert M.) posted this delightful steam era photo of his modeling, transporting us back to a bygone era.

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# WHAT'S NEAT

column



Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023

KEN PATTERSON TOPICS IN MAY:

- KEN COMPLETES A FOUR-PART SERIES ON BUILDING A NARROW GAUGE RAILROAD
- BACHMANN'S TYLER HANEY SHOWS OFF NEW AND UPCOMING PRODUCTS



*click to play video*

PHOTOS AND VIDEO OF SUPERB MODELS



**THIS MONTH ENDS A FOUR-PART SERIES ON BUILDING AN H0n3 shelf module** and the layout it will fit in. Tyler Haney then joins Ken to show some upcoming products from Bachmann.

## Building a narrow-gauge railroad, part 4



1. Ken shows how he builds a 5'x12' layout incorporating the module he built in Parts 1-3.

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

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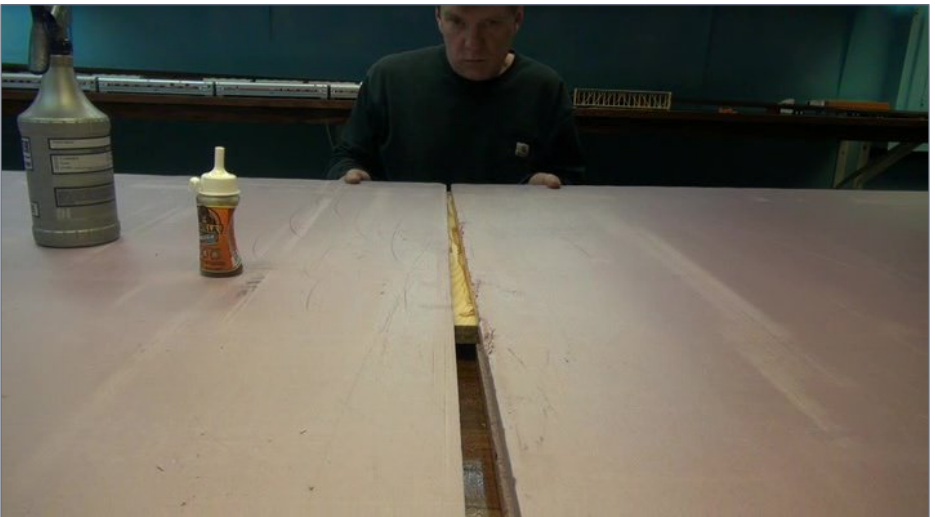
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2. The full layout features a single-track loop with a tree-covered ridge as a vision-block down the middle.



3. Ken routs 3/4" troughs in the edges of 2" closed-cell insulation and glues in a 1"x2" board as a connecting piece.



4. Ken glues a second layer of foam using one of his favorite adhesives, Great Stuff Foam Pro, to the parts of the layout surrounding where the module will fit. Additional pieces of foam were added to the perimeter to allow curves wide enough for the locomotives.



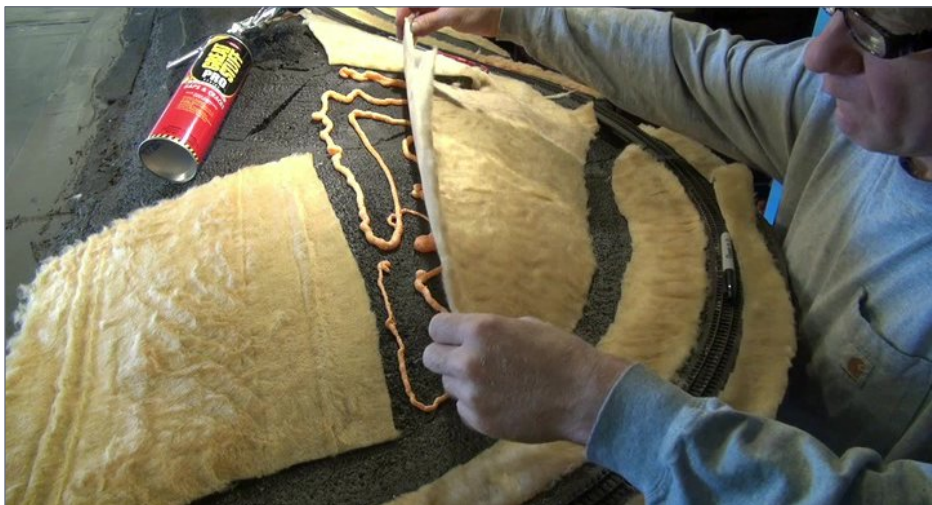
5. Foam scraps are stacked, glued, and shaped to form the ridge down the middle of the layout. More of the Great Stuff Foam Pro is used to fill in gaps as needed.



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6. For ground cover, Ken starts by gluing down cloth fake fur to the foam, which he has also painted an earthtone brown.



7. Ken demonstrates how he trims the foam to achieve irregular patterns across it.





8. Ken uses flat camouflage green spray paint to add color to the scenery.



9. After scattering ordinary dried and sifted dirt from his yard across the layout, Ken goes over it with a hairbrush to work it into the scenery cover.



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10. Ken adds ground foam for additional texture.



11. Everything is covered in Woodland Scenics Scenic Cement – Ken used eight bottles of it for the layout.





12. Assorted commercial evergreen trees are installed into the scenery base.



13. As a last step, Ken takes the entire layout with the module inserted outside for photography and videos.



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14. Who could resist running some HOn3 equipment around the layout?

**Tyler Haney, assistant product manager for Bachmann presents some new and upcoming products**



15. Introducing the Siemens Venture passenger cars, Tyler shows an Amtrak Midwest coach sample. Coach class, business class, "married coach," and café cars will be introduced by Bachmann as they enter service.



16. Bachmann will also be releasing the VIA Rail Venture cars, with the complete train set to be released in the first run to include 3A Business class with sealed locomotive end door, 3B business class, 1A and 1B coach class cars, and the coach class cab car. The cars will feature fully detailed and illuminated interiors and detailed underbodies.



17. Painted samples have arrived of the upcoming transfer/shorty caboose, including SP #1. Other paint schemes in the first run include Missouri Pacific, Union Pacific, and CSX.



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18. For N scale, Tyler had an unpainted sample of a new 52'-6" drop-end gondola. Road names in the first run will be New York Central, Union Pacific, Frisco, and Great Northern. Painted samples of the "bobbing head" stock cars in N scale were also shown, with cattle in the CB&Q and Rio Grande cars, horses in Union Pacific car, and reindeer in the North Pole & Southern Christmas train car.

To see all of Ken's construction tips and methods and the upcoming products from Bachmann, click on the video link at the beginning of the article. ☒





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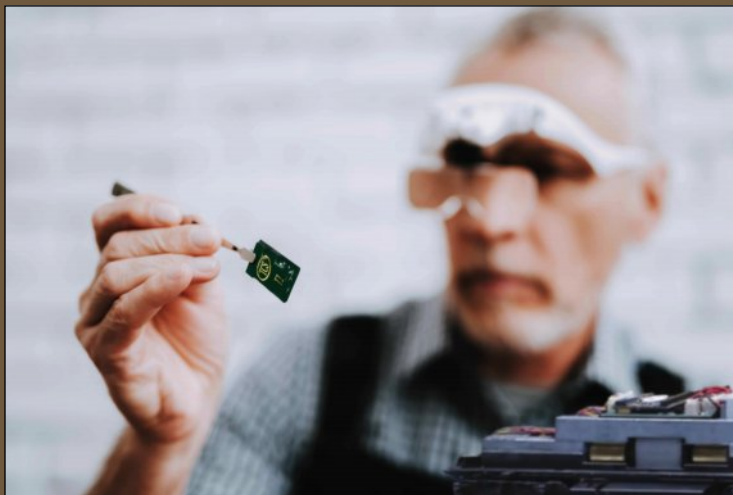
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# Back into the hobby: Discovering DCC



Electrical  
Impulses

Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023



## FRED VAN ASSEN ON HIS FIRST FORAY INTO DCC AFTER BEING OUT OF THE HOBBY FOR DECADES ...

**AFTER BEING OUT OF MODEL RAILROADING FOR YEARS**, my interest was rekindled during an NMRA convention held close to my location. Thanks to retirement, I found some time to do the hobby again. Each of you knows what takes your time away when you're younger: kids, military service, career, schooling ...

When I saw DCC in use at the convention, it piqued my interest. DCC looked like a promising way to simplify wiring and easily run multiple engines at the same time. I also saw

how Wi-Fi, tablets, and phones can be used as throttles. Really interesting!

I took one of the *Model Railroad Hobbyist* magazine's free CDs. It contained copies of magazines I could read on my computer with links to reference materials!

I started research on the internet and learned a lot. I talked to users of the various DCC systems online, and asked what they thought. My research told me that a DCC system's ability to read and program decoders easily was important for successful DCC.

### DIGGING OUT MY OLD TRAINS

I dug out all the HO train stuff I had put away over the years. I found locomotives that looked like they might be usable, so I checked the stall current for each of four potential candidates. All the stall currents read less than 1.3 amps.

I tested the locomotives to see how well they ran using a loop of track with an old MRC DC power pack. Two Athearn blue-box diesels ran quite well. One ran sort-of OK.

I had an old AHM GP18 that did not run well at first. After a little fussing with the pickups, I got it to the "sort-of good" range. I wanted to start with an inexpensive decoder and an old engine, so the GP18 became my guinea pig [1].

### WHAT DCC SYSTEM?

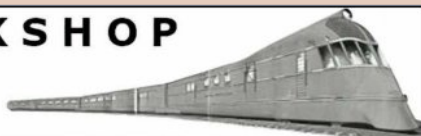
I knew I needed to supply power to the track with a DCC system to run trains. I studied options from NCE, Digitrax, Lenz, and others, and learned that it is a good idea to use the same system as other modelers and clubs in your area. Many of the locals use NCE, so I studied that system.

I then learned about the free JMRI software ([www.jmri.org](http://www.jmri.org)). I particularly liked the idea of JMRI's ability to support Wi-Fi throttles,



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## 1. The target locomotive - an ancient AHM GP18.

allowing their use with NCE, Digitrax, or whatever system is connected to your computer.

I then discovered the SPROG3 (right around \$100). It connects to a JMRI-equipped computer to program decoders, and allows copying decoder setups from one locomotive to another (great idea). It also allows both computer and Wi-Fi throttle control of the locomotive.

I found very little information about people using the SPROG3 for layout control, but found a lot of great info on people using it to program decoders. I decided I could not go wrong buying a SPROG 3 and trying it. If it did not work out well for layout DCC control, I could just use it to program decoders. and buy another DCC System.

When it arrived, the SPROG 3 included a transformer for track power, a USB cable to connect to the computer, and all the JMRI

software on a CD. I loaded the software onto my Macintosh and plowed ahead with connecting to it.

*(JMRI software is also available via free download at: [www.jmri.org/download/index.shtml](http://www.jmri.org/download/index.shtml). The software is regularly updated to accommodate the latest decoders, so be sure to check back regularly. -ed.)*

After an hour or so of fiddling and rereading the instructions, it worked! The SPROG3 lit up as predicted and responded as expected.

## EXPLORING DECODERS

After more research, I learned every decoder should be tested prior to installation. That made sense to me, since all my years in prior pursuits proved testing could save grief later.

I discovered the best way to test a decoder is to use a “decoder tester.” I bought a DT-01 decoder tester from Ulrich Models because it came nicely packaged and looked easy to connect and use. I am not necessarily recommending this tester since I have no experience with any of the competition. But the device looked right to me. (Ulrich Models has since closed. A good alternative is the decoder tester from ESU – see the shopping list link at the end of this article for more. – ed.)

I ordered two TCS T1 decoders because they were inexpensive, and many on internet forums recommended them to be solid decoders for simple installations. I also couldn't go wrong with TCS's “goof proof” warranty.

While I waited for the arrival of my order, I built a DCC test track per instructions found online. I wanted a short track I could use at my desk with my computer [2].

*(J. Scott Walton presented a self-contained, portable programming station using a SPROG3 and other equipment in the October 2021 issue of MRH: [online.fliphtml5.com/buups/eokd/index.html#p=49](http://online.fliphtml5.com/buups/eokd/index.html#p=49). -ed..)*





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2. The SPROG3 and test track.

## THE “SNEAK UP ON IT” APPROACH

When the tester and decoders arrived, I was unsure how to proceed. I decided to break the complex task down into manageable pieces, using a “sneak up on it” approach. I wanted this to be a successful learning venture after all.

I waited until I had a couple of uninterrupted hours to focus on what I was doing. I connected the SPROG3 to the computer and started JMRI. It still worked – good.

I connected the test track to the SPROG3 – all still good. Then I connected one of the decoders to the tester and hooked the tester to the track.

I went into JMRI and asked it to tell me what decoder was connected. It worked! Lights flashed on the tester and the decoder responded to the software and tester.



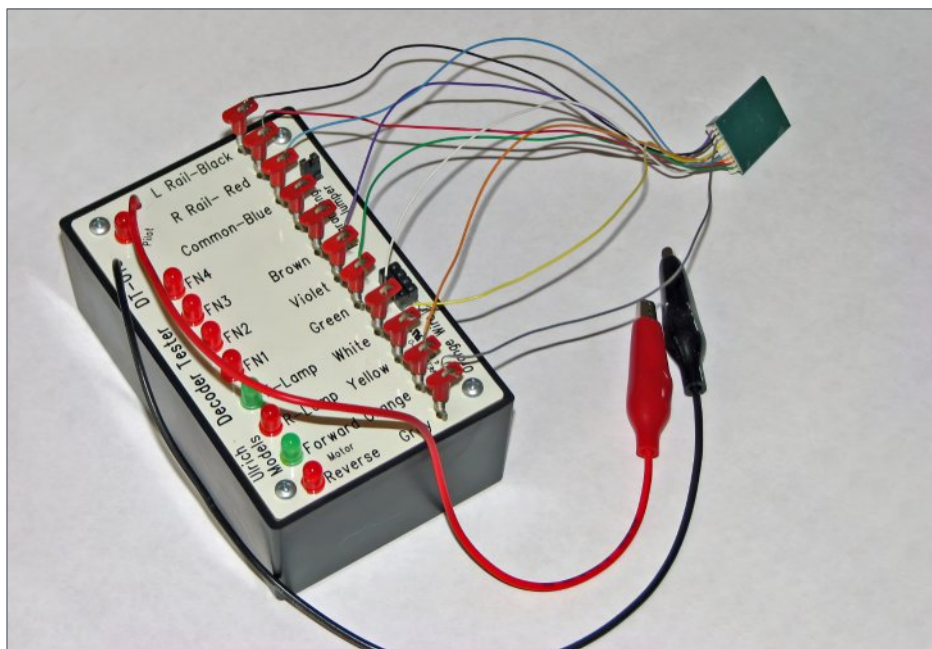
As the next step, I needed a throttle. I could not find the throttle in JMRI until I went back to the internet and found the JMRI instructions. Pretty simple once you read the instructions!

