

# THE RAIL BOARD



June 1997

VOLUME VI NUMBER 6

## Overview of Rail Traffic In The Washington, DC Metro Area

*Editor's Note: The following item was taken from the WWW pages of the CSX Corporation and is copyrighted in 1996 by the CSX Corporation.*

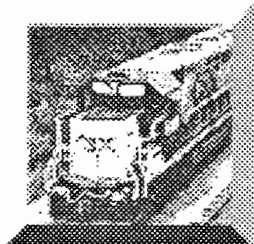
Like many urban centers, the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area contains a complex array of rail transportation systems. These systems are vital to the region's economy, transporting freight, commuter, subway and inter-city passenger trains in all directions. The multitude of trains that crisscross the metropolitan area also present logistical challenges, as well as safety concerns. Many of the trains share trackage and must be precisely coordinated to avoid congestion and the incompatibilities of dissimilar traffic.

Approximately 210 trains per day travel through the region, not including those operated by the **Metro** subway system. Of the total, nearly 160 -- or about 75 percent -- are passenger trains. The remainder are freight trains. The average daily traffic in and around Washington includes:

- 45 CSXT freight trains
- 10 Conrail freight trains
- 73 Maryland Area Rail Commuter (MARC) trains
- 26 Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter trains
- 60 Amtrak inter-city passenger trains

The complexity of the coordination necessary to manage this volume of rail traffic is increased by the fact that many trains operate across trackage owned by different entities. For example, about 70 percent of the trains that travel on CSXT trackage in the Washington area are not CSXT trains. The non-CSXT traffic includes five Conrail freight trains, 40 MARC commuter trains, 26 VRE commuter trains and 34 Amtrak inter-city trains. Put another way, CSXT trains account for about 20 percent of the total rail traffic in the Washington area, while CSXT trackage carries about 70 percent of the total traffic.

Dispatchers segregate different types of traffic whenever possible. For example, during MARC hours of 6:15 a.m.-9 a.m., and from 5-8 p.m., CSXT substantially limits the number of freight trains that operate on that corridor. The region's Metro system operates on a separate track network. However, much of the Metro trackage runs parallel to CSXT trackage, as does a short portion of Amtrak-owned trackage.



## The View from Manassas Junction

by Brian Brendel

*Inspiration... is more than just breathing*

We model railroaders are a talkative bunch. We're always yakking it up about our plans to build something, or to modify something. Sometimes all we do is talk about how we're planning to plan something! Yet there exists a fearsome force that ejects us from our armchairs and drives us to put saw to wood — inspiration.

What or who gets us kick-started? Somebody, or some group of somebodies, does something so neat that we are — well — inspired to do something.

What we do might not be as cool as what *they* did, but at least we *did* something. And chances are that the something you did this time turned out better than the something you did *last* time.

So, what has inspired me?

— Monroe Stewart's *Hooch Junction Railroad*.

For those who have experienced it, this needs no explanation. For those who haven't; just see it. But be forewarned — viewing this masterpiece and talking with Monroe about the hows and whys of his layout cemented me into N Scale for good (... and abandon hope all ye who enter...)

— My membership in NVNTRAK. Before NTRAK I was a hermit with trains — locked away in the basement (where I and some of us still belong). The discriminating eye of the public

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## MODULE OF THE MONTH

### Clark's Mill

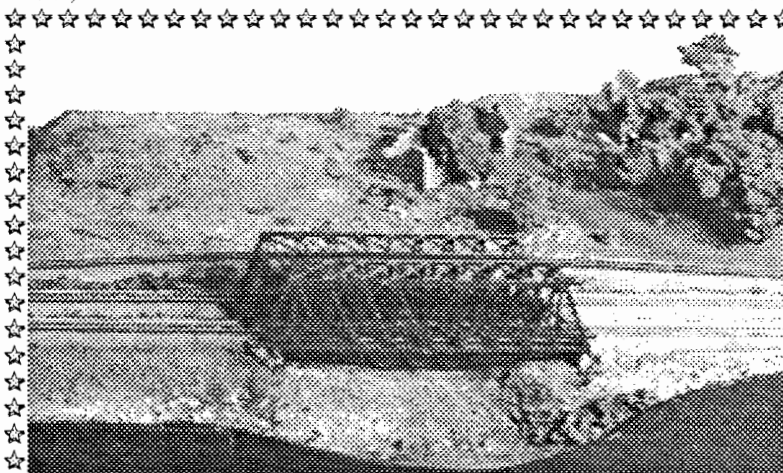
by Brian Brendel

Clark's Mill was the very first module that I ever built, and it's still my favorite — and one of John Drye's, too, since it's a four-footer. It's about as simple electrically as they come: 3 tracks, no turnouts. But it was a great testbed for trying out several ideas (some copied, some original) that I had been kicking around. It was inspired by my new membership in NVNTRAK.

