

THE CALL BOARD



JANUARY 1997

VOLUME VI NUMBER 1

A New Beginning...Again

By Gil Brauch

Well, here we go again!! It's time to launch a New Year, and I wasn't ready for the old year to end yet. There is so much more I wanted to get done. Does anybody know where the time goes? I, and a couple of my fellow "older" folks, can attest to the fact that each year begins to zip by at an ever-increasing pace as time marches nice if we all could begin as fresh as Babe, but I guess we are all outrageous fortunes of Father the past.

That's not all bad, successful futures are the past, and that's

As NVNTRAK marches into existence, I'd like to introduce your newly formatted suggested by Matt Schaefer, the rest of the members who *Board* was chosen because it of the newsletter, to inform the happenings of the club, so rest in a timely manner and



inexorably on. It would be new newborn New Year destined to accept the Time and learn to live with

though. Most built on the experience of what this article is all about. its sixth year of chartered you to *The Call Board*, newsletter. The name was and I want to thank him and all suggested names. *The Call* represents the primary function membership of the events and that they can return from crew meet their consists.

As a part of the renaming and reformatting, we will be bringing you some regular features... some old friends and some new ones we hope you'll like. Of course, we will continue to give our President and Superintendent their respective sounding boards. The *Rail Events Timetable* will appear as always on Page 2 and serve as the Official Timetable for the club. Then there's always the *Hostler's Shack*, which is the conscience of NVNTRAK, ever urging us onward to new and exciting ways to enjoy "*RunniN' TrainS*". Our strong supporter and patron, *Obie's Corner* will continue to grace the back page, and inside we will find regular articles by members of the Board of Directors and a welcome for our new members.

New to the "regulars" will be a monthly report from the Secretary to keep you posted on happenings at BOD meetings. Also new will be the *Module of the Month*. This will feature a member's module (or module set) each month, complete with a photograph. Get yours in early! At one a month, we'll only be able to get 12 in this year. On the last page, we are starting the *Member Swap Shop* as a place where you can get rid of your personal White Elephants and acquire new ones. In addition, there is a section for *Tiny Tidbits* where you will find an assortment of "quickie" notes and comments gleaned from all sorts of places. Accompanying all this we hope to have a lot of graphics. Your editor has acquired a scanner and can begin using more pictures and drawings.

However, (there's always a *however*, isn't there!) none of this will work without **YOU!** *The Call Board* is the perfect place for you to take your first stab a publishing, whether it be a short article or a series of photographs or

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The View from Manassas Junction

by Brian Brendel

So what do we do for an encore?...

The view from the Junction is somewhat obscured by fog this month, so I'll need your help. You see, Jake and I (— and especially Colleen) are still recovering from the big bash. Our normally-functioning "future vision" is somewhat skewed by a year of successes that was capped off by a great party (...where Colleen had so much fun she's already talking about *next year!*!...)

Since our crystal ball is out for repairs, we need to know what you'd like to do as a club in the coming year. We'll have an open forum at the Annual Membership Meeting on January 19th where we can discuss our options. Do we want more prototype fan trips and other socializing? How many setups should we plan for every month? Do more mail shows sound good? How many more? Wadda ya wanna do, hummmm?

Several of the other organizations which have hosted successful events like our convention and train show warned us to watch out for member "burnout". The "member drain" that occurred after their events was significant. I'd like to learn from their experiences and guard against our becoming

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NVNTRAK Presents Check to Fairfax Hospital Women's and Children's Center

by Chester Freedenthal

Monday, December 9th was another banner day for NVNTRAK. Bryan Brendel, NVNTRAK President and Chester Freedenthal, Member of the NVNTRAK Board of Directors, presented a \$1500 check and a small videotape library to the Fairfax Hospital Women's and Children's Center. The gift was made possible through the success of our *RunniN' TrainS '96* Convention. The donation marks the second "Giving Back to the Community" donations, the first being our donation to the Prince of Peace Church.

The Fairfax Hospital Women's and Children's Center is our "adopted" charity and we plan some other things for them



Brian Brendel presents a check to Caroline White, Director of Child Life at Fairfax Hospital Women's and Children's Center as a Center staffer, a patient and Chester Freedenthal of NVNTRAK look on.

including a small train show, some more videos, and possibly a small layout in one of their rooms for the kids to play with. The donation we made on December 9th will be used to buy some needed toys and equipment and some very special dolls used for therapy. The video library included movies for youngsters and teenagers and a few *Thomas the Tank Engine* videos as well.