I set the throttle to control decoder 3 since that's the default decoder address for all new decoders. And...

It responded! I could control the motor direction and the speed with the decoder attached to the tester [3].

In JMRI, I added a locomotive to my previously empty roster and changed the decoder address to the locomotive number. I did all this on the tester – I still had not installed the decoder in a locomotive.

No matter what I did, I could not get the headlights or rear light indicators on the tester to come on. I tried all kinds of settings in



### 3. The tester with decoder attached.



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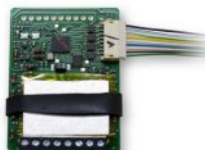
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the decoder, and nothing seemed to be working. Then I noticed the button on the throttle plainly labeled “LIGHTS.”

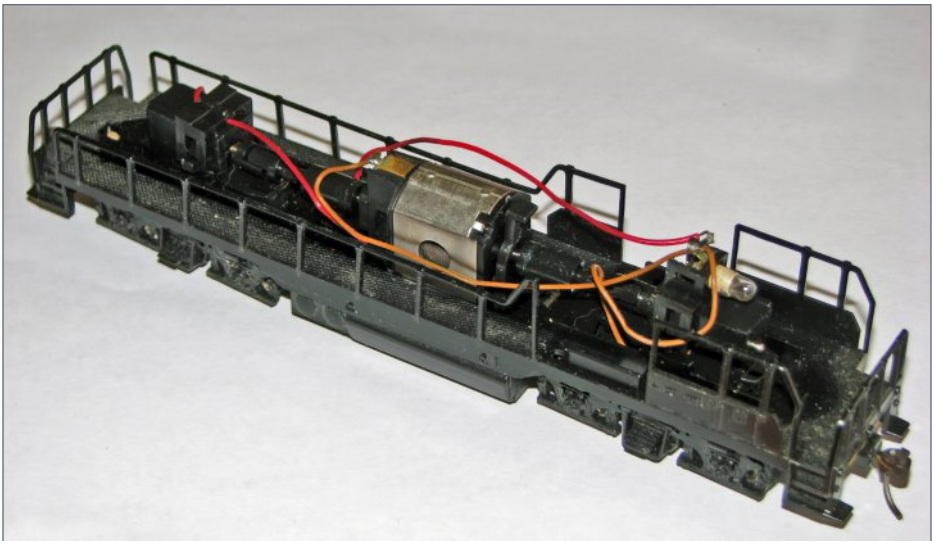
That did it! I turned on the lights on and then they worked perfectly going forward or reverse. Sometimes the simple escapes me. Doing things deliberately in my methodical “sneak up on it” manner helps me find my gaps in knowledge more quickly.

I still had trouble getting Function 1 and 2 to light indicators on the tester, so back to the decoder manual. It turns out that although the T1 decoder has wires for lighting functions 1 and 2, it does not support those functions.

Now for the real test – put the decoder into a locomotive [4]!

### PUTTING THE DECODER INTO A LOCO

I used instructions I found on the internet to clean the engine and tune it up as best I could. I figured if I ruined it, I would not be too disappointed.



4. The geep chassis before starting.

Again, following along with the “sneak up on it” philosophy, I installed the decoder to the track power, the motor power, and to the original headlight.

I am happy to say I had success with this first simple decoder install. Now I know I can handle at least basic DCC stuff.

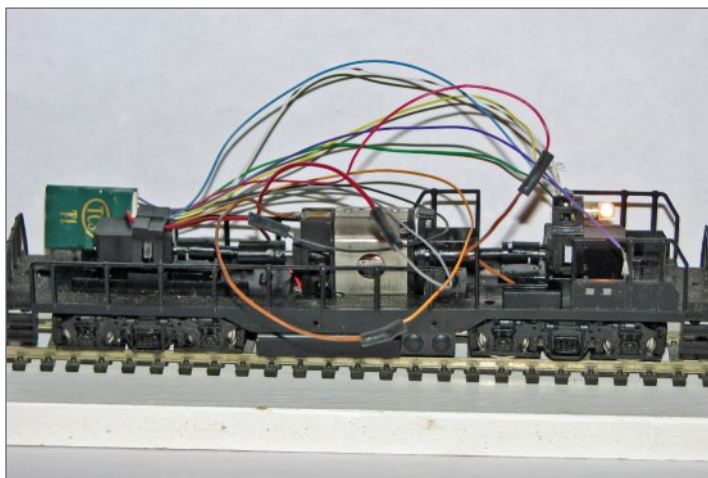
I learned I need to have good light to work in. I need to sit down to do a decoder hard-wire installation, as I am much steadier that way. I learned I need 1/16” shrink tubing.

I am glad I tried the first install with an engine that is not precious to me. I managed to break a couple of handrails in the process. Practice makes perfect, especially for us older folks with less-nimble fingers.

But I am now knowledgeable on the hard-wire installation of a basic decoder with the stock headlights.

### GETTING FANCY WITH DECODER INSTALLS

I then proceeded to install two LEDs for directional lights. They worked perfectly. I did not have any small wire to connect the LED function common leads together, so I used the purple wire I cut off the decoder [6].



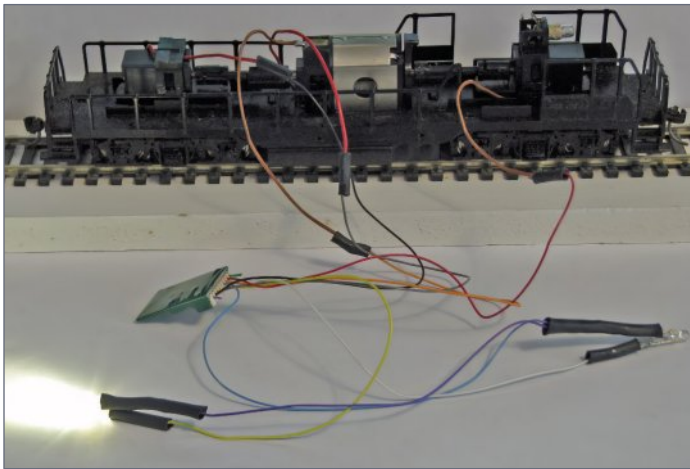
**5. After the decoder is installed and first light test.**



Then I encountered an oops – don't bundle the wires like that. It looks neat, but it would not fit into the hood that way [7].

I did not try to fit the LEDs into the body. I simply glued them to the plastic light inserts. I'll something more fancy on the next attempt [8].

Prior to my next install, I am going to acquire a few lengths of the important wire colors (red, black, and blue) and some 1/16" shrink tubing. The shrink tubing I had on hand worked,



**6. LEDs installed and rear lit.**



**7. Wires bundled and ready to assemble.**

but was too large. I might see if I can get some smaller, nimbler, fingers too!

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

I got my instruction from the internet and from the instructions that came with the decoder, with JMRI, and with the tester. I have not rehashed all those instructions here because you may have different equipment and need different details.

The regular contributors to *MRH* and other online sources can also be a great source of information. I thought you might be interested in how a new person might approach DCC, including a new person who has re-entered the hobby.

By the way “the sneak up on it” approach works for almost anything. It also helps to ask questions of others.



8. Finished Loco with working directional lights.



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Finally, a big “THANK YOU” to all who publish information online, so us new people can find it and take advantage of your knowledge. What a great resource we now have available to us!

## SOME SUGGESTED LINKS:

Intro to DCC:

[dccwiki.com/Introduction to DCC](http://dccwiki.com/Introduction%20to%20DCC)

Simple decoder hard-wire install:

[dccwiki.com/Installing your first mobile decoder](http://dccwiki.com/Installing%20your%20first%20mobile%20decoder)

Intro to the Sprog:

[dccwiki.com/SPROG](http://dccwiki.com/SPROG)

Headlight LED install:

[dccwiki.com/Installing LEDs with DCC Decoders](http://dccwiki.com/Installing%20LEDs%20with%20DCC%20Decoders) ☒

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## FRED VAN ASSEN



Fred was born and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He served in the US Navy during Vietnam, and following that worked for several companies doing electronic testing design, and computer programming.

He has been interested in model railroading his entire life, but never had the room to build a railroad until recently. Since he has retired, he is now trying to get caught up with the changes that have happened in the past 45 years. He is researching plans and layouts to build a temporary layout. ■

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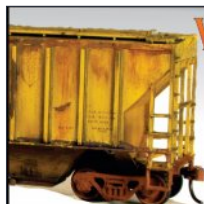
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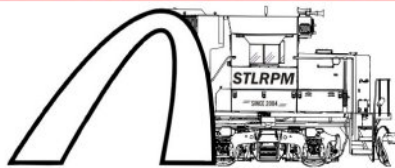
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# Mike Ross' Virginian Railway



**JOE FUGATE** VISITS THIS SCENIC APPALACHIAN  
LAYOUT ...



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*This layout can be viewed at the*  
**2023 Texas Express**  
NMRA National Convention  
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1. The Triplex 2-8-8-4 locomotive 700 is a distinctly Virginian locomotive. Baldwin Locomotive Works built the only one in 1916. Seeing it in action on Mike Ross' O scale Virginian is a real treat for the eyes.

Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023

## MIKE ROSS' LAYOUT IN THE GREATER DALLAS/ FORT

**WORTH AREA** will be open for tours during the 2023 Texas Express NMRA National Convention in August 2023. To learn more about this convention and to register, please visit this website: [2023texasexpress.com](https://2023texasexpress.com).

I visited Mike Ross in late February 2023 and toured his layout, taking photos and video. I sat down with Mike and talked about his journey in the hobby and the process of designing and building his layout.



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## **MRH: How did you get started in the hobby?**

**Mike Ross:** My story is not too dissimilar from other people. My father had some OO gauge cars, you know four millimeters to the foot, that he'd built during the war. I must have been 11 or 12 when we pulled those out and I started making tracks of cardboard. The turnouts I made didn't work too well! From there, I graduated to HO.

I built an eight-by-eight-foot square layout in the basement of our home in Ohio. I drew a track plan and sent it off to Linn Westcott at *Model Railroader*, and very graciously got a letter back that said, "when it's done, send me some pictures" [laughs].

I had the HO layout through high school, and it got thrown out when I went away to college. From there, I went into the Navy and to medical school, then began building a medical practice here in Texas.

And after that came a long interval of just reading the magazines and some occasional modeling.

Finally, as the kids started moving out, I bought a secondhand desk and put it in my home office space so I could get back to more serious modeling. I had one desk for my medical practice, and the second desk for modeling work got me back into the hobby again.

I started building On3 models, 0.75" between the rails, just slightly larger than OO gauge (0.65"). Then later I graduated from On3 to O standard gauge. And I've been in O standard gauge ever since.

## **MRH: Let's say someone comes up the stairs and walks into this room and they've never been in this room before. What would you tell them?**

**Mike:** If they're an experienced model railroader, I will tell them you're entering the center of the room and it's an around-the-wall layout. The main line is three times around, crosses once at grade, and goes up 1% in one direction, 1-1/4% in the other.



**2. Mike Ross runs a train on his Virginian. Mike runs with straight DC – he said he’s considering DCC, but will decide after the convention this summer. Mike is reworking the fascia in this area, so it was removed when we visited.**

The whole room is kind of a helix. (*The Layout Design SIG calls this a nolix – ed.*) The inner loop serves as a branch line and as a passing siding with industrial leads.

If I’m talking to a non-model railroader, I don’t say much of anything. I just wait for their reaction!

**MRH: Why did you what did you pick this to model?**

**Mike:** Well, this is the Virginian Railway. So many model railroads are western scenery, narrow gauge you know, the brown, iron rich mountains of the west. I always preferred Appalachian scenery.





