

# SPECIAL



# EDITION



## Northern Virginia NTRAK Newsletter

P.O. Box 1951  
Herndon, VA 22070  
Member Helpline: (703) 620-0812 (Ext 3)  
WWW: <http://columbia.digiweb.com/~nvnttrak/>

Northern Virginia NTRAK Officers:  
President: Brian Brendel  
703-719-4563  
Secretary: Phil Lebet  
703-525-3686  
Treasurer: Rodney Smith  
703-644-6359  
Superintendent: John Drye  
703-698-7148

APRIL 1996

VOLUME V NUMBER 4

### **W**The View from Manassas Junction**W**

by Brian Brendel

*Lend a hand ... or maybe even a foot*

I've always said that I was amazed by the depth and breadth of the talent in our little club, and as we all gear up for the convention, I continue to be impressed. The Convention Committee is starting to get help from the members, and those members that have chosen to help are jumping in with both feet. Each person that assists the committee usually does so because they have some experience in a field that could benefit the convention, and that's great. But in addition to those guys, and true to the helping nature of our club, there are folks who "boldly go" that extra step into unfamiliar territory and are helping in areas they know little about — just because we need assistance. We appreciate all the help and certainly could use lots more... 'cause if you didn't already know it, this isn't going to be a "little" convention.

If you're having trouble envisioning just how big this shindig is going to be, go to the Radisson and stand in the middle of the ballroom when it's fully opened up and empty. Then picture it filled with modules. Yup. That's **BIG**. Just think about the folks coming all the way from Switzerland for this. Or, how about 400 room-nights which have been booked 5 months ahead of the convention date. Sheesh. What have we gotten ourselves into?

Well, maybe I should have my head examined (and it's about time, as I'm sure most of you are thinking...) but despite all the work this event is going to be, I know our club will have FUN doing it. We LOVE challenges — from squeezing a layout underneath some stairs at the Fairfax Fair, to RunniN' TraiNs with just 100 volts of power in a dungeon filled with carcinogenic dust at Fredricksburg. (Ed: YUCK!) The challenge this time will not only be to throw a clambake that the "N World" will remember with a smile, but an event which even we exhausted NVNTRAK members will smile about.

That's really what the theme of this issue of the newsletter is all about and what you will see on almost every page. If everyone pitches in as they have in the past, you'll be able to see the smiles in Alexandria ... all the way from Manassas Junction.

### The Convention is Coming!... The Convention is Coming!...

by Gil Brauch

This special edition of the NVNTRAK Newsletter is designed for two purposes. The first is to give our club members and regular readers the first detailed glimpse into what will be going on at the 1996 N Scale East Convention, **RunniN' TraiNs '96**. Since we are the host club, we all need to be fully informed about the activities. *We also need to be signing up for those activities we are going to help with.* The convention is turning out to be a really big deal and it's going to take all of us pulling together to make it work.

Another purpose for this edition is to build the convention activity mailing that is being sent to the convention participants. That is why the convention section is separate from the features that are normally a part of the newsletter. I hope that each of you will make good use of the convention "pullout" section as we work our way together toward this most significant event in the life of NVNTRAK.

As you think about your level of participation, here are the people who are on the Convention Committee that you can contact to volunteer your services:

Rodney Smith	Chairman
Matt Schaefer	Inside Activities (layout, clinics, contests)
Bernard Kempinski	Tours
Fred Obermeyer	Commercial Activities
Charles Greenacre	Registration
Brian Brendel	Publicity
John Cook	Administration (Company Store, etc.)
Gil Brauch	Treasurer

Read, enjoy, **and VOLUNTEER!!**

*inside this month . . .*

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**FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S**

**CABIN CAR**

*by John Drye*

**APRIL SHOWS** - Since the Club has now had three months to practice at two setups per month, now we'll try two setups on ONE weekend! It is pretty incredible to me that you folks have been able to do all this. This month will, however, take some careful coordination by all.

The current club module listing (more on that later) includes two junctions and ten corners: exactly what is needed for one single-loop and one double-loop setup. We'll use four corners in Gaithersburg, and the two junctions and six corners in Springfield. The space at Gaithersburg will only allow about 24 feet of straight modules. The Springfield loops can be sized based on what straight modules don't go to Gaithersburg. This should provide some incentive to finish up modules currently in progress. We will scour the club to get power and throttles for all this.

