

*The*

# POTOMAC FLYER

Apr-Jun 2012

Spring Quarter

## A Day on the Clinch Valley Lines: Potomac Division Layout Tour



## AP and White Flag Extra Clinic Reports

Stop 'em from rolling:

## Build a Working Hill Brake!

## Get ready ... 2012 Minicon almost here!

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The Potomac Division, Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association includes the District of Columbia; Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's and St Mary's Counties in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, and Rappahannock Counties in Virginia, as well as all area independent cities.

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**The Potomac Flyer**

Potomac Division's Quarterly Newsletter

**Submission Deadlines**  
 Spring Issue March 1  
 Summer Issue June 1  
 Fall Issue September 1  
 Winter Issue December 1

**Advertising rates:**  
 1/8 page business card  
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 1/2 page \$25/issue  
 full page \$45/issue  
 Back cover, half page \$45/issue

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## From the Business Car

## Marshall Abrams, Division Superintendent

As you see from articles in this issue, the Minicon is coming together very well. It will be held on March 31, 2012 at South Columbia Baptist Church in Howard County, MD. This is the same location as the 2010 Minicon and again is co-sponsored with our friends from the north in the Chesapeake Division. There's a meeting of the Board with the representatives from CD on March 10 to finalize details. I hope that you will attend the Minicon to share information and friendships of model railroading. We're going to have three modular layouts, three presentation-style clinics plus one hands-on clinic presented twice, a celebration of modeling including the contest room, and the traditional white elephant sale. Bob Reid will be the official photographer.

Tom Brodrick joined the site selection team of for C&P Junction 2013. We now have narrowed our venue choice down to two hotels. The Local Convention Committee will be making a selection soon. The next step will be for Eric Dervinis, the MER Convention Liaison, to join us for a site visit with the Catering Manager/Sales Manager at the property to finalize the contract which he would sign on behalf of the MER.

The White Flag Extra clinic program continues doing well. The most recent session was on Saturday, March 3, 2-4 pm at the Reston Regional Library in Reston, VA.

The first presentation was Steel Mill Modeling by John Glaab, a national expert on steel mill modeling, who presented a PowerPoint presentation on modeling blast furnaces, coke ovens, rolling mills and other facilities required for making steel. He used images of his celebrated 4 x 8 steel mill module, Magarac steel, showing modeling materials and techniques that can be used to present realistic structures and scenes. The second presentation, by Bruce Greenberg, originator of The Greenberg Shows, discussed the origin of the shows, the mechanics of their operation, the advance publicity and requirements required for each show, and the ultimate objectives of scheduling layouts, white elephant tables, sales of model railroad equipment, where to find model railroads for the show, what are the problems in portable layouts? Bruce also offered suggestions on how NMRA can increase attendance at its shows.

The mission of the Potomac Division is to promote model railroading and to share

knowledge about the hobby with others. To help meet that objective, the Board is considering a seminar program. The general concept of the program envisions a small group of hobbyists meeting with individual seminar leaders who have graciously offered to conduct a specialty session on a well defined area of interest to modelers. Each seminar should last approximately one hour but no more than two. Please contact me if you would like to host a seminar or have a request for a seminar topic. The pilot seminar proposal is "Working on Prototype Modeling AP certificate."



There were two items in the February issue of the NMRA Magazine dealing with promoting model railroading. I'm looking for someone with the skills and interest to pick up either or both programs. The "President's Car" (p 6) reprinted a letter that focused on getting children interested. The point that caught my attention was letting children interact with the trains. The Division Business Car (p 40) described an outreach program of beginning courses for the general public. These are great ideas waiting for someone to lead.

If you know someone in the Potomac Division who doesn't receive this copy of the Flyer, please get in touch with me. We continue to hear from people who think that the Potomac Division has gone inactive because they haven't heard from us in a long time. The other side of the coin is that we continue to get notification of invalid email addresses. When you see your model railroad friends, please ask them if they saw this issue of the Flyer. If not, they should contact Mike White or me and we'll get our database updated.