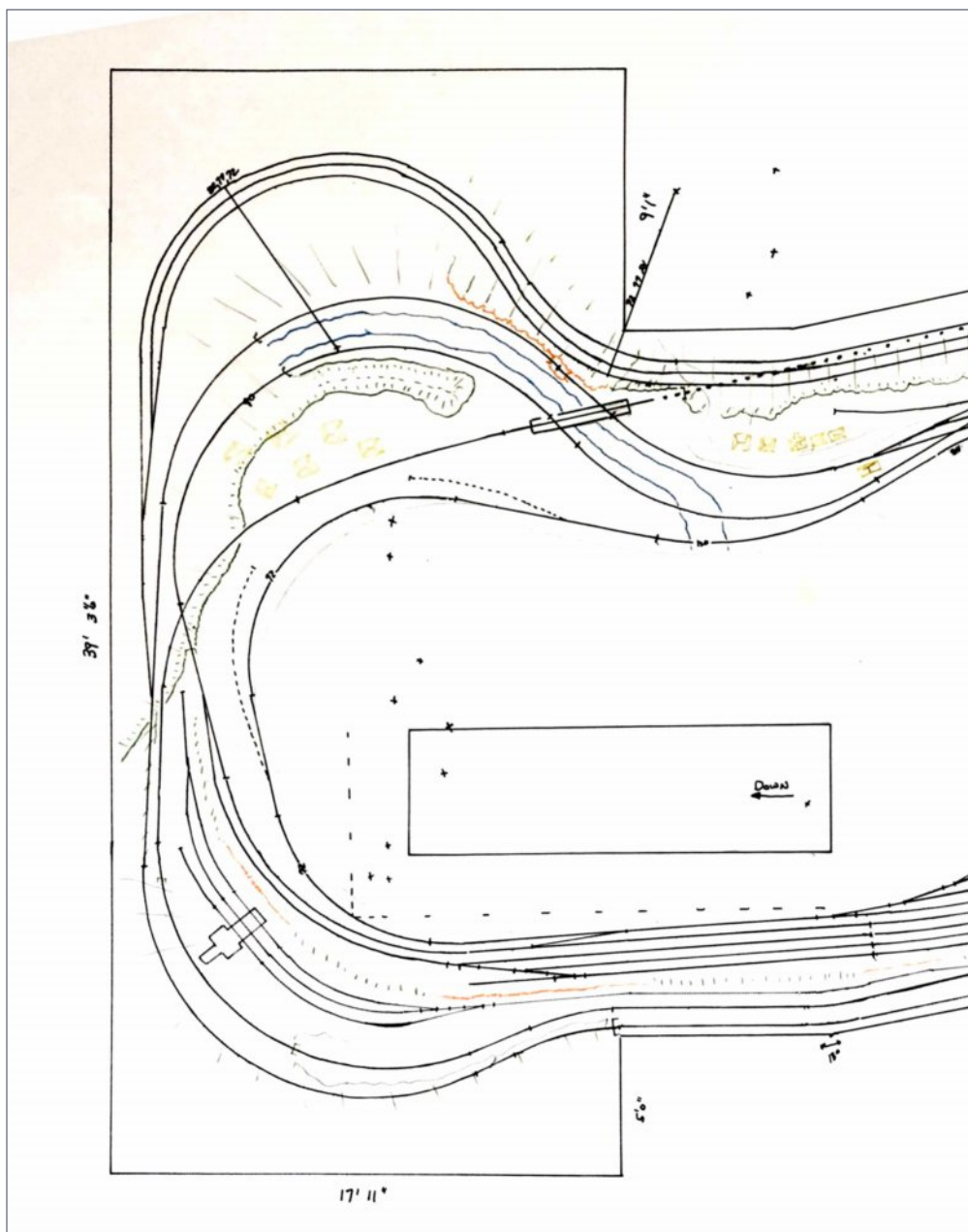


**3. Mike models the early fall just as the trees begin to turn, making for some colorful Appalachian slopes. The hillside is about 10 feet from the aisle here, so we had to stand in an access hatch opening to get this photo.**

I call this Appalachian-themed, even though it's all Virginian rolling stock. While there are some scenes representative of the Virginian, it's not purely prototypical. So one of the stations is Whitethorn that's a station on the Virginian. It doesn't look like the actual Whitethorn station, but I wanted to create an Appalachian-themed railroad in the fall.

**MRH: How many feet of main line do you have here?**

**Mike:** The room is 50 feet long. The train traverses the room each direction six times, so that's 300 feet. Then we need to calculate the distance across the ends. I think the main line's roughly 450 feet.



4a. Mike Ross' Virginian Railway track plan, drawn by Mike himself.



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**4b, 4c.** Mike has detailed his foreground turnouts with cast detail parts for the frogs, guardrails, points, rail braces, and tie rods.

**MRH:** Any idea how many turnouts are on this layout?

**Mike:** I've not counted the turnouts, so that's a good question. I handlaid most of them with lost-wax cast frogs, guardrails, points, rail braces, and tie rods. At least all the up-front ones have all that detail, but I'm done doing that.

I have some pre-made Atlas turnouts and some that come from a place in England that to this day still make beautiful O scale turnouts.

**MRH:** What's your minimum radius?

**Mike:** Minimum radius on the main line is 84 inches. In most places, it's 90. The narrowest part on the inner loop is 60-inch radius, and there's a 48-inch radius on the industrial spur to the pulpwood yard.

**MRH:** So, tell us about your particular era that you're modeling. Based on what I'm seeing here, it looks like you have a "rubber era" that moves around based on your mood?

**Mike:** I think the trend has been to pick an era – some even pick a day and time, like March 29th at 4:00 PM. For me, if it runs on rails, and I reason the Virginian mechanical department likes it – that is, if I'm intrigued by the kit – then fine. I'll run it here.





This railroad has things dating from the late 1800s to modern times, including a few things from an overseas prototype. The story I tell people is that the Virginian Railway never merged into that “other railroad.” And there’s no equipment from that “other railroad” on the pike if you notice.

As the Virginian grew, there’s more and more freight going from the west and Midwest to east coast ports. The Virginian prospered, yet there remains a cadre of experienced steam locomotive mechanics in the hollers of Virginia and West Virginia, and they maintain the steam engines. So why buy a new engine when the other one’s working fine, and the shop crew has the skill to maintain it?

That means I still have the big steamers hauling freight – and I figure the business has increased so much that we need some modern diesels too.

So, you see all eras on here, and sometimes I deliberately mix eras. I’ve had the Allegheny steamer hauling double stacks and the modern GE diesels hauling coal in early 20th Century hoppers.



**5. The Triplex pulls a long coal hopper train across this dramatic through-truss bridge scene.**



**6. Mike isn't afraid to change eras – here some modern GE diesels with a Virginian paint scheme haul a stack train across the same truss bridge scene as [5].**

**MRH: How did you develop the track plan?**

**Mike:** I developed the track plan slowly, and it was a bit painful. If you give me a plan of a car or structure, I will build it. No problem. But if you ask me to imagine it and then build it, I have a lot of difficulty.

I struggled for about a year on the track plan. After getting some input from friends, I finally came up with the plan I built. It's three times around the room, crossing once at grade, and an inner loop. I've made very few changes after I drew the original plan. I wanted wide curves, so knowing that the room is 24 feet wide, I went with a foot on either side behind the layout for access and a two-foot aisle in the middle – giving me 20 feet to play with.

That gives me nine-to-ten-foot radius curves, making that the minimum radius at each end.

**MRH: When did you start building the railroad?**

**Mike:** I started construction in 2005. We moved into this home in 2004, then I spent a year struggling with the track plan, finally starting construction in 2005.





7. Virginian #70 switches coal hoppers at this major coal mine operation. Also see [8].



8. Another view of #70 switching the major coal mine operation. Also see [7].





**9. Railfan view of the coal mine. You can clearly see this is a big-time operation with three tracks for hoppers.**

**MRH:** As you constructed the layout, what have been your greatest challenges?

**Mike:** There's a lot to learn in building a layout. From the benchwork on up, everything is a learning process. Many a time I delayed starting something until I worked up enough courage, and then finally went ahead.

The benchwork follows the recommendation of Lowell Joiner, who was a famous O scaler down in San Antonio. I built the layout with two stud walls and joists across.

If I had to do it again, I'd make the joists of 3/4" plywood so they're less likely to warp. Make two 3-1/2" strips of plywood, then screw and glue them together. That gives you a two by four joist.

With the mainline, I realized after getting started you can cut the plywood where the sub-roadbed for the main line is, and raise it a quarter-inch. Now you've got a more realistic main line raised.

I've always had electrical challenges. It's not my greatest area. Whenever you're building, you have to build from the wall for-







**10, 11.** Because some scenes are up to 10 feet deep, Mike has added pop-out hatches for access. He's still working on finishing these hatches with scenery.

ward – and then you also build from the fascia back. I've boxed myself in a few times!

I have a few sections where I've had to construct drop-ins later because of my enthusiasm to lay track before thinking about access for maintenance later.

**MRH:** You have a lot of deep scenes on this layout. How far it is in physical feet from the fascia to the back of the layout in the deepest places?

**Mike:** Obviously, the goal is that everything should be within reach from one side or the other. In most places, I built the railroad a foot off the wall, so I can get in back there.

My one mistake – the risers that hold the upper-level track have to extend backward above the staging tracks like a big C. That cuts into my one-foot distance.

I think one of the strengths of this layout is the depth, in some cases almost 10 feet. That has required several pop-out sections. I'm in the process of completing those now.

I've made the hatches out of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood or in some cases one-inch foam. They drop in and I hide the joint with trees, brush, shrubs, and miscellaneous junk. I think it will look good once I'm done.

**MRH:** Did you have any nasty surprises you just didn't anticipate with this layout?

**Mike:** Yes, there've been some "fun mistakes" and sometimes I think, why do we put ourselves through this? Why do we get such anxiety over hobby problems?

I'll give you some examples. The turnouts to staging are hidden on both ends, and on the west end, the turnout just refused to work properly. Weeks later, I finally figured out that hot glue dripped into the turnout as I was planting trees in the scenery above!

The second problem I had is I planted trees through the hard shell, and forgot to cover the tracks underneath. When I run engines through scenery debris on the tracks, it gets the wheels extremely dirty.

Then I've covered the staging tracks like I should, but because it's hidden trackage, I had forgotten I had newspaper lying over the tracks. So, I ran the engine right over the newspaper!



12. From the main yard view, you can see Mike has captured the rural Appalachian look with his scenery. On the far upper left, Mike is adding a turntable, see [13].





**13. Mike is adding this pony truss turntable to his main yard [12]. He hopes to have it done and operational by the convention this August.**

**MRH:** That's pretty amusing – we've all got some eye rolling stories like that, I think. What would you say you like most about this layout?

**Mike:** This may sound a bit odd, but one thing I like is this layout's almost too big for one person. It keeps me busy, and I like that.

I also like that the scenery looks fairly natural. I've tried to avoid steep grade separations. It's not a spaghetti bowl of track. It really gives the impression of Appalachian-type scenery.

**MRH:** What do you like least about the layout?

**Mike:** I struggle with electrical. That's my poorest area. Everyone has their strengths and weaknesses – my weakness is electrical. I'd much prefer to be building scenery, building cars, and hand-laying track. I wish I could leave the electrical to somebody else [laughs].

**MRH:** We find more than a few modelers who don't like the wiring part, but if you want the trains to run, that's a necessary evil. If you had this to do all over again, would you do anything differently?

**Mike:** There's a photographic backdrop there in two pieces. So, I would add some photo backdrops. I'm not sure I would do very much else differently. I've enjoyed working on the layout and that thought doesn't go through my mind.

I'm sure there would be differences if I did it over. You know, move the engine service and main to the same side, so to take an engine off a train, and to move it to the engine service, you've don't have to cross the main, for example.

**MRH: Why did you pick this layout height?**

**Mike:** I set the layout at a fairly conventional height by looking at what other people did. It's relatively close to chest height for me (about 50"). I don't think it's necessary to be at eye level. It helps to see over it to the two feet beyond.

The upper elevations are close to eye level, and then it drops about 17 inches to chest height.



14. The base level for the layout is about 50" off the floor, which is about chest height for Mike, see [2]. The highest level in the back is about 17" above this base level.





**MRH:** Why did you select the grades that you did, and what is the ruling grade on the layout?

**Mike:** Ruling grade is 1-1/4% going up to the summit, then 1% going down. And I set it simply by knowing how high I could go at that grade to reach the upper level. I wanted enough height difference to create a good scenic divide.

The other thing that's interesting – at 1%, these joists are spaced across the stud walls every 24 inches. That makes four joists cover 96 inches – a 1% grade is one inch per hundred inches, or a quarter inch every two feet.

I can pre-manufacture joists for eight or 10 or 12 or 29 feet, and make them each one-quarter-inch different. While that's not exact, it did speed up construction. I could eye the exact grade from there.



15. Everywhere you look on Mike's layout, you find indications that hauling coal is a major part of the Virginian's traffic, with coal loading facilities from small to large modeled.

**MRH:** What control system do you use for the layout, and why did you go that route?

**Mike:** I still control the layout with straight DC. Back in 2004, DCC was still coming into its own. I had this collection of larger O scale engines, and several articulated steam locos in O scale. They were still being manufactured in straight DC at that time.

To convert them to DCC with the needed high amperage decoders in O scale was a skill that I had not yet developed. And considering the cost of four-to-six-amp decoders, I decided to just keep building the layout as is for now.

I rarely operate trains unless people come by. I do enjoy operating, but this layout has not been set up for big op sessions. And so, DC works for me.

**MRH:** Is there any DCC in your future?

**Mike:** Will I go to DCC in the future? Possibly. I think that decision's a few years off. I want to get the layout to a much better stage of completion first. The turntable at the main yard is going to be a big project. Sometimes it takes me months to build a single big building.

So, I think any conversion to DCC is a ways out into the future.

**MRH:** What's your least favorite part of doing a layout and how do you motivate yourself to do it anyway?

**Mike:** As I've alluded to, the least favorite part for me is the electrical. I like that this layout is simple enough that I can wire it. Every piece of handlaid track and every piece of flex track in staging has a feeder soldered to the bottom of the rail, so it's hidden. From there the feeder drops through the homasote and sub-roadbed, and gets soldered to a bus.

But when the wiring doesn't work, that's especially frustrating.

**MRH:** So, what are your thoughts on layout size? Can you make a layout too large?

**Mike:** This layout measures about 50 feet long and 24 feet wide in the main part of the room, with it being a little bit wider over the



garage. When we designed this home as the kids left home, we downsized and built a smaller home but with a bigger train room.

That's the way it's supposed to work, I think. I told the architect a thousand square feet, but this is what he came up with, more like 1500 square feet.

Is it too big for one person? Perhaps, but I'm enjoying it. Again, it's not a spaghetti bowl of track. I think it's conceivable that I can get it to a better stage of completion in my remaining lifetime.

I would encourage people to aim for an open track plan. Allow more room for scenery since that makes it more realistic. That's what I've striven for here.

**MRH:** Your size of 1500 square feet is a decent space for an O scale layout. What are your thoughts on doing layout scenery and things like backdrops?



16. Mike kept his backdrop simple – he just painted the room walls a light sky blue and nothing else. He likes how this keeps your focus on the trains.

**Mike:** You'll notice here that I've not painted clouds or trees on the backdrop. It's just sky blue. I'm not sure that I'm competent to paint a backdrop. I prefer not to employ someone to come here and do it.

As it is, when you look around the room, you focus on the trains, and I don't think you miss a more detailed backdrop.