Fairfax Station Train Show

by Chester Freedenthal

NVNTRAK participated in the *Fairfax Station Train Show* on Dec 7-8. I had a one-man show with *Peaceful Valley* and *BRAC Flats* set up in a fully restored (to 1974 vintage) *Norfolk and Western* center cupola caboose. Ron Forsch had his Coffee Table layout set up in the WARM fully restored Station (G, Lionel, HO and Z were in the station also as was *The Loco Doctor*). My independent loops provided lots of action and I set up a variety of trains in static display on the mainlines. Despite rain and cold on Saturday, we had a steady flow of kids (young and old) on both days to ogle the train layouts. Some folks came back a second day. The show was visited by reporters from the *Fairfax Journal*, *The Fairfax Connection* and the *AP Radio Newswire* (he liked my sounds). The cold, wet and dirt of the caboose caused some problems with my track, power and locomotives, but nothing that wasn't overcome. The only casualty was my farm sounds, which I can't get to work... which should make Edd very happy!

The space in the caboose is tight (no room for stanchions and rope here... lots of asking little folks to not touch) and not much contiguous free space. By the way Matt, you may need a new tape measure... my 30" by 8 feet just fit! There are a lot of possibilities for a custom designed module or removable layout and the **Friends of Fairfax Station** are anxious for our presence. I was happy to do the show (Ron has been there for a few years) and the folks that put on the show were extremely appreciative. They even gave us an unexpected donation for being there! My thanks to the many NVNTRAKers that stopped by to talk, help with the sounds, and give me a rest break.

RAIL EVENTS TIMETABLE

<p>Jan 4-5 Greenberg Great Train Show - Capital Expo Center, Chantilly, VA - Setup Foreman: John Drye</p> <p>Jan 19 Monthly Setup - Franconia Governmental Center, Franconia, VA - 1-7 pm</p> <p>Jan 19 Annual Membership Meeting - Franconia Governmental Center, Franconia, VA - 5 pm</p> <p>Jan 25-26 Greenberg Great Train Show - Prince Georges Equestrian Center, Upper Marlboro, MD - Setup Foreman: John Drye</p> <p>Jan 25-26 Great Scale Train Show - MD State Fairgrounds,</p>	<p>Feb 16 Monthly Setup - Location TBD - 1-7 pm</p> <p>Mar 1 Potomac Division, MER, NMRA Mini-Convention - Fairfax Fire Training Academy - 9 am - 3 pm</p> <p>Mar 1-2 Southern MD RR Association Train Show - Prince Georges Equestrian Center, Upper Marlboro, MD</p> <p>Mar 16 Monthly Setup - Location TBD - 1-7 pm</p>	<p>Timonium, MD</p>
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(Items listed in boldface indicate NVNTRAK module events)

Third Annual NTRAK Northeast Regional Convention

by Charles Greenacre

I attended this convention last winter and had a wonderful time meeting NTRAKers from the Northeast. Many of them came to our convention last August. Plan on snow, since two years ago, it started snowing when the doors opened Saturday morning and snowed 20". The show did go on and was packed on Sunday. And last year, it started to snow when I arrived on Friday night and didn't stop until dawn with about 6" of snow.

Last year I flew up on **ValueJet**, really cheap fare \$78 roundtrip, to Hartford, CT. The airport is only 20 or so minutes south of Springfield, MA. **VJ** is not flying this route anymore, but cheap fares to Providence, RI are available on **Southwest** from BWI. I am told that one could take **AMTRAK** north, but I don't know which station to get off.

The annual show of the **Amherst Valley Railway Society** is an enormous show. Think of Timonium and Chantilly (the entire building) all rolled into one facility. This is the winter show of New England. Here's the announcement for this year's convention:

"Winterfest '97, the Third Annual NTRAK Northeast Regional Convention will be held on Friday, January 31 through Sunday, February 2, in connection with the annual show of the **Amherst Valley Railway Society** at the Eastern States Exposition Center in West Springfield, MA. Convention activities will include layout operations, clinics, a popular vote model contest, door prizes, and a repeat of last year's sumptuous banquet at the Red Rose with an after dinner guest speaker followed by the announcement of contest winners.

"Please bring your module and plan to join in the convention layout, which will be setup on Friday, Jan 31, beginning just after 12 noon. Layout takedown will be shortly after 5 PM on Sunday, Feb 2, following the closing of the show. Even if you can't bring a module, feel free to bring trains to run, as there will be plenty of track time available.

"Our convention hotel will be again the Red Roof Inn at 254 Riverdale Street in West Springfield (Junction of I-91 & Rt. 5). A block of 30 rooms (10 singles and 20 doubles) has been reserved. Rates, including taxes, are:

- one double bed for one person \$36.19/night
- one double bed for two persons \$41.68/night
- two double beds for one person \$41.68/night
- two double beds for two persons \$47.16/night

The above rates include a meager continental breakfast (coffee & rolls).