## Annual Division Minicon, 2012

### MARTY McGUIRK and BRIAN SHERON

One of the highlights of the Potomac Division year is the annual one-day Minicon. This year the Minicon is being held in conjunction with the Chesapeake Division, offering members of both groups to meet old friends and make new ones as we share a day of model railroading and fellowship.

When: March 31, 2012. Registration Opens at 8:30 am with the first clinic at 9:00.

Where: South Columbia Baptist Church  
8814 Guilford Rd., off MD Rt. 32 & Brokenland Pkwy.

Registration fee remains at \$10.

This year there will be one main clinic room, and a smaller room for a "hands on" clinic. A total of four clinic sessions in a variety of subject areas will be offered. We even have one "remote" clinic planned. Jimmy Simmons, who took 2nd place in the structures category at the 2011 NMRA National Contest, will present a clinic on his structure weathering techniques. You'll be able to see Jimmy's clinic, but he'll be in San Diego, presenting his clinic remotely. It should be interesting. The clinic schedule is printed on the next page.

As in any event of this nature, there will be Achievement Program opportunities and model judging contests to enter.

The upcoming Minicon will include a "Celebration of Models" room again this year. If you have either a model you would like to display and let others see, or if you have a model that you would like merit-judged, please bring them with you to the convention. Also, so we can make sure we have enough tables and judges, if you could let Brian Sheron know if you plan to bring any models. Brian can be reached at BWSheron@mac.com, or you can call him evenings at 301-349-5754.

Once the judging is complete, the room will be open for members and visitors to see the models. We currently plan for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards to be given for the merit-judged models based on the judging points received.

Three modular layouts will be featured at the Minicon: BANTRAK, Baltimore's NTrak organization and its T-TRAK division, the

tabletop modular group. Also, the N scale division of MARRS, railroaders active in the Fort Meade and Laurel area have confirmed they will be setting up a modular layout for the Minicon.

Since there aren't any restaurants located close to the church, a lunch will be available for a nominal fee on site, or members may wish to pack their own lunches.

Check the division web site:

[http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac\\_NMRA/](http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac_NMRA/)  
for updated information. For now, save March 31. We look forward to seeing many of you there!

### Report of the Nominating Committee

In the Winter issue of the Potomac Flyer, Superintendent Marshall Abrams in his Business Car column announced that nominations were open for the five elected positions on the Potomac Division Board of Directors. He also announced that Tom Brodrick and Brian Sheron would constitute the Nominating Committee. Nominations had to be submitted 30 days before the Potomac Division annual business meeting, which will take place at the March 31 Minicon. Nominations were therefore closed on February 29<sup>th</sup>. As of February 29<sup>th</sup>, the nominations submitted were for the current 5 incumbent members. No new nominations were received.

The current Board members and nominees are:

Marshall Abrams  
Bill Day  
Brian Sheron  
Mike White  
Andrew Dodge

Respectfully Submitted,

*Tom Brodrick and Brian Sheron, Potomac  
Division 2012 Nominating Committee*

## MiniCon: March 31, 2012

### Clinic Schedule

TIME	Track 1	Track 2
9:00 - 10:00	Realistic Model Railroad Photography, Part II Fred Lagno	Styrene Structure Make and Take - Clint Hyde
10:30 - 11:30	B&O's Baltimore Harbor Marine Operations - John Teichmoeller	
1:00 - 2:00	Intro to 2-rail O scale and Preserving Heritage Layouts - David Vaughn	
2:30 - 3:30	Remote Clinic: Structure Building Techniques with Jimmy Simmons, San Diego, CA.	

#### CLINIC DESCRIPTIONS:

**REALISTIC MODEL RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHY, PART II**, Fred Lagno: A continuation of Fred's popular Part I Clinic of the same name. Fred will address modeling, model selection and the types of details that contribute to a realistic scene.