**MRH: OK. And what's your approach for doing scenery?**

**Mike:** I enjoy doing scenery, here it's mostly chicken wire over supports. And since it's O scale and there's some wide areas to cover, I've gone with chicken wire. I know there's all sorts of other techniques, but this is still old-fashioned plaster cloth on chicken wire applied in multiple layers.

Then I cover it with a ground goop formula I use that includes cellulay. I don't put vermiculite in it – the vermiculite I can buy here is too granular. Then I add green latex paint instead of brown. And then instead of mixing in white glue, I use mortar admix.



17. Mike has put a lot of small details into his scenery, modeling the fall season with the trees starting to turn. Note the pumpkin on the stump in the lower left. Also see [18].







**18. If you lift the roof off the cabin in [17], you can see it has a complete interior.**

The admix is designed to make cement stronger and give it an adhesive property. The end result with chicken wire on wood supports, several layers of plaster cloth followed by my ground goop with mortar admix is some pretty strong scenery.

Even if I've got a two-to-three-foot span of this hard shell, I can get up there and drill holes, plant trees with hot glue, and it holds up pretty well.

**MRH: Do you have any favorite scenic techniques?**

**Mike:** If I had to recommend a favorite scenic technique, I would say the mortar admix ground goop. That's not mine. That came from another O scale modeler in California. You know, share and share alike.

Once static grass was developed, that adds so much. I think everyone agrees with a good heavy coat of static grass. Then the trees add a lot.

I've never quite mastered putting in shrubs and small bushes, though. Small pieces of Supertree material are the best I've come up with, along with bits of ground foam.

**MRH:** What time of year are you modeling?

**Mike:** I've set my layout in the fall. If you go over to the farm scene in [17], you can see a pumpkin sitting on a stump in front of the log cabin. I like to use super leaves on the trees and apply all sorts of fall colors. I think the overall effect is pretty neat.

**MRH:** What kind of locomotives do you use, and do you have a favorite?

**Mike:** Here the locomotive era runs from early steam all the way to modern diesels. Locos range from a GE 44 toner, which was not on the Virginian, but is kept around by the shop crew as a toy. The Virginian did have a GE 25 toner, however.

It's surprising how much Virginian Railway equipment has been available on O Scale. Everything except their 2-8-2 Mikado has been produced. Most varieties of the Virginian electric locomotives have been produced. We haven't pulled those out, but there are several on the layout hidden in staging or stored.



19. An articulated 2-10-10-2 hauling a mixed freight rolls drifts through the receiving yard on its way out of town.



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There's a 2-10-10-2 and of course the 2-8-8-8-4 triplex. And there's an Allegheny 2-6-6-6 on the layout. And I run diesels like the Train Masters on up through modern GE diesels on the layout.

**MRH: What about rolling stock? Do you have a preference as far as brand?**

**Mike:** My rolling stock is predominantly hoppers. Weaver came out with a Virginian Hopper – I purchased a whole string of them and have redone them with different numbers.

Several have produced the Virginian six-wheel battleship gondolas. New Jersey Custom Brass produced the older version many years ago, and I slowly have bought about 20 of them, which I'm guessing may have been 10% the run. Who knows?

Rich Yoder then produced a more modern updated version, and Intermountain produced O Scale car kits. Then US Hobbies has produced the standard USRA hopper in O scale. I have all of these on my layout.

In terms of other general merchandise cars, it's whatever tickles my fancy. I have lots of Virginian boxcars and a range of other stuff.

I even have two brass kits of Japanese cars that I purchased at the Tenshodo Hobby Shop in Japan when I was in the Navy! They're painted up in Virginian – because as I said, the general manager took a liking to it. If the kit is intriguing, it's on the layout and it's fine if the eras don't match.

**MRH: What about the structures on this layout?**

**Mike:** Many structures are scratchbuilt – I built several structures as a requirement for the NMRA Achievement Program and my MMR. Three of those I built are scratchbuilt bridges.

I built a trestle from a combination of Virginian and Santa Fe standard plans. A friend provided the Santa Fe plans, and I built it board-by-board with nut-bolt-washer castings every place they should be. Even the stringers underneath the track are sized correctly. They're with jigs, and when I assembled it,

I had a 10-foot straightedge clamped to hold it flat vertically at each end. I used two-by-four footings cut at an angle so I could slowly push up the bent until it matched the height I needed. That's how we got the top flat without any humps.

Behind that is a stone arch bridge using a rubber stone casting. I modeled that after the Thomas Viaduct on the B&O. If I had been smart, I would've made every arch circular so the stones around the edge would always be the same size. But not being smart, I made it elliptical just like the real Thomas Viaduct. That meant every one of those stones had to be shaped differently.

Finally, the big through-truss bridge is an Overland Model I completely disassembled because I couldn't spike the rail across the bridge. I hand-laid track laid the track across the truss and all the plate girder approaches. Then I reassembled the truss bridge once the track was laid.



21. We made this panoramic view with a composite of four overlapping photos. It nicely illustrates the finely modeled scratchbuilt and kitbashed structures Mike has on his layout.







20a, 20b. Mike has quite a history with the NMRA, as you can see from these awards.



Other structures scratchbuilt include a barn I built from following plans in a book called *Pennsylvania Barns*. It's built with beams that are actually pinned together. I took 1/16" dowel and cut it down to about a 32nd and pinned the beams.

I also scratchbuilt a log cabin Lincoln Log style with interior detail. The big mine over on one corner of the layout started as a BTS kit. I covered it with board-by-board siding, which meant I increased the width of the walls. I had to make all new windowsills and had to build an extension for the mine shaft.

And then I have a variety of kits on the layout. For example, there's a pickle factory over there. I can't remember exactly whose kit it was, but I'd been looking at that one for a long time and it really intrigued me. I finally ordered one at the local hobby shop and built it up.

Recently I read on the Norfolk and Western Historical Society site a conversation about pickle cars on the Virginian. And I said, well, okay – it's legit then!

**MRH: You can't help but notice this layout has a lot of nice bridges. That definitely gives us that Virginian look.**

**Mike:** That big through-truss bridge with plate girders on either end is a shortened representation of the Western end of the Virginian, where it goes over the New York Central across a river.

The plate girders come from Atlas – one of their O Scale products. I threw away the plastic deck and their fake bridge shoes. My bridge shoes are custom lost-wax castings I had made. I built up the deck to be like the prototype deck with a scale-size timber walkway with handrails and so on. And as mentioned, the through-truss bridge is an Overland Brass product.

I un-soldered and disassembled the bridge because I didn't think I could spike rail in the middle of a truss bridge when it was assembled. I put the wood deck on it with rails extending on both sides, then re-soldered the bridge and installed it. The rails had to be soldered to the rails on either end to get electrical contact and then we ran trains across it.





**22. Everywhere you look, Mike has detailed scenes such as this showing daily life in rural Appalachia.**

**MRH:** Would you ever consider doing a layout on a different scale?

**Mike:** You know, I think the natural tendency is to move up in size. If I relocated, I would consider an On2 Maine narrow gauge layout. I would consider doing it in G scale. Or maybe even do it in live steam. And finally, if I could reverse my aging, I would go to work for the railroad!

**MRH:** What's your philosophy on how to do a layout well? For example, how do you narrow the focus and not just be all over the place?

**Mike:** I think what you do is look at the mistakes other people have made. That includes things like a spaghetti bowl of track that doesn't look realistic. I tried to avoid that here.

If you say I am dreaming of a railroad climbing the Rocky Mountains, or maybe getting my train over the mountains with helpers? Or how about modeling the sharp curves and grades of the Appalachians? Or what about trains running

across West Texas where everything's flat and pulling long string of double stacks?

I think what you do is dream of doing real railroading and then duplicate that here in miniature.

**MRH: What advice would you give to someone who's starting out new in the hobby?**

**Mike:** I'd say just have fun. Remember, it's a learning process. I can remember the first HO kit I bought. I walked down to a little hobby shop when I was barely a teenager, came back and assembled this kit.

I glued the coupler pocket on and then glued the coupler solidly into the coupler pocket. You know, that's a mistake I've not made again!

I would also say consider a local club. Join the NMRA if it's active in your area. Here in Dallas-Ft. Worth, we have very active NMRA divisions.

I can't tell you how many times I've asked people things like what color do you use for tree trunks? Or if I'm building a pulpwood load – do the logs have the bark pulled off first? No, no. They said, no, just leave the bark on. So that told me what color to paint the logs.

It's a learning process. Enjoy the journey, have fun. Don't get too upset when you make a mistake. Work to correct it or just learn from it and move on.

**MRH: Your layout will be on the convention tour. What do you hope convention goers get out of visiting this layout?**

**Mike:** Yes, the layout will be on the convention tour. I'll tell you, there are train shows in the area. I have never just opened the layout to the public except neighbors in the area. I do welcome the NMRA members, and we'll be open one day during both bus tours and for self-driving tours.

I encourage people to come, and I hope you enjoy seeing something a little bit different than the average Western







**23. Modern GE diesels in the Virginia legacy yellow and black livery haul a mixed freight westward toward the main yard. This provides some idea of what a modern Virginian might look like had it continued to the present day.**

scenery layout. Hope you enjoy Appalachian scenery that's modestly well done with the fall colors and all the tree-covered slopes.

I'm just looking forward to sharing it with modelers.

**MRH: Thanks Mike for letting us come visit. I really enjoy a well-done O scale layout, and you have a nice one here. ☑**

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# LOOK

column

Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023



## East Coast Circuits

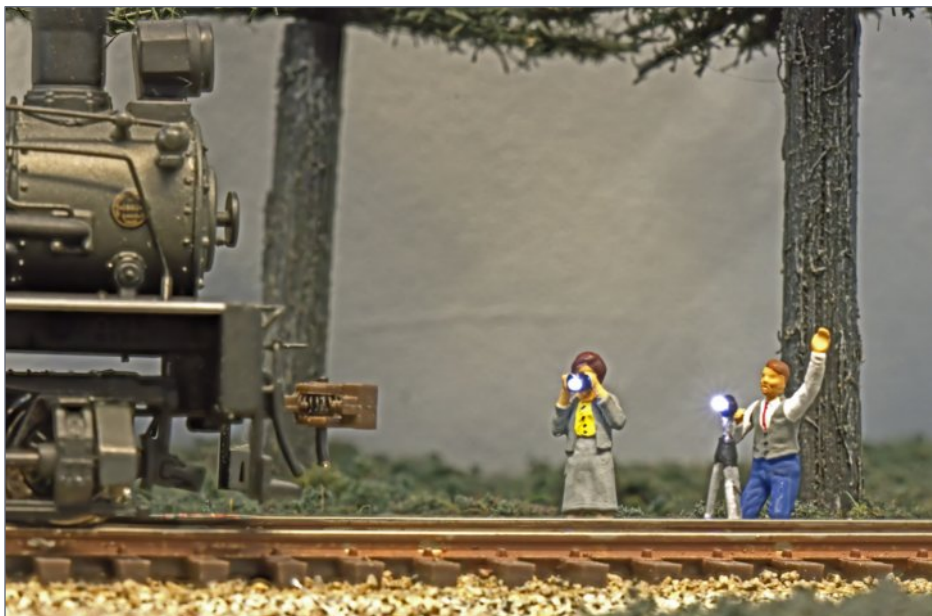
**JEFF SHULTZ** INTRODUCES NEW PRODUCTS FROM  
EAST COAST CIRCUITS...

**EAST COAST CIRCUITS HAS MADE THEIR REPUTATION BY TAKING VEHICLES** produced by different manufacturers and adding LED lighting to them, from headlights and taillights to a full suite of emergency vehicle lights. Now they are producing their own LED-equipped products.

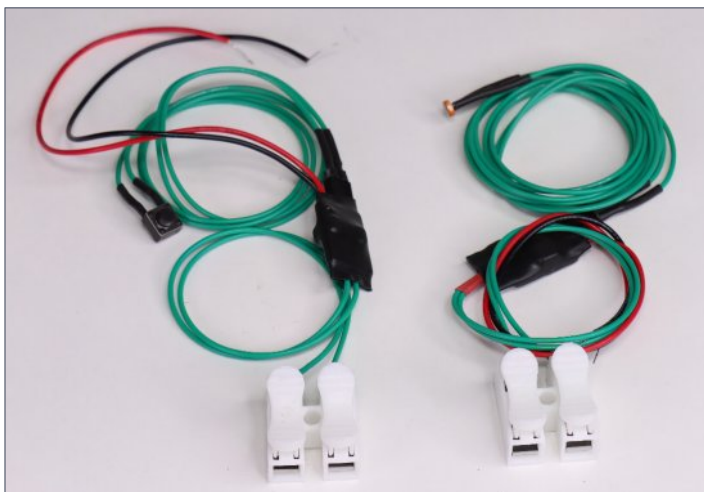
### FLASH PHOTOGRAPHERS

One of ECC's new products is a series of five HO scale photographers equipped with LED camera flashes [1]. Each photographer is available in two types: Street Photographer, which has an on-off pushbutton controlling the flash, and Railfan Photographer, which comes with an under-track sensor to trigger the flash when a train passes over it [2].





1. The “Female Photographer w/Skirt” and “Photographer w/ Tripod” figures mid-flash.



2. The Street Photographer (left) and Railfan Photographer (right) controllers.



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### 3. Closer view of the two photographer figures.

The figures are painted, and there are two female photographers and three male photographers. One of the male photographers includes a tripod-mounted camera, so you could use any figure you want with the tripod [3]. The sensor for the Railfan Photographer requires ambient light and does not work in the dark.

## ARROW STICK KIT

Another new product is the Arrow Stick Kit. A common sight on highway department and road construction vehicles, the Arrow Stick Kit is a series of LED lights arranged in a double-arrow shape. The kit uses a single button as both an on-off switch and a selector switch for the seven flashing patterns:

- Half-length line flashing left and right.
- Half-length line flashing left and right quickly.
- Full-length line flashing.

- Full-length line strobing.
- Left arrow flashing.
- Right arrow flashing.
- Both arrows flashing.

Both of ECC's new products are designed to be powered by 9-12V AC or DC. A single 9V battery was sufficient to power two of the photographers simultaneously.