"To reserve a room at the above rates you must call 1-800-843-7663 before Jan 17, 1997. You should reference block # B193000144 and NTRAK

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Welcome New Members

Northern Virginia NTRAK extends a hearty welcome to **Mark Franke**, our newest member, who joined during the past month. Welcome to the club. We look forward to getting to know you better in the coming months.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CABIN CAR

by John Drye

Well, 1996 was quite a year. We about doubled the thirty or so modules we began the year with. We added two new yards — plus two more still under construction — seven (yup, seven) junctions of five different designs, half a dozen four-foot modules (thanks to those who made the Ouija Board easier to manipulate), a couple more long or unusual configurations to keep layout design "interesting", but NO NEW CORNERS. Is this beginning to sound like a broken record?

Once again, I'd like to plead for those who are already designing or building new corners to keep up the good work (and hurry) and to ask folks who are planning a new module in the new year to consider a "good old three foot corner". We have quite a number of opportunities to run trains in '97 (more on that later), so additional corners will ease the burden on both the Ouija Board and those folks who currently bring corners to each and every setup.



On the subject of new modules, I'd like to get up on the soapbox for a moment and talk about how best to incorporate new modules into upcoming 1997 public setups. So here goes:

NVNTRAK "policy" is to include all modules in at least one club setup before "going public". This is to fully test track, wiring, carpentry, etc. in the context of an NTRAK layout. This "final checkout" also allows new modules the benefit of the collected club expertise to fix any minor (or major) glitches that show up.

The driving factor behind this is to make sure that no new module interferes with our public displays (we want to put on a good show for the public), or with other member's chances to run trains. This is not to say that we expect any single module to cause problems, but we need to be careful.

Admittedly, we have not followed that policy to the letter in the past 12 months. Between getting ready for the convention and the unfortunate circumstances at the church, we have made many exceptions. To now firmly apply the above policy probably seems unfair to those who have seen all the exceptions.

However, it's a new year, time for new

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THE HOSTLER'S SHACK



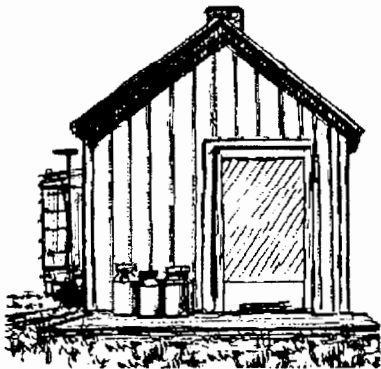
by Matt Schaefer

The New Year is the time to look ahead and back. I still have not fully finished celebrating the 1996 N-Scale East Convention. We introduced 100's of new ideas and I now realize the innovations aren't for everyone as many of them take work. Madison is an example.

MADISON — The plans for Madison are to have 6 separate layouts in a generous 100x100 foot area Sunday to Wednesday. Having been in on the World's Biggest Layout, it is interesting to see the Madison approach, which is to have more and smaller layouts in hopes of running more trains more reliably. Also it is more difficult to plan and operate one large layout. Others are not as familiar with junctions, *Red Line Route* operations, walk around radio controls, programmable **Aristo-Craft®** throttles, a telephone system tied into tower operators and caboose incentives. WE had it all didn't we?

You cannot expect a convention to incorporate these features without knowledge of them.

Yes we had a period of light rail traffic but it was just as light on the yellow and blue and not due to a big layout but due to great tours, clinics and other activities. The Madison Trade Show has only a small 60x80 foot area for **NTRAK** and, of course, there is module selection process.



WISCONSIN CENTRAL

PROJECT — On the other hand, their local publisher *Model Railroad Magazine* is sponsoring a new modular layout that will be a convention feature and basis of a future article. The 16x5 foot layout is single track with 4 operating passing tracks with fully operating signals for mains and passing sidings for prototype operations. Scenery extends 32" above the track, which is already 50" off the floor, making a view block. All these features sound neat and this is a good way to introduce new ideas.

CONVERTIBLE CORNERS — Speaking of great designs, John D and I have two corners in development. Their feature is they can be used either as inside or outside corners and the front and back always line up with the 2' deep modules and the triangular holes are filled in.

EAT MORE RAISIN BRAN — The cereal box for **General Mills Raisin Bran** now has coupons for half price on the second **AMTRAK** ticket throughout 1997. It may save you some mad money.

That's all for this time. See you 'round the Shack.

