

THE CALL BOARD

A 100% **NTRAK** CLUB



October 2000

VOLUME IX NUMBER 10

MER Fall Convention/Altoona Railfest

October 6-8 in Altoona, PA

by John Drye

It's not too late to join in the festivities at Altoona on October 6-8. This year, the annual **Altoona Railfest** is being held in conjunction with a **Mid East Region (MER)** convention. This combined event will provide a real feast of railroading activities, model and prototype. The **MER** convention will feature clinics by model railroad notables such as Tony Koester, Alan McClellan and Andy Sperandeo. There will be layout tours and other modular layouts, an auction, and a raffle. The **Railfest** provides a unique opportunity to ride up and around *Horseshoe Curve* through both Gallitzen tunnels and back down to Altoona. There will also be tours of the former **PRR** facilities. For the narrow-minded, the **East Broad Top Fall Spectacular** is only an hour's drive away. Oh, and there are some great railfanning locations. If you squint enough, the locos even appear Brunswick Green.

The following website shows features of the 1999 show:
<http://www.trainweb.org/horseshoecurve-nrfs/Railfest99.htm>

And this one has details of the 2000 Convention
<http://pages.cthome.net/kenmay/NERFAL00.HTML>

If you plan to go, please let me know, so we can add your name to the **Railfest** exhibitors list. Also, if you plan to stay overnight, please make a reservation at the **Days Inn**, the official club hotel. The rooms are being held under the name of **Juniata Junction** as well as "John Drye" (that's me). But you'll need to make a reservation to confirm space. The town is just about sold out except for our held rooms.

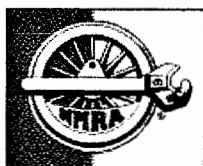
NVNTRAK Hotel

Days Inn, 3306 Pleasant Valley Boulevard, Altoona, PA 16602. Telephone (814) 944-9661; fax (814) 944-9557. About 1 1/4 mile north of the **Ramada**. \$65 per room per night.

We have room for a few more modules. We have a 15' x 40' space in the **Railroader's Memorial Museum**, right next to the tracks! The museum has an impressive display of rolling stock, including a *GG-1* as well as some great exhibits on the history of railroading in Pennsylvania. There is a public show Saturday and Sunday from 9 to 5 and we'll also operate Friday night exclusively for convention-goers. Bring your **PRR**, **PC**, **CR** and **NS** trains! OK, we'll save some room for pool power.

Convention Hotel

Ramada Hotel, 1 Sheraton Drive, Altoona, PA 16601. Telephone: (814) 946-1631; fax (814) 946-0785. 1/4 mile south of I-99 Plank Road exit.



W Along the River Line W

Dave Freshwater, President

As you will notice eventually, if you haven't already, this is a fairly plain newsletter this month. You'll probably be able to find some pictures from events on the Web Site a little later. It's been a busy month for a number of folks, with the real world of work and family intruding on time normally devoted to model railroading. The good news is that all our events and commitments were met. When last minute changes forced us to start following the club motto, *Semper Gumby*, other folks stepped in and did what was needed. September was probably the poster month for being more than one deep in positions.

This is where our size, and your expertise, keep us in good shape. We've got lots of folks who have done, or still do, lots of different things. We aren't dependent on one or two people to make sure that things happen. And there are lots of people who help you along when you are doing something for the first time and aren't quite sure of yourself. The club only seems to run itself - you do lots of work to make it so.

Several times since the annual meeting, we've mentioned that we are soon going to need a new editor for the **Call Board**. While there has been some interest expressed, we haven't settled out on a replacement yet. If you are interested, now is the

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BILL OF LADING

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Carolina Hospitality: The Saga Continues

by Noll HoraNn³

The weekend of September 9-10, 2000 marked the **Third Annual Southern Junction Model Train Show** in Raleigh, North Carolina. Co-hosted by **North Raleigh NTRAK** and the **Carolina Piedmont Division 13** of the **Mid Eastern Region** of the **NMRA**, this *Fairgrounds Grand Slam Extravaganza* was held in the **Dorton Arena** on the **North Carolina State Fairgrounds**.

After an unexpected two hour delay (my fault), Edd Braithwood, Steve Zutter and myself were southbound where we met up with Carl Zutter in beautiful downtown Dumfries, VA. Following a quick fast food gourmet lunch, it was on to Raleigh. Along the way, we paralleled train tracks much of the way, but with no action. We passed the prototype of Gil Brauch's *Kudzu Korner* module ... or is *Kudzu Korner* the prototype?

