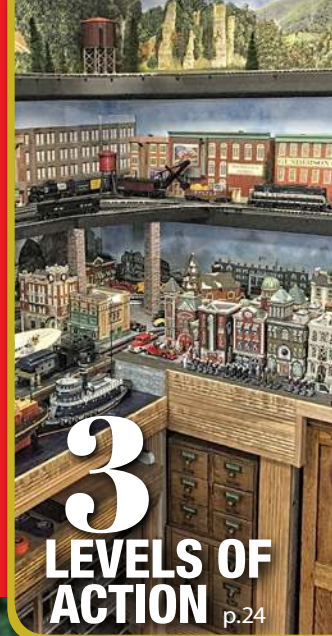


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March 2020



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Realism is in the eye of the beholder

THINKING BIGGER ABOUT WHAT MAKES 'A RAILROAD'

When you think of toy trains, do you think of realism?

Twenty years ago, my answer would have been a firm "No." In the intervening decades, though, I've seen and learned some things that have shifted my opinion.

It might be a matter of semantics, but "toy trains" really predate "model railroading" as a concept. First, there were trains that were moved by hand that were primarily meant for children. Once the miniature (relatively speaking) electric motor came along, and households were electrified, the needle really started to move toward "realism."

Scale O gauge models came to exist, and the pastime of "running trains" evolved into a hobby.

Al Kalmbach's first trains were O gauge and ran on three rails. They were also very rudimentary, but ultimately, made up *a railroad*. Locomotives and cars, on rails, going hither and yon, serving industries



Scale and toy train cars mix freely under my desk at work.

and hauling passengers. That's a proper railway in most people's book.

That's also the notion that's prevailed having seen lots of layouts over the past couple of decades for me. Once the trains start running, you don't see coupler sizes or disparity in scale, or even how many rails the track has. You see a realistic railroad that's as fun and as real-life as you imagine it.

Indeed, at the center of it all, is *fun* - the reason we run, and collect, and build and fix, and simply admire trains.

■ TEXAS & PACIFIC TIME

This month and last have featured a healthy dose of American Flyer's S gauge Texas & Pacific models. Their distinct Swamp Holly Orange and black locomotives were not only eye-catching, but the very name of the railroad captured many a young person's imagination.

So what if the real railroad never made it to one of its namesake destinations? It would hardly be the first to be guilty of that. And most that bought the models didn't know or care.

For me, there's a little bit of a personal connection with the T&P. It's one of the first real railroads I remember seeing. My cousins lived in a small town in Louisiana that was at the end of a T&P branch. That piece of railroad, as insignificant as it was, sticks with me.

Just like those orange and black diesels stick with me and a lot of you, too.

Hal Miller, Editor

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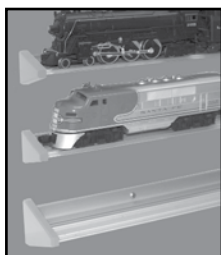


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MODERN ERA NOTES

WITH BOB KELLER

Model railroading *is* fun

ESPECIALLY IF YOU DO WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY

As this is written, Christmas has not yet happened, and I'm a little introspective. As turbulent as the world is today, toy trains are, for many of us, a calming diversion. For others, they are much more than that – a place to let the imagination roam.

Model railroading is fun. Seems obvious, eh? But many hobbyists in all scales strive for perfection – as *they* see it. This may be an exquisitely detailed layout based on a certain city, or railroad, or even a year. Locomotives and rolling stock are era-appropriate, and if the layout models the 1950s, you won't find a Ford Mustang in a corner.

For others it may be a railroad that isn't leaning toward realism or detail, but instead toward a time and place where they lived as a child. The most enthusiastic cases I can think of are layouts based on New York or New Jersey in the 1950s or '60s. You'd think they were plucked out of episodes of the television series *The Naked City*.

You have the freedom to do what you want. With the exception of a few things dealing with our pal, Mr. Electricity, or with what can be done with certain track radii, everything is wide open.

Want a realistic skyscraper with a giant ape on top? Go for it. Want to mix road names that didn't co-exist in the same time? Go for it. Want to use your Lionel trains to model a railroad in Zimbabwe or a subway in Jerusalem? It's been done and will probably be done again. I've also seen some pretty nice layouts based on the LTI-era Crayola train set.

There are no real-life railroad police in O or S gauges. There are many paths to

attain the same objective whether you're talking about benchwork, accessory wiring, or methods of making scenery. You have total freedom to use your creativity in layout construction and decoration. Nobody from the O Gauge Layout Planning Authority will drop by to inspect your handiwork.

Speaking of people seeing your handiwork ... I can tell you there's great satisfaction in having guests view your toy train creation. Sure, you'll get positive



Ceramic buildings mixed with scale automobiles on a toy train layout. Fantastic! It's your layout, and so you decide what looks good on it.

comments, but what's really great is when people start to relate their own experience or note how something on your layout reminds them of their hometown. Then there's that look in their eyes when they are transported back decades ... all because of your work on the tabletop.

In the end, this hobby should be fun. It can be a lot of work, but pace yourself and enjoy the process. Never let chasing your dream become like working a second job. Do it because you like it, not because you have a timetable to follow. Leave that to the real railroads. **CTT**

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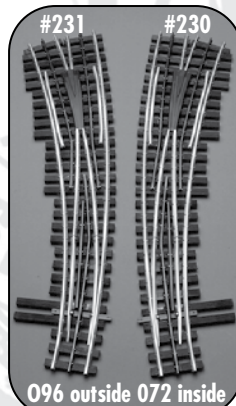
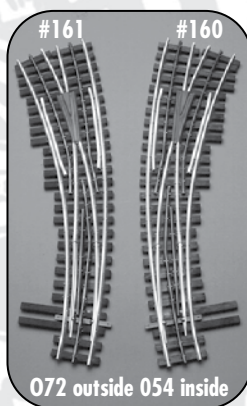
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YOUR PICTURES



▲ PAUL OGIN'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Most model railroaders prefer to spend many years building a single layout they consider their masterpiece. Veteran O gauge hobbyist Paul Ogin takes a very different approach: "I've been changing my layouts for more than 35 years," he explains. "I get new ideas and can't wait to tear one layout down and start a new one!" Luckily for us, Paul slowed down long enough from his labors in Wapwallopen, Pa., to snap a Union Pacific Electro-Motive SD70ACe from MTH Electric Trains passing a campsite on his latest display.



▲ NATIONAL TOY TRAIN MUSEUM'S WIDE GAUGE DISPLAY

With many operating layouts to enjoy, visitors to the National Toy Train Museum in Strasburg, Pa., can be excused if they miss the historical displays along the walls. Still, everyone should check them out, especially the beautiful tribute to the Wide Gauge trains and accessories made by the Ives Corp. in the first quarter of the 20th century. Engines and cars stand out against the wall made to look like an enlarged Ives box.



▲ ROBERT WITMAN'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Not all the most entertaining accessories date from postwar days. At least that's the opinion of Robert Witman. To prove his point, he made one of his favorite modern pieces a central feature of his O gauge layout in Avon, Ohio. The K-Line no. K703-8011 Dairymen's League milk car with unloading platform promises dependable operation while fitting well into this yard on his 11 x 45-foot display.

PHOTO ALBUM

YOUR PICTURES



◀ JOHN WARD'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

The sharp, neatly defined areas that were characteristic of the displays Lionel built for its authorized dealers in the 1950s have always appealed to John Ward. With firm memories of those classic compact railroads influencing him, he constructed a layout in his home in Park Ridge, N.J., featuring postwar trains and accessories. While a freight train made up of some of his no. 6464-series boxcars drifts past the nos. 128 animated newsstand and 132 passenger station, a no. 60 Lionelville trolley zips down a main line John made using sections of Super O track.



◀ JASON STUCKERT'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Three levels of intense railroad activity over an O gauge layout consisting of almost 170 square feet motivate Jason Stuckert to continue broadening his skills at making scenery and upgrading structures. However, from what we're seeing on his layout in Avon Lake, Ohio, Jason already has refined his talents in a remarkable fashion. The excellent trackwork and intriguing plan promise loads of satisfying operation. Expect to see more of Jason's layout in a future issue of *Classic Toy Trains*.

▼ PATRICK JEAN'S O GAUGE MODEL RAILROAD

Authentic, gritty, and compact – these are the terms that come to mind when seeing the photo Patrick Jean took of his O gauge layout. A resident of Montreal, he strives to replicate the feel of an urban railroad ferrying raw materials, such as the coal in the Lehigh Valley hopper, to distributors and factories. Look for more shots of Patrick's realistic and compact display in an upcoming issue of *Classic Toy Trains*.

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

PLEASE SEND your best pictures to CTT Photo Album, 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612 or email them to photoalbum@ClassicToyTrains.com. Digital photos must be taken with the camera set at the largest-possible file size. Include your name, address, and daytime telephone number; a description of each image; and the name of the photographer or layout owner. If your photo is published, we will pay you \$50 as long as we have not previously bought the photo.

For more on photos specs, please go to www.ClassicToyTrains.com/SubmissionGuidelines.



VIDEO PLUS

WITH RENE SCHWEITZER

Details make the difference

ADD A SCENIC BOOST TO YOUR LAYOUT

Details go a long way in adding realism to your O or S gauge layout. A few strategically placed people, benches, and clutter can make scenes come to life.

A couple of years ago, MR Video Plus built an O gauge project railroad called the City Terminal & Transfer Railway. Episode 15: "Details-o-Plenty," with hosts David Popp and Jenny Freeland, covers a number of easy-to-do scenery projects.

In addition to showing how to place figures in scenes, David shares a neat tip for leveling the feet of unbalanced figures.

Each item is thoughtfully placed into a scene. For example, one of the structures has debris next to it, so Jenny adds two men carrying garbage cans nearby.

Need a way to quickly add a bunch of road stripes? David has suggestions for those too, and the results look great! Looking for miscellaneous clutter? Jenny makes pallets you can place next to a factory.

What's helpful is that information is provided about each product David and Jenny use, including the manufacturer's website. You won't be left wondering where to find similar items.



Visit MRVideoPlus.com/CTTRY15 to watch the video. I dare you not to visit your local hobby store after watching to search for your own detail pieces. And if scenery isn't your thing, there are 14 other CT&T videos available on MRVP, covering a wide variety of subjects from benchwork to track! **CTT**

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PRODUCT NEWS

WITH THE CTT STAFF



COMEBACK KID: S&W Parts Supply, which suffered a devastating fire in December 2018, is back in business and is marking the occasion with two custom-run Lionel boxcars. Two road numbers are available: "1975" (the year the company was founded) and "2019." The O gauge cars cost \$85 each plus \$7.75 shipping or both for \$160 plus \$15 shipping. Order from S&W Parts Supply, 762 Whitney Dr., Niskayuna, NY 12309-3018 email trains@sandwparts.com. S&W is also accepting prewar and postwar Lionel trains and accessories for repairs.



FUEL FOR THOUGHT: Model the oilfields of the Southwest and you must have realistic pumps. Atlas O has answered this need with an operating accessory. The factory-assembled and wired O gauge oil pump operates on alternating current or direct current (8 to 22 volts) and is available in three color schemes, each priced at \$89.95. See your local retailer or contact Atlas O, 378 Florence Ave., Hillside, NJ 07205; 908-687-0880. For more information, go to www.atlasrr.com



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PRODUCT NEWS



GOING GREEN: Woodland Scenics has added Peel 'n' Place tufts in more colors and styles for O and S gauge. They include light and medium green grass tufts; red and violet flowering tufts; brown and yellow seeding tufts; brown-tipped, dark green, light green, and medium green prairie grass; and light and medium green edging strips, and everything is priced at \$9.99 each. See your retailer or contact Woodland Scenics, P.O. Box 98, Linn Creek, MO 65052. For information, visit www.woodlandscenics.com



TURN OF THE SCREWS: Anyone interested in repairing Lionel postwar locomotives knows reproduction screws must match what originally was used on the O gauge F3s and Train Masters. Packaged assortments of screws can be purchased from L&L Model Train Restoration Co., 1 Orient Way, Ste. F-348, Rutherford, NJ 07070. Minimum orders of \$15 plus shipping. For more information and to download a free catalog outlining the painting services and parts available, go to www.LenCarparelli.com

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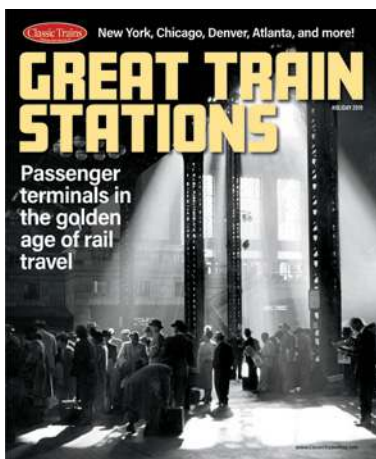
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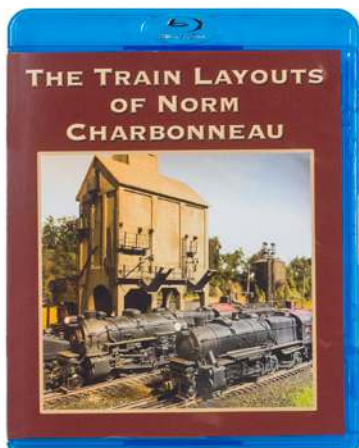
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SUPER STATIONS: Perfect for influencing your modeling or bringing back memories is *Great Train Stations*, the latest special-interest publication from *Classic Trains* magazine. This 108-page perfect-bound publication explores stations from railroading's golden age. It has maps, floor plans, and rare color photos. Priced at \$12.99 plus shipping, *Great Train Stations* is available from Kalmbach Media, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612. Order by going to www.KalmbachHobbyStore.com



HEY! NEW BLU-RAY: The first Blu-Ray disc produced by TM Books & Video has arrived. *The Train Layouts of Norm Charbonneau* invites viewers to spend time with one of today's best O gauge modelers. Norm has taken the quest for realism to a new level. The 76-minute video sells for \$19.99 plus shipping and can be ordered from TM Books & Video, P.O. Box 9228, Michigan City, IN 46361; 800-892-2822.



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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WITH JOSEPH L. MANIA & THE CTT STAFF



A Lionel 40-watt transformer should be able to handle the whistle on a postwar no. 239 steamer and tender. Yet it does so inconsistently, often leaving a train dragging behind them.

Quirky postwar whistle

WHY WON'T THE NO. 239 STEAMER SQUAWK WITH A NEW TRANSFORMER?

Q I have a Lionel postwar set. The engine is a no. 239 Scout-type 2-4-2 steamer with a no. 234W whistling tender. I have a new Lionel no. 81495 40-watt power supply running a small oval made of FasTrack sections. There aren't any accessories. There is wiring on each side of the straights going to the transformer.

The tender whistles only when the throttle control is set at 60 or lower. Also, when you push the whistle button, the 5-car train slows way down. What is the problem? – *Mike Smith, Kelso, Wash.*

A There are several issues at hand. First and foremost is the condition of the tender. If the motor and relay, along with the associated wiring, are not in good order, the whistle will cause problems. Remember also that the ground path for the whistle is through the frame and ultimately through the trucks and wheels. If that ground path is not clean, the whistle may not operate correctly.

The relay in the tender uses what's known as "DC Offset." Your transformer, like postwar ones, does also, but in different ways. The main difference is postwar transformers also add about 5 volts to the circuit for a few reasons, but one is to compensate for the whistle motor.

The fact that your transformer doesn't do this may be one reason the train slows down. Further, your having to use a lower

voltage to trigger it is an anomaly of the original design. Without going into the theory behind it all, the relay is designed to operate at 10 or 11 volts. At higher voltages, the offset becomes more apparent to the relay; at a high enough voltage, it will close without the whistle controller.

All told, the problem you have is probably due to both the transformer and the tender. The tender possibly is not in perfect operating order, and the transformer isn't designed for the purpose of closing a shaded pole relay.

SLIDING SHOES DON'T ACTIVATE

Q I have several postwar Lionel operating cars that use sliding shoes to activate their mechanism. In some cases, I can't get them to operate on a traditional O-27 remote-control track (that is a section with the two "extra" rails), though they will operate when I apply 12 volts to the shoes directly from wires connected to the transformer. I've checked the extra rails on the RCS track, and they are putting out the required voltage. I think there is no direct contact between the rails and the sliding shoes. Is there some way to adjust the shoes or the rails to correct this? – *John Gottcent, Evansville, Ind.*

A All postwar operating cars with sliding shoes should work on the no. 6019 operating track section.

You've done most of the diagnosis, finding that the cars and your track section are in electrical operating order. That leaves the mechanical conditions of the slide shoes in relation to the operating rails.

The track is easy to check, as damage to the fiber board holding the rails is easy to see after checking the top and bottom of the section. If the fiber board is broken, the rails can sink and so fail to come in contact with the rivet head in the shoe.