**THE B&O's MARINE OPERATIONS IN BALTIMORE HARBOR - 100 YEARS ON THE WATER MORE OR LESS**, John Teichmoeller: This program covers the various aspects of the B&O's Baltimore Harbor marine activity including tugboats, carfloats, barges, sidewheel car ferries, transfer bridges and a little about daily operations. The B&O's on-the-water activities in Baltimore Harbor lasted for almost exactly 100 years. Where possible, modeling applications will also be shown.

**INTRODUCTION TO TWO-RAIL O SCALE AND PRESERVING HERITAGE LAYOUTS**, David Vaughn: This clinic will introduce you to the current state of two-rail O scale modeling - models, sources, and resources. In addition, David will share his experiences preserving heritage layouts and how to assess the practicality of disassembling, moving, adapting, updating and reassembling a preexisting layout.

**STYRENE STRUCTURE MAKE AND TAKE**, Clint Hyde: Scratchbuild a WW&F whistle-stop passenger station in styrene. Comes with all parts, drawings, and training on working this material. Slight charge for materials, payable day of the clinic.

**TECHNIQUES FOR WEATHERING WOOD AND BRICK STRUCTURES**, Jimmy Simmons, Remote Clinic. Jimmy took second place in the Structures Category at the 2011 NMRA National and will share his tips and techniques for building and weathering structures.

### Main Auditorium Activities

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:30 - 4:00	Modular Layouts
11:45 - 1:00	Lunch and Business Meeting
8:30 - 4:00	White Elephant Sale

Our Cover Story



# Roger Sekera's HO Scale Clinch Valley Lines

**ANDREW DODGE, MMR**

**Photos by the author, unless noted**

The original inspiration Roger drew for his HO scale Clinch Valley Lines (CVL) came from a photo taken in the fall of 1972 of a set of Louisville and Nashville diesels heading-up a freight train on the Norfolk and Western. Based on a freelanced prototype railroad and set in 1959 Appalachia, Roger has developed an interesting layout designed for operations that is fun to run and visually appealing. Set in the

southwestern area of Virginia, Roger draws heavily upon the prototypes that run in that area, such as the N&W, L&N, SRR, C&O and Clinchfield, to add realism to his layout.

The locomotives and rolling stock operating on the layout add to the air of authenticity to the CVL by depicting the waning years of the transition period. A 2-8-0 consolidation, which is used only in a motive power emergency, stationed at the Andover yard is the only remaining steam power on the layout. The CVL has a fleet of GP 7s, F units, and other first-



generation diesels to handle all freight and passenger movements. Other roads also are represented on the layout such as several Southern Railways RS 3s that have trackage rights

on the CVL. Roger has purchased his model locomotives from Life Like, Atlas, and Kato because of their reliability. All of the rolling stock reflects the pre-1959 time period including the remove of glad hand air connectors from all rolling stock to better replicate the era. Even the types of trains adhere to the period with an emphasis on the movement of freight and the declining importance of passenger service.

Scheduled freight service on Roger's layout is evenly split between the movement of coal and general merchandise with the center of operations in the area around Bluefield, West Virginia, and Big Stone Gap, Virginia. The subdivision yards at Andover features the most

interesting operational portion of the layout with a classification yard and scales for weighing cars for proper billing to the shipper. The branch going to the town of St. Paul also supplements operational

interests to the layout with the addition of a number of different industrial sidings that require the railroad to service with box and refrigerator cars. One of the most usual industries on the layout is the Roberts Burlap mill in Wise, Virginia, which produces finished burlap used, even today, in coal mines for airflow control. To aid the movement of trains during operating sessions, Roger has constructed two large staging yards at both ends of the layout to represent "off the layout" destinations.

Roger likes to operate his layout with Railcommand controls and is a member of an operating group that meets at different member's layouts several times a year. The CVL was part of ProRail 2010 and was featured in the January 2012 Dispatchers Office magazine. The CVL has been running for more than five years and has been operated almost 20 times during that period. Under Steve King's guidance, the CVL has instituted Time Table Train Order or TTTO with 12 trains on the timetable and additional six to seven extras run during an operational session. In an additional effort to achieve prototype realism, Roger creates all his car movement cards and waybills on a 1950s vintage mechanical typewriter, which was on display during the open house. In an additional effort to reflect the pace of railroading during the period, all turnouts are hand thrown. The pace of operations is purposely slowed to reflect the period and the lack of competition.