Each product comes with a controller that includes the power leads and a plug for the pushbutton or under-rail sensor. The Arrow Stick Kit's connector wires also plug into the controller, and the photographers come with a spring-loaded wire connector that allows one or more photographers to be connected to the same power and controller simultaneously. The wires leading from the photographer figures to the controls are small gauge magnet wire and are somewhat fragile – the figures should be installed



## 4. Bidirectional arrow flashing.



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## FIRST LOOK: EAST COAST CIRCUITS | 5

permanently. If the end of the magnet wire that is inserted in the wire connector breaks off, a soldering iron is sufficient to burn off some of the insulation on the remaining wire.

The signal in the Arrow Stick Kit is a small plastic or resin double-arrow shape with the LEDs embedded. I mounted it to a styrene square painted black, then glued that assembly to the top of the most "highway department"-looking truck in my collection. [4] A video of the Arrow Stick Kit and two of the photographers is below.

Photographers: \$20.00 ea. (Railfan or Street Photographer)

Arrow Stick Kit: \$30.00

Info: [eastcoastcircuits.com](http://eastcoastcircuits.com) ✓

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## Central Valley double-track bridge build

YouTuber **Rob Bennett** shows many in-depth insights on how to build this Central Valley double-track bridge kit. This isn't just a single video, it's six videos with a total running time of over two hours.

If you'd like to build this bridge kit and avoid common first-timer mistakes with this kit, you will find this two hours to be invaluable in helping you get a high quality build of this bridge with confidence. ☑



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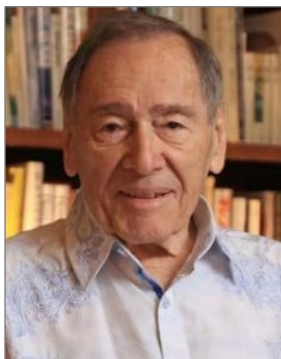


Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023

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



## INDUSTRY NEWS



### **Bob Darwin 1926-2023**

Robert T. Darwin passed away April 8, 2023 at his ranch home in Monterey County, California. His accomplishments were many including historian, author, actor, movie producer, thoroughbred horse breeder and highly successful investor. Bob was also an exceptionally talented model craftsman who will be remembered for a series of highly influential articles on

super detailing, upgrading, and repowering brass steam locomotives that appeared in *Model Railroader* magazine in the 1960s. Although the articles leaned heavily on Union Pacific Challengers and Big Boys, Bob's carefully documented techniques became a lasting inspiration to generations of brass modelers. An extended interview with Bob Darwin hosted by BrassTrains can be viewed at [brasstrains.com/video/MME-Season2-2017/Episode-12](https://brasstrains.com/video/MME-Season2-2017/Episode-12), and [brasstrains.com/video/MME-Season2-2017/Episode-13](https://brasstrains.com/video/MME-Season2-2017/Episode-13). Mr. Darwin has bequeathed his

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

multimillion-dollar estate to California State University at Monterey Bay for student scholarships. (Our thanks to Frank Bongiovanni, Charles E. Kinzer and T. Fred Hill for contributing to this report.)

## **Robert Hundman 1935-2023**

Robert Louis Hundman, the publisher of *Mainline Modeler* magazine, passed away April 22, 2023, in Everett, WA. He was 88 years old. Hundman was best known as the creator of *Mainline Modeler* magazine which he published from 1980 to 2006. In 1989 he founded *N-Scale* magazine, which continues to be issued by Platinum Rail Publications. Hundman also published numerous railroad themed books including *Northern Pacific Classic Steam Era*, *Pennsy Diesels 1924-1968*, *The South Park Line*, and *The Omaha Road*. Prior to establishing his own publication firm, Hundman was a prolific draftsman of scale locomotives, with many appearing in the pages of *Model Railroader* magazine.

## **TrainLife closing**

On May 2, 2023, TrainLife, a specialty hobby retailer that shares ownership and warehouse space with ExactRail, announced that it was closing. To expedite the sale of existing inventory, the announcement listed significant discounts on certain products. Through a computer glitch, the discounts were also applied to ExactRail's website. Some shoppers were able to place orders with ExactRail at deep discounts. When the error was realized, it was decided that the quickest way to stop it was to temporarily remove inventory from ExactRail's website. The move stopped shoppers from getting unintended discounts, but it also caused some to believe ExactRail was also going out of business. The computer problem was quickly resolved and according to company official Chris Brimley, "*ExactRail is not closing, Only Trainlife is closing.*" Models previously offered exclusively from TrainLife are now available from ExactRail.

For additional details visit: [trainlife.com/blogs/news/trainlife-closing](https://trainlife.com/blogs/news/trainlife-closing)

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## NEW PRODUCTS FOR ALL SCALES

**Atlas** has updated its Track Planning Software to Version 1.9.3. Several new features and fixes, including adding Atlas N C80 17" curve to the track library, are implemented in this version. Atlas has also fixed a bug that caused the program to hang when the user tried to create a 3-point polygon (triangle) with 2 overlapping corner points, resulting in line segment. For a demonstration of the upgraded software program visit [shop.atlasrr.com/t-software.aspx](https://atlasrr.com/t-software.aspx)

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## O SCALE PRODUCT NEWS



At the top of **Atlas O's** production schedule for the 2nd quarter of 2024 is a Premier line EMD

SD70MAC. The locomotive will come with Proto-Sound 3. Special features include directionally controlled headlights, lighted cab interior and number boards, spinning roof fans and operating ditch lights. Road names will be BNSF, CSX, Lake State Railway, Metra, RJ Corman and Union Pacific, including UP's *We Are One* scheme.

Additional Premier motive power will be available from Atlas O in the form of classic EMD E8 units.



Decorating schemes will be Amtrak, Burlington Northern, NJ Commuter, Penn Central, Rock

Island and Kansas City Southern.



Atlas O is developing a group of 70' lightweight O scale passenger cars that include a Vista Dome, diner,

sleeper, coach, baggage car and observation car.

Road names will include Amtrak, Burlington Northern, NJ Commuter, Kansas City Southern, Penn Central and Rock Island.



Every car will not be available for every road name. Visit the Atlas O website for specifics.



Atlas O has included a triple-bay rapid discharge hopper car in its production schedule due for release during the 2nd quarter of next year. In addition to the red

Southern Pacific car shown, road names will be Amtrak, Bessemer & Lake Erie, Florida East Coast, GATX, and Chessie System.



A twin-bay hopper with a removable coal load will be available decorated for Delaware & Hudson, Chicago & Eastern Illinois, Baltimore & Ohio, Maine Central,

Milwaukee Road, Pittsburgh & West Virginia, Fredericksburg & Potomac, and Peabody.



O scale triple-bay and six-bay cylindrical hopper cars are also under development at Atlas O.



Triple-bay cars will be available decorated for Cargill Salt, J.M.Huber, Morton Salt, Santa Fe and Sid Richardson. Road names for the six-bay version of the cylindrical

car will be Norfolk & Western and Burlington Northern Bicentennial scheme.



Road names for a 17,600-gallon tank car will include GATX, Tate & Lyle, U.S. Army, ADM and Minnesota Corn Processors.



Atlas O has listed two boxcars in its 2024 2nd quarter production schedule. Road names for a Berwick 60' high-cube boxcar



will be Conrail, Detroit Toledo & Ironton, Louisville & Nashville, Union Pacific, Norfolk Southern and Denver & Rio Grande Western.



A 50' 6" boxcar will be available decorated for RailBox, Maine Central, Rock Island, Warwick Railroad, and Union Pacific.  
Info: [www.shopatlasrr.com](http://www.shopatlasrr.com)

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## HO SCALE PRODUCT NEWS



Fans of Midwest railroads will be pleased with **Accurail's** latest release of a 3-car set of ACF twin-bay covered hopper cars. The economy priced set includes models decorated for Monon, Rock Island, and Chicago & Eastern Illinois.



Also available from Accurail is a 3-car set of HO scale kits for Boston & Albany 41' steel gondolas. The HO scale kits are based on a prototype built in 1927. 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)

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R. Bale

## EMD GP9

The GP9 is a four-axle diesel electric road switcher built between 1954 and 1959 by General Motors Electro-Motive Division. The GP9 succeeded the GP7 as the second model of EMD's General Purpose (GP)

line, incorporating a new sixteen-cylinder engine which generated 1,750hp. Units built without cabs were identified as GP9B booster locomotives. EMD constructed 3,626 GP9s, including 165 GP9Bs. An additional 646 GP9s were built by GMD, EMD's Canadian subsidiary, for a grand total of 4,257 GP9s produced. Externally, the GP9 strongly resembled its GP7 predecessor, with the number and sizes of the radiator fans changing through the production run. Most GP9s were built with high short hoods, but the Southern Pacific ordered a number with low short hoods for improved visibility. The GP9 was succeeded by the similar, but slightly more powerful, GP18.



HO scale locomotives under development at **Athearn** for future release include a Genesis series model of an EMD GP9.

Release is planned for September 2024. Units decorated for Union Pacific will have a Phase II body, a "branchline" pilot plow, a winterization hatch and a 1,200-gallon fuel tank.



Three Southern Pacific units are planned including SP #3882 which will have a unique low nose. All SP units will have

working Gyalights.



Torpedo-style air reservoirs will be mounted on the roof of GP9s decorated for CNW. Included with the model will be optional all-weather cab windows that can be installed by the modeler.

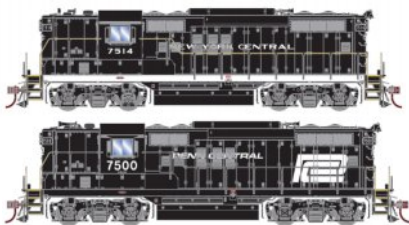


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New York Central GP9s and ex-NYC units decorated for Penn Central will be set up for operation with the long hood forward. Shared details include roof-top air tanks, nose mounted bell, steam generators and a large capacity fuel tank.



Central of Georgia GP9s will have a Phase II body, full foot boards, and a 1,200-gallon fuel tank.

The Genesis series GP9 models feature bidirectional constant LED lighting, full cab interior, wire grab irons, coupler cut levers, flexible rubber trainline hose and MU lines, textured walkway tread, lift rings, sander lines, windshield wipers, etched metal radiator intake and fan grilles, Celcon handrails, detailed fuel tank with fuel fillers, fuel gauges, breather pipes, and retention tanks. The Genesis driveline features a 5-pole skew wound motor, precision machined flywheels, and multi-link drivetrain.

Athearn's Genesis GP9 models will be available without sound and with an onboard DCC decoder with SoundTraxx Tsunami2 sound and dual cube speakers.



Athearn has included an EMD SD40 with numerous road-specific details in its September 2024 production schedule. BNSF models, which are ex-CN and GTW units, will have a 4,000-gallon fuel tank, operating front ditch lights, a snowplow pilot and a Sinclair antenna.

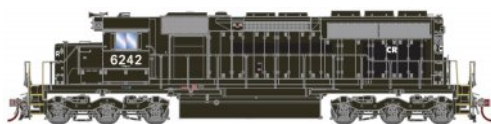


Southern Pacific SD40 locomotives wearing the short-lived Kodachrome

scheme, will have rebuilt L-shaped front windows, a large front plow, a 4,000-gallon fuel tank and an SP light package at the front and rear.



SD40s decorated for Penn Central and Chesapeake & Ohio have Leslie S3L horns and front and rear foot boards.



Conrail versions of the SD40 are ex-Penn Central units that have replaced the original PC front foot boards with a small plow.



Athearn's Ft. Worth & Western SD40 will feature operating front ditch lights, a large front plow and dual RV

type air conditioners mounted on the cab roof. An undecorated fully assembled SD40 that has the same details as the PC and CR units will be included in this release.

Standard features on Athearn's SD40 include LED lighting, etched stainless steel windshield wipers, wire grab irons, coupler cut levers, rubber MU hoses and handrails molded in engineering plastic. Athearn's SD40 will be available without sound and with a DCC decoder and SoundTraxx Econami sound with a single cube speaker.



Athearn will include an EMD GP38-2 four-axle road switcher in its September 2024 schedule. Standard features on most of

the road names will include operating ditch lights at the front and



rear, 3,600-gallon fuel tanks, dynamic brakes, and EMD –style front plows. Union Pacific units will also have a K3LA horn.



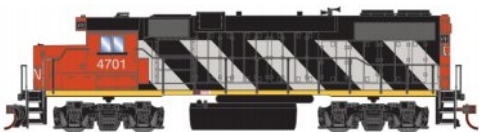
air intakes. All other road names will have “chicken wire” grille at the vents.



Models decorated for CSX will have a K5LA horn and a smaller 2,600-gallon fuel tank.



Burlington Northern and Soo GP38-2 diesels will have the usual details, a 3,600-gallon fuel tank and Leslie RS3L horns.



Canadian National units will be fitted with a 2,600-gallon fuel tank. They will not have dynamic brakes.



Athearn's version of a GATX GP38-2 will have a 2,600-gallon fuel tank and a K3LA horn.



A GP38-2 decorated for the Arizona & California Railroad will have “chicken

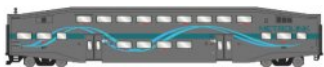
wire" air grille, front operating ditch lights, a 3,600-gallon fuel tank, dynamic brakes, and a Nathan P3 horn.

Athearn's economy-priced GP38-2 is a DC model without sound. It will be DCC-ready with factory installed dual speakers and a 21-pin NEM socket for installation of an aftermarket decoder.



A 16,000-gallon clay slurry tank car is included in Athearn's September 2024 production schedule.

The HO scale model features a separately applied manway, small safety valve nozzles, etched metal walkways and end platforms, complete brake plumbing, brake rigging and air reservoir, wire platform railings, grab irons, scale placard holders, and appropriate trucks with 36" machined metal wheels. Decorating schemes will be Amstar, Trinity Industries Leasing, Union Tank Car, Engelhard, Amoco Oil and Innophos Inc.



A new release of Bombardier bi-level coaches and cab control cars will be available from Athearn in September 2024. Road names will include three Metrolink schemes and Utah Front Runner.