That brings us to the shoes. The rivet holding the shoe together, and in the truck itself, doubles as the contact for the rail. What you see in the center of the shoe is actually the head of the rivet. As the car passes over the control track, the head slides over the rail; over time, it will wear down. This is probably causing yours not to touch the rails.

Additionally, the spring that pushes the shoe down may be worn. The wires may not be as flexible as they once were and so are pulling the shoes up a bit.

Because you may not know the service history of the cars, someone could have replaced the original shoes. The origin of



The sliding shoes on Lionel operating cars facilitated the activation of a mechanism when they were stopped on a special remote-control track section designed with five rails.



the parts and their replacement method may cause problems. The original parts were made of Bakelite, and the rivet had a rounded head. Some reproduction shoes are molded out of a different kind of plastic, one that (unlike the original thermo-setting type) melts after being formed.

Another cause is that some reproduction rivets have the wrong head shape. I've seen some that, even with the proper replacement methods, don't work because the head is shorter.

Lastly, the person replacing the shoes must first rivet the assembly together with the proper tools to the proper degree of tightness. Cinching the rivet too much can cause the head to recede into the shoe. Also, since the shoe can deform with heat, properly soldering the wire to the rivet becomes critical. Too much heat can cause the same thing.

All in all, John, I'd say you're on the right course. It may be easier to replace the shoes and the wires. **CTT**



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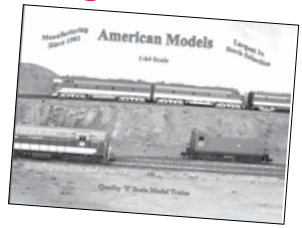
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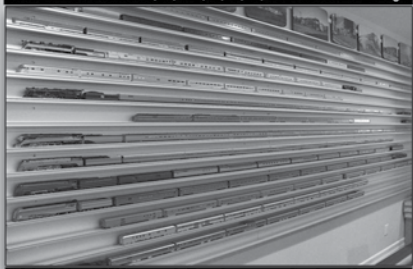
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VIEWS FROM THE UNDERGROUND

WITH LOU PALUMBO

Trains with benefits

THERE ARE SO MANY REASONS TO COLLECT

Collecting trains can involve more than just gathering toys and related accessories. Hunting for the models we collect is really an excellent activity during leisure hours.

We spend many hours researching the items we want for our collection. Then we meet with friends and form alliances to complete our tasks. Discussing and comparing our finds is a lot of fun after a "hunt," and it inspires us to move on to the next one.

A lot of hobbyists hunt in groups and compare their finds after each train hunt. They spend many enjoyable hours talking about this hobby. The camaraderie is priceless.

The joy of making a layout is unlike any other hobby. The building and improving of the landscape of this new imaginary world provides gratification.

We visit train shops and attend shows in our quest to find new items. Every dedicated hobbyist eventually attends what is the largest and best show: the huge show sponsored twice each year by the Eastern Division of the Train Collectors Association in York, Pa. It provides a wonderful way for people to meet other train enthusiasts and see and buy many fantastic model trains from every era.

The show at York is partially open to the public. A visitor can buy a one- or two-day pass to enter two of the large buildings filled with dealers selling new and vintage trains. Access to the other five buildings at the York Fairgrounds is only for TCA members and their guests.

Recently, the TCA membership wisely decided to open some of the halls to non-members to encourage some folks to see the York show and join the organization as regular members.

The York show takes place on Friday and Saturday one week in April and one week in October each year. If you ever have the opportunity to attend the show, you definitely should not miss it.

All the major manufacturers of O and S gauge trains are present in the Orange Hall, which will be open to the public. People therefore have a unique opportunity to check out all the new products

Atlas, Bachmann, Lionel, MTH, and others have planned each year.

In addition, show attendees enjoy time to speak with staff members from all the large manufacturers. They can also talk to many of the largest national retail train dealers.

Classic Toy Trains has a booth in the Orange Hall. You can meet the editors, see and buy new products,

and share your ideas on what you like about CTT and how it can be improved.

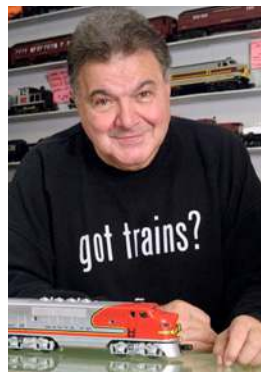
Yours truly is also in the Orange Hall. I spend most of my time speaking with the many loyal readers of my exclusive "Views From the Underground" column and pick up model train information. I sell new and old trains and sign copies of my new books.

We spend hours planning to attend the York meets. Best of all, we make new friends each year while sharing the numerous facets of our great hobby.

Model trains provide an outlet to build a hobby sure to offer us benefits now and well into our later years. We end up with something to share with our friends and family now and later. Our trains become a legacy to be passed on to the next generation.

Trains with benefits – that captures our hobby in three simple words!

Keep searchin' **CTT**



LOU PALUMBO, the owner of the Underground Railroad Shoppe in New Castle, Pa., writes this exclusive column for *Classic Toy Trains*. He can be reached at 1906 Wilmington Rd., New Castle, PA 16105 or by email at trainplum@yahoo.com

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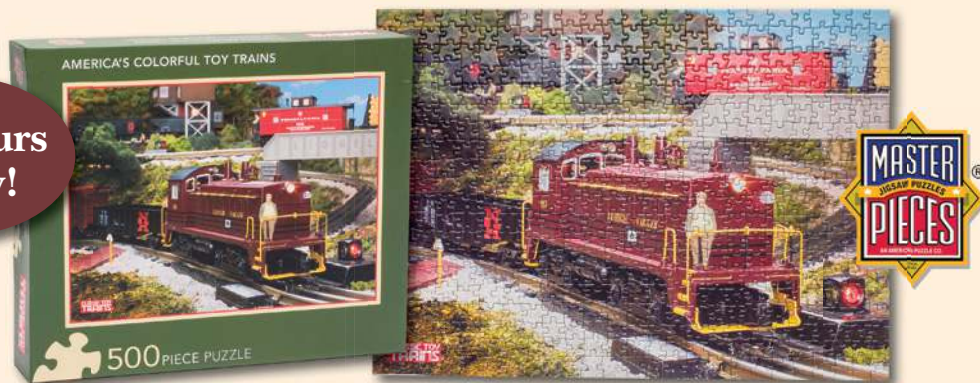
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ROOTS RUN DEEP

EXPLORE JOHN AND CATHY ROSE'S CHESAPEAKE & OLD DOMINION LINE

By Roger Carp • Photos by John Rose

Something about trains seeps into the heart and soul of certain people and never leaves. Then they convey their love of locomotives and cabooses, their passion for passenger cars and stations to others, particularly those younger than they. What happens over time is the newcomers decide to study railroading, to snap pictures of vintage and current engines, and to construct layouts.

After 70 years of riding trains and creating layouts, John Rose understands that phenomenon. This lifelong O gauge enthusiast has lived it in every sense, being ushered into the exciting world of railroading by his brothers and an uncle while a boy. Many decades later, John finds himself guiding his grandchildren into that thrilling realm.

The journey John has taken since the 1950s has followed different paths. These days, he and his wife, Cathy, use an O gauge layout named the Chesapeake & Old Dominion Line to initiate members of a fourth generation in their family. They look forward to enjoying the contributions of their grandchildren as their 15 x 20½-foot around-the-walls display continues to evolve.

1 John Rose, with help and support from his wife, Cathy, has designed an O gauge display unlike the ones typically featured in *Classic Toy Trains*. It has three independent levels of action, with building flats and backdrops on the walls.



Santa and an uncle start it

The extended timeline John uses to chart his life in the toy train hobby begins with rejection and disappointment. Hard to believe, but he dates the first step in his journey to Christmas 1947. Santa Claus, really John's mother and father, proved to be generous that day. Two of John's older brothers discovered a Lionel freight train pulled by a no. 1666 steamer.

But no one bothered to deliver a toy train to 7-year-old John. Missing out on a set in 1947 left him hungering for one and incited in him a determination to play with what David and Pete had. So, when the older boys headed off to school, he managed to sneak upstairs and run the short freights over their 3-rail track.

Better still, a beloved uncle who lived a few hours from the Rose family eagerly shared his O gauge layout with John and the other nephews. Highlights of his roster included a Lionel no. 773 Hudson steam engine and tender pulling heavyweight passenger cars and no. 2343 Santa Fe F3 diesels on the point of a long freight.

John, inspired by his uncle's three-rail display, pushed ahead. His dreams of a big O gauge layout grew in magnitude and

depth. Someday, he knew he would join the exclusive group among his extended family that had railroading in their blood.

His turn at last

It took a few years, but Santa Claus got smarter. Really, it was Mr. and Mrs. Rose

2 The Rose family likes using command control on the layout. Even the youngest members feel comfortable running trains using Lionel's TrainMaster Command Control and its LionChief Plus, along with MTH's Digital Command System.

who weighed the interest of their fourth son and concluded he was ready for his own train. Christmas of 1954 stood out as another key step on John's hobby timeline. He received no. 2032 Erie Alco PA units and a nice assortment of freight cars. Delighted, he began planning a layout.

John's parents handed over real estate in the attic of their home for him to launch construction. Did we mention the upper part of the residence had no heat? Clad in his heavy winter coat and occasionally wearing gloves, John persevered until he had laid and wired the track and situated various Plasticville U.S.A. kits.

Surviving the frigid winters and humid summers in the attic reflected the depth of John's commitment. Too bad the layout was vulnerable to a squirrel that entered the attic and destroyed the mountains.

John's father got involved and built his son an 8 x 12-foot O gauge layout in the basement, where temperatures were not as extreme and little critters were locked out. The display worked out perfectly until John reached adolescence and other priorities replaced Lionel trains. However, he recalled how kids dropping by to listen to records and dance appreciated the 3-rail display, even the girls.

AT A GLANCE

Name: John and Cathy Rose's Chesapeake & Old Dominion Line

Gauge: O

Dimensions: 15 x 20½ feet

Track: GarGraves (diameters range from 31 to 72 inches)

Switches: Ross Custom Switches

Motive power: K-Line, Lionel (postwar, modern), MTH, Ready Made Trains, Right-of-Way Industries, Williams

Rolling stock: Atlas O, K-Line, Lionel (postwar, modern), Menards, MTH, RGS Trains, Williams

Controls: Lionel type-ZW, MTH no. Z-4000 transformers (3) with Lionel TrainMaster Command Control and MTH Digital Command System

Accessories: American Flyer, Ives, Lionel (postwar, modern), MTH, Z-Stuff for Trains

Structures: Department 56, Empirerail, Evans Designs, Lemax, Lionel, Menards, MTH, Plasticville, scratchbuilt, Skyline, Weaver, Westport Model Works

Vehicles: Corgi, Ertl, Matchbox, Mattel, Rextoys, Solido, Tootsietoy

Figures: Artista, Model Works, Scenic Express, Woodland Scenics



What John and Cathy treasure most about their 15 x 20½-foot layout is how their grandchildren have contributed enthusiasm, ideas, and energy for it.

Catching a new generation

Skip ahead from the 1960s, when John passed his trains to his nephews, to the late 1970s, when the postwar pieces made their way back. It was time to get back to O gauge modeling, he thought. Repairing the old 1666 steamers was the first step; constructing a new layout was the second. His young sons were quickly smitten.

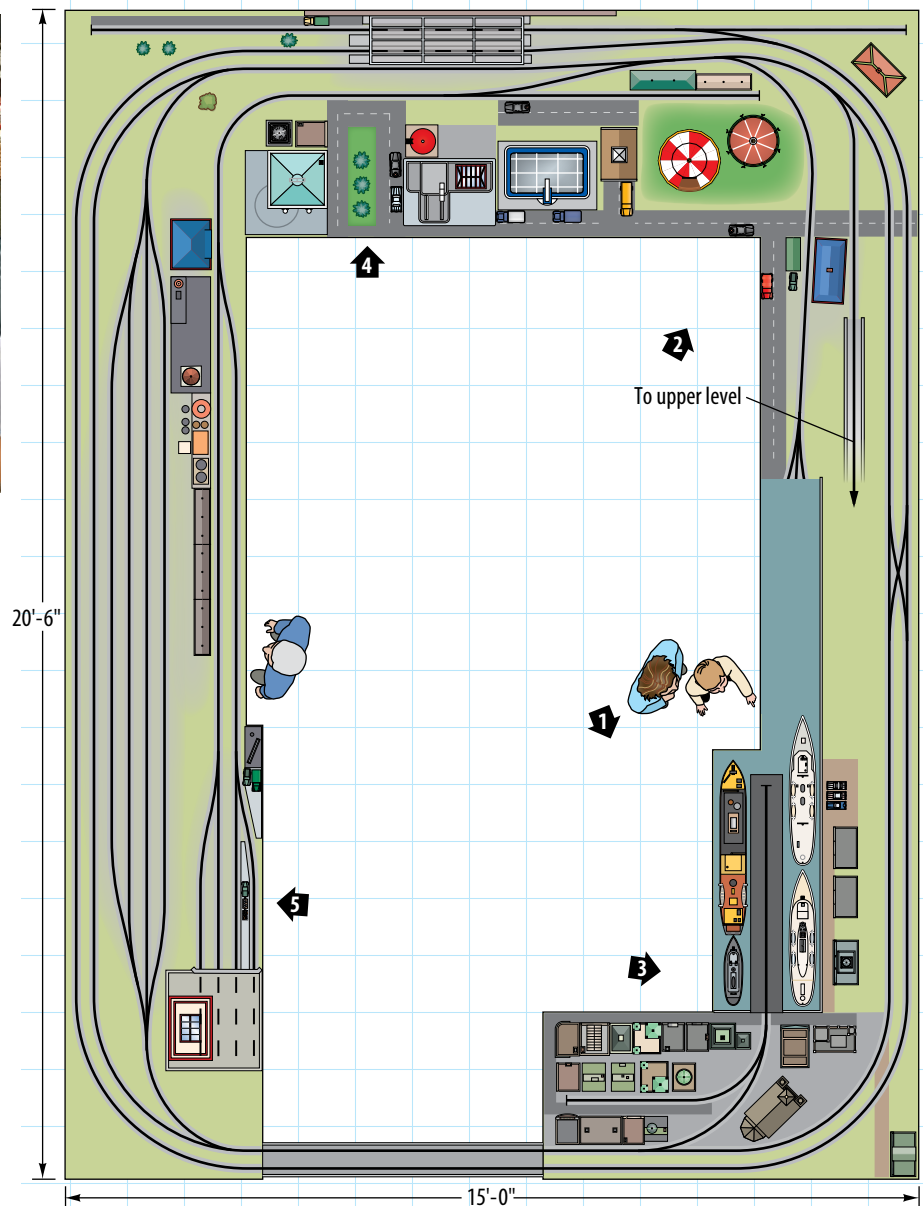
Thus had John captured a new generation in his family. The boys enjoyed fixing the layout and running the trains. Despite a flood in the basement of the Rose home- stead, the railroad refused to die. Plaster mountains, handmade bridges, a round- house, and lichen bushes were highlights.

Meanwhile, John's fascination with what Lionel had cataloged during his youth grew. He patronized a train store in his hometown and joined the Train Col- lectors Association. His roster of vintage as well as contemporary Lionel engines and rolling stock expanded in the 1980s.

More moves followed. No matter where John lived, regardless of how tight the quarters might be, he put up a 3-rail lay- out. By the 1990s, he had acquired his uncle's collection and kept picking up Lio- nel trains from every period of produc- tion. Cathy was not about to dissent.

Something different

The O gauge displays John had built since the very first one in his parents' attic had encouraged him to walk around to watch his trains. That was also true of the com- pact layouts Cathy and he constructed in condos they called home after they became empty nesters. To their regret, the



Trains can make complete runs around the perimeter of the O gauge Chesapeake & Old Dominion Line using lift bridges on the different levels. The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photos taken by John Rose.

curves tended to be too tight to permit running their biggest locomotives.

When the Roses settled into a retire- ment community, they recognized a tradi- tional layout might not be the answer. But they had to find a solution rapidly because their young grandkids, Jacob and Ken- nedy, wanted to watch the trains operate. Cathy and John spied an empty bedroom in the basement measuring 15½ x 20 feet. They agreed it would be ideal for a layout, with space for his shop area.

John proposed making their latest lay- out an around-the-walls type with inde- pendent levels on which a train or two would journey. But instead of proceeding

on his own, he discussed the design with his wife and grandson.

The three of them formed the board of directors of the Chesapeake & Old Dominion Line, a fictitious railway whose lines crisscross the Commonwealth of Vir- ginia in the first half of the 20th century. John, Cathy, and Jacob put their heads together to create a model railroad intended to achieve their diverse goals.