In 1991, I stumbled on some club information at Arlington Hobby Crafters and was delighted to learn that an NTRAK club had been formed locally. I had seen BANTRAK's modules at Timonium many times (...back when the Scale Show was once or twice a year... anybody remember that?...). Having been a lone N-Scaler for over 5 years, NTRAK looked like fun, so I went to the newly-formed NVNTRAK's meeting in January. I was instantly hooked. I rushed home, and in a frenzy of construction (with a firefighter's schedule and no Jake to tend to, I had a lot more time on my hands) produced the completed Clark's Mill for the next month's meeting.

I borrowed the NTRAK "How To..." book (available now from NVNTRAK for

\$6) from Tom Reid — one of the gang-of-five that started the club and for whom Reid's Corner is named. The book has our standards and good suggestions, but I was hot on some styrofoam scenery techniques I had used on by 5'x 6' home layout. I decided that I wanted to avoid the "plywood plains" look, so I used 1"



styrofoam only for the top and rabbeted it around the edges so it would drop into the frame and add strength. This way I could go below grade whenever I liked as the module progressed just by shaving down the 'foam with a Surform scraper. In fact, my dry river bed went a little deeper than 1" in spots and broke through my base — no problem, and I just added more 1" styrofoam underneath. Back topside, more 'foam was added to make a common engineering feature, a railroad cut. I also carved an embankment to signify a

stretch of right-of-way built on fill.

Folding legs were a must, since I can't leave them at home, and this started a folding-leg trend.

Other stuff fell right into place: I cut a chunk out of the back of each pier on an Atlas viaduct so I could curve it for the Branch (blue) Line... Mr. Plaster stumps

are a great excuse for not having trees in one corner... and the abandoned derelict building with the tree growing up through it was modeled after a cement mill in Shepherdstown, WV which is still there after years of floods. The model is on a mostly-washed-away siding, and it's scratch-built from a chicken tray (which are made of 1/4" styrofoam). I drew in the 2'x 3' granite

blocks with a dull pencil.

Even though it's a "runt" at only 4' long, it's used in nearly every setup. I forgot the skyboard one day and it became our first two-sided module, fitting right into the connector of a two loop setup. And it's a whole lot easier to transport than the 12' of Shenandoah Junction.

(...Oh, by the way: Clark is both Jake's and my middle name...)

The bridges have been recently rebuilt — again! — from Green Max kits. One of these days I'll learn and build a 'transport pod' to protect it.

## R A I L R O A D E V E N T S T I M E T A B L E

June 1	West Virginia Central Open House - Brian Brendel's house, Manassas, VA - 1-4 pm	July 20	Monthly Setup - Fairfax Station, Fairfax Station, VA - 12-6 pm. Clamptdown time: 1 pm.
June 7	Manassas Railfest, Old Town Manassas, VA, 10 am-4 pm. Setup Foreman: Brian Brendel. Clamptdown time: 8 am.	Aug 17	Monthly Setup - Fairfax Station, Fairfax Station, VA - 12-6 pm. Clamptdown time: 1 pm.
June 13-15	Alexandria Red Cross Waterfront Festival, Old Town Alexandria Waterfront, Daylight running on Sat and Sun. Setup Foreman: Rodney Smith. Clamptdown time: Sat, 8 am.	Aug 23	Gaithersburg MRR Society Show - Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Gaithersburg, MD. Details TBD
June 15	Monthly Setup - Fairfax Station, Fairfax Station, VA - 12-6 pm. Clamptdown time: 1 pm.	July 1-6	13th National Garden Railway Convention - Hyatt Regency Hotel, Arlington, VA
July 12-13	Greenberg Great Train & Toy Show - Capital Expo Center, Chantilly, VA - Setup Fri 1-6 pm. Setup Foreman: John Drye. Clamptdown time: Sat 9 am.	July 28-Aug 3	NMRA Convention - Madison, WI
		Nov 6-9	N Scale East Convention - West Chester, PA