**SPRINGFIELD MALL** - April 12-14 (Fri-Sun) at Center Court. Another opportunity for prime exposure and advertising for *RunniN' TraiNs '96*. The Mall has made our usual space available, so we'll plan to set up at least two loops. We will try to set up at least one loop by 9:30 PM Thursday and run with a small crew Friday during work hours, until the rest of the crew arrives Friday evening. We will have incremental clampdown, the last Saturday AM at 8:30 AM. Setup foreman is John Drye.

**GAITHERSBURG MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY, GREENBELT** - April 14 (Sunday only) at American Legion Post #136, 6900 Greenbelt Rd. Greenbelt, MD. The space only permits a single loop of about 10 by 30 feet. Just as well, considering. Setup is 6:00-9:00 AM on Sunday. Public Show from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Clampdown is 7:30 AM. I hear the food is GREAT. Setup foreman is Keith Holzapfel.

**UPCOMING SETUPS - PRINCE OF PEACE**

**LUTHERAN CHURCH** - May 19. Right now, our only setup scheduled for May is our usual third Sunday back at the Church. It should be nice to get back to our usual home. We could practice THREE loops, if another junction gets finished by then. Doors open 1:00 PM. Clampdown is 2:00 PM.

**MODULE LISTING** - The current NVNTRAK Module Listing is included in this month's newsletter. This listing is intended to include all modules that regularly make it to setups and also includes modules in various stages of construction. The listing also provides a general description of the modules. Please let me know of any errors, omissions, or updates.

**RunniN'  
TraiNs '96  
N Scale East Convention**

**Convention Corner**

*by Rodney Smith*

**YOUR CONVENTION WANTS YOU!**



The convention staff has done a good job, so far, to make this convention a success. It is now up to you, the members of Northern Virginia NTRAK, to do your part. We need your help in the following areas:

- \* Traffic control for layout and vendor set up and tear down
- \* Trip captains for layout and prototype tours
- \* Tour Sales
- \* Setup coordinators for the big layout
- \* Dispatchers and tower operators for the big layout
- \* Registration assistants
- \* Clinic A/V supervisor
- \* Company Store Sales
- \* Event Assistants

These tasks, and many others, await eager volunteers. Please pick the ones you are interested in now. Don't wait, volunteer early! Duties assigned on a first come-first served basis. We can't do it without you.

**RAIL EVENTS - TIME TABLE**

Apr 10-14 Industrial SIG Convention, Huntington, WV  
Apr 12-14 **Monthly Setup - Springfield Mall Center Court, Springfield, VA - Setup Foreman: John Drye**  
Apr 14 Gaithersburg Model Railroad Society, Amer Legion Post #136, Greenbelt, MD - Setup Foreman: Keith Holzapfel  
Apr 25-28 Pittsburgh Limited - Mid Central and MER

May 19 NMRA Joint Convention, Monroeville, PA.  
**Monthly Setup - Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, VA - 1-7 pm**

Aug 15-18 **RunniN' TraiNs 96 Convention - Radisson Mark Center Hotel, Alexandria, VA**

*(Items listed in boldface indicate NVNTRAK module events)*



## THE HOSTLER'S SHACK

by Matt Schaefer



## South Alexandria

### A "Private" NTRAK Home Layout

by Fred Obermeyer

**CONVENTION BALONEY** - You hear lots of superlatives and baloney about conventions being the best, world class, etc. It is hard to put the right superlatives on ours when it is a generation beyond anything else I have seen; *and I have been to 'em all*. Where do you find NTRAK or any kind of convention which offers 12,000 sqft for layout right in the hotel; ...radio walk around controls for your own trains; ...the best of tours and clinics, including a rail excursion in Superliners (at \$46 - about half the old excursion prices); ...an excursion to the B&O museum; ...AND a moonlight cruise (for \$15)??!?! Nobody else has this, yet. We have the mother and father of all N Scale conventions. I just wanted all members to get the message on the '96 East ... without the baloney!

**CORK ROADBED** - If you use cork roadbed, sheet cork saves construction time where you have yards, triple tracks, complex curves or several crossovers since you do not have to fiddle with strips. It goes down in one piece and you cut off the excess on a 45 degree angle. Bulk 1/4" sheet cork can be bought in 4' wide sheets, for \$2.70 a running foot at Home Depot.

**LEG HARDWARE** - I have suggested specific hardware for folding legs, such as the wider 2.5" utility hinges. The longer the pin bearings the longer the lever arm and the stiffer the fastening to the leg. I have bought extra hardware if you are interested in some.