Realistic operation appealed to Jacob, particularly because he had grown up admiring Norfolk Southern diesels, including the Heritage units. Cathy loved all the bling and flash associated with Christmas. She insisted on special effects,



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3 The transfer of freight and people from ships and barges to trains influences the finances and character of the Chesapeake & Old Dominion Line. While a tugboat prepares to dock, a marching band parades down Water Street.

tons of lights, and surprises. John went along with every idea – “I like toys and old-time Lionel trains, big-time steamers, and prototype East Coast railroads.”

Two main influences

John listened attentively to his partners at

Four generations of this extended family have experienced the many pleasures of building layouts.

the helm of the C&ODL. He felt responsible for incorporating the major elements of what Cathy and Jacob wanted. At the same time, however, he hoped to teach them about the history of model railroad-ing, a heritage that should influence the design and look of the new layout.

At the center of John’s thinking were two giants of the hobby. John Allen had built a HO scale railroad wonderfully combining realism with illusion and humor. Frank Ellison had developed a path-setting O gauge layout emphasizing

operation. He communicated in articles how railroads had touched small towns.

Learning from the pioneers taught John how to create a unique multiple-level display reflecting new technology. Thanks to Jacob studying Lionel’s TrainMaster Command Control and MTH’s Digital Command System, the family could walk around with their trains and run them in a prototypical way that Allen and Ellison could only have dreamed of.

Overall goals for success

Productive meetings of Jacob and his grandparents culminated in their complete agreement on how to proceed. The C&ODL was going to be a three-level railroad assembled on the perimeter of the train room. The basic level would be built atop cabinets, and the upper two levels would be attached to the walls. Installing lift-out bridges should alleviate the need for any ducking under.

The railroad was set in Virginia, so its scenery would be representative of what travelers might have seen there 60 to 80 years ago. There was going to be a harbor

with ships and rail barges. Also, realistic structures would establish the era and location while accessories promised fun.

Benchwork and backdrops

Once the room had been transformed with superb lighting, cabinets, carpeting, and furniture, construction went forward. Benchwork used 2 x 4 pieces of lumber over which was laid a foundation consisting of ½-inch-thick plywood.

Assuming importance next were the upper levels attached to the walls with shelving braces. The width generally varied from 10 to 12 inches, although a few areas ended up broader to accommodate mountains fashioned out of foam.

Then came the backdrops. John smiled when describing his clever method. He cherry-picked the finest postcards from his ample collection of illustrations of scenes from Virginia and used a photo scanner to duplicate them. Setting the pictures in black valences to divide levels and hide wiring finished the process.

How about the blue sky and white clouds? John shared his secrets. “The sky is Liquitex professional spray paint on



4 Folks have gathered around the station, lost in their thoughts while making plans for the upcoming weekend. They pay no attention to a troop train passing through.

white foamcore. I did it in light coats to leave patches of the foam to serve as clouds.” Meanwhile, John was cutting out scenes, including trees, from some postcards and gluing them right to the foam.

Getting more support

John treasured Jacob’s participation. There was something special about planning and building with his grandson by his side. Of

course, other priorities and “distractions” came to the fore once Jacob reached high school and then started driving.

Luckily for John and his wife, someone else arrived who was younger and more excited about the layout. Yep, another grandson – this one named Sammy.

Satisfied with all the GarGraves pieces installed and the Ross Custom Switches used, John turned to putting in many

accessories. New items from MTH added life to the layout. So did structures from the postwar and modern eras. A Skyline station and a reissue of another from Lionel’s prewar line captivated viewers. Other favorites came from Department 56.

Particularly useful on the upper levels were building flats and preprinted sheets picturing commercial and industrial facilities. John credited the items put out by Empirerail, and Westport Model Works.

Nods of approval from Jacob and granddaughter Kennedy as well as squeals of delight from Sammy told John he had done everything to perfection. From then on, it was just a matter of picking details.

Ready to wait

John occasionally reflects on the journey his fascination with trains has taken him. He expresses gratitude to his dad and uncle for introducing him to the joys of Lionel. He thanks his older brothers for letting him play with their trains.

John realizes how fortunate he has been to have enjoyed running O gauge trains with his wife and sharing the hobby with his children. Even if their passion never equaled his, at least there have been grandchildren to join him. **CTT**



5 Red and gold stripes, along with the gold lettering and numerals, add a helping of elegance to Baltimore & Ohio 4-6-2 Pacific no. 5307. The Lionel locomotive, stylishly painted blue and gray, stands out when posed next to the vintage truck and carts.



• EYE-CATCHING SCENERY •

BRING A BIKE RIDER



TO LIFE

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

PARTS

- Atlas N scale code 80 flextrack (two sections, each 29 ½ inches long)
- Atlas N scale rail joiners
- Bachmann no. 60052 N scale Plymouth switcher (or similar)
- K-Line no. K-4170 set of 32 unpainted figures
- Track nails
- Wall transformer (cell phone charger), 3.5-5 VDC

MISCELLANEOUS

- 5-minute epoxy
- Craft paint, acrylic
- Flat white spray paint primer
- Hook-up wire
- Plywood, ¼ inch thick
- Styrene
- Super glue
- Wire from large paperclips
- Wood blocks

HIDDEN TRACK HELPS CREATE THIS ANIMATED SCENE

Story and photos by Joseph Rampolla

Animation can bring your layout to life! Making a bicycle move will be a big hit with guests, creating great memories of the visit and showing how much fun the hobby can be.

The secret to this sleight-of-hand is an N scale locomotive and track. Bachmann's Plasticville Frosty Bar provides the perfect venue for the lad on the 2-wheeler to perform his magic.

Layout and cutting

Cut two 12 x 20-inch pieces of ¼-inch-thick plywood. Use the diagram to lay out the kidney-shaped bike path on one plywood piece; this will become the upper deck. The pattern can be any shape the N scale track and locomotive can manage; I chose the bare minimum



Fig. 1: After cutting piece A, you can use it as a template to draw the track centerline on piece C. The cut area can be any shape as long as the flextrack can conform.

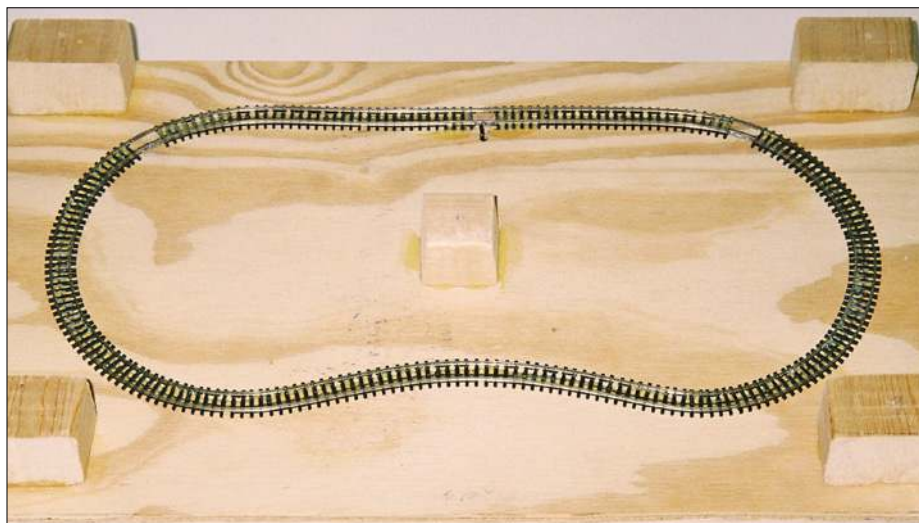


Fig. 2: Lay the flextrack on the centerline. It's easier to connect sections of track in a straight line versus making a joint on a curve. Nail the track through holes in the ties.



Once the bike is attached to the locomotive, connect a low-voltage DC power source to the rails and make a test run. Fine-tune it until the switcher runs smoothly.

curve of 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch radius. If you'd rather work with larger HO scale equipment, the minimum curve radius will be about 14 inches.

Cut out the center section (piece B) with a saber saw. Then use piece A (Fig. 1) as a template to trace the centerline for the N scale flextrack on the lower deck (C).

Glue wood blocks, approximately 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, to the corners and middle of the lower deck to act as spacers for the upper deck as in Fig. 2. Smaller or larger spacer blocks can be used as long as your hand can fit between the decks for track cleaning.

Laying the flextrack

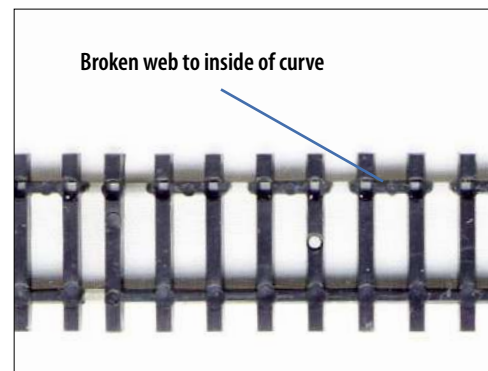
Flextrack has nail holes in the ties and one rail with a broken web. The latter side goes to the inside of a curve.

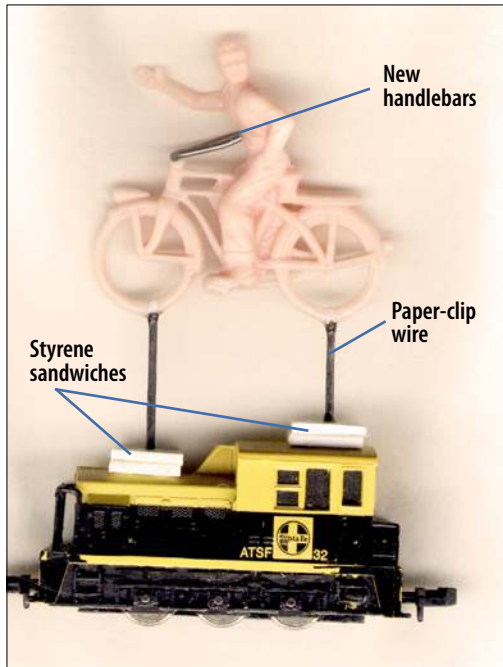
Make the first track joint by butting the ends of two pieces of flextrack, soldering rail joiners in place on each mating set of rails. Be sure to keep the rails with the broken web along the same side. It's advisable and easier to make track joints on tangent (straight) sections. A trial run will help you determine where the joints fall.

Nail the flextrack to the lower deck along the centerline, being careful not to strike the tops of the rails.

Lay the track until the rails meet again, leaving about four inches free at each end. Cut the rails to about an inch of the finished length, align as in Fig. 2, and use a motor tool with a cutoff wheel to make the final cuts. Be sure to wear eye protection.

Slide on the rail joiners, soldering if desired, then use a nail set to finish driving home the brads. Solder a pair of wires to the rails, and attach them to a wall-wart style low-voltage transformer.





I used an old 3.5-VDC cell phone charger. Once the locomotive is running well, glue down the track by drizzling yellow carpenter's glue between the ties, making sure to keep it off the rails.

The K-Line figure

The boy on the bike found in a K-Line set of 32 unpainted figures is perfect to make laps in the Frosty Bar parking lot. These old figure sets can still be found at shows and on Internet auction sites.

I made a more realistic handlebar from a paperclip and used cyanoacrylate adhesive (CA) to glue the right side of it to the boy's sweater to provide stability.

Next, I cut two pieces of wire, each about 1½ inches long, from a large paperclip for the supporting rods that attach the bike to the switcher. I drilled holes in each bike tire to accept the rods and secured them with a drop of CA.

I cut four scraps of .060-inch-thick styrene and laminated two of them together. Then I drilled small holes to accept the rods from the figure and glued them to the switcher's shell. A bit of weight (a nut and bolt or small fishing weight) glued to the top of the shell may aid the performance of the little switcher.

Fine-tune the kerf

It will require some adjustment to get the top deck and the board B into alignment as in Fig. 3. Place pieces A and B on their

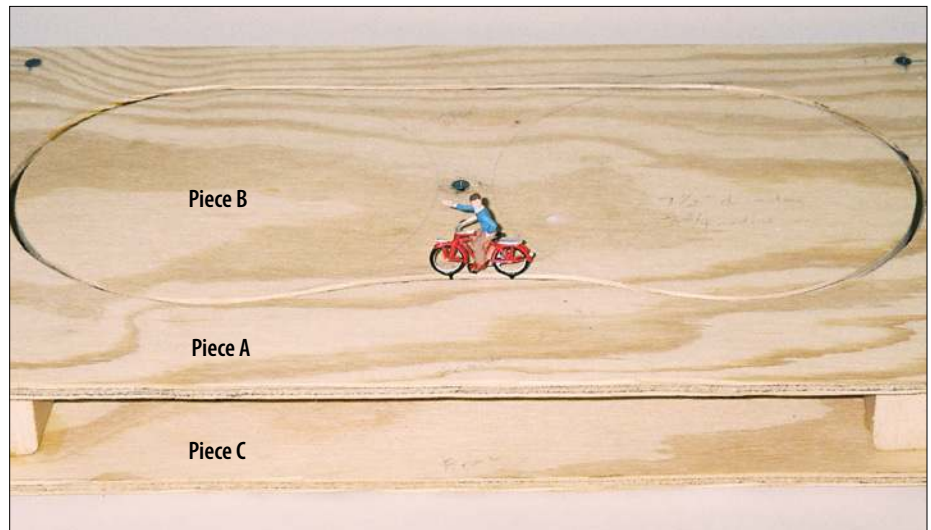


Fig. 3: Test-fitting all the pieces with the bicycle is the key to making everything work. Run the switcher to make sure the wires move through the slot without binding.

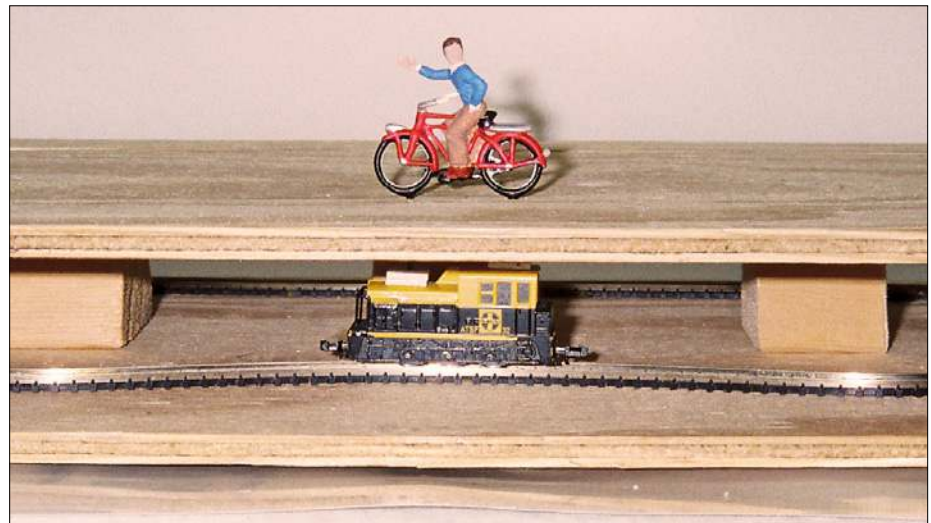


Fig. 4: Some sanding may be required to open up the slot to help the rider move around the course. Painting flat black inside the slot itself will help hide it.

respective supports and sand as needed to allow the bike to make its way around the slot (Fig. 4).

When everything has been aligned, attach the pieces to their spacers with drywall screws.

Remember to put the screws for piece B in an accessible area, as it may become necessary to remove for servicing the track or switcher.

As it's not meant to run continuously, the switcher needs frequent breaks. Installing a gap in the rail and a switch can provide intermittent operation. I advise locating the gap behind the Frosty Bar on a

straight section of track; this way the rider is out of sight while resting.

Painting sets the scene

Paint the upper deck to resemble black asphalt; flat black will make the kerf less obtrusive. Remember to paint white rims on the bike's tires to define them against the blacktop. Don't worry if you're not a great painter – the figure will be moving.

Hope our bike-riding friend has a chance to partake of a little refreshment at the drive-in. There's nothing like a cold milkshake after a little exercise. Watch out for him! **CTT**



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Sometimes simplicity is the best feature. A gravel road and a farmer hauling hay with a tractor and wagon serve to create a scene that catches the eye and tells a story.

HOW ONE MODELER ESTABLISHES RURAL REALISM

A system for SCENERY

Story and photos by Neil Schorr



When I last wrote about my O gauge layout (February 2016), I told how I built Duncannon, the first urban scene on my layout. At the northern end of that small town, the Juniata River flows into the Susquehanna.

The headwaters of the Juniata are far to the west at the base of the Allegheny escarpment, which is the eastern continental divide.

From there, the Juniata flows eastward, cutting through the “Endless Mountains,” a series of repetitive ridges that define the topography of central Pennsylvania.