The *Army of Northern Virginia* arrived around 6 pm and were immediately surrounded by a swarm of **Southern Junction** hosts who were most helpful in unloading, which went very quickly. Matt Schaefer, Tony Hawker, and Mitch Brown had arrived earlier and pitched in to help set up. The layout was up, connector tracks in place by 7:30 — not bad for a 16'x 80' layout. **RANTRAK** joined us Saturday morning to close the loop. Then it was off for a much deserved dinner, as stomachs

were growling as loud as the rain pounding on the roof at *Edison 2000*.

The **Outback Steakhouse** was the chosen victim after the **Olive Garden** guaranteed us an hour-plus wait. Carl somehow reduced the hour wait a **Outback** down to seven minutes. Edd had prime rib with a side of horseradish and I think he discovered the true power of this unruly root because it seemed the top of his head was smoking like a **Chessie SD-60** just being fried by DCC. (Steve, sincere thanks for your gesture at dinner.)

With much hard and well-appreciated work by *Master Electrician Mr. Braithwood*, the layout was running within ten minutes of the show's opening on Saturday morning. Thanks, Edd. I know it was unexpected, but without your expertise we could just as well have been a huge **Brio** layout. The Red Line was DCC, while Yellow and Blue were in three blocks. After the bugs were worked out, it was *RunniN' TrainS* constantly until show closing at 5 pm. Jim Altobello also brought his trains and could be seen walking the loop for quite a while.

Of course, the *High LiNn³ Route™* made it's narrow gauge debut. In fact, Steve's *2-6-0 Mogul* was running so well he was able to take a short break up in the bleachers as the **Colorado Southern** continued to run flawlessly. And the **East**

Broad Top made a few passes as well. I think some North Carolinians seemed to be bitten by that Nn3 bug. What can I say?

Speaking of bugs, **Dorton Arena** is an old structure and has its share of insects — or should I say livestock! But folks, the cockroaches there are HUGE! I had enough respect for them to address them as "Yes Sir" and "No Sir". One happened to be visiting Jim LaBaugh's *Shadow Mountain Mine* module. This darn bug was bigger than a **MicroTrains** drop bottom gon! But I got him with my can of *WHOOOP A***.

The annual after-show dinner on Saturday was once again held at **Los Margeuritas**. A group of about 20 or so of us were treated to some of the best Mexican food this side of the Mason-Dixon Line. Again, Mr. Zutter managed to comander an entire room for the gathering. How does he do it?

Sunday operations went smoothly as some serious *RunniN' TrainS* took place. John Czarny brought out his **NASCAR** train, which was a big hit since the *Richmond 400* was run the previous night. Spectators were seen picking out various race driver's cars on John's carriers.

The **Southern Junction Model Train Show** closed at 4 pm on Sunday. Tear down was complete by around 5:30 and

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RAIL EVENTS TIME TABLE

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| <p>Oct 1 Monthly Backshop - Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, VA. 12:30-6 pm. Clampdown: 1:30 pm.</p> <p>Oct 6-8 NMRA MER Tri-Regional Convention - Altoona, PA. See Superintendent's article on page 3 for details. NVNTRAK Coordinator: John Drye.</p> <p>Oct 7 Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad Open House - Rescue Squad Station, Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD. Show hours: 11 am-5 pm. Setup: Fri, 7-10 pm; Sat, 8-11 am. Clampdown: Sat, 10 am. Setup Foreman: TBD.</p> <p>Oct 15 Monthly Setup - Fairfax Station Museum, Fairfax Station, VA. 11:45 am-4 pm. Clampdown: 12:30 pm. Setup Foreman: TBD.</p> <p>Oct 28-29 Mall Setup - Spotsylvania Mall, Fredericksburg, VA. Show hours: Sat, 10 am-9 pm; Sun, Noon-5 pm. Setup: Fri, 9:30 pm-???, Sat, 7:30-9:30 am. Clampdown: Sat, 8:30 am. Setup Foreman: Peter Pfothenauer.</p> <p>Nov 4 Railroad Days - Damascus Library, Damascus, MD. Show hours: 11 am-4 pm. Setup: 8-11 am. Clampdown: 10 am. Setup Foreman: Dave Freshwater.</p> | <p>Nov 5 Monthly Backshop - Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, VA. 12:30-6 pm. Clampdown: 1:30 pm.</p> <p>Nov 11 Rockville Lions Club Show - Rockville Senior Citizens' Center, Rockville MD. Show hours: Sat, 11 am-5 pm; Sun, 11 am-4 pm. Setup: Sat, 8-11 am. Clampdown: Sat, 10 am. Setup Foreman: Dave and Charles Greenacre.</p> <p>Nov 12 Gaithersburg Model RR Club Show - Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Gaithersburg, MD. Show hours: 10 am-3 pm. Setup: Sat, 3-5 pm; Sun, 7:30-9:30 am. Clampdown: Sun, 9 am. Setup Foreman: Keith Holzapfel or Dave Freshwater.</p> <p>Nov 18 Fairfax Hospital Women and Children's Center Special Event. Setup Foreman: Paul Diley and Chester Freedenthal.</p> <p>Nov 19 Monthly Setup - Fairfax Station Museum, Fairfax Station, VA. 11:45 am-4 pm. Clampdown: 12:30 pm. Setup Foreman: TBD.</p> |
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Items in boldface indicate NVNTRAK setups. Others are for information only.