**ADHESIVES** - Obie stopped by the shack and we were talking about fastening foam mountains. Obie and I agreed for once - we use PL200 panel cement. I have tried Elmer's, Liquid Nails and, PL400. PL200 is thin, fastens on contact, movable for 15 minutes and at Home Depot is \$3.41 for 28 ounces; *cheap, cheap*.

**TWO FACED MODULES** - We plan to set up the junctions across the back of the ballroom. Since we will be viewing from both sides of this division it would helpful to connect the junctions with modules that can be used without skyboards, like Clark's Mill. Design in flexibility to your new modules or consider modifying your older modules by planning them so they look good from both sides, we may need lots of these.

**RUNNING TRAINS CONTESTS** - Quick, from memory what is the name of the numbered passenger train for each of these railroads: B&O #1 & 2; C&O #1 & 2; N&W #1 & 2 (a tricky one); Sou #37-38; AT&SF #1 & 2; Great Northern #681 & 682; Burlington #1 & 2. The final authority will be my RR Guide; the one from the 50's with the cover torn off. The person in first place will be given priority for their train over all other trains running on the Virginian Northern (the Rathole Route) in the next operation. Anyone delaying this train will be called up on the carpet to see why their pay from Northern VA N-TRAK and the Virginian Northern should not be forfeited. The answers are on page 4.

The *South Alexandria* layout is centered on the southern outskirts of Alexandria and its railroad industries. The pike reaches from a piggyback yard in South Alexandria to curves going through downtown and around the coal yard. The layout consists of NTRAK modules: four 3' outside corners, two "standard" 2'x4', and two that are 3'x4' in size. The focus is on the RF&P, Southern, Seaboard, ACL, and Chessie and reflects most of RF&P's Potomac Yard's action -- although not an exact model of the original. It is quite nice as it folds together.

The 8' section of RF&P contains the piggyback and intermodal yard areas. The track switches off the Blue Line and goes on a 30-degree angle towards 3-approach tracks for piggyback service. A single switch backs off of the 3rd piggyback track and reverses to industry tracks for Walther's Medusa Cement Works. Sneaking back to the yard, another track switches back to a coal unloading area. Here cars are dumped and manually loaded with a drag crane. A construction building opposite the coal area has giant cranes and equipment for more activity. Engines and cars can be switched from this area giving a lot of action. Probably the neatest part about these tracks is a track which parallels the Blue Line and switches into two passenger tracks. This is where N&W's "1218" and "J" are stored ready for another excursion run to Roanoke.

Just before you reach the passenger station, you find another track which switches around the back of the passenger area and into a diesel fuel storage area. Boy! All this is in just 8' feet of modules! Top all this off with lots of vehicles and people and it gives this section a nice appearance. The backdrop shows industry and downtown areas with cotton smoke attached to some chimneys in the photos to add a three dimensional effect.

As we leave the yard area in either direction, we travel into a set of 3' corners that lead to a 8' hidden yard on the back of the piggyback yards. Access is gained through switches on the Blue Line of the corner modules. This allows the yard to be used as a set up yard for Blue Line. There are four setup tracks are on the 8'x 12" yard, with a 5th track available for through traffic. This module has also been used to increase activity on the Blue Line while some other train is occupying it on another part of the layout. A separate power pack is used to control the yard area.

Another set of modules clamps to the front edge of the yard and corner modules which give an additional 15' of giant yard parking and Red Line set up tracks. To me this provides the ultimate solution for staging of cars.

As we leave the yard area, we go through Rose Hill, named after the famous Rose Hill Farm (or to you 90's people - Lee District Park). The module has a pond, greenhouse, barn. This introduces lots of color and makes it great for photography. From Rose Hill the trains travel onward into Old Town. Here the tracks separate on the Yellow Line. The Blue and rear Yellow lines go towards the back of the module and the Red and front Yellow lines go along the front of the module. A town occupies

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Obie's Corner

**Atlas Model Railroad Company** - GP-7 - If you missed it in the March MR, well here it is! undec, B&A, Burlington, ConRail, Erie Lacawanna, NYC, NP, Santa Fe, Southern, UP, Wabash, WP. Check 'em out - can't run 'em out.