It was along the banks of the Juniata

River that the Pennsylvania RR found an easy route to the west as it left the Susquehanna River Valley. On my layout, the section of the railroad just west of Duncannon is built on a ledge carved into the base of a mountain along the banks of the Juniata River, like the prototype. The scene is roughly 30 feet long, and was designed to depict the classic 4-track Pennsy mainline.

I put the 30-inch-deep shelf to good use, with short tangent sections flanking a broad curve. This also allowed me to keep the track centers down to as little as 3¾ inches, or 15 scale feet, not much more than the prototype’s 13 feet.

Working the system

When I build my scenery, I generally stick to the same scenario. First, I airbrush the track and then I build the scenery behind it. I then ballast the track between the two outermost rails.

Next, I create the scenery in front of the track, and finally, I place the ballast



The scenery on Neil Schorr's gauge layout captures the look and feel of the Pennsylvania RR's bucolic – and sometimes rugged – Middle Division in the 1940s and '50s. The 4-track mainline and knife-edge ballast were trademarks of the railroad.

between the outer rails and the finished scenery. Sticking to this sequence avoids damaging any scenery on the near side of the tracks while building that beyond the right-of-way. Leaving the ballast work beyond the outer rails to the end allows me to neatly blend the ballast with the finished scenery adjacent to the tracks.

I tried a new technique when building the hillside on the stretch of track west of Duncannon. On a prior section of scenery, I formed the rough contours of a

hillside by stapling chicken wire to wood supports. I then covered the chicken wire with paper towels soaked in Hydrocal plaster. When everything was dry, I drilled small holes in the hardshell surface, then inserted hundreds of meat skewers. Finally, I placed polyfiber “puffball” trees coated with medium and dark green ground foam onto the skewers.

The finished hillside looked fine, but it was obvious there was an easier way! This time around, I again used chicken wire to form the contours of the hillside,

stapling it to profile boards cut from scrap plywood. Then I just stuffed the puffballs into the chicken wire. The result was just as good as on the prior section, if not better, and it took much less time.

My son, Steven, was a huge help on this section. The hillside contains exactly 600 puffballs; he made 475 of them!

Moving forward from the hillside, I built the drainage ditch between the bottom of the mountain and the edge of the ballast. It's made of sand, which is very inexpensive and easy to use. A V-shaped trough was formed, then I thoroughly





Along this stretch of the heavily trafficked 4-track main, the only scenery is a signal bridge and the lineside equipment that makes it work. The detailed and wired telegraph poles, hillside foliage, and the weathered cars add to the realism.

soaked it with diluted white glue. Next, I lightly sprinkled Woodland Scenics grass mix and cinders and allowed to dry for several days.

The next step was to create the slope between the track and the fascia, and a sliver of the Juniata River.

The subroadbed here is elevated 8 inches above the benchwork. This makes it ideal to stack four layers of 2-inch-thick pink insulating foam to create the slope. The layers are bonded using foamboard adhesive. Once dry, the foamboard is rough cut using a Hotwire Foam Factory foamboard cutter. Next, I used a rasp to

carve the final shape. I'm careful to adhere to sound engineering principles and make my slope no steeper than a rise of two inches for every three inches of width. This yields a highly realistic slope identical to that used by the Pennsy. A rounded shoulder about an inch wide provides a transition between the railroad grade and the adjacent slope.

The slope is built in 3- to 5-foot sections that can be finished in my workshop. There, each piece is laid on scrap wood so the sloped area is level. Then it's painted with flat earth-colored latex house paint and allowed to dry. Then I can apply ground foam and cinders without it all washing down the slope when diluted white glue is applied.

I give the scenery at least 24 hours to dry before taking it back to the layout room for installation.

The sections are secured using foamboard adhesive, which is also used to caulk gaps between adjacent sections prior to hiding them with latex paint and ground cover. I jokingly refer to this technique as "Chunk O' Scenery."

Finally, the track edges are ballasted. This area of the layout represents the 1940's and '50s when maintenance crews still finished the ballast to a sharp edge using hand tools. We create this effect by actually masking off the ballast edge

with tape. Once the ballast is glued down, my son, Steven, goes back and picks errant pieces of ballast off the shoulder and slope using a toothpick.

For all the time put into accurately recreating the hillside and right-of-way, structures are conspicuously absent from this roughly 30-foot stretch. This provides the illusion that the trains are actually going somewhere.

The only structure on this stretch of railroad is a signal bridge and its attendant scratchbuilt relay case. There's a simulated cable drop connecting the latter to the telegraph poles adjacent to the right-of-way. These often-omitted line poles are an essential scenic element for a 1940s-'50s-era railroad.

Growing a farm scene

Heading west out of the narrow gap in the mountain ridge, both the prototype and model enter one of the broad farm valleys so common in this part of Pennsylvania. This change in topography allowed me to finally model an authentic farm scene.

Growing up in western Pennsylvania and first visiting the area portrayed on the layout in 1975, I'd always wanted to model a typical Pennsylvania barn and farmhouse. Having seen both countless times, it was apparent that many of them shared common architectural features.

The architectural term for what I longed to build was a "Pennsylvania barn."



To make a tree-covered hill, Neil started with chicken wire attached to plywood formers. His son, Steven, in addition to shaping the roadbed for the track, made most of the puffball trees needed to cover the hillside.



Banked barns, so named because they are built into hillsides or banks of earth, are a staple of central Pennsylvania. The one that graces this scene was built board by board using stained coffee-stirring sticks on an MDF core. A silo adds to the rural charm.

Also called a “banked barn,” such a structure has three essential elements. First, they typically are built into a hillside or earthen bank. Next, they have a forebay, which is an overhang of the second story over the foundation. The third is the roof has just two flat planes.

While there are several ready-to-use O scale barns on the market, I would have to scratchbuild my own to fit the location.

I worked from photographs to develop plans. Once drawings were completed, I built a core from ¼-inch medium-density fiberboard (MDF) and glued it together. A few windows and doors were cut out before assembly.

Next, I recreated the stone foundation by laminating Noch 57700 Granit material to the lower part of the structure using 3M Super 77 spray adhesive.

For realism, it would be best to model the wood part with individual stained boards. Scribed wood wouldn’t produce the same effect. It turned out to be a lot easier and cheaper than I’d anticipated.

First, I bought a box of 5½-inch-long wood coffee stirrers; a box of a thousand costs only a few dollars. Then I soaked about 50 at a time in a shallow plastic container partially filled with Hunter Line Barn Red stain.

Once they were dry, I glued the “boards” onto the MDF core using Elmer’s white glue, taking care to line them up to minimize gaps. Finally, I weighted the boards down, in my case with a heavy glass line pole insulator.

I keep the glue layer thin so it dries rapidly. I usually apply about eight boards at a time, give them about 15 minutes to dry, and then go on to the next batch. Though it sounds tedious, it really goes pretty fast, and only took a few weeks to accomplish. The final result is well worth the effort!

A Tichy Train Group window was installed at each end of the barn. The four louvers are ½-inch-scale dollhouse shutters painted white, weathered, and glued

onto the side of the barn.

The roof is two sheets of styrene. On top I applied overlapping rows of masking tape. Then I painted it flat black and weathered it to simulate roofing paper. An important rooftop detail is the lightning rods commonly found on these barns. They’re easy to simulate using a short

The scenery is built in sections that can be finished in my workshop. Then I take it back to the layout room for installation

piece of brass wire with a few beads from a crafts store and a dab of silver paint. A clear matte coating helps finish them.

The last major element of the barn is the silo. For this, I used an Ertl model purchased years ago. These are still easy to find on eBay, and though they’re 1/64 scale, I raised mine up on a block of pink foam hidden by a small simulated con-



The farm wouldn't be complete without a house. The tidy structure rests on a stone foundation, like the barn. Fenceposts made with toothpicks and some old tires and lumber serve as scenic accents for this farm scene along the PRR's Middle Division.

crete retaining wall. That made it the perfect height.

The dome at the top is spray-painted silver, then with matte finish. The lower concrete portion is painted with flat khaki, then weathered with Bragdon's black weathering powders.

Woodland Scenics no. A2724 Holstein cows, are perfect for this dairy farm. Don't forget the cows need to be fed, and JTT

tractor operator is the final touch.

The tractor and wagon travel on a dirt and gravel road that was made by carving shallow ruts into the pink foam base. Then the roadway was painted with flat earth-colored latex house paint. Next, N scale gray ballast was lightly applied, followed by some sand and earth-tone ground foam to create the effect of gravel slowly sinking into the mud.

Last, turf and a few scrubby weeds are applied to the ridge between the ruts using Woodland Scenics grass blend turf and coarse dark green ground foam.

Along with all barns there has to be a farmhouse. Mine was built out of an American Model Builders no. 486 kit I built the per the directions, painting it the typical white, with trim painted a deep red to match the barn.

As with the barn, it's built on a slope to enhance realism, which necessitated construction of a foundation. This is made of Noch no. 57710 Dolomit laminated onto a

¼-inch-thick MDF foundation.

Steps were added using a Builders in Scale kit. Flowers from JTT enhance the front of the house, and a woodpile made of twigs found in my front yard was used to build a stack of firewood on the side porch. A few large shade trees, a gravel driveway complete with a 1955 pickup truck, and an outhouse detailed with an Artista figure sitting on the toilet reading a newspaper complete the scene.

A few large shade trees, a gravel driveway complete with a 1955 pickup truck, and an outhouse complete the house scene

no. 95583 haybales, are ideal.

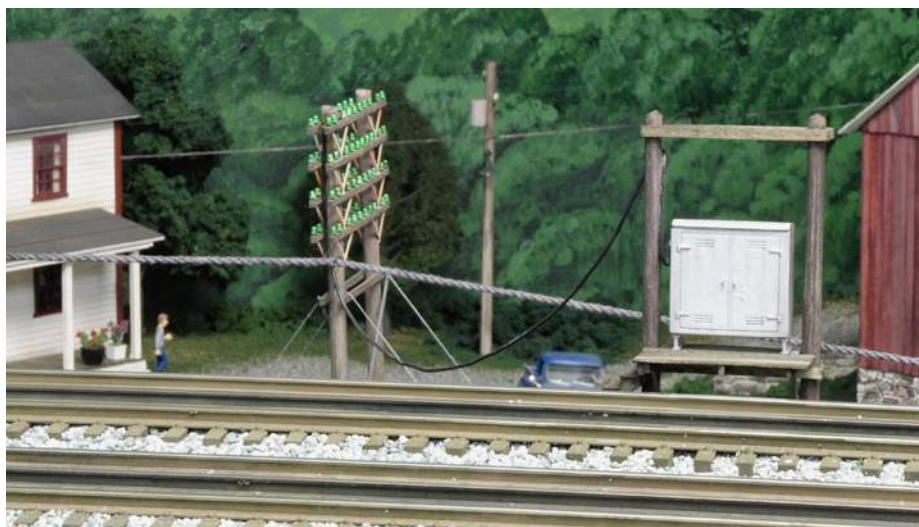
Beyond the fence, more hay bales are on the way via wagon. I was unable to find a good model of a hay wagon, so it's kit-bashed from a contemporary side-dump wagon and some stripwood.

It's pulled by a die-cast 1950s farm tractor model sprayed with matte finish and weathered with chalks. An Artista farm

A look at lineside details

With the structures completed, the fields surrounding the farm had to be finished. To the left of the farmhouse, I modeled a hay field using fake fur spray-painted with olive green floral paint and glued to the underlying carved pink foam.

A dozen or so rolled hay bales included with the rectangular JTT hay bales are scattered in the field. A cornfield may be found to the right of the barn. I simulated the corn by cutting an olive green AstroTurf doormat into strips. The strips are then cut to the correct length and secured to the underlying foam with



Details along the right-of-way help establish a sense of place and that this is a very busy railroad. The folks on the farm have plenty to watch!

For now, the scenery ends there, but that won't last long.

Towns springing up

Even as you read this, the scenery has been completed to the west at the town of Mifflin, with efforts underway to close the gap between there and the farm scene.

This section will include not only more farmland but also Port Royal, the second town to be modeled. Work is also finally underway on the engine-servicing area at East Altoona, thanks to some assistance from Mark Vinski, one of my highly skilled model railroading friends.

Finally, you'll notice that many of the freight cars are weathered. This is due in large part to Steven's efforts. Not only has he replicated the elements' toll on the rolling stock, but he's also built many loads for flatcars and gondolas, lowered cars to enhance realism, and detailed and weathered a number of diesels. We hope to continue these efforts, especially the work on the motive power.

More than any other scene on the layout, the farm scene has helped me to capture the wonder and amazement I experienced when I first laid eyes on this stunningly beautiful part of Pennsylvania back in 1975. Steven and I hope to again report our progress on the layout to the readers of *Classic Toy Trains* in the not-too-distant future. **CTT**

adhesive. Then the bases are buried in sand, which is then covered with a thin coat of earth-colored ground foam and finally secured in place with diluted white glue.

If you try this technique, find a mat that's an olive shade of green; it will be more realistic. Avoid ones that have a bluish-green hue.

A few more details deserve mention. First, fences are abundant on any farm, and my model is no exception. These are easy to build using Diamond brand square toothpicks which are flat on one end. I stained a handful in a cup of Hunterline gray stain. Once dry, it's an easy job to stick them into the pink foam scenery base then string them with gray thread.

Other essential visual elements are the poles used to supply electricity and telephone service to the farm. I construct

these out of the Weaver telephone pole kits I designed and had manufactured over a decade ago.

I use the poles intended for use with two crossarms and mount two insulators cut from the crossarms at an angle near the top of the poles. I wire them up using Berkshire Junction elastic electric line, and use a heavier line below them made of dyed twine to represent the telephone lines. They lead from the backdrop all the way to the house, with a transformer made from a short length of dowel rod mounted to the pole closest to the house. A special detail is an Artista crow landing atop one of the poles.

The farm scene comes to an end along the banks of Tuscarora Creek, just before it passes under the curved stone arch bridge at Port Royal and empties into the Juniata River.



Gilbert went west ON THE TEXAS

THE AMERICAN FLYER LINE FEATURED SEVERAL DIESELS WEARING ORANGE AND BLACK

When considering American Flyer diesels, most S gaugers focus on the Alco PA and PB units from the 1950s, and with good reason. These sleek units look great, run well, and serve as veritable billboards for famous railroads, such as the Santa Fe, New Haven, Missouri Pacific, and the Northern Pacific, plus a few the folks at Gilbert created.

Always playing the proverbial second fiddle to the Alcos, Flyer's different Electro-Motive Division GP7 road diesels, nonetheless, deserve our attention. They beautifully blend a rugged appearance with vivid color and sharp detail. And they run smoothly and can haul long freight trains.

The American Flyer roster boasted a handful of great GP7s. Here, let's focus on the seven S gauge models wearing the snappy scheme of the Texas & Pacific Ry., with black paired with a hue known as "Swamp Holly Orange."

Missed opportunity

The A.C. Gilbert Co. initially showed an interest in the Texas & Pacific in 1946. The toy maker released the no. 631, the first of its S gauge gondolas lettered for the T&P. The plastic car came unpainted gray or green or painted green or red. The Flyer line cataloged the 631 through 1953. The no. 931, equipped with knuckle couplers, made its debut in 1952 and remained in the line through 1955. Uncataloged models appeared in the 1960s.



Between 1954 and 1960, the American Flyer line featured S gauge models of diesel locomotives celebrating the Texas & Pacific Ry. They came in the distinctive paint scheme known for its vivid "Swamp Holly Orange." Models courtesy Mark Speichert

& PACIFIC

By Mark Suek • Photos by William Zuback

By the way, although the actual railroad had a grandiose name, it never went from Texas to the Pacific Ocean. Chartered in 1871, it went as far west as Sierra Blanca, Tex., where it met the Southern Pacific. The T&P mainly served Texas and the adjoining states of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. It merged with the Missouri Pacific in 1976.

Eight years after introducing the 631 T&P gondola, the Gilbert Co. brought out a pair of S gauge models of its GP7 road diesel decorated in orange and black. Oddly, the company's leadership missed an opportunity to play-up the newcomers in 1954 by using the powered and non-powered units in any cataloged set.

Instead, the Gilbert Co. designated the nos. 374 and 375 T&P Geeps (the 21¾-inch-long pair was commonly listed as no. 3745 or 374/75) as a separate-sale item priced at \$39.50.

As puzzling, the company announced the duo with a small illustration and a brief description.

Striking decoration

The initial T&P offering featured a double worm drive powered truck and 4-position reverse unit in the 375. It and its non-powered twin (the 374) had a sheet-metal frame, a functional headlight, and operating couplers. The 374 also came with a horn.

Incidentally, the first T&P Geep represented the only instance when a powered diesel unit was assigned a higher number than its non-powered partner. Who knows why executives did not designate the powered unit as no. 373 (a number Gilbert never used)?