NOTICE

If you haven't already sent in your annual renewal, **DO IT NOW!!** We have included a copy of the renewal form in all the newsletters. Your expiration date is on the mailing label of *The Call Board*. If it is circled in red, that means the Treasurer hasn't received your renewal as of the date the newsletter was mailed. **DO IT NOW!!!**

You don't want this issue to be your last!!!!

North east News

by Bob Gatland
NTRAK NE Regional Director

I had the pleasure of attending two fine conventions this summer. I went out to Long Beach, California, in July to attend the concurrent **NMRA** and **NTRAK** conventions. In August, I headed south to Alexandria, Virginia, to attend the East Coast **NTRAK** Convention. Several interesting observations can be made.

NTRAK can stand by itself. Both conventions were basically run as independent conventions. There is enough managerial material in our ranks to put together first-rate conventions, although those involved in the operation are put through the wringer. By the last day of a convention, the organizers are ready to collapse in a heap — extremely happy and proud — but just about burned out. We owe these volunteers — big time.

Both conventions attracted registrants in large numbers. There are a lot of **NTRAK**ers out there who look forward to these conventions and are able to figure out ways to work them into their travel plans.

I've heard it said that between the three summer **NTRAK** conventions (East, West, and Collectors), we just about equaled the attendance of the **NMRA** Convention. Still, I'm in favor of working with the **NMRA** as much as possible. The Madison Convention next summer will feature a combined **NMRA/NTRAK** package. **NTRAK** registrants will have access to all of the activities of the conventions. I'm all for the sharing of resources whenever possible.

Although Madison is a three-day drive for many of us in the Northeast, it could turn out to be well worth the trip. At this time there are no major summer conventions scheduled up and down the East Coast.



W The View from Manassas Junction W

(Continued from page 1)

victims of our own success, hence the title of this column.

Anyway, I have a suggestion (...and who didn't know *that*...) for a club event. Jake and Colleen and I rode the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad in Cumberland on November 30th — this one was a "Santa Special", but trains run almost all year. We had a ball, even though it poured rain. I'd been on the line when it was the Allegheny Central in the '80's, but in the summertime, and behind an ex-Canadian Pacific, *Pacific* (which is easy to say, but hard to read). The lack of leaves this time around allowed a spectacular view, and we rode behind a 1912 *Consolidation* (2-8-0) painted with the big WM fireball, which was pulling several former NS steam special coaches which the WMSR purchased after the NS steam program was killed (*ED: A moment of silence is appropriate here....*).

Unlike an NS fan trip, you didn't have to elbow folks out of the vestibules on the WMSR — you could sniff cinders without any arguments about who was hogging the Dutch-doors. The price was reasonable, it's fairly close — about 2½ hours away — and offers the huge CSX shops, yard, and a zillion through trains as extra added attractions.

This is just one idea to help inspire you to make some suggestions. That bad-order crystal ball may have to be shopped for awhile, so we need your input ... along with any other "inside tracks" you may have — like an "in" with a shopping mall manager who likes trains, for instance!!

See you at the Annual Membership Meeting on the 19th!!!!



Legs, Legs, Legs.....

by Fred Obermeyer

I'm working on a new leg design that NJ NTRAK had at the '96 N Scale East Convention. It is a simple 3/4" galvanized gas pipe, threaded on one end, which is fitted into a threaded flat socket mounted to the module. The other end has a large half-dollar sized washer welded to a 3/8" screw which adjusts to different heights. My plumber will be helping me make a bunch of these and I will have them available for those who would like a set. Guaranteed not to warp!.....

TINY TIDBITS

This little feature is designed to allow sharing of interesting short items of railroad and modeling related information. Items should be no more than two or three sentences long. Submit them by mail, phone or EMail to the editor.



Did you know that the 13th National Garden Railway Convention will be held in Crystal City in 1997. See their WWW page at: <http://adams.patriot.net/~bto/ide97.html> for details.



The RF&P first arrived in Fredericksburg in January 1837. Since then, that city has enjoyed 160 years of continuous rail service.



Here is a trick to cut InterMountain grabs off of the sprues. Use the X-Acto blade that looks a small chisel. Cut through both legs of the grab at once. This eliminates strain on the part from the blade passing between the sprue and the grab while the other end is still attached. This does tend to send 'em flying though. Work inside of a shoebox while cutting the parts to keep them from flying off into the wild blue yonder.



The caboose at Fairfax Station is available for birthday parties. Volunteers will do a party for up to 8 children. They are also looking for more volunteers to help with the parties. Call Georgia Weatherhead for more information at 938-4829.

Superintendent's Cabin Car

(Continued from page 3)

beginnings. We will try to be flexible, especially as our "Third Sunday" setup situation evolves, but we need to keep in mind that our mission is to display the benefits inherent in model railroading, especially N-Scale and NTRAK, by "RunniN TrainS." The best way to do that is by exhibiting attractive, reliable modules and rolling stock.