Items in bold face type indicate NVNTRAK setups

## So You Want to Work on the Railroad!!

*(Ed Note: "Tales From The River" is a humor column that appears on the bulletin boards of a large northeastern railroad. Since our newsletter is named **The Call Board**, it seems only appropriate to pass along this particular piece, which appeared on the N-Scale listserv on the Internet)*

### TALES FROM THE RIVER Issue No 33

Is the constant pressure and responsibility of the Transportation department getting to you? Do you dream of working in a place where you can make mistakes all day long and nobody will care? Then Dearborn is the place for you! There's plenty of openings since callers are constantly bidding back to their hometowns, and being replaced by new clerks who don't know the job. If you'd like to see if you have what it takes to be a "Caller Without A Clue", take the....

#### CREW CALLER APTITUDE TEST

1. A crew caller must always hand a request to mark off to the supervisor because:
  - a) I'm too lazy to do it myself
  - b) I don't want to take the responsibility
  - c) I'm not allowed to make decisions since I'm going to be replaced by a computer any day now.
2. Which of the following are acceptable reasons for marking off:
  - a) sick
  - b) car accident
  - c) missing child
  - d) wedding
  - e) death in family
  - f) death of employee
  - g) none of the above
3. When you get caught red-handed cheating an employee out of a good job in order to give it to a sharpshooter, you should:
  - a) play dumb
  - b) lie
  - c) change the times in the computer so the penalty slip will be denied
  - d) all of the above
4. It's 2:00 AM, you need an employee for a job, but you're not sure if he's qualified for it, you should:
  - a) Look in the computer
  - b) Wake him up and ask him.
5. When calling an employee, how many times should you let the phone ring before missing him out?
  - a) 2 Rings
  - b) 5 rings
  - c) 8 rings
  - d) 12 rings
6. When an employee calls you, how soon should you answer the phone?
  - a) 20 rings
  - b) 50 rings
  - c) 100 rings
  - d) Don't answer it, they'll just bug you about marking off.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CABIN CAR

by John Drye

I hope everyone enjoyed their month off. We actually DID run some trains in May, but not quite what we had gotten used to. We did make progress on the stanchions, now a fine shade of tuscan. Next step, of course, is to paint five gold stripes on them.

We begin our summer schedule in Manassas, on the 7th, at the **Manassas Railway Festival**. Brian claims that this year we will have a level lot for setup (we'll see). This setup offers a chance to check out prototype equipment "up close and personal".

We have a new location for a setup this June: the **Alexandria Red Cross Waterfront Festival**. This Festival (the 16th Annual) raises money for the Red Cross. In addition to our trains, the festival features music, food, crafts, and maritime exhibits. Kind of a nautical version of the **Fairfax Fair**.



The Festival is held in Alexandria, north of Old Town, between Oronoco and Madison Streets, on the waterfront. Our setup is in a huge tent (about 10,000 square feet) right in the middle of the festival grounds. We have a sixteen by thirty foot space in the tent, along with a number of other displays, including clowns (seems appropriate).

Parking is a problem in Old Town. Who didn't know that? So we (Rodney, the setup coordinator, that is) will try to fit the setup (modules, throttles, trains and stuff) into one trailer and as few cars as possible. We'll be able to tow the trailer to the tent for setup, but won't be able to get a vehicle in there during show hours. It's a bit of a walk from the nearest parking to the setup, so plan accordingly.

To get into the Festival while it is open to the public, you'll need to go to the Volunteer Check-in station (Gate 2) on Oronoco St. Tell them you are from **NVNTRAK**, and they'll direct you to the setup. If you have any problems, ask them to call yours truly on the radio (I work for the Festival in another life) and we can resolve any questions.

We have our "Third Sunday" setup on the same weekend as the **Waterfront Festival**, but the "Mountain Men" have tentatively agreed to cover the **Fairfax Station** setup.