Although other Flyer GP7 locomotives, the no. 372 Union



The Flyer line first used the T&P Geeps as the motive power for a set in 1955. The no. 5542H, “The New Sunshine Special Freight,” was profiled in the February 2020 *Classic Toy Trains*.

Pacific for example, sport the same features as the Texas & Pacific units, the latter stood out for their appealing decoration. They dazzled with bright orange on the sides and the ends of the plastic shell, accented by a black frame and cab, black roof and railings, and sturdy black steps.

More elegant were the black lettering, fine black striping on both the hoods and ends, and a diamond-shaped decal of the

Texas & Pacific herald (much simpler than the prototype) in red with yellow letters and trim under the cab windows. As expected, the decals are often damaged or missing. Luckily, replacements are available.

In addition to examining the heralds when buying a T&P Geep, you should study the stripes to be sure they are sharp. Fuzzy striping likely was caused by the masking slipping or not being close enough to the model when it was painted.

Time for a set

The T&P GP7 road diesels associated with 1955 production were identical to their predecessors, right down to the thin American Flyer Lines lettering on the long hoods. A difference related to their frames, which tended to be a heavier die-cast metal. For that reason, Geeps from 1955 tend to stay on the track better and operate more reliably.

Gilbert wisely used the 374/375 combination in a set in 1955. The 374/375 went on the point of an attractive train, the no. 5542H, labeled

“The New Sunshine Special Freight.”

The set, which had a retail price of \$49.95, included nos. 920 Southern gondola; 921 Chicago, Burlington & Quincy hopper; 922 GAEX (General American) boxcar; 926 Gulf triple-dome tank car (new for 1955); 929 Missouri Pacific stockcar; and 930 American

In addition to examining the heralds when buying a T&P Geep, you should study the stripes to be sure they are sharp.



The roster of models of a T&P Electro-Motive Division of General Motors GP7 road diesel opened with the nos. 375 (powered) and 374 (non-powered).



Flyer Lines illuminated center-cupola caboose. Owners also got 16 pieces of track, track locks, no. 706 remote-control uncoupler, and no. 708 diesel horn control box.

New numbers for 1956-57

The product number assigned the T&P GP7s changed to 377 and 378 (listed as no. 3778 or 377/78) in 1956 with the addition of a sound system Gilbert called Diesel Roar. The Diesel Roar used a vibrating mechanism to simulate the sounds made by General Motors diesel engines. How well the effect was received by S gauge enthusiasts is a matter of opinion.

Gilbert finally corrected the numbering of the Texas & Pacific Geeps, designating the powered unit as 377 and the non-powered one 378.



During the 1956-57 run of the 377 and 378 road diesels, Gilbert selected them to be the motive power for set no. 5655RH, known as "The New Sunshine Special." It had a retail price of \$57.50 and returned three of the same cars: the 920, 921, and 926.

Decision makers at the firm changed two of the freight cars in the set. Gone were the 922 boxcar and 929 stockcar. In their place went the nos. 924 Jersey Central covered cement hopper and 989 Northwestern Refrigerator Line car. The caboose was also switched, with a no. 977 American Flyer Lines operating center-cupola model substituted for the 930.

Five-digit for 1957 and '58

The contents of the no. 20355 "Sunshine Special Freight" set cataloged in 1957 duplicated those in the 5655RH with just one difference. The operating caboose was now a no. 979 illuminated bay-window type, which Gilbert cataloged for only that year. Also, the pair of engines might have been referred to as the no. 21908, although that number failed to appear in any reputable reference guide to postwar American Flyer trains.

Following Gilbert's switch to a five-digit numbering system, the T&P GP7 returned in 1958, but with changes. Previously issued as a duo, the new no. 21831 was a single locomotive with a two-position

reverse unit and most of the features of its predecessors.

However, the decoration had been modified. The long hood of most 21831s came lettered "American Flyer Lines." That suggested the company was intent on depleting its left-over stock, because other units were marked in a more proto-typical fashion with "Texas &

Pacific" on the long hood sides in thin or thick (or light or heavy) lettering.

The latter, highly desirable variations are, according to the 2019 edition of *Greenberg's American Flyer Pocket Price Guide*, second only to the no. 21234 Chesapeake & Ohio road diesel (with long steps) in value among the American Flyer GP7s. The 21831 marked

Texas & Pacific has a value of \$541 in excellent condition.

Another "Sunshine Special" – no. 20430 for 1958 – was the only set with a 21831 T&P GP7 on the point. The slick Geep led the nos. 24029 Bangor & Aroostook State of Maine boxcar, 24209 Jersey Central covered hopper, 24316 Mobilgas single-dome tank car, 24539 New Haven flatcar with plastic or silver cardboard pipes,



Gilbert changed the numbers of the T&P powered and non-powered GP7s for 1956 because the no. 377 had been upgraded to include a sound system called Diesel Roar.



Most examples of the no. 21831 GP7 came lettered "American Flyer Lines" (right). But a small number were marked in a more prototypical fashion with "Texas & Pacific" (below).



25049 Rio Grande operating Cookie Box boxcar, and 24626 American Flyer Lines center-cupola caboose.

One more T&P

The parade of S gauge Texas & Pacific GP7 road diesels came to a halt after 1958. It had not lasted long, but the orange-and-black beauties left quite an impression. American Flyer collectors chase after them with enthusiasm, especially the 21831s.

Gilbert offered a final salute to the Texas & Pacific, a regional railroad the Lionel Corp. com-

pletely ignored in the postwar era. The Flyer line featured the no. (21)812 in 1959 and '60. Not an Electro-Motive unit or an Alco, the model replicated a Baldwin S-12 diesel switcher.

The locomotive had a black plastic shell (painted or unpainted) with sides painted orange as well as orange and black striping on the hood front and rear. It featured a two-position reverse unit, one

power truck with two Pull-Mor power wheels, and an operating headlight. The number "812" in orange was found on both sides of the cab.

A (21)812 led set no. 20510 in 1959. The "Rambler," which retailed for \$29.98, came with nos. 24047 Great Northern boxcar, 24322 Gulf single-dome tank car, 24539 New Haven flatcar with pipes, and 24632 American Flyer Lines center-cupola caboose.

Last came the no. 20610,

"The Dispatcher," in 1960.

That work train, which had the same retail price of \$29.98, was cataloged for only a year. Its Baldwin led nos. 24216 Union Pacific 3-bay hopper, 24561 American Flyer Lines crane car, 24562 New York Central flatcar (no load), and 24627 American Flyer Lines center-cupola caboose.

After that year, the Texas & Pacific disappeared from the Flyer roster of great locomotives. But the elegant look and solid performance of the

Geeps and their kid brother Baldwin brought them into the upper echelon of postwar S gauge steeds. **CTT**

The no. (21)812 Baldwin diesel switcher pulled a pair of sets: the nos. 20510 "Rambler" in 1959 and 20610 "The Dispatcher" in 1960. Both items had a retail price of \$29.98.



By Roger Carp

YOUR GIFT

FROM COLBER

THE NO. 120 RAILROADER'S PACK

The gift pack – a deluxe piece of merchandise containing several basic items from a single manufacturer – hardly caught on with firms making toy trains in the postwar era. Maybe the market proved so robust for their individual S and O gauge products no one saw a need to offer more for less.

Lionel had tried cataloging gift packs during the prewar era. It had combined different accessories or freight cars in a large carton. But after 1945, Lionel, like Gilbert and Marx, dismissed the idea.

Which offered an opportunity for a newcomer. The Colber Corp. decided to create gift packs in the 1950s. The best of them was the no. 120, which came with three of the finest and most popular accessories available from that small business.

Ready for a fight

Tony Collett and William Berke had met after the war in New Jersey and decided to go into business repairing air-conditioning and refrigeration units. When they expanded to include home appliances, they were inundated with toy trains.

The two started fixing older trains and accessories before shifting into the sales of new ones. They built up Train Center of America in Orange, N.J., into one of the premier retail outlets for Lionel.

If Collett and Berke could sell new Lionel trains and repair old ones, then why shouldn't they build what they thought was missing. The place to begin, they surmised, was with simple accessories.

In 1948, the nascent Colber Manufacturing Co. (the first syllables of their surnames formed the name of the venture) challenged Lionel with a cheap streetlight. Next was a crude automatic gateman.

Different kinds of bridges followed in 1949 and '50. So did an inexpensive plastic water tower and an ingenious oil derrick. A floodlight tower from Colber hit the market a year later, with a wig-wag, or banjo, signal making its debut in 1952.

Lionel, which like Colber produced its accessories in Irvington, N.J., had not looked kindly on the rise of this upstart. It protested when Colber packed its models in boxes copied from Lionel's. Neither did Lionel appreciate the release of Colber items whose design was obviously borrowed from its own.

Collett and Berke bowed to pressure from their neighbor. To protect their investment, they turned to Gilbert and aimed to broaden its line of Flyer accessories. Thus did Colber make water and light towers, oil derricks, and rotating beacons for Gilbert in 1950 and '51.

Something new

Smart moves by Collett and Berke preserved their company's financial welfare well into 1952. The year after witnessed stability with little growth. By 1954, both partners at the helm worried about the shrinking market for toy trains and were beginning to look to other fields.

To offset declining sales and the end of the agreement with Gilbert, drastic steps had to be taken in 1954. The men at the top at Colber raised the prices of the company's models while introducing some less-expensive versions of its

boulevard lamp and deck girder bridge.

Collett also planned to combine a few items into gift packs. He hoped the ploy would reduce inventory and make various accessories appear more desirable.

One gift pack (the no. 119) offered consumers seven different lights: four street lamps, two spotlights, and one rotating beacon. A second gift pack (the 120 featured here) came with a trio of slick items: the nos. 108 water tower, 115 wig-wag signal, and 116 rotating beacon.

The 120 railroaders' gift package arrived in stores in a gray cardboard container with red railroad illustrations and company lettering. The artwork alone should have boosted sales. Sadly, it sold poorly and was gone within a year or two. Colber then abandoned the train business to concentrate on electronics components for the next half-century. **CTT**



**GENERAL MILLS
BROKE GROUND
WITH MODERN
COLLECTIBLE
ROLLING STOCK**



STARS OF

By Roger Carp • Photos by William Zuback

Not long ago, in the December 2019 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*, the focus was directed at the final O gauge outfits and rolling stock offered by Lionel during what's popularly referred to as the "postwar era." That memorable

period of production opened right after global peace returned in 1945 and continued through 1969, when the original Lionel Corp. leased the rights to manufacture and market Lionel trains to General Mills, a giant in the field of consumer foods.

Now, exactly half a century after Model

Products Corp., a division of General Mills, introduced its first listing of Lionel sets, locomotives, rolling stock, and accessories, it's time to shift the spotlight to what opened the period known as the "modern era." A splendid way of doing so, and thus acknowledge what designers had

achieved, involves concentrating on the seven near-scale boxcars cataloged.

Colorful poster

Almost every year of the postwar period, Lionel had released a full-color catalog of its new products for the general public to enjoy and savor. Stunning artwork and sharp photographs had filled the many pages of those "wish books," which were printed in excess of a million copies annually and then distributed widely.

General Mills adopted a dramatically



The first year Model Products Corp. oversaw the development and merchandising of the Lionel line, it released seven near-scale boxcars. Six of the newcomers represented road names or paint schemes never used during the post-war era. Models courtesy Michael Connor

LIONEL FOR 1970

different course when introducing the new Lionel train line for 1970. It brought out a unique document, cleverly conceived as a 22 x 34-inch poster on one side and an 8-panel catalog on the other.

To be specific, the eye-catching poster illustrated on one side "A Lifetime of Railroading." Sepia-tone images of historic events in the history of American railroading surrounded a wonderfully colorful depiction of a contemporary rail yard, where the latest diesels and specialized rolling stock competed for attention.

The reverse consisted of eight panels, each measuring 8½ x 11 inches. Three of them looked at the outfits available for sale. Two others highlighted the accessories, all of which were updated versions of postwar favorites. Another referred glowingly to how realistic and technologically advanced the trains were.

The remaining two panels showed and described the locomotives and cars, track, and transformers consumers would be able to purchase in what everyone knew was to be a year of transition. The new

diesels and freight cars looked great, and youngsters and adults were eager to learn more about the newcomers.

Boxcars to delight

Model Products Corp. offered, besides the rolling stock in the seven O gauge and O-27 sets, a smattering of freight cars. The roster was minimal: one tank car, one gondola, one short and one long hopper, a couple of cabooses, and so forth.

The grand exception to the bare-bones approach adopted by MPC was the group



The no. 9201 Penn Central boxcar was the first piece of Lionel rolling stock to come painted and lettered for the railroad created when the New York Central merged with the Pennsylvania RR in 1968.

of near-scale boxcars unveiled for 1970. Seven items arrived, only one of which could be considered a reissue of a scheme previously cataloged. Called the “Famous Name Collector Series,” they were illustrated and described in a special red-bordered box in one of the eight panels.

“Scale Model Box Cars,” declared the copywriter, labeling them “Authentic railroad designs in bright modern colors and heralds.” Additional key features of the 10½-inch-long models included “realistic railroad trucks” equipped with “solid steel wheels,” sliding doors, and remote-controlled knuckle couplers. The boxcars would, the unidentified writer felt certain, satisfy a diverse audience consisting of “hobbyists, collectors, and railroaders.”

An impressive roster

The seven boxcars available in 1970 launched the no. 9200 series. MPC returned all seven models for a second year. Also in 1971, it supplemented the initial offerings with another seven newcomers, one of which was a double-door automobile boxcar. For 1972, MPC retained all the boxcars it had introduced the previous year. However, only one of the models from 1970 came back for 1972.

9200 Illinois Central (cataloged 1970-72). When the third edition of *Greenberg's Guide to Lionel Trains, 1970-1991* hit bookstores and hobby shops, editors Roland E. LaVoie and Michael A. Solly had documented 12 variations of this orange-painted car with black heat-stamped graphics. Models varied according to body (type V, VI, VII, VIII, or IX),

door guides (metal or plastic), frame (types I, II, or III), and trucks (AAR or Symington-Wayne).

The editors commented on the spacing of the IC logo and the location of the MPC logo. Finally, they noted the existence of a scarce variation with an unpainted orange-plastic body and postwar bar-end trucks equipped with plastic knuckles.

9201 Penn Central (cataloged 1970-71). Two variations were noted, both related to the shade of green used to paint the plastic shell, which could differ in color. The jade green version came on a jade green shell with matching doors. The dark green version came on a dark green shell with matching doors.

9202 Santa Fe (cataloged 1970-71). This was the only boxcar released in 1970 whose decoration represented a reissue of a postwar model – the no. 6464-700 Santa Fe cataloged in 1961 and 1966. Three variations were listed, based mainly on the color of the sliding doors. Unlike its fore-runner with red doors, the 9202 can have gray plastic doors painted gray or silver. Also, there can be two or three white dots to the left of the doors. A scarce variation was reported with two dots on one side and three on the other. Finally, a rare car had an unpainted orange plastic body with black lettering and details.

9203 Union Pacific (cataloged 1970-71). The yellow-painted type-V body shell with matching doors and a red-blue-white striped Union Pacific herald differed in noteworthy respects from the model illustrated on the Lionel poster. The latter had the Union Pacific herald on the left and its

“Automated Rail Way” graphics on the right. The regular-production 9203 had the herald on the right and omitted the map graphics, substituting the railroad’s name lettered in black on the left.

9204 Northern Pacific (cataloged 1970-71). This green-painted car with white and black outlined lettering had a type I frame. The six reported variations derived from the body type (VI or VII), door guides (metal or plastic), trucks (AAR or Symington-Wayne), shade of green (ranging from Burlington Northern light green to apple green to dark green), and presence of a built date (1-70).

9205 Norfolk and Western (cataloged 1970-71). Nothing much out of the ordinary for this boxcar. It used a type VI body shell and type I frame and came with metal door guides. Like every other model introduced in 1970 except for the 9202 Santa Fe, it had a built date (BLT 1-70) and an MPC logo. Four of the variations noted were based on the shade of blue paint used (medium to royal to dark) and the trucks (AAR or Symington-Wayne). A fifth variation came with postwar bar-end trucks with plastic knuckles (like a variation of the 9200 IC).

9206 Great Northern (cataloged 1970-71). The seventh near-scale boxcar to make its debut in 1970 had three variations. They related to the body shell (type VI or VII), the trucks (AAR or Symington-Wayne), and the degree of lightness in the blue paint used on the shell (some were more pale than others). The doors were uniformly a light shade of blue. The lettering and GN herald were white. **CTT**



The Lionel no. 224E engine leading prewar freight cars under the Christmas tree enjoyed by Joseph Sbuttoni and his cousin, Marie, after World War II continue to be treasured by his family 70 years later.