So, for 1997, any new module needs to be set up and checked out at one of our club setups; at the church, Franconia, or Fairfax Station before it can be included in a public show. To "pass", a module needs to have all wiring in place in accordance with NTRAK standards, stable legs, reliable trackwork and wiring, and presentable scenery (no bare plywood or styrofoam). As always, experienced members of the club, including, but not limited to, the Board of Directors and the Superintendent Emeritus are available and willing to help.

I'll get off the soapbox now, thank you. OK; so how about out '97 setups. First, we have two setups in January, plus a bonus opportunity. Greenberg has two shows in January in our area, one in Chantilly and one in Upper Marlboro. Our space at Chantilly is smaller than we had anticipated, due to a miscommunication with Greenberg. We'll have a larger space at Upper Marlboro, and hopefully larger still when Greenberg comes back to Chantilly in July. Both Greenberg and GATS are planning Chantilly shows in Fall '97, so we'll have several opportunities to set up in our "back yard". Hopefully, there won't be any snow in July.

BANTRAK has invited us to participate in their setup at the Great Scale Show in Timonium in January. That show is the same weekend as the Greenberg Show in Upper Marlboro. We'll offer trackage rights on a pair of junction modules to allow BANTRAK to set up two loops and send a few modules up to Baltimore for the joint setup.

There has been considerable discussion, both on and off the net, about setting up at a local mall in '97. Springfield Mall has openings in February or March and again in May. We'll schedule a setup and publish details when they are set. We'll also see about a holiday mall setup next December.

More on the rest of '97 next month. We have the opportunity to be as busy as we want to be.

JANUARY EVENTS

GREENBERG GREAT TRAIN & TOY SHOW — January 4-5, Capital Expo Center, Chantilly, VA. As of publication, we have a 10' by 60' space. Show hours: Saturday 11 AM-5 PM, Sunday 11 AM-4 PM. Setup is Friday, 1-6 PM and Saturday,

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MODULE OF THE MONTH

(Editor's Note: This is a new feature which we will be running each month. Club members are invited to submit a short description of their module, along

with any unique features, construction techniques, or the like.

If you have a good photo that you would

prefer to be used, submit that also.

Otherwise, the editor will use a "stock" photo of his choosing of your layout.

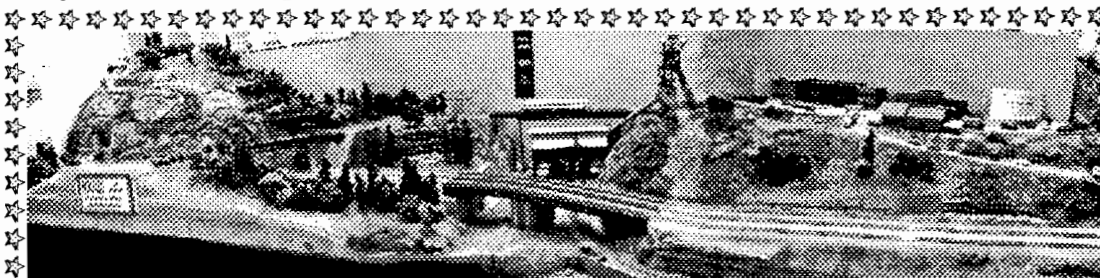
We'll start out with the editor's module, for illustrative purposes only.)

Gil Brauch's pair of matched modules is featured this month. **Loop Mountain** and the **DD&D Mine** modules contain a couple of unique design and operational features not normally found on NTRAK

modules.

From a design perspective, Gil used a normal 2'x4' module and paired it with a 4' corner in order to accommodate a

the back of the module under the scenery. A Circuitron automatic reversing device is used, along with spring switches, to create the illusion of "loads out, empties in" as



two trains alternate running back and forth across the front of the module.

The second unique

sweeping "S" curve. The result is an 8' pair with a 2' offset to the front. The offset is created by using the 4' corner in a straight-through manner. Gil also built a deep frame for the 4' corner to allow for a loop of track below the **NTRAK** mains.

This lower loop contains the first of two unique operating characteristics.

There is a passing track on the loop at

operating feature is on the loop on the Mountain Division. Again, a Circuitron automatic reverser is used to control the polarity of the "dogbone". This allows a train to run "loop-to-loop" unattended on the Mountain Division.

Gil has shown his module at many **NVNTRAK** setups and also at the national conventions in Orlando, Atlanta, and Alexandria.