In July, we'll be back at the Capital Expo Center

*(Continued on page 5)*



**CAT CREEK — CAT CREEK LIVES ON** — The announcement of *Cat Creek's* demise has been greatly exaggerated. A member even asked if he could strip off the Cinch plugs and wiring. The frame is not cold yet and the rails were still hot at **Trains Etc.** in May. I was instrumental in its design and construction with the help Bernie and John C and we can put it back in 1st class shape, no problem. And the wobbly club feet, isn't that the standard for NVNTRAK club legs? (*Editor's Note: Got your attention, didn't we??!!*)

**JUNCTION LAYOUTS** — NTRAK at Madison has had a political tussle with the NMRA over how the NTRAK modules would be laid out. I sent out a plan for a 112 module layout with 4 junctions and 3 loops which solved all the argument of having one large layout versus many small loops. The head cheesehead/coordinator job has been switched and I am now checking on the details for the *New River Subdivision*. The currently proposed layout will no doubt have some changes. The *Red Line Route*, at least through our *New River Subdivision* loop, will be under walk-around control.



**NEW RIVER SUBDIVISION** — We are now checking to see if we can haul four junctions along with 50 feet of other modules including Bernie's *Quinnimont* and 10' *Alkem Steel*, the Zutters' *Prince*, my *Hawks Nest*, *Drye Creek*, *Foggy Bottom*, bridge modules, the NVNTRAK banner, scenery and other equipment in a club trailer. The Zutters have a full size van for towing and I have made a cardboard mockup of the trailer and modules to give us a good idea of how and what we can load. Paul Fulks' *Thurmond*, Join Plant's *Hinton*, and the 26 feet by Matt Kross and John Evans (all was at '96 *East*) will join us in the *New River Subdivision* in Madison. The EMail traffic and the enthusiasm is building up.

**FOUR JUNCTIONS** — Four reliable junctions are needed at Madison. I made and distributed wiring diagrams in Nov of '96 and double checked these against *Smokey Mountain* in May. The circuits are all the same. Instead of having two separate switches for each turnout making six total switches I have recommended eventually using only three 4PDT switches to make the controls user friendly. I am installing some on my modules to demonstrate. With 4PDT switches there are plenty of poles for routing power, paralleling points, signals and Tortoise machines too.

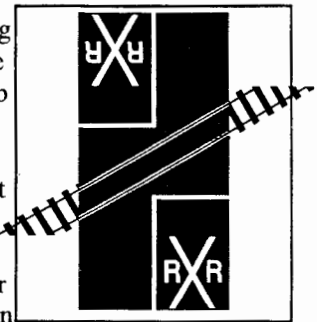
**CHEESEHEAD PROJECT** — An N Scale 16'x5' modular layout sponsored by *Model Railroader* with many new ideas will be debut at the Madison convention. Scenery is 32" above the track, which is 50" off the floor. So the scenery makes a view block at 83". The layout is single track, but trains can be run in opposite directions and passed on the 4 operating passing tracks which are fully controlled by operating signals and DCC.

**KANSAS CITY '98 NMRA** — KC is even more interested in both the *Aristos* and making their own junctions and I have been providing information to them. They're already familiar with wireless controls but have been using another brand that cannot address more than one block.

**EDISON 2000** — Bob Gatland says plans are going ahead to hold the NTRAK East Coast 2000 convention in Edison, NJ. It will be held in conjunction with the Greenberg Show. He is asking if NVNTRAK wants to be in charge? Anybody?

Although I did quite a bit of traveling in May, I didn't get to any hobby shops or do much on the way of trains. A correction from last month — I noticed an advertisement in one of the magazines for **Rio Grande Hobbies** in Huntsville, AL at a different address than **Action Hobbies**. I guess I got the two confused. I'll be back in Huntsville in June so I'll be sure to check both of them out. I'll also be in Denver, so you know I'll check out **Caboose Hobbies** as well.

*Alien Corner* will now be called *Alien Landing*, a straight 2 by 4 with a prototypical alien landing and defense attack by the military. I purchased Bob Spitzer's original modules, built back in 1991. One of them is just a plywood plains which will be transformed into *Alien Landing*. The other is *The Masonic Temple* in Alexandria. It's a beautiful 2 by 4 with a 6 inch extension in the back for the Temple. It has contoured terrain, buildings, landscaping and great roads, and the Temple needs just a little work to get it presentation ready. Now all it needs is some sound...hmmm, maybe an organ (Just for you Edd!).



The corner is still on the drawing board, but I think it will be a nuclear power plant with either a meltdown or a toxic waste dump ( or both). For those of you that are new to the club, I don't take my modules seriously (*Peaceful Valley* now has *Snow White* and the *Dwarfs*, complete with a diamond mine!). I like to have fun with them. Maybe that's why I'm always on the back side of the layouts!