The MANY WONDERS of a Lionel prewar set

By Roger Carp

RICHARD SBUTTONI
WILL ALWAYS
CHERISH HIS
FATHER'S
BOYHOOD TRAIN

Richard Sbuttoni shakes his head in disbelief. He just can't understand why any family would choose to get rid of a toy train that had belonged to someone in the previous generation. What reason, he asks, would a person offer to explain why he or she sold or gave away a Lionel or an American Flyer set that had once been cherished by a grandparent, uncle, or mom or dad?

Call it being sentimental or praise it as an expression of a deep sense of loyalty to and love of the generation that raised him. Richard wouldn't think of getting rid of the Lionel no. 224E steam engine his deceased father ran and trea-

sured as a youngster coming of age in the 1940s. Every Christmas, as seen in the photo Richard submitted, he brings out the prewar locomotive his grandfather bought from a fellow employee at the Taft Hotel in New York City.

The O gauge steamer was a gift for the boy who grew up to be Richard's dad. Along with it were a few freight cars, including a no. 3659 operating dump car. It still works in tandem with the no. 97 coal elevator evident in the black-and-white photo snapped at Christmas in 1946 or '47.

A Lionel train built 80 years ago still runs like a charm and helps a son honor the memory of his father. **CTT**



By Roger Carp

EXCEPTIONAL MODELS

PAUL V. AMBROSE HAS SPENT A LIFETIME SEARCHING FOR THE VERY FINEST LIONEL POSTWAR TRAINS

The notion of the train collector as lone wolf – refusing anyone's help while hunting for what will elevate his collection above all others – refuses to die. People keep speaking about giants of the hobby who amassed hordes of the rarest items without making a friend.

Sorry to shatter the myth, but the individuals with the finest collections of prewar or postwar trains I've seen relied on assistance and expertise shared by more experienced guys and dealers. And they made lots of friends along the way.

Paul V. Ambrose epitomizes that trend. He talks about the help and insights shared by a variety of people in

the hobby. Lou Shur and Ed Prendeville come up, as do Bruce Greenberg, Harry Lovelock, and Joe Algozzini.

But one gentleman has done the most to spark a love of trains in Paul and so influenced the extraordinary collection he has built over his life. This man is the reason Paul uses his middle initial. He does so to pay homage to his father, Paul P. Ambrose. The respected student of Lionel who has changed the hobby remains the son of an honorable man.

Starting very young

If Paul belies one hobby stereotype – the lone wolf obsessed with snagging every model on his extensive want list – he does provide proof of the accuracy of another one. Specifically, the collector

who received his first train before he was old enough to know what it was. Paul was barely 4 years old when he became the owner of a Lionel O gauge outfit on Christmas morning of 1950.

How does Paul explain that miraculous event? Simple. Paul P. Ambrose, like many new fathers who had returned from World War II eager to create an ideal life, believed a Lionel train set was absolutely essential to what he wanted. No sacrifice would have been too great.

As a consequence, Paul P., whose own father had emigrated from Lithuania, picked out an outstanding steam freight train and connected a loop of three-rail track beneath the family's decorated Christmas tree. Awaiting his little son was set no. 2141WS from 1949.



Sharp-eyed observers should be able to identify the traits that make these two Lionel NW2 diesel switchers real gems
LEFT: The red model in the collection accumulated by Paul V. Ambrose not only has the gray-painted frame and yellow-painted platform railings associated with the scarcest version of the no. 600 Missouri-Kansas-Texas engine; better, it was mistakenly heat-stamped "610" with the Erie RR herald Lionel had intended for another NW2 introduced in 1955.
RIGHT: The scarcest version of the 610 Erie had a yellow-painted frame and platform railings. All photos by Forrest Nace

Smart planning

Paul P. was a shrewd shopper. He devised a clever plan for paying for that outfit, which originally had retailed for \$57.50 (\$611 in today's dollars) from wages he earned as a coal miner in western Pennsylvania.

After Christmas, as became plain to Paul V. just a few years later, his father would take a trolley to one of the outlets in nearby Pittsburgh that sold Lionel trains. He knew leftover merchandise had been reduced in price by half. Then it was simply a matter of paying for the set using the store's own lay-away or charge plan.

The elder Ambrose had put his plan into motion long before Christmas. On December 25, his son gazed with fascination as the no. 671 Turbine and its no. 2671 streamlined tender pulled a pair of operating cars (the nos. 3461 log car and 3472 milk car), along with a no. 6456 hopper and a no. 6457 illuminated Southern Pacific-type caboos.

Who among the three generations of the Ambrose clan gathered together could have predicted that the life of their youngest member had just gained direction? They likely believed Paul, while only a toddler, was destined to do great things. But would they have guessed so many of his accomplishments would involve Lionel trains?

Launching an empire

Paul loved the train, with its puffing smoke and headlight, as much as his father and uncles did. That was all the encouragement the elder Ambrose needed. Two more cataloged outfits arrived a year later, launching a routine that lasted through the decade. Eventually, say by 1954, the younger Paul was perusing the new catalog and requesting particular sets and engines with hopes of getting them.

Before long, Paul understood the system his dad had to keep building their 3-rail empire. He appreciated the sacrifices his parents made so their roster of sets and models might grow. And he was grateful for the \$2.00 his father put down every week at Gimbel Bros. or Kaufmann's Department Store or the local Western Auto or Firestone dealer until the trains were paid for.

The pattern continued all through the decade. Every Thanksgiving the boxes of Lionel trains were carefully unpacked, and the Ambrose "men" planned their new layout. They would spend hours operating the amazing roster, with neighbors dropping by to take a turn at the controls. Once the calendar changed and a new year had begun, Paul knew his parents soon would tell him to put the trains away.



Paul and his wife, Gloria, are high school sweethearts who got together again after attending their 30-year class reunion. They have filled their beautiful home with antique furniture and lamps, American art, and Lionel trains.



Lionel needed to put together a preproduction version of its brand-new no. 6464-325 Baltimore & Ohio Sentinel boxcar for the artists preparing the advance catalog for release to the toy trade early in 1956. Workers at its factory in northern New Jersey hastily painted a plastic shell and door silver and then added the lower band of aqua blue. Then they affixed decals to only one side of the near-scale car.

No point in objecting, not when Paul could depend on his father to keep bringing home the best of the best. Thanks to the generosity of his folks, he ran no. 2379 Denver & Rio Grande Western F3 diesels in an A-B-B-A combination. Train Masters ended up being double-headed so they could pull long trains filled with near-scale boxcars and gondolas, flatcars loaded with vehicles and logs, and double- and triple-dome tank cars. A deluxe illuminated caboose rode at the rear.

Life with Lionel hardly lost momentum after Paul entered high school and started to drive. He intended to pursue higher education and carve out a business career. All the while, he knew deep in his heart toy trains were part of his future.

Amazing discovery

Paul is the kind of fellow that exudes a strong sense of confidence. When he really knows something – whether about business, Lionel trains, or himself – you

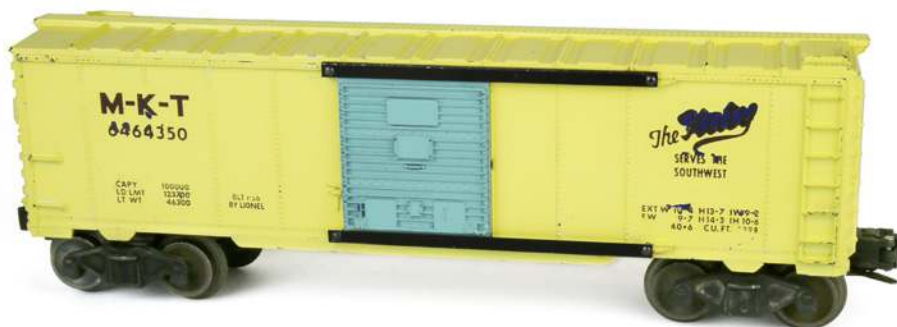
can feel it. You realize there's no purpose in arguing or disagreeing with him.

The point behind this observation is that Paul knew instinctively he would someday return to the world of Lionel. Even though he had put his sets and cars away when leaving home and entering the worlds of college and then business, there was absolutely no doubt in his mind that he would again make them central.

Maybe this inner feeling, like a compass whose needle always points to the north, explains why after launching a career in the apparel industry in New York City during the 1970s, Paul felt pulled to a tiny storefront on East 23rd Street Avenue where toy trains were on display. He had encountered Madison Hardware Co., undoubtedly the most famous retailer ever to stock and repair Lionel trains.

Presiding behind the counter or perched on a ladder in search of a boxed item were the brothers in charge at Madison: Lou Shur and Carl Shaw. Paul met the pair and, as was true with other collectors, came face to face with their less-than-genial demeanor. Lou and Carl showed little interest in their new customer.

That was okay with Paul. He was a smart businessman, like Lou, and understood the need to win over the owner. So Paul never left Madison without making a purchase. It might have been an inexpensive gondola or a common caboose, but it was something. Lou and Carl liked that.



Outfit 1587S, known throughout the collecting community as the "Girl's Set," had many drawbacks, accounting for weak sales in 1957 and '58. One advantage the O-27 train had, however, was being the first Lionel outfit to include two members of the no. 6464 series of near-scale boxcars. Both came painted in pastel hues to appeal to girls or their mothers. The no. 6464-515 Missouri-Kansas-Texas car in that set featured a yellow-painted plastic body shell with aqua blue doors. Paul owns this unique paint sample heat-stamped with the number Lionel already had used in 1956 for a Tuscan red M-K-T boxcar. The latter came marked "6464350."



In 1952, after offering the no. 3464 operating boxcar decorated for the New York Central and the Santa Fe, Lionel decided to add a third road name. The no. 3474 Western Pacific featured a silver-painted body with a large yellow feather decal across the side. The advance catalog for 1952 showed it as part of three sets. Like the model shown here, the boxcar in the advance catalog mistakenly had the "3464" product number of the earlier ones. Also, the decal "W.P." was larger.

Then came the day when Paul was able to offer them something much better. Madison typically assembled outfits for Christmas. Lou and Carl grabbed old locomotives and random cars off the shelves and from their vast inventory to create sets. Only one problem – there had run out of cartons to pack the trains in.

Paul came to the rescue and had dozens of new corrugated cardboard boxes delivered by his business supplier. Lou and Carl expressed gratitude for the favor. From then on, Paul gained access to their hidden stash of scarce and unique Lionel items, along with many mint pieces and never-opened sets from the 1960s.

Lasting friendship

Paul's friendship with Lou and Carl blossomed over the years. The three gentlemen met for breakfast early on many Saturday mornings before the store opened. Paul usually picked up the bill. Then came his gift: time alone in the store with just the brothers.

Always showing great respect for Carl and Lou, Paul stayed in touch with them even after ownership of Madison Hardware had passed to the late Richard Kughn, then the owner of Lionel Trains Inc. He moved everything to Michigan.

The role Paul P. Ambrose had formerly played in Paul's life – introducing him to Lionel electric trains and then nurturing his knowledge and appreciation of them – had passed in the 1970s and '80s to the two brothers running Madison.

Carl and Lou, besides helping Paul build his great collection, shared with him stories of Joshua Lionel Cowen and other

executives at the firm. In doing so they helped him understand the genius behind the development and marketing of Lionel's products. Gradually, Paul was becoming an expert on postwar trains.

Another influential duo

During the 1980s, formative years in the hobby for Paul, another pair of gentlemen – friends and business associates rather than brothers – also assisted him in gathering pristine and desirable pieces. He credited Ed Prendeville and the late Bob Morgan at Train Collectors Warehouse with influencing what he bought and shedding light on its importance. Their insights and tips proved invaluable.

On a regular basis, Paul traveled from metropolitan New York to inspect the latest items Ed and Bob had added to their impressive inventory. He was one of the few granted the privilege to wander the aisles at Train Collectors Warehouse and examine closely the latest gems there.

Spending hours looking over the trains at Ed and Bob's facility, located in Spring Valley, N.Y., and later in Parsippany, N.J., enabled Paul to do more than claim incredible prizes. He was receiving an education in all things Lionel.

To be sure, Paul arranged to purchase a number of unique Lionel pieces. Many of the paint samples and preproduction items in his display cabinets came from



Based on the rolling stock used, designers at Lionel were considering a train set aimed at girls early in 1954 – three years before the actual O-27 set no. 15875 Lady Lionel made its debut. They requested that various models be painted in colors that might appeal to girls. Paul owns several of these fascinating color experiments, including this one painted in a shade of green he has labeled "mint." The no. 6417 Pennsylvania RR porthole caboose, just like the matching nos. 3656 operating cattle car and 6456 Lehigh Valley hopper in his collection, has lettering and graphics heat-stamped on both sides in black.



In 1957, Ronald Saypol, serving as the chief assistant to Lionel's executive vice president Alan Ginsburg, sought to negotiate deals with manufacturers of various consumer goods to advertise their wares on Lionel rolling stock. He worked with executives at the Whirlpool Corp. on the sale of an exclusive promotional outfit. Set no. X-589 featured a no. 6024 8½-inch-long boxcar with Whirlpool graphics. Lionel created this unique preproduction model of the red plastic car, using decals to show people at Whirlpool how the final heat-stamped markings would look.

Train Collectors Warehouse. As important was getting opportunities to study multiple examples of virtually every locomotive and type of rolling stock Lionel had cataloged in the postwar era. Paul noticed subtle differences in their composition and decoration that would advance his understanding of those trains.

Just as Paul's deep interest in Lionel had tightened his bonds with Lou and Carl, so too did it nurture a lasting friendship with Ed and Bob. All of them felt a fascination with Lionel trains that truly extended beyond wishing to own certain items. Ed and Paul sought to learn more about the firm and to understand why it had introduced various models and how it had designed and made them.

Eager to share

Throughout the 1980s, individuals in the toy train hobby attempted to make knowledge of different manufacturers and their prewar and postwar trains accessible to collectors. They shared what they had observed and aimed to publish the information they had compiled. Leading the way was Bruce Greenberg, who reprinted vintage catalogs and put out annual price guides and reference books.

In the long parade of people who had shaped Paul's appreciation of Lionel trains and helped him rise in the field, Bruce assumed a special role. He was the one who dared ask Paul's view of the overviews

of Lionel postwar trains he had done, only to be rebuffed by words of disappointment and derision.

Bruce, backed into a corner, could only defend himself by suggesting Paul step forward and write something more comprehensive: "What can you do?"

Quite a challenge! Yet anyone who has known Paul will not be surprised for a minute to hear he accepted Bruce's offer without giving it a second thought.

Steady effort led to an outstanding and much-improved survey of Lionel's locomotives and all its rolling stock cataloged during the postwar period of 1945 to 1969. Paul had studied those models for many years, right down to the trucks and couplers installed. The depth and extent of his research, not to mention the authority he brought to the project, culminated in the most definitive volumes.

Collaboration is key

Always remember when assessing Paul's writing that he wisely benefited from insights and information shared by other top-flight collectors. Never did he presume to know everything or intend to ignore what others were discovering.

One significant collaborator in the volumes Paul compiled for Greenberg Publishing Co. about individual models and outfits cataloged by Lionel was his good friend, the late Harold Lovelock. Together, they shed a lot of light on the contents of

every postwar set, plus the variations of different locomotives and railcars and some of the fascinating rare and unusual items reported to exist.

Paul's friendship with the fellow nicknamed "Harry" took off in the 1980s, after Ed Prendeville introduced two of his best and most knowledgeable postwar customers. Paul and Harry took an immediate liking to one another and quickly figured out where their collecting interests overlapped and where they diverged.

Harry was always interested in the advance catalogs Lionel released to its authorized retail accounts early in the production year. He emphasized their importance to Paul, noting how many rare items were exactly as artists had shown them in those catalogs.

Very soon, Paul and Harry were attending local as well as national train shows together. They had a standing rule that resolved all disagreements: "We would flip a coin to decide who went first," Paul explains. "The winner was given first shot at any and all items of interest for sale on the first set of tables. Once we had finished that area, the other guy went first on the next set. We never had a fight."

With various projects sponsored by Greenberg Publishing occupying his time, Paul sensibly got Harry involved. They investigated the sets and variations in their collections before reaching out to other advanced Lionel enthusiasts. The result of their collaboration were some heavily documented and illustrated books.

Their most significant contribution to postwar collecting, at least in the estimation of some of their peers, was the Greenberg reference book Paul and Harry completed on rare and unusual Lionel items. Never before had so many engineering mock-ups, paint samples, and preproduction models been shown in a single volume. The color photographs presented a treasure trove of unique trains.

Another friend helps

Paul, determined to do everything possible to show what Lionel had done during the postwar decades, eventually turned his attention to a niche enveloped in mystery. He owned a number of boxed train sets whose contents separated them from any described or illustrated in Lionel's annual consumer catalogs.