**ConCor** - J-3 Hudsons on the shelf. B&O, SP Daylight, Southern.

**deLuxe Innovations** - Husky stacks and containers now in stock.

**Kato** - Anniversary Set has arrived!! Also, steam engines now in stock. Be careful not to handle these improperly. They must not be bent between the couplers so as not to dislodge the center clip that holds them together. Sure do run nice.

Early announcements for Fall 1996 late issue.....

- 106-0004 Erie Lackawanna train set
- 106-0005 Santa Fe train set
- 106-0006 Soo Line train set

(prices around \$150)

F-7's to be released separately from sets in A&B units.

**LifeLike** - SD-7/9s available soon. They are verrry late...

**Micro Engineering** - I *finally* got MY turnouts. WOW! that took *forever!* Anyway, they are *nice!* Code 55, R's & L's.

**Woodland Scenics** - has a new kit for 4'x8' layout that has just arrived and is in stock. Everything that is needed to complete the scenery on the layout is in the box. Check it out...it's *great!*

Stay tuned here for some new items from the European Toy Fair...New SW-1500 due out in August and new #3 car sets due out about the same time from Rivarossi. Also new GG-1 coming soon.

We've got a lot of other **NEW STUFF** on the shelf. Stop by and check these out!!

## Micro-Trains - Recent Releases

100010	36' Riveted Steel Side Caboose	16.85
25550	50' Rib Side Boxcar(CSX)	12.65
21212	Merger Pack (Fallen Flags)	53.00
28040	40' Outside Braced Box (CN)	10.40



## Answers to Hostler's Shack Quiz (from Page 3)



I hope no one was cheating!

B&O 1 & 2 - The National Ltd,

C&O 1 & 2 Washington to St. Louis, The George Washington to Cincinnati

N&W, #1 & 2 - Roanoke overnight to NYC Via Front Royal and Hagerstown and I'm sure they gave it names

SRR 37 & 38 - The Crescent

AT&SF 1 & 2 - San Francisco Chief (The plain Chief was #19 & 20)

Burlington #1 & 2, The Denver Zephyr

Great Northern #681 & 682 was the 4:30 PM local from

Shelby to Sweet Grass and back - sounds like a nice trip.



## South Alexandria

(Continued from page 3)

the back and center of the module. Buildings are removed and reset in the open area in the front between the two Yellow lines to change scenery from a circus theme to industry, depending on the occasion. This module also has nice mountain division tracks with three Kato bridges that create an effective scenic backdrop. Leaving Old Town, we approach New River Mining, which occupies a 3' corner. This module stays busy, with coal loads going in both directions.

So there you have it. An NTRAK layout at home. All you need is about 8'x14' of space for a whole lot of railroading! All this, and it's portable! OH! Did I mention that I can also run 60 car trains with no problem?



The Northern Virginia N-TRAK Newsletter is produced for and by the members of Northern Virginia N-TRAK. Membership is \$30/year or a Newsletter subscription for continental USA residents is just \$10/year payable in January. Send check: Treasurer, Northern Virginia N-TRAK, P.O. Box 1951, Herndon, Virginia 22070.

Submissions should be sent to the editor, Gil Brauch, 6111 Lorcom Ct. Springfield, VA 22152, by electronic mail to [gbrauch@lmi.org](mailto:gbrauch@lmi.org), or faxed to 703-917-7482 (and clearly marked for Gil Brauch on the cover sheet).

Please send articles for the May 1996 newsletter by April 22, 1996. Thanks.

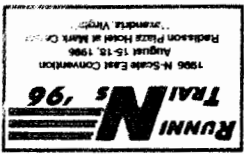
### Northern Virginia NTRAK Module Listing - April 1, 1996