The Other Side of the Tracks

by Chester Freedenthal

Just a short article this month as there is so much going on. The show at the Fairfax Station Caboose, December 7 and 8, was great, with almost 1200 folks coming through on a very wet Saturday and a cold Sunday. Equally enjoyable was the presentation of a check at the **Fairfax Hospital Women's and Children's Center** on December 9th. This is a side of **NTRAK**, and our club, that I really like. We give a show for the community and have fun doing it, and then we can turn around and have more fun giving back to the community. Next time we do a mall show (Please!) or a commercial train show, let's keep that in mind. Let's make the Chantilly show one they will remember.

Still no jokes... at least ones printable in the newsletter. I need some help in finding some. Also no hobby shop review this month. Next month I'll provide a review of three of the big mail order firms; **Brooklyn Locomotive Works**, **Tex-N-Rails** and the **Freight Yard**. Sally and I had a wonderful Chanukah and hope you and yours have a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Superintendent's Cabin Car

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8-10 AM. Setup Foreman: John Drye. Clampdown: Saturday at 10 AM.

MONTHLY SETUP — January 19, 1-7 PM. This will be for testing of modules only in conjunction with our Annual Meeting. The room is small. Call John Drye before you bring a module to make sure there is room. Setup Foreman: John Drye. Clampdown: 2 PM.

GREENBERG GREAT TRAIN & TOY SHOW — January 26-27, Prince Georges Equestrian Center, Upper Marlboro, MD. We'll have a 36' by 40' space. Show hours: Saturday 11 AM-5 PM, Sunday 11 AM-4 PM. Setup is Friday from 1-6 PM and Saturday from 8-10 AM. Setup Foreman: John Drye. Clampdown: Saturday at 10 AM.

GREAT SCALE SHOW — January 26-27, Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD. **BANTRAK** has graciously invited us to join in their setup. They asked if they could obtain trackage rights on two of our junctions and offered to let us run trains on their track. Show hours: Saturday 10 AM-5 PM, Sunday 11 AM-4 PM. Setup is Friday from 1-6 PM and Saturday from 7-9 AM. Setup Foreman: John Steitz. Clampdown: Saturday at 9 AM.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

SPRINGFIELD MALL — Late February or early March, date TBD. Details TBD.

FAIRFAX STATION — February 16 (TENTATIVE). 1-7 PM. Setup Foreman: TBD. Clampdown: 2 PM.



Northeast NTRAK Convention ...

(Continued from page 3)

Winterfest '97. Reservations will only be held until 6 PM, unless guaranteed with a valid credit card. If you experience any problem, please call Shannon Bishop, Special Service Rep at 1-800-847-9000.

"Location of the hospitality/conference room will be posted at the hotel registration desk. You may pick up your registration packets in that room after 6:30 PM Friday evening or at the layout on Saturday morning. Friday evening will also feature a member slide show - any volunteers?"

"The banquet will feature a speech by a senior **AMTRAK** official. Carl Senftleben, Manager of Boston Commuter Rail Operations, will be the guest speaker for this year's banquet. Carl's first railroad job was as a yard clerk for the **B&M** in Fitchburg, MA, and in 1971, he was promoted to dispatcher. As a dispatcher he worked all over the **B&M** before transferring to **AMTRAK** in 1987. For **AMTRAK**, he served as Chief Dispatcher, North Side Commuter Rail, before being promoted to Manager of Operations—Commuter Rail, this year.

"In over 30 years as a railroader, Carl has witnessed significant changes and has many a story about the good, the bad, and the ugly side of railroading in New England to share with us.

"Carl is also an accomplished model railroader as any visitor to his HO scale *Atlantic Shoals Railroad* will attest. "*Faster by the Ferry*" is the slogan of this New England based railroad that features both beautiful scenery and operations to challenge even the most seasoned operator.

"The banquet will be held at the Red Rose Pizzeria Restaurant in downtown Springfield. The evening begins with a cash bar at 6:30 PM with dinner following at approximately 7 PM.

"**Registration.** Full registration for \$35 includes the Saturday Banquet. Indicate choice of entry: Lasagna, Chicken Caccitore, Chicken Marsala, Veal Parmesan, or Eggplant Parmesan. Full registration does not include hotel. Single Day registration for \$20 does not include the Saturday Banquet (which is available for another \$15). Discount of \$5 applies to all applications postmarked before January 26, 1997. Mail registrations to *Winterfest '97* Registrar, 4 Biggar Avenue, Wilmington, MA 01887. Make checks payable to **Northeast NTRAK**.

"**Planning to bring a module?** If you plan to bring modules, please contact our layout coordinator, Mr Frank Dignan, to let him know what you plan to bring and when you plan to arrive. Frank may be reached at 617-294-1925 or by mail: Frank Dignan, 1244 Main Street, Hanson, MA 02341.