The layout proved to be a big draw for Potomac Division modelers. Despite the good weather and

with it the draw to do outdoorsy things, 42 members, wives, and relatives came to visit. Everyone had a good time and shared in the fellowship of model railroading.



*This page: Marshall Abrams Photos*

## Tips and Techniques

# A Simple Electro-Mechanical Car Brake

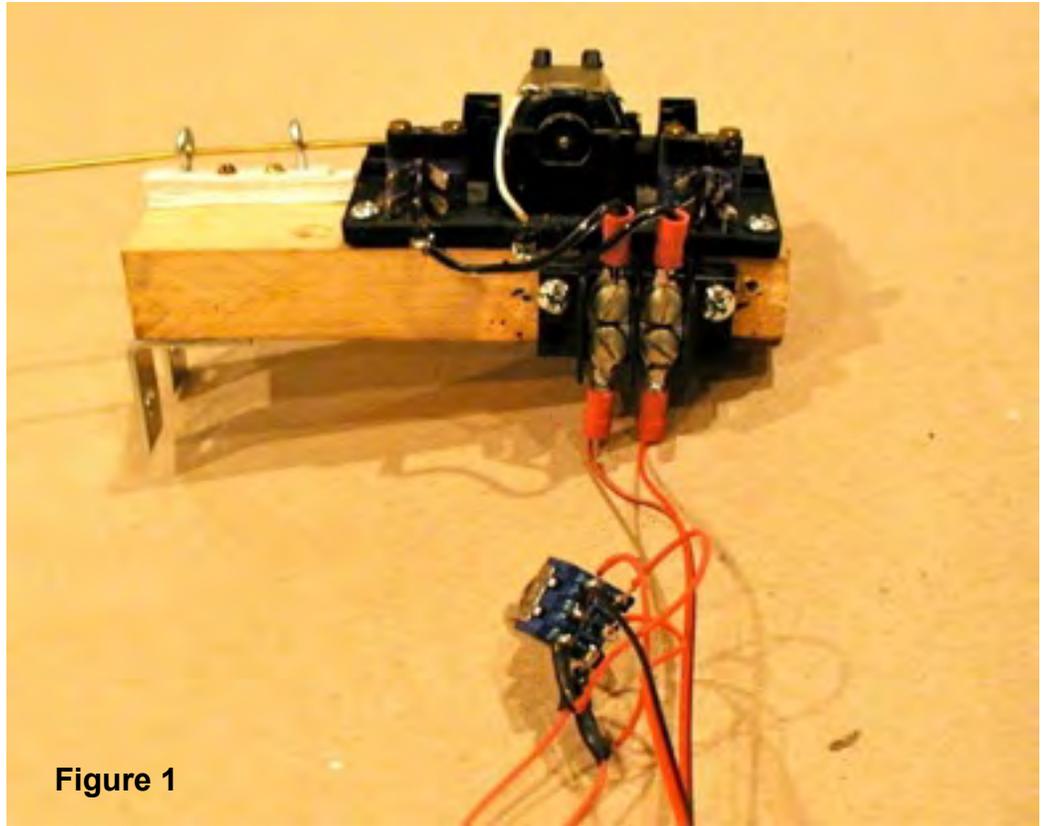
**BRIAN W. SHERON, MMR**

### Photos by the author

I have two sidings on my layout that are on a slight incline. During operating sessions, it can be a challenge to switch cars at these sidings if the car won't stay in the right position. I had kept thumbtacks nearby, so that when the operations crew was switching in those locations, they could hold the cars in place by sticking the thumbtack in front of them. The problems with this were that the operators complained that the glued ballast was too hard to easily push a thumbtack into, and at the end of an operating session, there was a high likelihood the thumbtack was anywhere in the layout room but by the siding.