I'm trying to put together a history of the club, so if you have any old papers or photographs that are club related, I'd appreciate them. Also, please let me know if you need anything such as a your name tag, your module name plate, module skirt, etc. I'll get your need to the right person. See you at the next set-up!

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## Superintendent's Cabin Car

(Continued from page 3)

in Chantilly for a **Greenberg Show**. At the end of the month, the *New River Subdivision* and friends travel to Madison, WI for the **NMRA Convention**. Later in August, we'll go back to Gaithersburg.

We continue to work on upgrading junction wiring and scenery. There will be a couple of work sessions scheduled this month and in July to get them ready for Madison. Details TBA.

### JUNE EVENTS

**MANASSAS RAILFEST** — June 7, Old Town Manassas, VA. Show hours: 10 AM - 4 PM. Setup: Saturday 7-8 AM. Clampdown: 8 AM. Setup Foreman: Brian Brendel.

**ALEXANDRIA RED CROSS WATERFRONT FESTIVAL**, — June 13-15, Family Pavilion, Old Town Alexandria Waterfront. Festival hours: Fri 6-10 PM, Sat 10-10, Sun, 10 AM-7 PM. Setup: Fri 12-6 PM and Sat 7-8 AM. Clampdown: Sat 8 AM. Setup Foreman: Rodney Smith.

**MONTHLY SETUP** — June 15, Fairfax Station, Fairfax Station, VA. 12-6 PM. Clampdown: 1 PM.

### JULY EVENTS

**GREENBERG GREAT TRAIN & TOY SHOW** — July 12-13, Capital Expo Center, Chantilly, VA. We have a 30' by 40' space. Show hours: Sat 11 AM-5 PM, Sun 11 AM- 4 PM. Setup: Fri: 1-6 PM and Sat 7-9 AM. Clampdown: Sat 9 AM. Setup Foreman: John Drye.

**MONTHLY SETUP** — July 20, Fairfax Station, Fairfax Station, VA. 12-6 PM. Clampdown: 1 PM.

**NEW MODULE SETUP, CLINIC and WORK SESSION** — Date and location TBD

### AUGUST EVENTS

**NMRA National Convention** — July 28-August 3, Madison, Wisconsin

**MONTHLY SETUP** — Aug 17, Fairfax Station, Fairfax Station, VA. 12-6 PM. Clampdown: 1 PM.

**GAITHERSBURG MODEL RAILROAD SOCIETY**- Aug 23, Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Gaithersburg, MD. Details TBD.

**NEW MODULE SETUP, CLINIC and WORK SESSION** — Date and location TBD

### TINY TIDBITS

Response to a letter written to Vice President Al Gore pleading that **Amtrak's Texas Eagle**, running from San Antonio to Los Angeles, be saved:

"Thank you for your letter regarding the protection of the *Texas Eagle*. I share your view that the urgent problem of species extinction and the conservation of biological diversity should be addressed. All animals and plants help make our natural surroundings more diverse and should be protected to ensure the preservation of a healthy environment."



Looks like they'll be less room for **RunniN' Train's** at the **Radisson**. In the old Gallitin's Dining Room behind the lobby bar, an upscale pool hall complete with sandwiches and 150 beer brands, will open on June 2, 1997. The area will have five pool tables — one in a private room for the very serious players and four in the area overlooking the lake. There will be lounge seating in the pool playing area with table/booth seating throughout. The Hall will open daily at 11:00 am and close daily at 2:00 am. The Hall is elegant — TVs hook to three separate satellite dishes on the roof and a \$25,000 sound system is being installed for music.

# North east News

by Bob Gatland  
NTRAK Regional Director

Jim FitzGerald and I visited **Steamtown** in April to check it out as a possible site for a Year 2000 summer convention. While we found **Steamtown** to be a worthwhile attraction, convention space in town is lacking. The largest hotel in Scranton can provide 120 rooms. Its ballroom area could accommodate either a modest sized layout (by summer convention standards) or the dealers. St. Mary's church has the largest convention space in town. This would also constrain the size of our layout. **Steamtown** has limited space available for setting up modules. Perhaps they would be willing to roll a few passenger cars out of one of the storage buildings to make room for our layout, but our layout operating times would have to conform to their 9 to 5 schedule. We doubt if dealers would be welcome there or if we could charge admission to see our layout.

