

Northern Virginia N-Trak

Club News

We have a new monthly setup location. Through the efforts of a Brendel, we now have use of the Fairfax Fire Training Academy on Sunday evenings. Our regular setup sessions are scheduled for the third Sunday of every month from 5:00PM to 10:00PM. Our last session on the 16th saw the largest layout to date with a variety of modules including Brian's "T" flyover with setup yard.

Everyone is reminded that if you plan to attend the monthly setup, please call the Club Coordinator Matt Schaefer (703-978-2946) by the Wednesday preceding the setup. Matt needs to know who will be there to plan the module arrangement. We need this information to speed up the assembly. Last setup took two hours! That didn't leave much time for running trains. We need to get the setup time down to about 30 minutes. The only way we can do this is for everyone to inform Matt if you are coming. Also, we have noticed that many modules do not conform to N-Trak standards in one aspect or another. This may seem like a minor point to some of you, but something as simple as not providing a power strip under the module has caused problems during setup. Be sure that you review the N-Trak standards in the *N-Trak Module "How-To" Book*. If you don't have a copy, you can order one from NTRAK Publishing at 2424 Alturas Rd, Atascadero, CA 93422.

Matt will be inspecting every module at the next setup and "bad ordering" any module that doesn't meet the full NTRAK standards. We have three shows coming up in a few months and we need to get our modules in order before then. We've also noticed that scenery is still moving rather slowly. No module will be permitted at the upcoming shows unless it is fully scenicked (is that a word????) and has a regulation size skyboard. The club does not have a rule regarding skyboards. The minimum height for skyboards is 8" above the rail tops. NTRAK recommends 14", but anything higher is allowed if needed for scenery. Try to keep yours below 14" since reaching over anything higher is very difficult unless you tend to drag your knuckles when you walk.

A few other reminders: Minimum radius on the two main lines is 24". Branch line is allowed 18" minimum. Avoid S-curves. We constantly have problems with longer equipment negotiating them. NTRAK does not recommend them. If you must have them, use easement curves. If you don't know what an easement curve is, ask one of the members at the next setup. We'll show you how to lay them out. For the Mountain Division, the track must be 4" from the skyboard and 3-1/8" above the tops of the main line rails. This is measured from rail top to rail top.

Much of our time during setup and takedown is spent screwing and unscrewing the module legs. I strongly recommend that everyone take a look at folding legs recessed in the module or at friction fit leg holders that don't need screws.

Matt will have signup sheets at the September setup for those who are planning to attend the October and November shows. Please sign up and identify quantity and size of modules you will bring. Matt will also have a signup sheet for the regular setup for those who want to run trains. It is first come, first served when signing up. You may sign up for time slots and lines (red, blue, or yellow). This should make the evening go more smoothly as everyone will know when his turn to run is.

Jim FitzGerald will be at the October MER in Fairfax. He is coming out to see how the new NTRAK clubs are doing. Plan to join our module setup on October 16-18 and get a chance to visit with the founder of NTRAK.

Club property, where is it? The Club currently owns several modules, barrier support posts, rope, skirting, and throttles. If you are the keeper of any of this stuff, please call Matt Schaefer and let him know exactly what you have. Matt will keep an inventory for use in setups and shows so that the key people with Club materials are reminded to bring them.

Business Meeting: There will be a Club business meeting at Obie's

Trains on 3 Sep from 7:00PM-9:00PM to discuss upcoming events, Club By-Laws, State incorporation, Club property status, meeting places and times, and any new business that members wish to bring up. Please be there. We need as many members present as possible to ensure that decisions made are acceptable to the majority of members.

Contest!!!

We are having a contest to create an official Club logo which will be used on membership cards, stationary, and Club literature. We have a de facto logo created by Dennis Austin which many of you have seen on our Club name tags. We want to get the Club members' opinion on the logo. Does someone have another suggestion? Any new logo ideas you have should be sent to the Club Secretary at Northern Virginia N-Trak, P.O. Box 1951, Herndon, VA 22070. We need all ideas by November 1st. The candidates will be presented at the December business meeting/holiday party and voted upon. The creator of the winning logo will receive a prize. (Submissions must be in presentable form for duplication. Submitter must be able to prepare a final full-color version for the printer if selected as the winner. The Club will not redo the artwork.)

For Sale

Leonard White has a batch of aluminum N-Trak gages for \$8.00 each. These are the gages discussed in the N-Trak literature which are useful for trimming your rails to the proper length for joining modules. Call Leonard White (370-9682) if you are interested. Leonard can also get #80 drill bits in quantity for a good price.

Matt Schaefer has B&O Trix F9 B units he will trade for B&O Trix F9 A units or shells. (703-978-2946)

Other N-Trak News

For those of you who are not aware, there is a national N-Trak organization. A bi-monthly newsletter is published with lots of info on N-Scale activities. There are also N-Trak resource booklets covering everything from module construction to throttles. You can join by sending \$5.00 to: N-Trak Publishing, 2424 Alturas Rd., Atascadero, CA 93422, (805)466-1758. Jim FitzGerald runs the organization and handles the newsletter.

Railfan News

Norfolk Southern has many steam excursions this year headed by the N&W 611 or the Sou 4501. Coming up on October 10th is a trip from Roanoke, VA to Walton VA and on October 11th another trip from Roanoke to Bluefield, WV. If you are interested, contact the Roanoke Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, P.O. Box 13222, Roanoke, VA 24032, (703)389-3935.

The Pocahontas Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society is hosting the '92 Railfest at the Bluefield Youth Center, 1780 Stadium Drive (next to Mitchell Stadium in Bluefield, WV) on November 14 and 15. Hours are 9AM - 6PM Saturday and 12Noon-6PM on Sunday. Admission is \$2 per person, \$5 per family. For more info call (304)327-0026 or (304)487-3128

Meeting Reminders

Our September setup will be held on the 21st at the Fairfax Fire Training Academy on West Ox Road (near the Price Club).

Shows: **Oct 3-4** Greenberg Show at Mt. Vernon High School
Oct 16-18 MidEast Regional Fairfax Convention, Fire Training Academy
Nov 14-15 Rockville Lions Club, Rockville Senior Center (Nov 13 Fri - optional setup 6PM until 9PM; Sat 8:00AM-10:00 setup, run from 10 to 4; Sun, run from 11 to 4, tear down at 4PM)