I had seen articles describing mechanical brake mechanisms that were actuated from a handle or other dial-like mechanism from the front of the layout's fascia board and had a direct mechanical linkage to a brake mechanism (usually a rod) that would pop up between the rails. My problem was that I did not have straight, unblocked access between the fascia board and the locations of the brakes. Moreover, many times these brakes required fabricating strangely-shaped linkages that would translate a push/pull or twisting motion on the fascia board to a vertical up/down motion of the brake pin.

Hence, I decided to skip the mechanical linkages between the fascia board and the brake pin and use a common switch machine to move the brake pin up and down between the rails. The best switch machine for this is the type that uses an electric motor to turn a worm gear that will



**Figure 1**

then turn a gear on a threaded rod that in turn moves a slider in a line back and forth. I had some extra Fulgerex switch machines that were ideally suited for the job. I simply mounted the machine on a piece of wood. I used a 3/64" diameter brass rod as the brake rod, and bent one end at a 90 degree angle so it fit into the hole on the switch machine slider mechanism. I used two small eye screws as guides for the brass rod, and these also served to hold the rod in place. I left the rod purposely longer than necessary, as I would trim it to the required length once the brake was mounted. Drill a hole slightly larger than the diameter of the brass brake rod in the center of the track at the location where you want the cars to stop. Remember that the cars will stop where the axle hits the rod when it is in the "up" position. Two small L-brackets are attached to

the end of the wooden block and these will mount the mechanism under the table (see figure 1).

The electrical leads on the motor are connected to a double pole double throw toggle switch that mounts on the front of the layout fascia board and actuates the switch machine motor that moves the brake up and down. Hook up the power leads to a 12 VDC power supply and when the brake is in the "down" position, cut the brass rod flush with the top of the ties. Figure 2 shows the brake installed and in the "up" position.



Figure 2



This HO scale frame house was scratchbuilt by Mat Thompson from an article in the February 1992 issue of *Mainline Modeler*. Walls, windows, doors, vents and the chimney were built from styrene. Scale 1"x2" stripwood was used to make the rear porch lattice. The Merit Award score was 93 points. *Mat Thompson Photo*

### **WANTED: Layout Hosts!**

The Potomac Division sponsors layout tours approximately every other month.

Layouts don't have to be complete, as layouts in various stages of construction are often just as interesting and informative to members. If you would like to host an open house on a Saturday afternoon and let other members and friends of the Potomac Division see your layout and enjoy your handiwork and modeling talents, please contact the Division's Layout Tour Coordinator, Brian Sheron ([BWSheron@mac.com](mailto:BWSheron@mac.com)), and let him know you are interested in hosting an open house.

**Achievement News**

**Brian W. Sheron, MMR**



Congratulations are in order for several current and former Potomac Division members. Bob Minnis, a former Potomac Division member who moved out of the area a while ago, received Master Model Railroader #462 several months ago. This was announced in the November, 2011 issue of the NMRA Magazine. Mat Thompson received his Achievement Certificate for "Master Builder-Structures." This was announced in the February 2012 issue of the NMRA magazine, and John Pagononi received his Achievement Certificate for "Master Builder-Cars", which was announced in the March 2012 issue of NMRA Magazine. If you see Bob, Mat, or John, be sure to congratulate them.

In addition to being the Achievement Program Coordinator for the Potomac Division, I also am the Layout Tour coordinator. Hence, many of you that regularly attend the layout open houses probably know me, since I try to attend all of the open houses, and often serve as the "Greeter" at the door. One of the things I've noticed when I attend open houses is that many of the layouts are well scenicked, many have a variety of electrical track devices installed, and many have one or more hand-laid tracks, turnouts, crossings, etc.

During my visits to a few layouts, I was able to conclude that the layout already met most of the requirements for one or more Achievement Certificates. For example, if you have a well-scenicked layout, check it against the requirements for the Scenery AP certificate. You might be pleasantly surprised that you have met most or all of the requirements already.