We did learn that ground will be broken this year for a convention center. Perhaps **Steamtown** will serve our needs at some other time.

In the meantime, we are working on Plan B. A **Greenberg** show is held in Edison, New Jersey, in the summer. They have agreed to work with us. The Edison site is so large that **Greenberg** is currently using only 60 percent of it, which would leave room for a large layout for us. There are hotels nearby that can handle our lodging, banquet, and clinic needs.

Working with the **Greenberg** show will greatly reduce our managerial chores. The agreement with them will provide for a contribution to **National NTRAK** and will provide space for our preferred dealers and manufacturers.

Wayne Shortman and the members of the **Northern New Jersey NTRAK Club** have provided a modular layout for the Edison show for a number of years and are familiar with the show and the surrounding area.

We are planning to run a four-day convention with a full slate of activities.



## Alkem Steel Update

by Bernard Kempinski

(Editor's Note: Bernie has been working on a major project to convert the **Walther's HO Steel Mill** to an N-Scale scene. He is scheduled to display the module at the **NMRA National Convention** in Madison, WI this summer.)

*Alkem Steel Number 2* is nearing completion. I ballasted all the yard and mains. I'm pleased with its appearance, but I think I need to tone down the color of the turf. **Woodland Scenics Turf Blend** has a bit too much yellow and orange for the mill environment. To look right it should be more like brown-gray and rusty gray.

I'm planning on revising the track work

slightly on *Alkem Number 1*. I've decided to not include the rotary dump house at all.

I drew up a plan that incorporates two **NVNTRAK**-style junction modules and another 3'x5' *Alkem* module. This would contain rolling mills, a Basic Oxygen Furnace, the other end of the coil yard — making it a double ended yard — and a coke works. The whole plan is 21 feet long, which will just fit in my house.



(Continued from page 4)

LANDMARK AFTERGLOW — This was the largest all club show we have had with 66 modules. High speed running time around the Red Line Route was 6.5 minutes. This was in the 2 hour period when the Super Dispatcher called for fast running to clear the logjam of passenger and time freights. This 6.5 minutes running time is an average of 75 MPH and it was enjoyable to experience prototypical passenger train and time freight running with clear blocks ahead. With 4 trains running there was a train passing any given spot every 1.6 minutes just on Red. Earlier there were several 100 car freight drags and they would probably take 10 to 15 minutes running time depending on anomalies.

TESTIMONIALS — At 09:15 AM 4/27/97, William Baxter of the Metro Atlanta N-Scalers club wrote: "Matt — I met you at NTRAK East last year ... that was probably the best convention I have attended. I am on a committee for our club, Metro Atlanta N Scalers, charged to present a plan to the club delineating out future directions. I have some questions on the Aristo system used at the 1996 convention ..." (CMS note: The Atlanta Metro Club is Digitrax's baby and is going to blue and yellow with DCC. Their club has never used wireless controllers so I sent them my standard dissertation on Aristos.)

COMMENT ON LANDMARK — At 01:39 PM 4/29/97, Clinton Hyde wrote: "Matt — I came by around 11:30 Saturday. Only one of the loops was running. The loop with the big steam engines and turntable was empty. The diesel side was running what I thought was too few trains. My 5-yr-old kept asking 'Where's the trains?' Little folks don't like looking at too much static scenery and we'd have both liked seeing the steamers run." (CMS Note: We have 3 main lines and multi loops. We should be able to start off with lots of short trains running on some of the tracks!)

PROTECTING MODULES — We had some module damage at Landmark that pointed out several mistakes. 1) All modules, like the mountain junctions, should have some vertical 1 x 2 and 1 x 4's as an extension of the frame to support the foam hills and protect the scenery. Either this, or all modules should have dedicated packing plates so they can be nested together like the mountain junctions. The mountain modules were moved out to the trailers without their dedicated plates — not good. 2) All club modules should be handled very carefully, just like they are your own so they do not get to looking like 'club modules'!



DO YOU KNOW WHO TO CALL???

SCENARIO: You are railfanning (safely, of course) and observe a hazardous situation that can endanger life and property on the railroad right of way. WHO DO YOU CALL???

- ANSWER: CSX Emergency Response 1-800-232-0144 NS Emergency Line 1-800-453-2530 Conrail Police 1-800-272-0911

Clip this coupon and carry it with you. You never know when it will be useful.