The Square Root of 2 Layout

by Dave Freshwater

It's fall. Football is in the air and *Semper Gumby* is in the winds. With our Superintendent suddenly out of town on business, I stepped in to coordinate the layout at the **Greenberg** Upper Marlboro show. Fortunately, with the **Redskins** playing the **Cowboys** on Monday night, we didn't have to worry about traffic.

Edd Braithwood, Paul Diley, John Cook, Leonard White, Jeff Peck, and Greg Nagy responded to a call for modules, with augmentation from the corners and *Grigg's Crossing* from the trailer, along with my *OLI Tower*. The trailer was repositioned on Friday night, but the notes and layout diagram left inside did no good since none of the early arrivals had a key to the trailer. Since Keith had arranged for our normal "skybox" accommodations in the **Show Place Arena**, everyone knew where to go and we weren't really delayed by the trailer key problem. With Matt Schaffer, Mitch Brown, Jay Keese and Bill Baldwin on hand to help with set-up, and John Drye around to kibbutz, we were up and running with plenty of time before the show opening. Ken Allen and Dave Greenacre arrived later to help keep trains running and assist with the clinic Saturday. Sunday brought help from a different crew, with George Brown, Bill Reaves, Noll Horan, and several guests to help run trains and tear down.

We tried a couple of new things with this layout. We deployed an *anti-Lionel-smoke device* (a fan) on Sunday, because the **Trackers** now have a burning building generating smoke, in addition to their many engines. We had the 45-degree corner pair, manufactured for the club by Dave and Charles Greenacre, in the large trailer. We split the 2 halves and placed John Cook's modules between them, giving us a different look – the layout was actually parallel to three of the walls in the skybox! It made it a little difficult to close the loop. The 45-degree triangle formed by the split corners meant that the distance between them was a multiple of the square root of 2. (Ask a geometry student.) But, with a couple of bridges and a little scrunch, we made up the couple of inches needed.

We also tried out one of the new **Aristo 2000s** once we got the layout running. It appears moving between blocks will be real easy – there is a button for the frequency and another 2 buttons for the channel (one cycles up, the other down.) But, you have to press and hold buttons, which we didn't do in the past. You now have to set a momentum and a stop time setting. **Aristo** added the latter setting so that trains stopped before they changed directions. And, the green light on the base unit doesn't always blink when you press a button on the transmitter. There may be a few more tricks that our crack electronics crew will discover

Continued on back cover....

All the members of Northern Virginia NTRAK join together in expressing our condolences to **Gil Brauch** and his family upon the sudden death of his mother last month. All of our thoughts and prayers are with them during this difficult time.

From the Super's Desk
for Keith Holzapfel, Superintendent
by Guest Author Dave Freshwater

To some extent, this is a pinch hit column this month. If changes arise, we'll work to get the word out to everyone, by EMail and phone (for the non-digitally enabled).

The first event for the month, the *Backshop*, will have already occurred by the time you get this. Both trailers were at the church for some module tweaking and cross-leveling.

The first full weekend of October (October 7-8) is a Double Header Weekend. *NVX-1* is going with the gang to Altoona, where we have space in the **Railroader's Museum**. Our layout will not only support *Juniata Junction*, the NMRA Tri-Regional convention, but will be available for viewing by the thousands of people attending **Altoona Railfest** that weekend. Last year, 12,000 people were in attendance. Sounds like some small convention that occurred in Alexandria a few years ago. John Drye is coordinator for the layout there.

The other half of the Double Header Weekend is the **Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad** set-up. We've committed to a layout and an **Operation Lifesaver** display for this show. *NVX-2* will be available for the layout starter set. Our spot is on the second floor at the station in downtown Bethesda. We can arrange to position modules and other items on Friday night. Expect that this event will work like last year, where we didn't park at the station itself. After dropping off modules and trains, vehicles were moved north to a parking lot at the **National Institutes of Health**. The **Rescue Squad** used a van to shuttle people from the parking lot to the station. We didn't have a set-up coordinator for this event at the time this column was written. Contact one of the BOD members about participation in this event.

Our monthly commitment to **Fairfax Station Museum** is the next weekend, October 15. We haven't named a coordinator for this event yet, but we will have *NVX-2* available to support it.

Spotsylvania Mall is the last event for October. It is on the weekend of 28-29. Make your plans now and contact Pete Pfothenauer for this event.