Also look at the requirements for electrical. If you have wired up turnouts, a turntable, a reversing loop, you are already most of the way there towards getting your electrical certificate. All you probably need to do is prepare some wiring diagrams and a layout diagram.

The Civil AP certificate requires that at least 3 track components be scratch-built and merit judged. If you have scratch-built any track components on your layout, they will count towards the Civil AP certificate as long as the pass the merit judging. Thus, it may mean that you only have to scratch-build an additional one or two track components.

The bottom line is that for many of you with layouts that are fairly well along, you may already have met the requirements for one or more AP certificates. Once you get a few AP certificates, it may provide the impetus for you to continue on and get others, The ones I suggest you check against are the Scenery, Electrical, and Civil. If you think you meet the requirements, please contact me (BWSheron@mac.com).



Another of Mat Thompson's merit award winning models. Tillamook Cheese is real industry in Tillamook, Oregon. The structure is a fanciful rendition made by kitbashing Dabler's Mill by AMB and Kingston Creamery by South River Models. The Merit Award Score was 94 points. *Mat Thompson Photo*

## Around the Division – Layout Tour Reports

# Glenn Paulson's Conrail Mountain Division



**MIKE WHITE**

**Photo by Marshall Abrams**

The Conrail Mountain Division is a 1500' square foot double deck layout. The layout is run with Digitrax and most trains run with at least one sound locomotive in the consist. Moving heavy freight trains and operations are the focus of the railroad. Many trains a day service the Karra Steel Mill and neighboring Karra Slab and Cartwright Coil. Helpers are needed to get heavy trains up the mountain. Occasionally they are needed for their dynamic braking to get heavy coal trains from the mines down the mountain. Fast clocks are used for scheduled passenger trains, double stacks and piggyback trains. Bridge traffic and local freights move from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia on a double track main with a stretch of triple track as faster trains overtake



slower ones through the mountains. Scenery is well underway.

## Division Calendar

**March 17, 2012, 1-4 pm**

**Layout Open House**

J.D. Smith, McLean, VA

**March 31, 2012**

**2012 MiniCon**

South Columbia Baptist Church, Columbia, MD

**April 14-15, 2012**

**Great Scale Model Train Show**

Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD

[www.gsmts.com](http://www.gsmts.com)

**May 19, 2012**

**Layout Open House**

Monroe Stewart, Oxen Hill, MD

**June 9, 2012**

**Layout Open House**

Jim Helwege, Alexandria, VA

For Future Planning:

**July 29-August 4, 2012**

**NMRA National Convention, Grand Rails 2012**

Grand Rapids, MI

<http://www.gr2012.org/>

**October 18-21, 2012**

**MER Regional Convention, Milepost 40**

Suffolk, VA

<http://www.nmra-mer-tidewater.org/Convention/convention.html>



**Check out  
6,000 train books.**

Or 100,000 train photos. Or 50,000 train magazines. In fact, there are a *lot* of things you should be checking out at the National Model Railroad Association's Kalmbach Memorial Library. You'll find everything from prototype railroad periodicals to vintage model kit instructions.

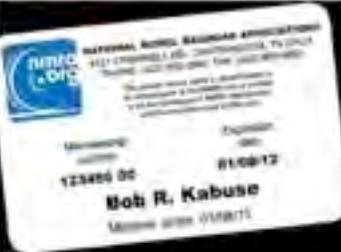
As an NMRA member, you have easy access to everything – it's all just a phone call, letter, or email away. Our staff will even help you do research about virtually any train topic, whether it's model or prototype.

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## Around the Division – White Flag Clinic Report

### **BILL DAY**

Modeling rock formations with confidence and success has long been a goal of beginning and advanced modelers. To take us through the basics—and finer points—of rock strata, Bob Johnson of the South Mountain Division used a variety of dyes, molds, sprays, brushes and spatulas to set, cure and tint plaster formations. He surprised even veteran modelers with his modeling tips: plaster bonds to cardboard; Rit dyes, black and brown, provide an excellent base wash; stippling with a stiff, cut-off brush provides prototypical rock surfaces; vegetation on rock faces can be sprinkled or inserted with equal effect; strata can be aligned by creative use of breaking molded rocks; Clorox used carefully can lighten formations in a realistic way; brushing and scraping excess plaster with a small tool can unify strata; and retaining walls and field stone formations can be expertly fashioned with plaster and a nut pick.