Other leading hobbyists also had become aware of what they referred to as



Anyone who has collected as long as Paul has will inevitably chance upon a car or a locomotive whose appearance leaves them intrigued, despite the fact that it can't be documented or even explained. Consider this no. 2534 streamlined Pullman car painted deep green with a red band going across the window and two thin yellow stripes bordering it. Decals were used to identify the passenger car as belonging to the "Norfolk and Western" with "Hampden Sydney" as its name. Paul has no idea whether the colorful car represented original Lionel production or if someone at the hobby shop in Linden, N.J., where he had purchased it, created it on a whim. Either way, it always gets attention from fellow postwar experts.

"uncataloged," or "promotional," outfits. Unfortunately for them, the purposes and sources of those odd sets had eluded them. Paul decided to tackle that puzzle.

The perfect collaborator on a project of such magnitude and complexity was Joe Algozzini, an acknowledged expert on postwar Lionel trains whose experience and knowledge rivaled Paul's. They shared information about the outfits in their collections and then pursued data from Lionel and the archives maintained by retail chains that had sold uncataloged sets in the 1950s and '60s, including Sears, Roebuck & Co.; Montgomery Ward; Firestone Tire & Rubber Co.; Western Auto Supply Co.; and Spiegel.

The fourth volume in Bruce Greenberg's distinguished series on postwar Lionel trains and accessories arrived in 1992. As written by Paul and Joe, it offered curious hobbyists an unprecedented survey of uncataloged sets, enhanced by dozens of color photos of actual outfits held in collections across the U.S.

Thanks to the research conducted by Paul and Joe, readers were at last able to see which businesses and organizations Lionel had worked with in the second half of the postwar era to create those unique sets. In addition, they could verify the contents of the outfits they had acquired and calculate what might be missing.

Never stopping

The flow of publications either authored or edited by Paul has slowed over the past 20 or so years. But that hardly means he is taking a leave of absence from the ranks of

postwar experts. Articles bearing Paul's byline continue to appear in the periodicals being put out by hobby organizations as well as in *Classic Toy Trains*.

Moreover, Paul keeps adding to his sterling collection, especially in the area of boxes. He was among the first group of postwar enthusiasts to search for original component and outfit boxes as well as master cartons. Paul insisted the packaging enhanced what could be learned from a locomotive or a set. Getting rid of boxes or even separating them from their contents was short-sighted at best.

In many ways, Paul and the amazing collection he has assembled over his lifetime go on honoring the people who have taught him a love of Lionel trains.

Visit him and you feel as though the spirit of Madison Hardware Co. has survived. Talk with him and you get a sense of what his long conversations with Ed Prendeville and Harry Lovelock were like. Most of all, listen as Paul speaks with passion about his trains and you imagine you are hearing his father preparing to buy something new. The heritage Paul P. Ambrose built lives on in Paul V. **CTT**



In the late 1950s and early '60s, Lionel reached out to many retail businesses, consumer organizations, and producers of housewares in hopes they might place orders for or even subsidize the production of novel pieces of rolling stock. Paul owns a few examples of these rarities, including this unpainted black plastic hopper from about 1960. The lettering and graphics were decals, as was the "0000" (indicative of a preproduction model). A sales executive might have used it to attract attention from Colgate-Palmolive, a producer of consumer goods that did sponsor a contest in 1959 for which Lionel trains were offered as prizes.



A magnificent 4-4-2

THE LIONEL O GAUGE LEGACY A6 ATLANTIC, ILLINOIS CENTRAL NO. 1003

This is the finest 4-4-2 Atlantic model I've ever seen, and I have Kent Johnson to thank for having a chance to play with it. He bought it for his dad, Carl, and I had about an hour to put it through its paces.

I'm impressed with this Lionel steamer. This model, offered in Chicago & North Western, Illinois Central, Southern Pacific, and Union Pacific road names, will please steam and passenger train enthusiasts with its appearance, flexibility in command operation, and amazing sound package.

The first thing I learned was that the Illinois Central did indeed have a small number of 4-4-2s in its fleet. Dating from the early 1900s, the high-stepping passen-

ger locomotives did what Atlantics were known for – pulling fast passenger trains. As they grew older, a small number were converted to freight engines.

■ OPENING THE BOX

As amazing as this O gauge locomotive is, what first caught my eye was the silky smooth gray-and-black paint scheme. The gray smokebox is just the right color to accentuate the headlight and number boards, builder's plate, and classification

lights. The tender also has 3-lens marker lamps.

The handrails run from the cab along the boiler, then gently curve down and around the smokebox. The gray paint also accents the deep, clean casting of the smokebox rivets and hinges.

It's interesting that the pipes to the steam chests start out gray, but below the running board they match the black of the pilot, boiler, cab, and tender. I thought this was a nice cosmetic detail.

At first glance the pilot may appear solid, but it does have see-through slats and a scale-size front coupler. All the walking surfaces, such as the pilot and catwalk, are smooth.

The riveting ends with the smokebox, and the key boiler feature is the bands around it. Topside details include a tall smokestack, steam and sand domes, a power generator, and a whistle.

Near the catwalk you'll find the air compressors and cast-in piping. Below them, the pilot wheels, running gear, and wheel tires are natural metal.

The cab has riveting on the roof, and at their stations are two crew figures. The

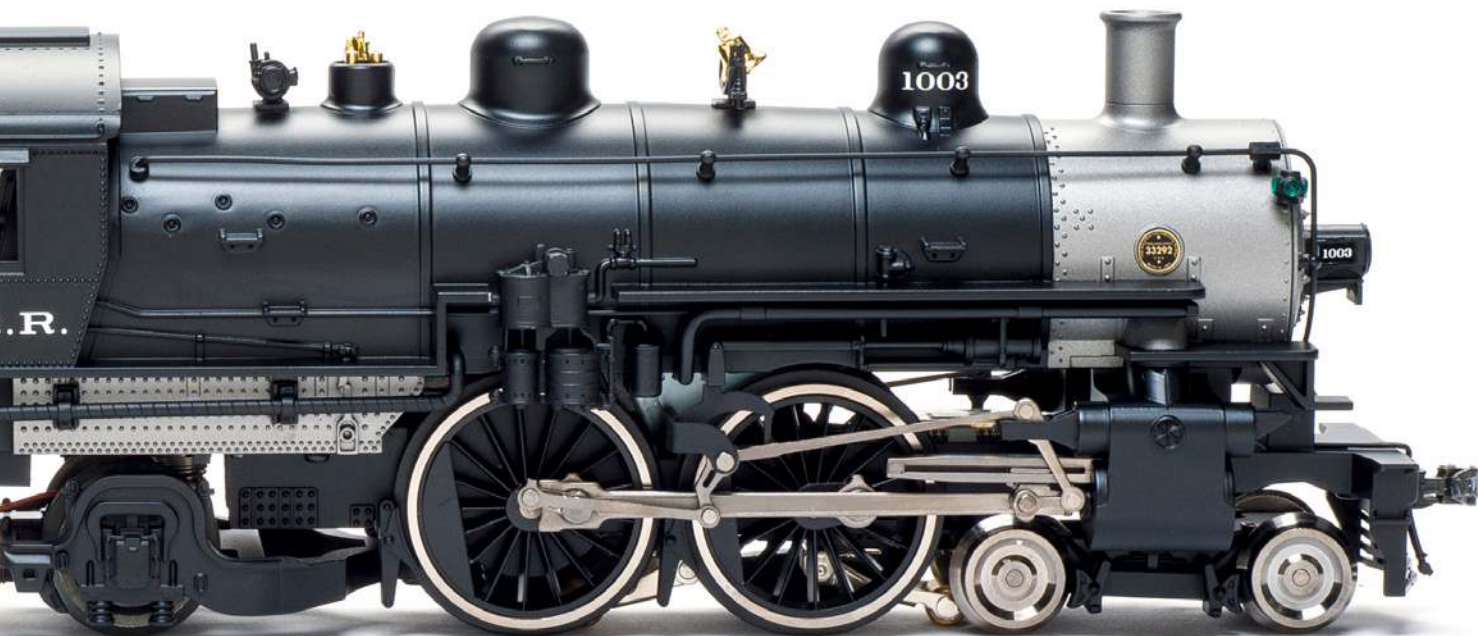
O GAUGE 4-4-2 ATLANTIC FROM LIONEL

Price: \$799.99 (no. 1931200) **Features:** Die-cast metal construction, wireless tether, tender coil coupler, illuminated cab, adjustable smoke output, Lionel Legacy command and sound systems, Odyssey II speed control, Bluetooth capable for LionChief universal remote or LionChief app **Low speed (conventional):** 5.5 scale mph **Low speed (command mode):** 3.9 scale mph **Current production road names:** Chicago & North Western, Illinois Central, Southern Pacific (standard or *Daylight*), Union Pacific **Website:** www.Lionel.com



EXCLUSIVE VIDEO //

Go to www.ClassicToyTrains.com/OnlineExtras



Lionel's Legacy A6 4-4-2 Atlantic is a potent package of looks and performance.

flickering firebox glow looks great at slow speeds. The backhead gauges have painted faces, which make the engine's "control center" look more authentic. Below the cab, the firebox is painted gray.

The locomotive and tender are connected with a wireless drawbar. This junction is considerably smaller than those used just a few years back. The tender has steps on all four corners, and you'll find nice rivet detail on the sides and top. The coal bunker is filled with chunk-style coal, which is more realistic than the old hobby standard of a cast-in load.

The water hatch has two scale handles, but a finger can raise the lid and find a manual volume control. Just behind this is a backup light with the engine numbers on the side. Lighting is directional, so when the locomotive is in reverse, the backup light comes on.

The rear has a remote coupler and a simulated uncoupling lever. There are grabirons to help crewmen hoist themselves up to the ladder. Once on top, they can check the light or pour

water into the tank. The marker lights on the tender look brilliant in bright light, but appear to be superb warning devices in the dark!

■ ON THE TEST TRACK

A scale model, the Atlantic has a wonderfully compact footprint: 16½ inches coupler to coupler. Don't judge performance by the size; this is a champ.

The first thing you have to decide is how you want to run the locomotive. There are lots of options.

The Atlantic can be run in conventional mode. It can also be run with Lionel's Legacy command system, or its predecessor, TrainMaster Command Control. You can also add it to the LionChief Universal Remote, or use the app on your tablet or cell phone.

The model performed well regardless of how it was controlled. My personal favorite controls were the Universal remote and the iPhone app. I think the latter is the easiest entry point for doing what most of us do – start and stop, blow the horn or whistle, ring the bell, and uncouple cars.

The startup sounds are great, and the steady background noises of the steam hiss, ker-thunks, and crew conversation are appealing. The engine starts to move forward in a fluid motion, so unlike our beloved Lionel steamers of the 1950s.

The wow factor for the sound system was best detected when the model was creeping along. You could hear the tortured sound of steel against steel,

continued on page 58



FRONT VIEW

REAR VIEW

PRODUCT REVIEWS

continued from page 57

wheels, springs, and joints of the engine and tender that didn't really want to move. I ended up grabbing several folks passing the workshop and saying, "Hey, you've gotta hear this."

The sound and smoke unit are synchronized. The matching chuffs begin slowly, chuff ... chuff ... chuff, each with a matching puff of smoke. Listening to the sound and watching the running gear move made me smile. As speed picked up, the chuff-puff rates kept up with each other.

The whistle was robust and provided a blast that matched your press of the button – no standardized whistle here.

Crunching the numbers, our conventional low speed was 5.5 scale miles per hour. The command-mode low speed was 3.9 scale miles per hour. Our high end (limited by the straight run of the test track) was 56.2 scale miles per hour. Drawbar pull for the locomotive was 16.8 ounces.

All things considered, the locomotive looks great, has ample detailing, and features superb sound and smoke. The days of buying a sharp-looking locomotive and just letting it sit on a shelf are gone. Further, it would be a crime to let a locomotive like this sit around getting dusty.

Oh, and a note to Carl Johnson, Kent made the right choice!
– Bob Keller



Ultimate budget cargo carrier

My favorite freight car is the boxcar, because, as Darren McGavin said in *A Christmas Story*, "There could be anything in there." But the gondola gets lots of points for play value from old and young alike.

Anyone who owns a gondola knows you can load one with ready-made O gauge cargo such as crates, barrels, or loose coal.

Don't like those? Create your own: A pile of washers of assorted sizes, broken train parts like side rods, or small metal bits make a scrap load. Railroad ties are also good; Get some balsa and trim the pieces to a uniform size, then couple the gondola to a wreck train. You can even collect twigs from your shrubs and pose them as wood on the way to a paper mill.

If you really want to get into the holiday spirit, gon-

dolas are particularly good for hauling candy around the Christmas tree, unless you have curious pets!

■ WHY THESE CARS?

These Menards gondolas tick a lot of boxes. They are colorful cars with modern graphics and unique numbers. Last but not least, they come in below the \$25 price point.

The cars measure 11 inches long, 2 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches wide, and 2 inches tall. They operate on O-27 curves, the tightest in O gauge.

While you can find inexpensive used gondolas at a train show or swap meet, these cars are factory fresh. They have metal wheels, operating couplers, and contemporary design. This makes a difference in regard to painting and decoration. Modern techniques are superior to those of the postwar period, and it shows.

FLEET FILLERS

This is the first installment of Fleet Fillers, reviews of equipment to help fill out a car roster inexpensively. Items may be new or vintage, but must be commonly available in stores or on the secondary market for \$25 or less in good condition. The goal is to help create colorful operating collections in a budget-friendly manner.

The graphics of the Menards cars are skillfully applied. If you asked a modeler which he or she prefers – six gondolas with the same car number, or six cars with six numbers – I'm sure the varied numbers will win.

Can you get variety on a budget? Absolutely. There are 12 road names from all over the country. At about \$20 each, they give the prospective buyer plenty to think about. – Bob

Price: \$19.99 **Road names currently available:** Baltimore & Ohio (blue, orange, and white), CSX (yellow and blue), Chicago & North Western (black and yellow with North Western logo), New Haven (orange, black, and white), Pennsylvania RR (Tuscan red and white with keystone logo), Santa Fe (silver and red with logo), Soo Line (red, white, and black), Union Pacific (yellow, red, black, and the UP shield), U.S. Army (green, white, and a camouflage pattern), U.S. Navy (blue and white), Western Pacific (silver and black with orange feather logo). **Available from:** www.Menards.com; Menards.com/Trains



The J. Shepherd & Sons Dog Food Factory is the latest fully-assembled O gauge structure from Menards. The multiple-story building features an animated illuminated sign, a loading dock with workers, an exterior staircase, and a detailed rooftop.



Feeding Fido

THE MENARDS O GAUGE J. SHEPHERD DOG FOOD FACTORY

There are probably a thousand potential industries that can be added to a model railroad. The J. Shepherd & Sons Dog Food Factory is one I'd never thought of. Considering that Jack, the Menards German shepherd mascot, is everywhere these days, it makes sense for him to have his own brand of dog food.

The left side of the O gauge building has a stairway rising to a second-floor entry. The front has an office door and a recessed loading dock for truck deliveries and shipments. Also on the front are two large windows and an

electronic sign with fun animation showing kibble pouring out of a bag into a dog bowl. The right side has two storage silos.

The dock is raised to truck-trailer height and has warehouse and office entries. Jack is on hand, looking for free samples of his tasty food.

The roof is corrugated metal and is a busy location as there are employees maintaining the equipment. This includes three vents, a dust collector, a propane-style tank, and a water tank (being painted). The water tank has one warning light, and the silos on the side have four.

The appearance and extra industrial features up top make this building a candidate for a creative conversion to another product or industry. But why bother? You can easily enjoy the Menards J. Shepherd & Sons Dog Food Factory as it comes, especially with its great

illumination and live action sign. Besides, how many of you can truthfully say your layout already has a pet food manufacturer!

Come on, you know you need one. Otherwise, you may get caught barking up the wrong tree! – Bob

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Price: \$99.99 (no. 279-4494) **Features:** Fully assembled and decorated, six figures and Jack the dog, warning lights, animated sign, loading dock, and train run-through. For illumination the factory requires a Menards 4.5-volt power supply, sold separately. **Website:** www.Menards.com/Trains

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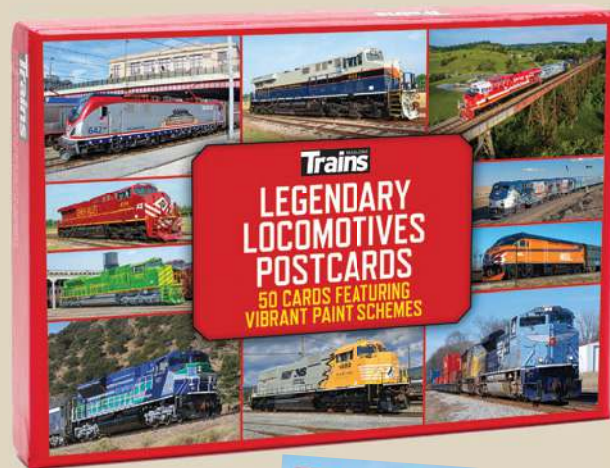
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Events Rate: \$45 per issue (\$5 word maximum). Ads will contain the following information about the event: state, city, sponsoring organization and name of event, meet, auction or show, dates, location, times, admission fee, name and/or telephone number and/or email of person to

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CLOSING DATES: May 2020 closes Feb. 13, July closes Apr. 8, Sept closes June 10, Nov closes Aug. 12, Dec closes Sept. 10.