Working on the Railroad...

(Continued from page 3)

- 7. When a regular job is advertised as "return first unassigned", it means: a) They get the first extra train on their rest b) Ahh, who cares, mark 'em up behind the pool crews. 8. When an employee complains about being called out on his rest for the eighth time you should say: a) Look at the money you're making! b) Hey, you should try sitting at this desk for eight hours! c) If you don't like it, Mc Donald's is hiring! d) any of the above 9. When an angry employee calls you about being mishandled, you should blame it on: a) the previous shift b) the movement desk c) the computer. d) yourself e) anything but d. 10. When CSX takes over, they will: a) Reorganize the desks to double our workload again. b) Move us hundreds of miles to some god-forsaken location again. c) lay most of us off again. d) all of the above. Answers: 1-c, 2-g, 3-d, 4-b, 5-b, 6-d, 7-b, 8-d, 9-e, 10-d

The View from Manassas Junction

(Continued from page 1)

makes me pay more attention to detail. And the adoring eyes of all those kids makes you want to do more.

— The members of NVNTRAK. NVNTRAK membership exposed me to many talented modelers who are so good, they don't just inspire — they compel. I would name names, but I think we already know who's who in the "criminally-over-talented" department. Just breathing the same air as these guys makes you a better modeler.

There's more to it than that, though. We inspire others because — and don't tell anyone this — we're nice guys and gals, too. Whatever skill level we have attained, our members have their hearts in the right place. Talent-challenged or talent-intoxicated, our members always seem to be there when we need to paint a church, build some stanchions, or run a convention.

You see, inspiration also has a lot to do with perspiration.



## Cherry Pond

by John Steitz

*(Author's Note: This is the first of what may work out to be a regular feature in **The Call Board**. During the course of each year, I sketch up far more module designs than I could ever hope to build in the course of a lifetime. So, I'd like to share some of them with the rest of the club. Feel free to reproduce them, use them, and build from them — so long as you don't make money off of them. If you do manage to earn any \$\$\$ off of one of my plans, we can talk about a contribution to my hobby fund ... :-).*

During my annual pilgrimage to the Tidal Basin last month enjoying the beauty of the cherry trees in bloom, my mid-afternoon tranquility was interrupted by a three chime diesel horn.

Of course, I thought, the CSX main south through the (former) Potomac Yards and Alexandria passes just a few hundred feet southeast of the Tidal Basin as it rounds a curve and heads across the river parallel to the I-395 highway bridge. All sorts of freight and passenger equipment passes within sight of the Jefferson Memorial as they move to and from Washington on any given day. Boy, wouldn't an NTRAK module displaying the Tidal Basin in early spring be a real scenic show stopper.....

When I got home to pencil and paper, the drawing here was

including those that reach down over the Tidal Basin walkway to the water. In essence, the scene would be bluish-green water, surrounded by a border of white cherry trees, with other trees having the very lightest, barest green tint on the outskirts. This, in turn, is framed by the arc of the tracks, and — on one side — the Potomac River and the highway bridge. Trees fade into the backdrop — a blurry horizon scene of downtown DC — with the White House and numerous red-roofed federal office buildings in the distance.

The other elements of the scene are straightforward, but probably require scratchbuilding. I haven't included plans for the Jefferson Memorial, but it's a fairly well documented structure. Probably a bit of selective compression is in order. The Jefferson Memorial is a large structure and you don't want to