Additional road names in this release will be Sounder and New Mexico Rail Runner.

The cars will have a detailed interior, tinted windows, separately applied grab irons, and Bombardier trucks with outside brakes. The cars can negotiate an 18" radius, however a 22" radius is recommended by Athearn.



Completing Athearn's list of new models scheduled for release in September 2024 is a 40' modernized



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boxcar. To enhance crew safety, in 1968 the AAR legislated the removal of running boards. To meet the mandate, most 40' house cars had their side and end ladders cut down. Many required lowering the brake wheel as well.



Road names in Athearn's run of modernized cars include Union Pacific, Burlington Northern, Canadian Pacific, Southern, Maine Central, Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac, Nacionales de Mexico, and Santa Fe. All Athearn rolling stock mentioned in this report will have McHenry operating knuckle couplers.

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

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Chesapeake & Ohio coming soon.

**Bachmann** has released a new run of EMD GP7 locomotives in HO scale. Roadnames in this release include

Amtrak, Conrail, and Santa Fe, with

Chesapeake & Ohio coming soon.



The models are DCC ready with an NMRA 8-pin socket, directional LED headlights, fine scale handrails, blackened metal RP25 contour

wheels, and E-Z Mate Mark II knuckle couplers.



Bachmann also announced that it will be releasing the Siemens Venture Cars in HO scale. Both VIA Rail Canada and Amtrak Midwest trainsets will be available, with the VIA consist including two business cars, two standard coach cars, and a cab car. The

business and coach cars will include interior lighting, the cab car will include DCC-controllable directional lights and sound. The models are expected in late 2023.

Info: [shop.bachmanntrains.com](http://shop.bachmanntrains.com)

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**Bowser** is taking pre-orders for Phase 2 and 3 Western Maryland Hammerhead RS3 locomotives in the speed lettering scheme. The locomotives include separate air hoses, windshield wipers, grab irons, coupler lift bars, operating headlight, window glass, and fuel tank.



Powered by a flywheel equipped can motor, the DC version of the model features a 21-pin DCC plug, and the DCC/Sound version includes a LokSound V5 decoder. Blackened wheels with RP25 flanges and knuckle couplers are standard.

Info: [www.bowser-trains.com](http://www.bowser-trains.com)

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R. Bale

## CHESAPEAKE & OHIO K-2 MIKADO

The American Locomotive Company delivered 50 class K-2 2-8-2 Mikado steam locomotives to the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad in 1924. They were substantial upgrades over the older K-1's from 1911. Larger drive wheels at 63" diameter, Baker valve gear, 200 psi boiler pressure, automatic stokers, and boosters on the trailing truck combined to give the K-2s a tractive effort of 63,467 lbs. In typical C&O fashion, a large Elesco feedwater heater and a pair of compound air compressors were mounted on the front of the smokebox giving the K-2's a robust, intimidating appearance. The K-2's handled all types of freight service for the C&O, from heavy drag freights, to helper service, to expedited freight on level trackage. Many were upgraded with class V-16 six-axle 16,000-gallon Vanderbilt tenders that were nearly as long as the locomotive. With freight traffic spiking during the years of WWII, the K-2's outperformed their expectations handling massive wartime freight trains. Beginning in the early 1950s, diesel locomotives began to replace the 25-year-old K-2s.



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**Broadway Limited** has released an impressive group of HO scale Chesapeake & Ohio K-2 class 2-8-2 Mikado steam locomotives. BLI's HO model is detailed as the workhorse K-2 appeared in the 1940s.



The models are of hybrid construction with boilers, cabs, and

tender body crafted of brass. The chassis of the locomotive and the tender are diecast metal.



Three road numbers are available for the

K-2 as delivered with a 12-VC 12,000-gallon, 15-ton Vanderbilt tender. Three different road numbers are available for a K-2 upgraded with a 16,000-gallon, 20-ton VC-16 tender. Unlettered versions of both tender types are also available along with a VC-16 equipped K-2 painted as a brass model.



All the K-2 models in this production run will be available

as both Paragon4 sound/DCC and in BLI's economy-priced DC "stealth" series that lack sound but are DCC-ready for installation of an aftermarket decoder.



Broadway Limited has added DC non-sound "stealth" models to the list of HO scale SD40 road switchers set for release this month.



Two road numbers each will be available for Santa Fe, Chesapeake & Ohio, Canadian National, Canadian

Pacific, Conrail, CSX, Pennsylvania, Southern, Southern Pacific and Union Pacific. An unpainted model is included in this release.



Broadway Limited's HO scale SD40 is available with Paragon4 sound/DCC. In addition to BLI's Paragon4 Sound & Control System with Rolling Thunder, the SD40 will also be available DCC-ready with a standard 21-pin socket on the DC motherboard. Identified by BLI as the Stealth Series, the DCC-ready models provide hobbyists with the opportunity to purchase BLI locomotives at a lower price.



R. Bale

## IDENTIFYING EMD'S F UNITS

Spotting features of the F3, built from 1946 to January 1949, are three evenly spaced portholes on the car body side and the so-called chicken wire grilles covering the air intakes along the top of the body. Some upgraded F3s had the chicken wire replaced with Farr-Air stainless steel grilles. The F7, which began production in February 1949 and continued until the end of 1953, can be identified by the four square car body filters between two portholes. All F7s had Farr-Air grilles. The F9 is similar to the F7 with the addition of a fifth square body filter in front of the first porthole.



Broadway Limited has announced a September release date for a large group of EMD F3 and F7 diesel locomotives. A-B sets will be available with powered A units and unpowered B units.



BLI's F3 units decorated for Santa Fe and Southern Pacific will have dual headlights and Farr-Air stainless steel grilles over the vents at the top of the car body.



F3 units with Farr-Air grilles and one headlight will be available for Lehigh Valley and Southern Railway.



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Canadian National, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, Northern Pacific, and Soo Line.

Features on both the F3 and F7 units include individually controllable headlights, number board lights, classification and cab lights. Road specific details include nose doors with and without a second headlight, three different pilots, two styles of number boards, three different horns, chicken wire or Farr-Air grilles, different styles of dynamic brake hatch, eyebrow grab irons, antennas, Trainphone antenna (PRR), and nose and rear lift lugs (NP and PRR).



Northern and Missouri Pacific will have a single headlight in the nose. Denver & Rio Grande Western and Texas & Pacific F7s will have dual headlights.

All BLI F7 units will have Farr-Air grilles. F7s decorated for Rock Island, Boston & Maine, Great



Baldwin's RF-16 Sharknose diesels were 1,600hp cab units built between 1950 and 1953. A total of 160 were built: 109 A-units and 51 cabless B-units.



Broadway Limited is offering the HO scale RF-16 Sharknose locomotive in several fantasy paint schemes including Santa Fe and Southern Pacific which tested the Baldwin demo A-B set but declined to order production units.

In addition to prototypically authentic paint schemes for PRR, B&O, NYC, and D&H,



Individual A and B units of the F3, F7 and RF-16 locomotives will be available with Paragon4 Sound & Control System featuring Rolling Thunder. The models will

also be available DCC-ready with a standard MTC 21 pin socket on the DC motherboard.

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

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**ClassOneModelWorks.com** is taking preorders for four new loads appropriate for

depressed center flatcars such as the GSC heavy duty flatcar they are releasing. The models are a large modern transformer, a large pump, a drum and bearings, and an old transformer. The HO scale loads are cast resin and painted gray.

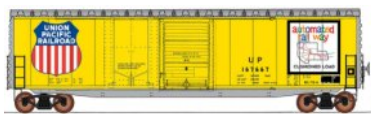
Info: [www.classonemodelworks.com](http://www.classonemodelworks.com)

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**InterMountain** has released a group of HO scale 50' PS-1 boxcars with cushion underframes. Models decorated

for Southern Railway and Norfolk & Western have etched metal running boards and two Youngstown sliding doors on each side. A Western Maryland car has running boards and a combination of one plug door and one sliding door.



Cars without running boards decorated for ACY and Union Pacific have a plug door and a sliding door. Completing this run is a Detroit &

Toledo Shore Line car with two Youngstown sliding doors.



Fifty-foot PS-1 boxcars with a single sliding door will be available from InterMountain decorated for Missouri, Kansas & Texas; Detroit,

Toledo & Ironton; Atlantic Coast Line, Missouri Illinois, and Bangor & Aroostook. A Milwaukee Road car wearing a special scheme celebrating the 100,000th PS-1 boxcar will also have a sliding door.



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PS-1 boxcars with a plug door will be available decorated for New Haven, TLCX-Transport Leasing and Chesapeake & Ohio.



InterMountain Railway is booking reservations through June 30 for a new production run of HO scale 50' 5283 cu. ft. boxcars with double sliding doors. The release date is TBA.



Six road numbers each will be available for Cotton Belt, Southern Pacific, Golden West, Burlington Northern (late scheme), BNSF (new image), CEFX (patch), CSX (patch, ex SP) and Arkansas & Missouri.

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

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**Kadee's** latest offering is a 40' PS-1 boxcar decorated for the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic Railroad. The ready-to-run model accurately replicates a prototype Pullman-Standard built for the DSS&A in 1948.



Like the full-size car, Kadee's HO scale model is equipped with 6' Superior seven-panel doors and Bettendorf-type plain bearing trucks. The roof and ends are black, and the sides are painted boxcar red.

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

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**LASERkit** has released a kit for a New York Central standard short wood caboose. Featuring the low cupola associated with NYC cabooses, the standard short wood cabooses were inherited Lake Shore & Michigan

Southern cabooses, rebuilt after the LS&MS and NYC & Hudson

River merger in 1914. They were placed in the 18000-18649 number series in the 1936 system-wide renumbering. Some of the cabooses were still on the NYC roster in the 1960s, having been renumbered into the 17000 series.

The model features 100% laser-cut components, laser-scribed side and end walls, tab and slot and peel and stick construction, cast resin platform steps, AB style brake gear, white metal smokejack, injection molded turnbuckles, and custom Tichy Train Group decals.

The kit includes optional details such as square or rounded body corner posts, side windows that can be modeled open or closed, two different styles of end ladders and running boards, and a complete set of screen doors and windows. Trucks and couplers are not included.

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

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R. Bale

## ALCO FA-1/FB-1 DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES

The FA-1 cab unit and FB-1 cabless booster locomotives were Alco's shorter, freight hauling version of the elegant PA/PB units. Built in Schenectady, NY in partnership with GE between 1946-1959, Alco's FA/FB diesels were developed to compete against EMD's FT and F3 diesels. GE's Ray Patten designed both the FA and PA locomotives. Alco's model 244 diesel prime mover proved to be the undoing of the FA, and the locomotives failed to capture a marketplace dominated by EMD. Despite its prime mover problems, Alco managed to sell a combined total of 617 FA and FB units. The later 251-series engine, a vastly improved prime mover, was not available in time for Alco to recover the loss of reputation caused by the unreliability of the 244, which was a key factor in the dissolution of the partnership with GE.







electronically scanned the nose of a prototype locomotive.

**Rapido Trains** continues accept pre-production reservations for its HO scale Alco FA-1 and FB-1 locomotives. To accurately recreate the distinctive Alco



classification lights and back-up piping and conduit.

Features on the model locomotive will include etched side and fan screens, operating headlights, lights; and full underbody



Road specific details include flat or angled number boards, and dynamic or non-dynamic brakes.



Operating options are DC/Silent (21-pin DCC-ready) or DC/DCC/Sound with ESU LokSound.



Road names on the initial release will be Canadian National, Canadian Pacific, Erie, Great Northern, Lehigh &

New England, New Haven (two schemes), Pennsylvania, Reading, and Union Pacific. A release date is TBA.

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



lit walkway and ground lights, and alternately flashing LED

**Scale Trains'** latest production run of EMD SD40-2 diesels is scheduled to be released by the end of December. Upgraded features of the HO scale Rivet Counter model include LED

ditch lights mounted on both front and rear pilots. A BN SD40-2B will be part of this production run, the first time this locomotive has been available in plastic in HO scale.



the early 1970s, and Conrail in the small lettering, Q logo and pilot-mounted ditch lights.



ICG units will be available in two versions of orange and gray, patched and without dynamic brakes.



This red and yellow Rock Island unit will not have dynamic brakes.



Santa Fe units in the 1980s as delivered yellow and blue scheme will have an 88" nose. ScaleTrains version of a SOO

Line SD40-2 features a unique non-dynamic brake hatch and exhaust silencer.

Sound-equipped locomotives will have dual cube speakers and the ESU-designed PowerPack with two super-capacitors, enabling the locomotive to maintain power even when passing over dead spots on the track. DCC and sound equipped locomotives feature the ESU LokSound 5 decoder, which comes with the Full Throttle feature to simulate the locomotives pulling a heavy train at slow speeds.

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

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boxcar. The cars in this release replicate those assigned to the 1970 Brownstown, Michigan Ford Parts Pool. The cars in the pool featured extra rivet rows to attach interior posts for the DF2 belt rails.



Louis Southwestern. Two undecorated kits, one for each body style, are also available.



**Tangent Scale Models** has released six paint schemes on two new body styles of the 86' Greenville double plug door

Paint schemes in this release include Santa Fe, Burlington Northern, Detroit Toledo & Ironton, Seaboard Coast Line, St. Louis-San Francisco, and St.

The models feature End of Car Cushioning or Center of Car Cushioning draft gear variations, Kadee scale couplers, separate flexible air

hoses, per-prototype under car brake system variations, Gypsum, Apex, or Morton etched metal end crossover platforms as appropriate, side tack boards, multiple prototypically accurate brake stands from multiple manufacturers, optional 3rd door crank arms with multiple configurations, 100-ton low



profile Barber S-2-A trucks, and 36" metal wheels with rotating Timken bearing caps.