"Please contact Frank on or before Jan 26, 1997 to give him sufficient time to plan the layout. Remember, you must be registered to participate in the layout. If you register for one day only, we may or may not be able to accommodate your participation with at module. Please contact Frank for a definitive answer as we can only accommodate one or two such modules."

Thank You

Northern Virginia NTRAK extends a big THANK YOU to Brian and Colleen Brendel for hosting our 1996 Annual Christmas Party. Colleen did a great job getting everything together while Brian and Jake made sure the trains ran right. What a great party!

Module Musings

by Fred Obermeyer, Board Member

Many new modules are under construction and lots of them are very interesting. If you are one of the new members of the civil engineering crew, here are some things to keep in mind.

Your new module should first be brought to a local setup at a club meeting before attempting to put it in a show. The module will be checked out for leg height, wiring, trackwork, and basic size. But, you don't have to wait until the module is "finished" to bring it. Feel free to bring your "work in progress" module to the setup to have it worked on. A lot of ideas and good modelers in the club can help you if you are stuck.

Remember when you lay your track to go all the way to the end of the module. When you bring it to the setup, we will check the spacing and then cut back the ends using a special gauge that Leonard White developed.

Your module is your pike, so you should be proud to show it off. We are all here to help each other in that respect. New corners and some new module concepts are now under development. Pitch in and have a good time along with the rest of us!



A New Beginning ...

(Continued from page 1)

drawings. We can keep this newsletter at eight pages only if we all take a hand in submitting items to go into it. Why eight pages? Well, six sheets of paper is about all that will go for a 32¢ stamp. That's four pieces for *The Call Board*, one for the wrapper, and one in reserve for special occasions, like the module listing or membership list when time comes to issue one.

One of the things I get to do as editor is to see a wide assortment of other clubs' newsletters. They range in size and content from the relatively slick *Potomac Flyer* of the **Potomac Division, MER, NMRA** to a couple of one page, dot matrix calendars. The willingness of our club members to share information with each other about all aspects of railroading, be it modeling or railfanning, is what has made our newsletter easy to put together each month. It also is instrumental in making the newsletter easy to read and informative.

So, I promise to keep working at making it "prettier" if you will just keep those articles and pictures coming in!

Anyway, here's your "new look" newsletter. I hope you like it and continue to enjoy it.

Thank you for all your support in 1996. We look forward to serving your train needs in the future. Many new products are being produced for 1997. **Kato, Atlas, ConCor, Key** and many others have lots of new N-Scale products coming this year. Stay tuned in and keep on building those modules!

OBIE'S CORNER

I'm currently working with Landmark Mall to get us back in the perspective of a show there in the Springtime. I will keep everyone posted on the results. If things work out, you will be hearing more about this from our Superintendent, John Drye.

NEW PRODUCTS

JMC ConCor:

NYC Hudsons with Cullion Drivers and new paint scheme

UP Hudsons in brown, yellow and red 49er's paint scheme

Corrugated Cars **NEW**:

AMTRAK, CP, NH, Wabash, ACL, C&O, L&N, RF&P

New Sets:

PRR 2-tone with gold, 7 cars & 1-50' mechanical box
\$149.98

PRR same as above, but with different numbers! same price

SP Overnight set E-8 Black Widow scheme \$289.98

SP add-on set of *Overnight* cars \$129.98

Whistle Stop set '96 *Electoral* \$269.98

PRR 50' Double door Boxcar singles \$9.98

MicroTrains:

93040 3-bay ACF Centerflow Covered Hopper \$22.85

78020 **GN** (red) 50' Auto Boxcar \$15.20

100050 **SP** 36' Riveted Steel Side Caboose \$16.85

62060 **Reading** 50' Composite Gondola \$11.35

39170 **C&O** 40' Double Sheathed Boxcar \$10.15

65420 **Belcher Oil** 39' Single Dome Tank Car \$17.40

32050/4 **ATSF** 50' Standard Boxcar \$12.65

New MicroTrains Couplers:

#1003 - Bettendorf w/ medium extensions and low profile wheels

#1168 - Pilot conversion for **Bachmann** 8-40CW

#1111 - Fits new **Atlas** cabooses

#1015 - Lid up or 1015-1 lid down fit **MDC Overtons**

Roundhouse MDC:

Assortment #895 - King Coal Assortment - 12 pack of 3-bay ribbed hoppers with all new tooling. Roadnames: **BN, WM, Southern**
- List \$83.76



MEMBER SWAP SHOP

Let's try this for a while and see how it works out.