Bob's demonstrations gave us modeling techniques ranging from Linn Westcott's zip texturing to the latest craftsmanship on the web. He told us how to make molds, how to pour plaster to set up in three minutes and, alternatively, how to add vinegar to provide more working time. He told us where to get materials (Michaels Crafts for plaster and tempera paint), Joann's Fabric (for Rit Dye). We learned about the geometry of rock formations and their relationship to neighboring rocks. And we learned how to model natural highlights on rock surfaces, and how peaks, valleys and fissures exist in the real world.

There were a dozen modelers in the clinic and each one left with an increased knowledge of geology, all in the service of better layouts.

Tom Brodrick's clinic on iron and steel did what few clinics do: take us behind the scenes of the business as it relates to railroads. Tom showed us nomenclature and dimensional data for common forms of steel: angles, channels, rods, pipes, beams and plates (including a multipage handout and disk with photos and dimensions converted to HO scale). His power point presentation showed prototype steel distribution centers and how they are served by rail. He moved to the next step, fabrication companies, which rely on rails in unusual ways. One fabrication company, to paint beams indoors, cut a vertical slice in its building, loaded beams on railroad trucks, and pushed the beam into the building with a tractor. Once painted, the beam could be hoisted by crane onto a flatcar and dispatched to the job site.



We learned that steel priced in the Midwest often makes its way to eastern markets; lowest price is all-controlling, trumping proximity. Tom showed pictures of prototype loads on bulkhead flatcars and gondolas, illustrating tie downs, bands and dunnage used in transport. Addressing the post-World War II era, when welding largely replaced riveting, Tom showed prototype railroad cranes, stationary cranes, outsized forklifts and straddle cranes at work. Because Tom followed his father into the steel business, the clinic had the unmistakable feel of authenticity.

Tom concluded by giving a primer on beam size and weight, showing modern structural steelwork, then comparing it to a recent Walther's kit. (Phil Walthers will need to consult Tom before releasing that kind of kit again).

The next brace of White Flag Extras took place on March 3rd at the Reston Regional Library, Reston, Virginia. We'll have a report in the next issue of the Flyer.

## NVNTrak Report

J. B. Wellepp



On Sunday, October 2, 2011, Northern Virginia NTRAK celebrated its 20th anniversary as an Ntrak model railroad club. During these twenty years, Northern Virginia NTRAK has hosted two major n-scale conventions (the 1996 ruNNiN' trainS Convention and the 2004 Capital Limited); has participated in many other conventions including the 2008 Derby City Express in Louisville, KY; conducted hundreds of Operation Lifesaver presentations to the general public, boy scouts, and professional drivers; and has supported local charities and non-profits including the Alexandria Red Cross, INOVA Fairfax Hospital for Children, and the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. All while running trains. We have enjoyed every minute of it.

The fall equinox brings an increase in club events for both the NTRAK and T-TRAK divisions. The months of October, November, and December saw us on both sides of the Potomac River with NTRAK setups in Alexandria/Franconia, Fairfax Station, and Herndon, Virginia and in Bethesda/Chevy Chase, Gaithersburg, and Rockville, Maryland with T-TRAK set ups in Fairfax, Virginia and Columbia, Maryland. In addition, club Operation Lifesaver presenters assisted Santa on the VRE Santa Trains in Woodbridge, Burke, and Manassas, Virginia.

Our annual participation in the Rockville Lions Club model train show in November was especially significant for two reasons this year; it marked the anniversary of our first layout 20 years ago and two of our long time members, who are struggling with illness and injury, were able to actively participate.

We held our annual holiday party at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum in December. It was attended by members and wives and featured a guest appearance by a jolly bearded gentleman in a red suit. The holiday get together was highlighted by the gift exchange that included several exchanges over a coveted gallon bottle of Elmer's white glue.