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

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R. Bale

## GE 8-40BW

General Electric's wide-cab 8-40BW 4,000hp diesels were built between 1988 and the early 1990s especially for ATSF, where they were put to work on the Santa Fe's high-speed intermodal service. They were the only versions of GE's Dash Eight built with the then-new North American Safety Cab (aka wide cab) creating the 8-40BW. Many joined the ranks of the BNSF Railway in 1996 where they were eventually downgraded to non-mainline service. Some were sold or leased to other railroads. GE built 20 modified versions of the 8-40BW for Amtrak in 1991. Identified as P32-8BWH, they were B40-8W units downgraded to 3,200hp and modified internally to provide Head End Power (HEP) and other passenger service requirements.

**Walthers** is preparing Mainline series HO scale GE Dash 8-40B/BW and P32-8BWH locomotives for release during the winter of 2024.



Models decorated for BNSF will have a large fuel tank and a wide North American Safety Cab.



Models decorated for Santa Fe, Southern Pacific and Union Pacific will come with standard GE cabs and large fuel tanks.



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All the Amtrak P32-8BWH models, including the Phase V scheme above and Phase III “Pepsi can” below, will have the wide safety cab.



Amtrak Phase IV (left) and the Amtrak California paint schemes are included in this run. Despite this preliminary artwork, all Amtrak units will have small fuel tanks.



The body of the economy priced Mainline series model will have molded starter

points to aid hobbyists wanting to add individual grab irons. Although lacking in some of the surface details the Mainline model will have the same premium drive system as Walthers upscale Proto series models. The Mainline diesel will be available for DC operation and with ESU Sound and DCC for DCC layouts.



A new production run of 54' 23,000-gallon Funnel-Flow tank cars is coming from Walthers this summer. The HO scale model is

based on a prototype developed by the Union Tank Car Co. during the 1960s. Funnel-Flow cars can transport a variety of liquids and slurries. The tank is slightly lower in the middle which allows the contents to be unloaded by gravity.



Decorating schemes on this release will include ADMX-Archer-Daniels-Midland, CRGX-Cargill, CCLX-Corn Products, PROX-Procort, SUNX-

Sunoco, and UTLX-Union Tank Car Line. Details on the WalthersProto series model include etched metal walkways and platforms, factory-applied grab irons, brake train pipe and underbody brake rigging, appropriate trucks with 36" machined metal wheelsets.



R. Bale

## REBUILT WELL CARS

Early in the new millennium, as 53' containers became the standard for domestic shipping, older well cars built to carry 48' containers became of limited value for railroads. Since most were only a few years old

Thrall began a rebuilding program in 2003 that shortened the wells to the standard 40'. This allowed them to carry 20' and 40' containers in the well with 40' and 53' units on top.



Walthers plans to release both single cars and five-unit sets of Thrall 40' rebuilt well cars this fall. Five-unit sets will be available decorated for BNSF, TTX-DTTX with black and white TTX logo, TTX-DTTX with small red TTX logo, TTX-DTTX with large red TTX logo, SFLC-Santa Fe Leasing, and TTX-red TTX and Next Load logos with yellow conspicuity stripes.



Individual rebuilt well cars will be available for TTX-DTTX large black and white TTX logo, TTX-DTTX small black and white TTX logo, TTX-DTTX with small black and white TTX logo, and TTX-DTTX with red Forward Thinking TTX logo. All will have yellow conspicuity stripes.

The well cars will have a heavy diecast metal frame, molded 3-D brake rods with chains, brake piping and weld lines, and



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separate deck-mounted brake detail with piping, and IBC storage boxes.



General Steel Castings flatcars. The Mainline series model is based on an early 1950 GSC prototype that consisted of a large one-piece steel casting.



Also coming this fall from Walthers is a new release of 53'

Like the prototype, Walthers HO scale version features a diecast metal body.



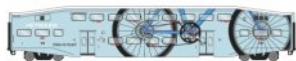
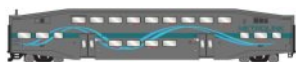
Road names on this release will be Burlington Northern,

Conrail, Delaware & Hudson, Illinois Central, Minneapolis & St. Louis, Pennsylvania Railroad, Union Pacific and Wabash. All the Walthers models mentioned in this report will come with ProtoMAX metal knuckle couplers.

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

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## N SCALE PRODUCT NEWS



A new release of Bombardier bi-level coaches and cab control cars will be available from **Athearn** in September 2024. Road names will include three Metrolink schemes and Utah Front Runner.



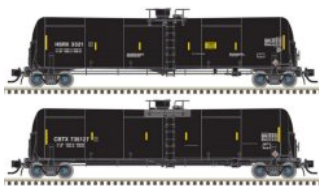
Additional road names in this release will be Sounder and New Mexico Rail Runner.



The models in this release will have retooled Bombardier trucks with outside brakes. The cars will have a detailed interior, tinted windows, and separately applied grab irons. The cars can negotiate an 11.75" radius, however for more reliable

operation Athearn recommends a 15" radius.,  
Info: [www.athearn.com](http://www.athearn.com)

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**Atlas** expects to release some long-awaited N scale models to dealers this month. Included on the list is a Trinity 31,000-gallon crude oil tank car. The model is based on a prototype Trinity began building in 2012. The Atlas Master Series model comes with BLMA 100-ton ASF Ride-Control trucks with 36" metal wheels. Road names will be Ferromex, HSRX-High Sierra Energy and CBTX.



Also scheduled to go to dealers this month is an all-new Atlas N scale model of a Trinity 3230 cu. ft. PD (Pressure Differential) covered hopper. Trinity developed the prototype 3230 to handle dense, heavy lading such as cement. The design was based on Trinity's larger 5660 PD which was itself based on an earlier Thrall design.



Atlas' Master series model features an etched metal roofwalk. Road names on this initial release are CRDX Chicago Freight, RCCX Roanoke Cement, TILX Trinity Industries Leasing, GACX

General American and CBFX CIT Group.  
Info: [shop.atlasrr.com](http://shop.atlasrr.com)

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R. Bale

## PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD 4-4-4-4 T1 LOCOMOTIVE

The pair of 4-4-4-4 duplex steam engines Baldwin delivered to the PRR in 1942 were aesthetic beauties and engineering failures. They tended to be slippery engines and their poppet valves required constant attention. The grate area and boiler capacity were insufficient to meet the needs of the T1's four cylinders, and the long, rigid wheelbase could not negotiate the curve at the west end of PRR's Pittsburgh station. Ironically, Raymond Loewy's beautiful, streamlined design kept the T1s dirty, with smoke tending to swirl around the cab and head end cars. Brushing aside their problems PRR ordered 25 more T1s from Baldwin in 1946 and erected a like number in their Altoona shops. Despite constant tinkering, things did not improve and by 1949 PRR had removed the T1s from service. All were scrapped by the end of 1953.



release a group of N scale PRR T1 4-4-4-4 steam locomotives this month.



include Paragon4 sound/DCC models as well as BLI's economy-priced DC "stealth" models that have no sound but are DCC-ready for installation of an aftermarket decoder.



**Broadway Limited** is scheduled to

This production run will

Decorating schemes in this run include PRR's traditional

dark green in two lettering schemes, and an unlettered locomotive. Two T1s will be available decorated in fantasy schemes of silver and Tuscan Red.

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

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**InterMountain Railway** has released N scale bathtub coal gondolas in five new paint schemes.



Road names available now include Sultran, Procor, Sullivan Scrap, and CP Rail in both black and red bodies. The models feature

operating metal knuckle couplers and appropriate trucks with machined metal wheelsets.

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

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**Kato's** new N scale 4-8-8-4 Big Boy steam locomotive is scheduled for release this month. The innovative model uses two coreless motors in dual articulated mechanisms

to power the 16 driving wheels. The two sets of driving wheels in the articulated design move independently which will allow the N scale model to navigate 11" radius curves. Kato's new Big Boy features electrical pickup from both drive sections as well as the tender. Options include pre-installed DCC and DCC + Sound.

An exploded diagram showing the design and assembly of Kato's N scale Big Boy can be viewed at [katousa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/N-parts-BigBoy.pdf](http://katousa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/N-parts-BigBoy.pdf)

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

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**Micro-Trains** has released this 40' Western Pacific boxcar to its network of dealers. The N scale model is based on a prototype built in 1951. Details include Youngstown sliding doors and ASF Ride-Control roller bearing trucks.



Also available now from Micro-Trains dealers is a 60' Canadian Pacific high-cube rib side boxcar with double plug doors. The N scale model is based on a prototype National Steel Car built for CPR in 2001.  
Info: Contact a Micro-Trains dealer.

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**Rapido Trains** has announced plans to produce an Angus wide-vision van in N scale. Between 1972 and 1981, Canadian Pacific's Angus Shops in Montreal built over 300 modern, wide-vision vans.



Features on the new N scale models include a detailed interior with battery powered lighting and operating end marker lights. Additional details include separate air and brake piping, uncoupling levers, factory installed metal grab irons, knuckle couplers and Bettendorf-Barber caboose trucks.





Paint schemes will include Canadian Pacific (CP Rail), Canadian Pacific (Engineering / White), CP/SOO (Beaver Shield), BC Rail, Algoma Central, Ontario Northland, Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo;

Burlington Northern, Conrail, CSX (Safety First #21195 Special Edition), Delaware & Hudson, Milwaukee Road, Norfolk Southern, Denver & Rio Grande Western, Rock Island, Santa Fe, SOO Line, and TTX (#100). Unlettered vans will be available with white, yellow, or red bodies. Road name options include a roof mounted air conditioner and fuel oil tank details. The order deadline is June 15, 2023. Delivery is TBA.



Rapido is working on several new N scale projects including prepar-

ing a model of VIA E series 4-8-4 sleeper *Edmundston* #1115. The model will be an accurate reproduction of the prototype Edmundston which is currently undergoing restoration by the Via Historical Association. Rapido has pledged to donate 100% of the sales of the N scale Edmundston to the restoration of the full-size car.

Also under development at Rapido are three eight-car train packs inspired by famous Canadian passenger trains. Decorating schemes include 1954 and 1961 CNR and VIA Rail Canada. Models selected for the train packs will be from Rapido's Panorama Line of N scale cars. Each model will have full interior and underbody detailing, track-powered interior lighting, appropriate trucks, and magnetic couplers. The train packs will be packaged in a special presentation box.

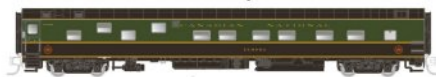


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The CN 1954 scheme train pack will consist of a baggage car, coach, Dayniter, a café-bar-lounge car, two 10-5 sleepers and an E series sleeper.



The eight cars for the 1961 CN train pack will include a baggage car, a Dayniter, a café-bar-lounge car, a club galley car, and four coaches.



The VIA train pack will also have four coaches, a club galley car, a café-bar-lounge car, a Dayniter and a baggage car. As a conditional announcement, this project is subject to a 5% early-bird discount applied to orders received by the order deadline of July 17, 2023. Delivery is TBA.

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

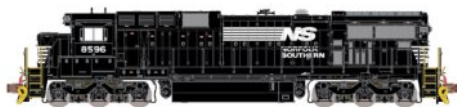
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R. Bale

## GE C39-8 LOCOMOTIVE

The C39-8 is a six-axle diesel electric road engine built by GE between 1983 and 1987. It is part of GE's Dash 8 series of freight locomotives. Spotting features include large angular radiator wings at the rear of the car body, an angular low short hood, and a boxy dynamic brake and clean air compartment at the front of the long hood. General Electric introduced its Dash 8 series as an improved line of locomotives over its Dash 7 predecessor. The C39-8 proved to be somewhat unpopular with crews who complained about its rough ride and tendency to overheat. Maintenance departments made note of frequent turbocharger problems, issues with the fuel injection system and general reliability issues. Just 161 C39-8 locomotives were built.



**ScaleTrains** is developing an N scale GE C39-8 diesel locomotive for release this winter. Road-name features of the Rivet Counter model include LED lighted headlights, ditch lights and number boards.



Additional factory-applied details include wire grab irons, trainline hoses, MU cables, uncoupling levers, windshield wipers, mirrors, a brake wheel, and sunshades.



Road names will include Norfolk Southern (three versions), CSX (YN3), Conrail (three versions), and Pennsylvania Northeastern (two versions).



DCC & sound equipped locomotives will have ESU LokSound 5 micro decoder. Scale Trains reports the sound unit will replicate the distinctive FDL-16 prime mover GE used in the C39-8.



ScaleTrains is booking reservations through May 22, 2023 for an all-new Rivet Counter N Scale BSC F68AH bulkhead flatcar. The model is based on a BSC prototype introduced in 1969.



The N scale model features a laser-cut wood deck with recessed deck tie-down details and transverse deck risers. The see-through end crossover platforms are made of etched stainless steel. Factory applied details include metal grab irons, coupler cut levers, trainline hoses and connection pipe with silver glad hands. H-shaped jacking pads are included along with a handbrake housing that has a nicely detailed wheel and chain.





The underbody brake system includes numerous separately applied parts including an air reservoir, control valve, reduction relay valve, and retainer valve. The model comes with ASF Ride-Control trucks and body-mounted Type E M-T compatible knuckle couplers.

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

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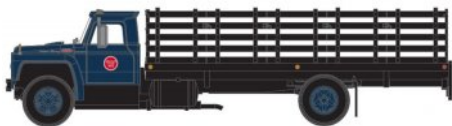
**Trainworx** has released an N scale 52'6" corrugated gondola in multiple roadnumbers for Burlington Northern, Norfolk

Southern, Santa Fe, and Union Pacific. The gondola features Fox Valley metal wheels and Trainworx M89 couplers.

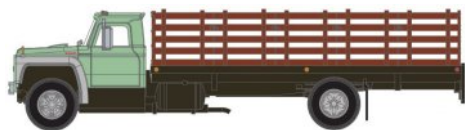
Info: [www.train-worx.com](http://www.train-worx.com)

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## STRUCTURES & SCENIC SUPPLIES



**Athearn** is scheduled to release several versions of a Ford F850 stake bed truck in September 2024. The 1:87th scale model will have a molded cab interior with separately applied steering wheel, clear window glazing, rubber tires, and stake sides of simulated wood.



Decorating schemes will include Missouri Pacific, Southern Pacific, Burlington Northern, and Western

Maryland. Non-railroad versions include a Teal truck, and a Green truck with gray fenders, black under carriage and brown stakes.