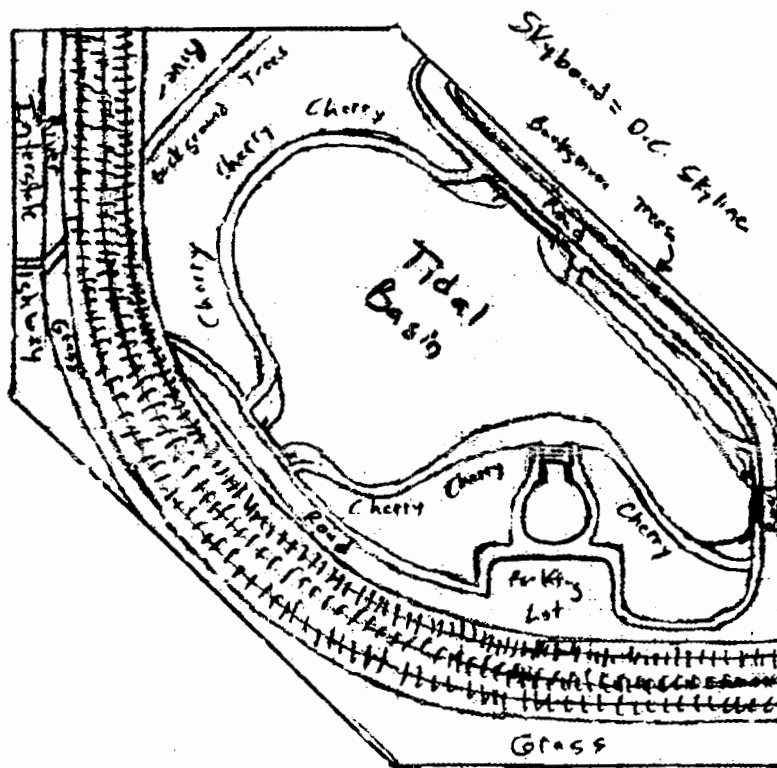
overpower your Tidal Basin, which is also compressed from the prototype.

All along the path beside the Tidal Basin are small scenes hidden among the trees: a mini-pagoda here, a memorial there, and — to do it well — lots of people along the path and on the steps leading up to the Memorial. A tour bus or two parked along the street side of the structure probably would make the scene complete.

Don't worry about getting every last little detail. So long as you can portray the Tidal Basin, the cherry trees in bloom, and the Memorial, you've made

the scene. The rest is gravy.

If you are really interested, the Jefferson Memorial gift shop could be a starting point for research. The Library of Congress



# OBIE'S CORNER

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58050	36' wood reefer — Heinz	\$18.40
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22180	40' Standard Box — Milwaukee Road	\$9.65

**DUE IN SOON!!!!**

### Kato

Business Cars — Undec., Amtrak, ATSF, CBQ, PA, CP, NYC, UP, Southern, S.P.; 2-different #'s ea. roadname.  
C44-9W — Undec High Hood, Undec Low Hood, CN, UP, CSX, Santa Fe, SP.; 2-numbered and 1 un-numbered ea roadname.

### Life Like

E-7 A/B locomotives — CBQ, FEC, IC, L&N, Milwaukee, PRR, Southern

### Atlas

GP-9 Torpedo Boat — B & O, BN, GT, MR, NP, SP

Well, it's summer, so crank out those module projects today because before you know it, it's winter again and you can't do it outside. This is a great time to plan that special project for the layout. I will build 4 - 3' corners for the club. YEA! JD SAID. WoW! What else will make him happy outside of a Hershey (Pa). Candy Bar — or is that a 40' Candy Bar with wheels!?? I'm sure that other surprise modules are under members roofs at this time.



## MEMBER SWAP SHOP

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**Bachmann Plymouth Switcher:** Painted for the W&ODRR. Also included are a matching caboose and 40' boxcar in W&ODRR--ALL w/ MT! (\$55 - firm).

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**Kato GP-38-2 Conrail w/MT's \$55.00**

*Call Victor Graulau (5/97)*

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**Articles and other submissions for the July 1997 issue must be received by June 23, 1997.**

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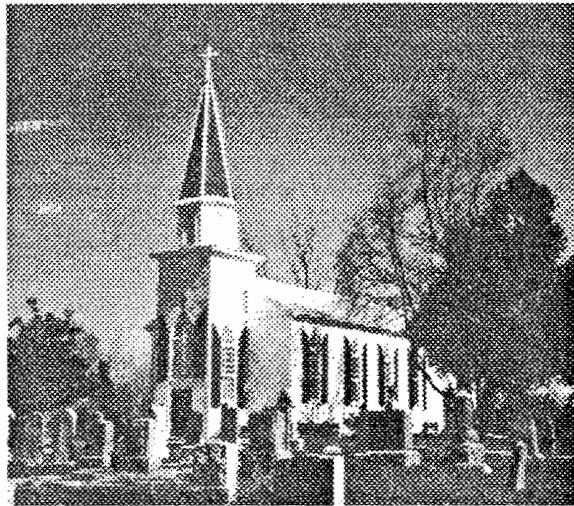
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A volunteer to scratchbuild this building for the Fairfax Station Layout. Contact Matt Schaefer for details.