Events

AL, MOBILE: Model Train Show sponsored by South West Alabama Railroad Modelers (SWARM). Via Health, Fitness and Enrichment Center, 1717 Dauphin Street. March 14-15, 2020, Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm; Sunday 11:00am-4:00pm. Admission \$5.00, family \$10.00, under 10 free. Operating layouts, demonstrations and dealers. Contact Charlie Boyer, 251-454-0572, email charlieboyer66@att.net

CO, DENVER: Rocky Mountain Train Show March 7-8, 2020. Denver Merchandise Mart, 451 East 58th Avenue, Denver, CO 80216. Saturday, 10:00am-5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. 2-1/2 acres of model trains of all scales, 30 layouts, 700 sales tables, clinics and more. Admission \$10.00 under 12 Free, Free-Parking. 303-364-0274 www.RockyMountainTrainShow.com information@RockyMountainTrainShow.com

FL, OCALA: Lions Semi-Annual Train Show. First Christian Church, 1908 SE Fort King St. Saturday, March 14, 2020, 9:00am-2:00pm. Adults \$4.00, children 12 and under free w/ adult. Bring two canned goods and receive \$1.00 off admission. Information: Bob 352-694-6381 or cell 352-208-5284

FL, PINELLAS PARK: TCA Southern Division TAMPA BAY AREA GREAT TOY TRAIN EVENT at Pinellas Park Performing Arts Center, 4951 78th Ave N., Saturday, February 22, 2020, 10:00am-3:00pm. Admission: \$5.00/person (Children under 13 FREE). Operating Layouts, Train Displays, Kid's Play Area, Scavenger Hunt & Train Drag Races. Free Parking. Information: Guy Ateniese, 727-480-7909 or gateniese@tampabay.rr.com

FL, PINELLAS PARK: Regal Railways Presents a Toy Train, Collectible and Hobby Show/Sale. Lopez Hall, 7177 58th St. North, Saturday, March 28, 2020. 9:00am-2:00pm. Adults \$5.00. Vendors, videos & operating layout. Serving lunch items. Contact Joe: 727-244-1341 or visit www.regalrailways.com for more information.

FL, SARASOTA/BRADENTON: 43rd RealRail Train Show. March 21-22, 2020, Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm and Sunday 10:00am-3:00pm. Bradenton Area Convention Center, 1 Haben Blvd, Palmetto, FL. Door prizes, interactive Lionel layout, Florida LEGO user group layout, kids' HO layout, 150 vendors. Adult admission \$8, Children under 13 free. Contact David Fontaine for more information: 941-685-2221 or david_f_34205@yahoo.com

ID, LEWISTON: 9th Annual Lewis-Clark Railroad and Collectibles Swap Meet. NPC Fair Grounds, 1229 Burrell Ave. Sunday, March 29, 2020, 9:30am-4:00pm. Adults \$5.00, children under 12 free w/adult. Several vendors. Operating model RR's available. Operation Lifesaver Train Simulator. Refreshments/food. Contact Dan Wise, 208-816-0845, wraills@cableone.net

IL, SPRINGFIELD: Springfield Railroad Society Annual Train Fair. Orr Building on the State Fairgrounds. Sunday, March 15, 2020, 10:00am-4:00pm. Early bird shopping starts at 9:00am for \$10.00. Admission fee \$5.00 from 10:00am-4:00pm. Free parking. Largest show in downstate Illinois! For info call Ray at 217-544-4295 or visit www.springfieldtrainfair.com

IN, EVANSVILLE: Evansville All Gauge Model Train Show and Swap Meet. Saturday, February 29, 2020. Gates open 10am-3pm CST at St. Paul's UCC, 2227 West Michigan Street, Evansville, IN 47712. Admission \$3.00, under 12 free. Vendors, test track, operating trains, Lego layout and Thomas dealer, food available. Contact John 812-306-5050

IN, INDIANAPOLIS: Central Indiana Division/NMRA announces the Franklin Spring Train Show. New permanent location at the Johnson County Fairgrounds, 250 Fairground St., Franklin, IN 46131. Saturday, April 4, 2020. 10am-3pm. Admission \$3, Family \$5. Clinic and CID Annual Meeting, Door Prizes, Displays, Operating Layouts, Free Parking, Food available. Info/table rental: Michael Roderick 317-833-3556, mdrghost@hotmail.com or www.cidnmra.org

NC, ASHEVILLE: Asheville Train Show. Western North Carolina Agricultural Center. February 28-29, 2020. Friday 12:00pm-7:00pm and Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm. Admission \$6.00, under 10 free. All scales, all gauges, collectibles, artifacts. Operating layouts, Thomas The Tank Engine, hundreds of vendor tables. More: www.Asheville-Trainshow.com

NC, GREENSBORO: 12th Annual "Greatest Little Train Show". Lewis Recreation Center, 3110 Forest Lawn Dr., Greensboro, NC 27455. Saturday, March 21, 2020, 9:00am-4:00pm. \$5.00 adults, children under 12 FREE. Contact Jim Turckett, 336-314-3341, jturckett@gmail.com or mail CMT, PO Box 13642, Greensboro, NC 27415. www.carolinamodelrr.org

NJ, BRICK: National Collector's Club Show, Elks Lodge, 2491 Hooper Avenue, Brick, NJ 08723. Sunday, March 29, 2020, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$6.00; under 10 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to www.eastcoasttrainparts.com and click on The Brick Show.

NJ, CLARK: Jersey Central Train Show & Sale. Mother Seton Regional High School, 1 Valley Road, Clark, NJ. Sunday, March 8, 2020, 9:00am-3:30pm. Admission: \$5.00, children under 12 FREE. Model Trains, Railroadiana, Books, etc. Email Heinz Ricken at hricken@gmail.com

NJ, WAYNE: National Collector's Club Show, P.A.L. Hall, 1 Pal Drive. Wayne, NJ 07470. Sunday, March 15, 2020, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$6.00; under 10 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to www.eastcoasttrainparts.com and click on The Wayne Show.

NY, KINGSTON: Kingston Model Train and Railroad Hobby Show. Murphy Midtown Center, 467 Broadway. Sunday, March 22, 2020, 10:00am-4:00pm. Adults \$7.00, kids under 12 \$2.00, 11,000 sq. ft. Operating layouts, dealer, vendor tables, Thomas the Tank engine and LEGO trains. Information: www.kingstontrainshow.com or e-mail kingstonmts@aol.com

NY, WHITE PLAINS: February 2, 2020. The Westchester Toy and Train Show, Westchester County Center, 198 Central Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606. Our 37th year, 9am-3pm. For sale, New and Antique Toys - Trains - All Gauges - Parts - Appraisals - Diecast Cars - Books - Test Track - Toy Soldiers - Operating Stage Layout. Info: 516-433-2135

OH, KIRTLAND: Lakeland Community College (AFC), 7700 Clocktower Dr., Kirtland, OH 44094. Railfest - NMRA MCR Div. 5. March 14-15, 2020, 10:00am-4:00pm. All Gauge Train Show with over 400 tables. For Information: 440-357-8890 or www.Railfest.org

OH, MT. HOPE: CJ Trains Spring Train and Toy Show. Mt. Hope Event Center, 8076 St. Rt. 241, Zip 44660. Saturday, February 29, 2020, 10:00am-4:00pm. Admission: \$5.00, under 12/FREE. \$25.00/dealer table, 600+ tables. Contact: Jon Ulbright, 330-262-7488, cathijon@sssnet.com, www.cjtrains.com (GPS info: Millersburg, OH 44654)

OH, TOLEDO: Greater Toledo Train & Toy Show. Owens Community College (SHAC), 30335 Oregon Rd., Perrysburg, OH 43551. Sunday, March 8, 2020, 11:00am-3:00pm. Early Birds: 9:00am-3:00pm. Adults \$6.00/Early Birds \$10.00, 12 and under FREE w/ paid adult. Contact: Randy Ramsey, 1566 South Ave., Toledo, OH 43609, 419-215-4181, email: toledotomymasters@gmail.com, website: toymasters.org

PA, CHESWICK: "TRAINS, TRAINS, TRAINS: SHOW!" At the Pittsburgh Shrine Center, 1877 Shriners Way, Cheswick, PA 15024. Sunday, March 29, 2020, 10am-3pm. Sponsored by the Fort Pitt Division of the Train Collectors Association. www.hobbytraincollectors.org Please enjoy our event for \$5. Thank you for attending.

PA, HAWLEY: Model Train Show & Sale. Hawley Fire Department, 17 Columbus Ave. Sunday, April 26, 2020, 9:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$3.00, under 12 free with adult. Bill Delling, 618 Fern St., Hawley, PA 18428, 570-226-3206.

PA, NEW CASTLE: BLRHS Frosty Rails Train Show. February 16, 2020, 10:00am-3:00pm. Shenango Twp VFD Social Hall, 2424 E. Washington St., 16101. Next to Dunkin Donuts. Adults \$5.00 (\$4.00 if you mention Classic Toy Trains ad) Children under 12 free. For show info: Nick D'Amore, 114 Hillendale Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15327-1802. 412-358-0286, njdamore@gmx.com

SC, COLUMBIA: Jamil Temple, 206 Jamil Road. Saturday, March 28, 2020, 9:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$5.00, under 5 FREE. Over 200 vendor tables. Lots of G, O, HO, S/AF, N gauge. More info at CarolinaTrainShows.com

VT, ST. ALBANS: Vermont Rails Show. Collins Perley Sports & Fitness Center, Interstate 89, Exit 19. Saturday, March 14, 2020, 10:00am-4:00pm. Adults \$6.00, children 6-12 \$2.00, children under 6 free, Sponsor: NWV Model Railroad Association. Contact Ron Piro, 802-598-0905, www.nwvrailroad.org

WA, CHEHALIS: Lewis County Model Railroad Club, Annual Spring Train Show and Swap Meet. Southwest Washington Fair Grounds, Blue Pavilion Building, 2555 N. National Ave., Zip: 98532. April 4-5, 2020, Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm and Sunday 10:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$5.00. Free parking. Contact information: Ted, 360-985-7788 or tedstrains@lewiscountycity.com

WA, MONROE: UNW/H 29th Annual Model Train Show and Marketplace. Evergreen State Fairgrounds. February 22-23, 2020, Saturday 10:00am-5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. Adults \$10.00; Juniors/Seniors \$8.00; kids under 9 FREE w/paid adult. Featuring 25 layouts, over 300 vendor tables, clinics, presentations, family fun for all ages. www.unwclub.com/unwshow.html

WA, SPOKANE: River City Modelers Spring Train Show, Spokane Fairgrounds, 404 N. Havana. Sunday, March 8, 2020 from 9:30am-3:30pm. Admission \$6 for adults, 12 & under free. 200+ tables of Railroad-related items for sale, operating layouts, Free-MO, Operation Lifesaver & more. Free parking. For info on table rental or general info, contact: Shirley Sample, 509-991-2317 or email: shirley@busnws.com

WI, MILWAUKEE: Milwaukee Lionel Club Swap Meets. Oct 20, Nov 17, Dec 15, Feb 23 and March 15, 8am-noon. Four Points Sheraton Airport, 5311 South Howell Ave., Milwaukee. Call 414-764-5375 to reserve a table. Buy, Sell, Trade, New and Used O gauge and other gauges.

CANADA-ON, ESSEX: 25th Annual Model Train Show. Essex Public School, 72 Brien Ave. E. Essex, ON, N8M2N8. February 29 and March 1, 2020, Daily 9:30am-3:30pm. Adults \$5. Display, Memorabilia, Interactive Train Model and More! Contact Historic Essex Railway Station at 519-776-9800 or heritageessex@bellnet.ca

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LIONEL'S NO. 2465 SUNOCO DOUBLE-DOME TANK CAR

The engineering and sales staffs at Lionel prepared an impressive line of new locomotives and rolling stock for 1946. From one outfit the previous year, they also developed extensive lists of O-27 and O gauge sets.

Among the newcomers was the no. 2465 Sunoco double-dome tank car. The 9¼-inch-long model ended up being produced in large quantities.

■ NOVEL PLASTIC

Key personnel had plenty to keep them busy as corporate leaders looked ahead to 1946. Already, engineers had introduced die-cast metal operating knuckle couplers on the components of the sole outfit cataloged for 1945. They also had heralded their first piece of rolling stock with an injection-molded plastic body shell, the no. 2452 Pennsylvania RR gondola. It looked more realistic than previous models.

Designers expanded their use of new types of injection-molded plastics, which were lighter, less expensive, and

more easily shaped and painted than die-cast metals or compression-molded plastics.

Decisions about how and where to move forward with plastics coincided with choices made at the top regarding marketing efforts. Tank cars, in particular, generated discussion because they had long been used at Lionel to fill out sets.

For the 1946 O gauge lineup, updated versions of the prewar single-dome model fabricated out of sheet metal would suffice. For O-27 enthusiasts, Lionel planned to introduce a less-expensive, slightly shorter tank car with an injection-molded plastic shell.

■ TWO DOMES, TOO

Thus was born the 2465. Making its debut in 1946, it stayed in the line through 1948, at which point the all-but-identical no. 6465 took over. The latter differed mainly in being equipped with staple-end trucks and magnetic couplers.

Unlike the vast majority of tank cars Lionel had previously developed for its O or Standard

gauge trains, the 2465 featured two domes. Their presence on actual tank cars meant they had been equipped with two separate storage compartments. They could transport two different liquids without them becoming contaminated.

■ LOOKING TO THE SUN

The 2465, like the 2-dome tankers that succeeded it in the line through 1966, used a plastic body. The dome caps and end pieces were molded separately. They were glued to the shell, which was secured by screws to a sheet-metal frame.

Along with the single-dome tank cars in the early postwar roster, the 2465 came lettered for Sunoco. Starting in 1932 and running almost continually into the 1950s, Sun Oil Co. contracted with and paid Lionel to decorate tankers with its name and yellow-and-black diamond logo with red arrow.

■ SIMPLY INDISPENSABLE

The 2465, distinguished esthetically by a blending of curved and straight lines and

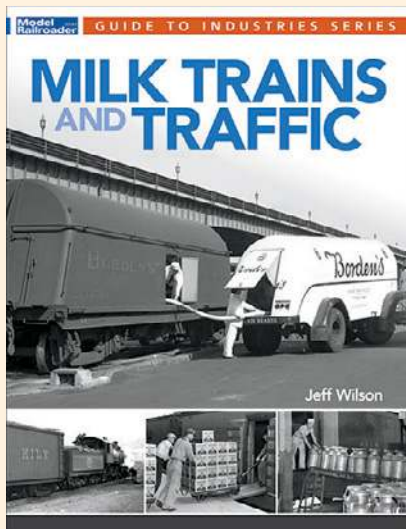
soft and sharp angles, became a favorite at Lionel. The sleek cylinder painted silver riding atop the black frame looked great and exuded realism.

Individuals assembling the O-27 lineup of outfits for 1946 took the unprecedented act of placing a double-dome tank in every one of the regular freight sets cataloged then. All nine included a 2465; only the two O-27 work trains came without the new model.

Lionel had developed an attractive and useful tanker sure to serve many purposes. The 2465 became a classic part of the line. — Roger Carp

Lionel cataloged the no. 2465 Sunoco double-dome tank car from 1946 to '48. The 2020 edition of Greenberg's Pocket Price Guide to Lionel Trains values this O-27 freight car at \$7 in good condition and \$18 in excellent. However, the scarce variation with the Sunoco decal placed in the center of the painted body shell is valued at \$163 in good condition and \$450 in excellent.

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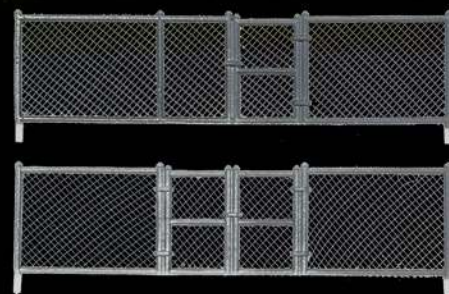
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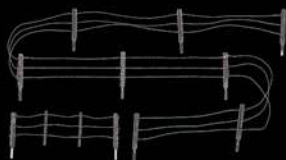
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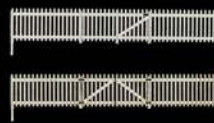
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