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

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**Comfort House** has created personalized "Welcome To ..." signs that can have the third line custom engraved with up to 15 characters. The signs are suitable for N (1.75" high), HO (2.75") and O scale (4.75").

Info: [www.comforthouse.com/model-railroad-signs-scenery.html](http://www.comforthouse.com/model-railroad-signs-scenery.html)



The newest HO scale kit for a commercial structure from **Fos Scale Models** is Gorman Sign Co. In addition to the main structure, which is surrounded by assorted signs, the kit includes a storage yard full of a variety of both old and new signs. The kit features laser-cut walls, metal and plastic detail parts, and 3D printed parts. All the signs shown are included as well as the yard fence. The assembled structure has a footprint of 4" x 5.5". The structure and sign yard as shown occupies approximately 4" x 10".

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



**Frenchman River Model Works** is selling an O scale resin kit for Pete's Tavern, a two-story brick structure. The kit can be assembled for a right- or left-hand corner. Components included separate resin walls,



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and window and door panels. Details include a chimney, steps, electric meter, trash cans, tar paper roof material, window glazing, signs, and a sign bracket. The assembled model measures 3.25" wide x 5.5" deep x 6" tall.

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

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**LASERkit** has announced a new kit in HO, N, and O scales. Sanders Grocery and Supply is loosely based on a structure seen in *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*, which appeared to be a small retail business. The kit consists of milled basswood, 3-ply aircraft grade birch plywood, peel and stick windows, doors, and trim; rolled

roofing, a variety of business signage, resin cast and white metal details. The finished structure measures 4.75" deep x 2.5" wide x 3.375" tall in HO scale, 2.625" deep x 1.375" wide x 1.75" tall in N scale, and 8.625" deep x 4.5" wide x 6" tall in O scale.

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

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**Showcase Miniatures** has released a new N scale kit for the Pacific Coast Railway Depot at San Luis Obispo, California. The model depicts the PCR Depot as it appeared in the late 1920s.



The kit features tab and slot construction. Components include laser-cut parts, peel and stick backed windows, 3D printed parts and precision metal castings.

Material for the siding comes scribed and pre-weathered. Instructions and decals with alternate signage are included.

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

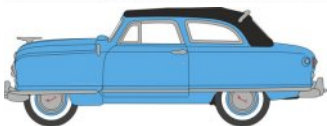
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New 1:87th scale vehicles coming soon from **Oxford Diecast** include a 1959 Plymouth Belvedere sedan decorated as a yellow cab.



Oxford's tricked out version of a 1966 Pontiac GTO is painted in Montero Red.



Future 1:87th scale releases from Oxford include this 1950 Nash Rambler Landau. Note the convertible black top and thin white wall tires.



Scheduled for release soon is this 1948 Dodge B-1B Railway Express Agency pickup. The truck is equipped with heavy duty wheels and wood side rails.

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

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**Walthers** is quoting a fall delivery date for two large retail stores currently under development. First up is The Bargain Depot, a modern concrete block structure that features distinctive signage for the building and a free standing "\$" sign. Details include a rooftop air conditioner, and gas and electric meters. The assembled kit measures 8.56" x 9.94" x 2.87" high.



The second new Walthers Cornerstone kit coming this fall is a home improvement complex that includes a retail store and a lumberyard. The kit includes a main building, a lumber shed, eight



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pallet racks, 10 lumber stacks, a rooftop air conditioner, trash cans, propane locker and utility meters. When assembled the building measures 8.87" x 9.94" x 2.75" high. The lumber shed is 9.75" x 4.5" x 2.75" high, and the freestanding sign is 2.94" tall. Info: [www.walthers.com](http://www.walthers.com)

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## BRIEFLY NOTED AT PRESS TIME ...

**Broadway Limited** is accepting reservations through June 22, 2023 for newly announced N scale locomotives including EMD SD40-2 and SD70ACe diesels, and both light and heavy versions of USRA 4-6-2 Pacifics ...

**Jackson Terminal Trains** has new N scale 53' high-cube containers decorated for ABF Freight, UPS, R+L Carriers, COFC Logistics, and CH Robinson. A JTC Five-Year Anniversary high-cube corrugated container is also available ...

**Rail Smith Models** is booking preorders for a custom 40' Micro-Trains N scale boxcar that celebrates California's Sequoia National Park ...

**Walthers** plans to release Code 83 DCC-compatible #6 right and left hand single crossovers this summer. Also due mid-year are Union Pacific ACF Heritage cars including a coach, baggage, diner, dome diner, dome lounge, dome coach and a Budd sleeper. Fall releases include a new Mainline series 89' flatcar with bi-level shielded auto racks. WalthersProto EMD E8/E9 diesels scheduled for release during the winter of 2024 will include UP Heritage E9A-B ... ■

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### DISCLAIMER .....

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# SELECTED EVENTS



Model Railroad Hobbyist | May 2023

MAY

***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](https://www.scaletrains.com/roadtrip)

## May-June 2023

**CANADA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER AND ONLINE**, May 26-28, 2023. Railway Modellers Meet of British Columbia (RMMBC), Prologue on May 18. See website for information.

Info: [railwaymodellersmeetofbc.ca/wp](https://railwaymodellersmeetofbc.ca/wp)

**CANADA, NEW BRUNSWICK, SAINT JOHN**, May 25-28, 2023, Fundy Rail Fest 2023 MFMR/ECD Convention, Best Western Pluss Saint John, 55 Majors Brook Dr.

Info: [www.fundyrailfest2023.ca](https://www.fundyrailfest2023.ca)

**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, CROCKETT**, June 24-25, August 26-27, September 10, October 14-15, December 9-10, 2023. Carquinez Model Railroad Society Open House. 645 Loring Avenue.

Info: [cmrstrainclub.org](https://cmrstrainclub.org)

**CALIFORNIA, RICHMOND**, June 17, 2023. Bay Area Prototype Modelers Meet 2023. St. David's School Hall, 871 Sonoma St.

Info: [www.bayareaprototypemodelers.org](https://www.bayareaprototypemodelers.org)

**COLORADO, AURORA**, June 8-11, 2023. O Scale National Convention. Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center, 13200 East 14th Place.

Info: [oscalenational.com](https://oscalenational.com)



**FLORIDA, TALLAHASSEE**, June 24-25, 2023. Tallahassee Model Railroad Show & Sale. North Florida Fairgrounds, 441 Paul Russell Road.

Info: [www.facebook.com/events/428051575813892](https://www.facebook.com/events/428051575813892)

**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.rrshows.com](http://www.rrshows.com)

**MASSACHUSETTS, SPRINGFIELD**, June 16 – 18, 2023. New England/Northeast Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet. La Quinta Inn & Suites, 100 Congress St.

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

**NEVADA, SPARKS (Reno)**, June 14-18, 2023. National N scale convention, presented by the N Scale Enthusiast. Nugget Casino Resort, 1100 Nugget Avenue.

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

**OHIO, DUBLIN (Columbus area)**, May 17-21, 2023.

Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society 2023 Annual Meeting. Embassy Suites Dublin, 5100 Upper Metro Place.

Info: [prrths.org/AnnualMeeting2023](http://prrths.org/AnnualMeeting2023)

**PENNSYLVANIA, ALLENTOWN**, May 19-20, 2023. 26th Biennial Meet of the East Penn Traction Club. Agriplex, Allentown Fairgrounds, 17th and Chew St.

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

**PENNSYLVANIA, COLUMBIA**, June 10th, 2023. 4th Annual Columbia Railroad Day, sponsored by Susquehanna Division NMRA, NHRS, and Columbia Historic Preservation Society. Multiple locations.

Info: [www.facebook.com/events/5978270928900719](https://www.facebook.com/events/5978270928900719)

**TEXAS, FOREST HILL**, June 24, 2023. DFW Red River Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet. Forest Hill Convention Center, 6901 Wichita Street.

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

**WISCONSIN, WAUPACA**, June 17-18, 2023. 33rd Strawberry Fest Model Rail Show, sponsored by the Waupaca Area Model Railroaders. Waupaca Recreation Center, 401 School St.

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

## Future 2023 by location

**ARIZONA, PRESCOTT**, July 29, 2023. Beat the Heat Model Train Swap Meet, sponsored by the Central Arizona Model Railroad Club. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, 3700 Willow Creek Road.

Info: [camrrc.com/bth](http://camrrc.com/bth)

**CALIFORNIA, CROCKETT**, June 24-25, August 26-27, September 10, October 14-15, December 9-10, 2023. Carquinez Model Railroad Society Open House. 645 Loring Avenue.

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

**CALIFORNIA, SANTA CLARA**, July 1-8, 2023. 38th National Garden Railway Convention. Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Pkwy.

Info: [ngrc2023.org](http://ngrc2023.org)

**COLORADO, DENVER**, August 30-September 2, 2023. 2023 National Narrow-Gauge Convention. Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Center, 15500 E 40th Ave.

Info: [www.43nngcdenver.com](http://www.43nngcdenver.com)

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

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

**ILLINOIS, COLLINSVILLE**, July 28-29, 2023. St. Louis Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet. Gateway Convention Center, 1 Gateway Center Drive.

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



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**ILLINOIS, NAPERVILLE**, October 27-28, 2023. Naperville RPM. Northern Illinois University Conference Center, 1120 E Diehl Rd.  
Info: [www.rpmconference.com](http://www.rpmconference.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)

**INDIANA, FRANKLIN**, August 6-7, 2023. Franklin Train Show, sponsored by the Central Indiana Division/NMRA. Johnson County Fairgrounds, 250 Fairground St.  
Info: [www.cidnmra.org](http://www.cidnmra.org)

**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)

**MARYLAND, HUNT VALLEY**, September 13-16, 2023. Mid-Atlantic RPM, Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley, 245 Shawan Road.  
Info: [www.marpm.org](http://www.marpm.org)

**MASSACHUSETTS, WEST SPRINGFIELD**, January 27-28, 2024. Amherst Railway Society Railway Hobby Show. The Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds, 1305 Memorial Avenue.  
Info: [www.railroadhobbyshow.com](http://www.railroadhobbyshow.com)

**NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE**, November 9-12, 2023. Rails along the Rio Grande, Rocky Mountain Region Convention.  
Info: [rmr-nmra.org](http://rmr-nmra.org)

**OHIO, MARION**, October 12-14, 2023. Central Ohio RPM. Marion Union Station, 532 West Center Street.  
Info: [www.facebook.com/groups/438383252883060](https://www.facebook.com/groups/438383252883060)

**OHIO, MARYSVILLE**, May 20, 2023. 14th Ohio N-scale Weekend. The Beef Barn, Union County Fairgrounds, 845 Main Street.  
Info: [www.centralohiontrak.org](http://www.centralohiontrak.org)

**OREGON, PORTLAND**, October 7, 2023. Bridgetown Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet, Airport Shilo Inn, 11707 NE Airport Way.  
Info: [www.brpmm.com](http://www.brpmm.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](https://mer2023.org/index.html)

**PENNSYLVANIA, COLUMBIA**, June 10, 2023. 4th Annual Columbia Railroad Day, sponsored by the Susquehanna Division NMRA, NHRS, and Columbia Historic Preservation Society. Multiple locations.

Info: [www.facebook.com/events/5978270928900719](https://www.facebook.com/events/5978270928900719)

**PENNSYLVANIA, HAMBURG**, September 15-17, 2023. Anthracite Railroad Modelers Meet XI. Reading Railroad Heritage Museum, 500 S. Third St.

Info: [readingrrmm.com](https://readingrrmm.com)

**PENNSYLVANIA, MOUNT UNION**, July 14-16, 2023. Central Pennsylvania Shortline RPM. Bricktown Museum, 300 West Small St.

Info: [meet.pennsyrr.com](https://meet.pennsyrr.com)

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

Info: [www.2023texasexpress.com](https://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](https://www.nationaltrainshow.org/2023/ntsdfw.html)

**WYOMING, EVANSTON**, August 4-6, 2023. 25th Annual Evanston Roundhouse Festival, sponsored by the Hostlers Model Railroad Club and Roundhouse Restoration, Inc. 1440 Main Street.

Info: [hostlers.info](https://hostlers.info) ■



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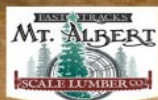
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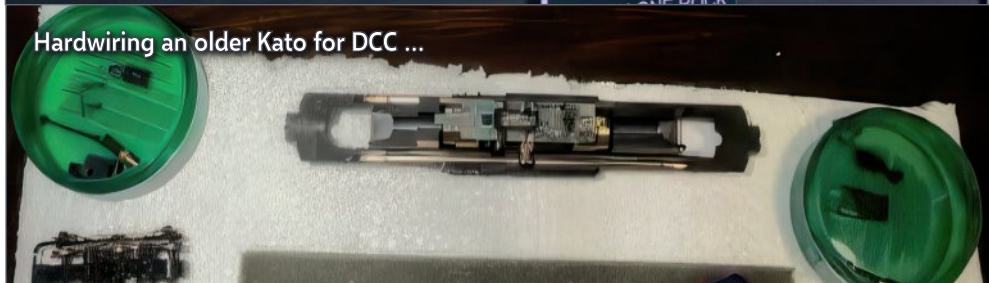
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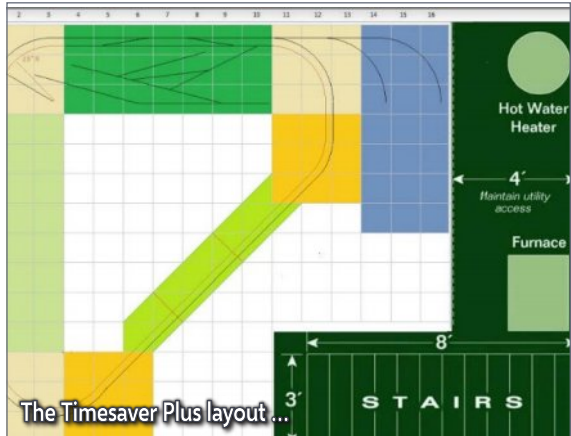
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