Each month, this space will be reserved for the members of **NVNTRAK** to offer for sale or swap or to announce their desire to obtain items associated with our hobby. We'll sort of make up the rules as we go along, but here are a few simple ones to start with:

1. This service is open to regular members of **NVNTRAK** only.
2. Items must be related to the hobby (no reliable, old cars, please!).
3. Descriptions of products offered/desired should be as complete as possible without being overwhelming. For example: **KATO SD-40**, series 176-20, any roadname.
4. Items for sale will be listed for two months only and will require the editor be notified if the second month run is desired.
5. Items being listed for the first time will have priority over re-runs.
6. Items to be run must be submitted to the editor in line with the submission deadlines for each issue indicated at the bottom of the box in the next column.

That's enough for starters. For your information, I will start out limiting space to this box for a couple of issues. We'll see how it works out and if there is enough interest, we may be able to expand it later.

So, let's hear from you about swaps, sells, trades.

Gil Brauch, Editor

The **Call Board** is produced by and for the membership of **NVNTRAK** and selected subscribers.

Northern Virginia **NTRAK**, Inc.

P.O. Box 523051

Springfield, VA 22152

Member Helpline: (703) 620-0812 (Ext 3)

WWW: <http://columbia.digiweb.com/~nvnttrak/>

NVNTRAK membership is \$30/year or a subscription for continental USA residents is available for a \$10/year donation. Dues are payable in January. Donations are accepted at any time. Send checks to:

Treasurer

Northern Virginia **NTRAK**, Inc.

P.O. Box 523051

Springfield, Virginia 22152

Material for publication should be submitted to the editor. Send submissions to the address above or to:

Editor

The Call Board

6111 Lorcom Ct.

Springfield, Virginia 22152

Submissions can also be made by electronic mail to gbrauch@lmi.org, or faxed to (703) 917-7482 (and clearly marked for Gil Brauch on the cover sheet).

Articles and other submissions for the February 1997 issue must be received by January 24, 1997.

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



ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
 NORTHERN VIRGINIA NTRAK, INC.
 ANNOUNCES THE
 1996 ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
 JANUARY 19, 1997
 5:00 PM
 FRANCONIA GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
 FRANCONIA, VA

AGENDA ITEMS

Election of Board of Directors

Four positions on the Board of Directors are to be elected. As of the date of publication, the following club members have been nominated:

Brian Brendel (Incumbent)
 John Cook
 Dave Freshwater
 Bill Rutherford
 Rodney Smith (Incumbent)
 John Steitz

Seconds for these nominations as well as additional nominations and seconds will be accepted from the floor.

In accordance with the By-Laws, the Officers of the Corporation for 1997 will be selected by the new BOD after the elections.

Ratification of Club Expenditures

Trailer
 Module for Fairfax Station
 Additional Donations
 Insurance for Mall Shows

Discussion Items

Possible Changes to Club Bylaws

Expansion of BOD:
 Vice President
 Additional At-Large Members
 Spending Authority of BOD
 Voting Regulations

Club Organization

Setup Coordination:
 Geographic:
 MD, DC, VA-North, VA-South
 Operating units:
 Mountain, New River, Yards
 Superintendent:
 "Assistant Superintendents"; to assist with setup planning and coordination

Club Activities

Number of desired setups
 Mall Shows
 Train Shows
 "Private"
 Main Question: Do we want a second "club only" setup each month?
 Train Show in 1998?
 Convention in 2020? :-)

Changes to Articles of Incorporation

The BOD recommends that the membership endorse the initiative to gain recognition of Northern Virginia NTRAK, Inc. as a Non-Profit organization, vice the current status as a Not-For-Profit organization.

Other Items

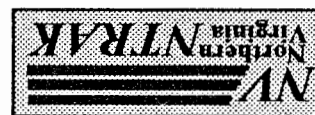
Other items for discussion or decision may be properly brought before the meeting in accordance with the Bylaws by any member in good standing.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

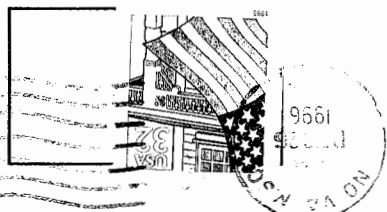
In order to participate in this meeting, you must be a member in good standing. Since the annual dues year runs from January to December, only those members who have paid their 1997 dues can actively participate in the meeting. Guests are welcome and may observe.

Chester Freudenthal
7449 Brighthouse Ct.
Alexandria, VA 22315-3835
Exp 1/98

P.O. Box 523051
Springfield, VA
22152



Jan '97



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Annual Membership Meeting
and
Election of Board Members
Sunday, January 19, 1997
Franconia Governmental Center
5 pm

See inside for other agenda items and important information