Module Name	Member Name		Club	Size	Config	Status			Yards and Sidings	X-Over	Mtn
						C	-S	UC			
BRAC	Freedenthal	Chester		4	S	X			B: loop		
Cat Creek	Cook	John	X	3x4	C	X			B: siding		X
Cedar Creek	Obermeyer	Fred		8	S	X			M: passing siding; loop below mains		X
Clark's Mill	Brendel	Brian		4	S	X					
Construction Demo	Graulau	Victor	X	4	S		X				
Convention Display	Brendel	Brian	X	4	S	X			display track behind B		
Foggy Bottom	Smith	Rodney	X	3	C	X					
Fudruckers	Greenacre	C&D		4	S	X			B: sidings	B-Y, Y-R	
Iceblock	White	Leonard		4	S	X					X
Junkyard Corner	Obermeyer	Fred	X	3	C	X			B: siding		
Keating Jct	Drye	John		4	S		X		B: sidings	Y-B, R-Y	
Laurel Creek	Kempinski	Bernie		3	C	X			B,Y: setup yard		
Le Harvre	Greenacre	C&D			S		X		harbor		
Loop Mtn/DD&D Mine	Brauch	Gil		4S+4S-X	S+S-X	X			mine with yard and loop below mains		X(LH Loop)
M&K Extension	Braithwood	Edd		6	S		X		B:yard	B-Y, +?	
M&K Junction	Braithwood	Edd		12	S	X			B:yard and engine facilities, R: siding	Y-B, R-Y	Removeable
MIT #1 and #2	Stewart	Monroe		6 w/6 ext	S	X			B: sidings		
Mountain Corner	Obermeyer	Fred	X	3	C	X					X
name?	Lebet	Phil		4	S	X			B: sidings		
new	Chibarro	Mark		4	S		X		B: sidings and loop		
New River Gorge	Schaefer	Matt		4C+4S	C+S	X			high line loop		
Obiechobie Swamp	Schaefer	Matt	X	5	J	X					
Orphan Corner	Drye	John	X	3	C	X					
Peaceful Valley	Freedenthal	Chester		4	S	X			B: loop		
Point of Rocks	Greenacre	C&D		5	J	X					
Possom Point	Cook	John		4	S	X			B: siding to power plant		
Potomac Interlocking	Steitz	John		4	S		X		Org, Brn	B-Y, Y-R	
Prince	Zutter	Carl&Steve		8	S-X			X			
Quantico Creek	Cook	John		4	S	X					
Quinnamont	Kempinski	Bernie		5	J	X			B: siding		
Reid's Corner	Greenacre	C&D	X	4	C	X					
Ribbon Cliff	Matthews	Pete		12	S	X			B,Y: setup tracks	B-Y	
Rose Industrial Park	Rutherford	Bill		4	S		X		B: switching "Timesaver"		
Rowe's Run	Hawker	Tony		4+12	C+S	C			B: engine facilities, turntable		
Scrapwood Mountain	White	Leonard		4	S	X					X(RH Loop)
Shenandoah Junction	Brendel	Brian		12	S+J	X			Y,R:junction to inside setup yard	Y&R-M	X
Spacer Bridge #1	Greenacre	C&D	X	3	S	X					
Spacer Bridge #2	Greenacre	C&D	X	2	S	X					
Spacer Bridge #3	Greenacre	C&D	X	2	S	X					
Spacer Bridge #4	Greenacre	C&D	X	1	S	X					
Spider Ridge	Smith	Rodney		12	S	X			B,Y,R: passing sidings	R-Y	X
Table Rock	Budens	Robert		8	S	X					X
Thomas Steel	Drye	John		4	S		X		B	B-Y, Y-R	
Turntable Corner	Obermeyer	Fred	X	3	C	X					
Up. Casteleman River	Holzapfel	Keith		12	S		X		B: mine		
Yard	Allen	Ken		8	S		X		B: yard tracks		Removeable

**Key:**

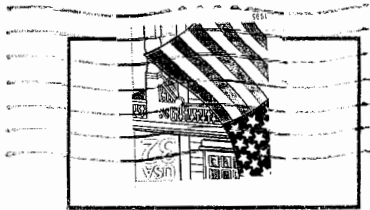
Size	Module Length (feet); total of linked modules
Config	S=straight; C=corner; J=junction; X=offset; A+B=linked corner and straight
Status	C=complete; -S=complete less scenery; UC=under construction
Yards and Sidings	B,Y,R=track off blue, yellow, red lines
X-Over	Crossover B-Y, Y-R=RH running; R-Y, Y-B=LH running
Mtn	X=Mountain Line; Removeable=separate accessory installation

**For corrections, additions, and modifications, contact the Club Superintendent, John Drye**



Edward G. Braithwood  
2017 Wethersfield Ct.  
Reston, VA 22091-3602  
Exp 1/97

P.O. Box 1951  
Herdon, VA  
22070



# SPECIAL CONVENTION PULLOUT INSIDE!

**Runni Ns '96**

1996 N-Scale East Convention  
August 15-18, 1996  
Radisson Plaza Hotel at Mark Center  
Alexandria, Virginia

**Get all the latest convention information  
and sign up for your part today!**