The loss of the annual holiday Greenberg Train and Toy Show at the Dulles Expo Center has impacted all modular model train clubs in the Northern Virginia area as well as model train hobbyists and vendors. The loss of this venue was the result of the north expo building being sold to another developer. The building is presently being converted into a Wal-Mart Store.

The exhibitor who used the north building bumped Greenberg from the December-January schedule for the south building.

The loss of the holiday train show means that there is only one major model train show a year in the immediate National Capital region. Will this mean that train modelers will travel to the Great Scale Model Train Shows and Greenberg shows at Timonium and elsewhere? That may depend in part on the rising price of gas.

When one door closes, another door opens. In January, Northern Virginia NTRAK took to the road; setting up at the Greenberg shows in York, PA and in Fredericksburg, VA a week later. Long johns were definitely the order of the day in York. Our layout was located in the lobby of the convention building and was the recipient of gusts of cold wind whenever the front doors were opened. The layout in Fredericksburg was decidedly warmer and the threat of freezing rain and snow never fully developed.

Our annual meeting in January saw the election of new members to the Board of Directors. The Directors then elected Officers for 2012.

President – Jim Davis  
 Treasurer – Dave Porter  
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                     Kip Petzrick  
                     Wayne Rash

As we begin our 21st year, we will begin planning for an N scale convention in 2014 as well as looking for new venues and opportunities to run trains.

## J.D. Smith's Southern Railway Rathole Division

**When: SATURDAY, March 17, 2012, 1:00-4:00 pm**

This layout models a portion of Southern Railway's Second and Third Districts between Emory Gap, TN and Danville, KY. The terrain was a challenge for the railroad with demanding grades, a number of bridges and four tunnels. The prototype is fully signaled and under CTC. The layout is partially signaled at this time with further signals underway. Brass components for the New River Bridge are being assembled. Mountain scenery is well underway with peaks as high as eight feet above the floor. Over 50% of the trackage on the layout is ballasted. The yard at Emory Gap is a current focus, with 80% of the yard ballasted. Rivers and streams are in place. The mainline run follows the prototype, with single and double track and is approaching 300' in length. Current projects are focused on additional hidden staging for long trains and on continued scenery construction.

Mainline priority trains have long consists, a number of which, have mid-train power units. For example, the AW&W Coal train has three six axle units on the front and three six axle units at mid-train. The coal train's consist includes 65 loaded coal cars, a mid-train radio car and a caboose.

Control panels with track diagrams, LED lighting and turnout toggles allow Engineers and Conductors to traverse the layout under radio control with the Somerset Dispatcher. TV monitors assist Engineer/Conductor Teams in moving trains in and out of hidden staging from the outside stairs.

## Hooch Junction Railroad, Monroe Stewart

**When: SATURDAY, May 19, 2012, 1:00 - 4:00 pm**

The Hooch Junction fills a 20' x 40' room and spills out into a 6' x 10' Hooch heavy industry area. This is one of the world's best N gauge layouts and is not to be missed. Monroe keeps upgrading the layout. Horseshoe Curve was bulldozed in and a neat polluting industry was added above the old reservoir. An even more recent modification involves the removal of a mountain, and the conversion of this space to staging yards..



## Jim Helwege Bangor & Aroostook

**When: SATURDAY, June 9, 2012, 1:00 - 4:00 pm**

Designed around a U-shaped walk-around layout, Jim's N scale layout covers a 12' by 8' space in his basement. The idea of the layout was for continuous running, and not specifically for operations, although an operations system could be incorporated with the numerous industries on the three folded dogbone loops on this 100% scenery-covered railroad. Several scenery refinements and locomotive and rolling stock additions have occurred since the last visit 3 years ago. The focus of the layout is the Bangor & Aroostook railroad, with the locomotive stock including all versions of the varied Bangor & Aroostook paint scheme (commercial and custom), and including early F3s and BL-2s to the more modern GP-9s and GP-38s.