November is **Model Railroad Month** and we will have many events, in addition to the *Backshop* and monthly **Fairfax Station Museum** set-up. We've added an event for November 18 at **Fairfax Hospital Women and Children's Center**, one of our club charities. Paul Diley and Chester Freedenthal have been working this event. Because we have limited



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THE HOSTLER'S SHACK

by Matt Schaefer

NEW ARISTOS – On September 11, NVNTRAK and members took delivery of 47 sets of the **Aristo-Craft Train Engineer (ART-5473)** throttle and the 10 amp receiver (**ART-5471**). Many of you have seen these used by the NJS club and elsewhere and are familiar with the simplicity of running through 10 blocks using one keystroke per block. A second “freq” button is used to change the 10 frequencies, each capable of addressing 10 blocks or accessories. A row of 10 LEDs across the top indicates which block or



frequency you have command of and the approximate voltage. The voltage indicated is very roughly two times the number of LEDs that are lit. For about \$110 for a throttle-receiver set you can have radio control (R/C) on your home layout.

WAVEFORMS – At the September 16 -17 shows we tested and found the super bright LED headlights to be dimmer on the linear setting than on the PWC (power width control) setting. Fire Dancer Dave Greenacre tested a unit on his oscilloscope. Dave said the linear setting gives a clean flat DC output and PWC is almost a square pulse wave every 60 micro-sec and the higher pulse peaks cause the LEDs to be brighter on PWC.

INERTIA – Tapping the speed increase key takes too long. Learn to hold the button down and be ready for about a one volt overshoot due to momentum. Emergency stop also has momentum and takes about 3 seconds to go from full voltage to no voltage. This is about the same inertia as a good flywheel engine taking about 6” to stop from 60 MPH when in emergency. This is advertised as easier on the loco gears. Another new feature is that you can reverse direction with one keystroke while running, which makes switching easier because you do not readjust speed. The reverse time delay is adjustable but the emergency and reverse inertia are not adjustable.

SETTING UP A RECEIVER – The black or black striped wire goes to the negative on the power supply. Reversing those wires causes sparks and a short. The instructions say keep 2’ away from receiver when programming but I found a closer distance not to be a problem. It takes less than half a minute to program a receiver after you get the hang of it. The throttle batteries are used only when a button is pushed so the batteries can be left in between uses.

POWER SUPPLIES – You do not need any 10 amp power supply unless you plan to power 10 receivers. N Scale locos draw on average about 0.25 amps each. Try your old power packs like the **MRC Tech II**. I was able to power two **Aristo** receivers with one ancient **MRC 501** rated at 18 VA (volts times amps). I was able to draw 10 volts at 1 amp (10 VA) continuously from each receiver which is more than enough for 4 to 6 speeding locos on each receiver. Although the **501** output terminals said 12 VDC the no load (NL) output was really 18 VDC. I also tested an **MRC Dual Pack Model 770** rated at 8 VA and two receivers each had an output of 2.5 VA (1/2 amp at 5 V) giving a lower output than the **501**'s. When you use these small power packs you do not need to add 2 amp fuses or other protective circuits.

SHENANDOAH CANNONBALL – Don’t forget to get you ticket early for the **Superliner** lounge trip October 29 to Staunton, now as low as \$36 round trip for those seniors ... and maybe the members in the **AAA**?



NVNTRAK Awarded Custody

by Noll HoraNn³, BOD Member

What a year this has been for NVNTRAK! Starting last August with the **uNcoNveNtioN**, the annual Holiday Party, the appointment of Mr. David Freshwater as club president, acquiring a small narrow gauge railroad, and the **2000 N Scale East Coast Convention** in Edison. Now NVNTRAK has gone so far as to adopt a true branchline. What **ARE** we thinking?!?!?! Yes, ladies and gents, we have adopted a **HIGHWAY**....well, actually a road.

As of August 21, 2000, the **Virginia Department of Transportation** has awarded NVNTRAK a section of **Ravensworth Road** in Annandale to look after and nurture. In other words — keep it clean and free of trash. This section of road runs between Braddock Road and Little River Turnpike (Route 236).

I took this project upon myself just because I thought it would be neat for the club’s exposure to have our name displayed on a sign at either end of the adopted route. Here’s how it works..... Trash must be collected at least four times a year (especially in April and October). I’m thinking six times for us. This is a two year contract. I did some studying on this road and there is quite a bit of traffic both for the morning and evening rush hours.

Ravensworth Road is a major cut through from Braddock Road to Falls Church. This 1.6 mile stretch is mainly residential, so that theoretically means less trash. See, I’m looking out for the club.

As per the rules, there is a video to watch for safety reasons. We get those big ole’ orange trash bags, cleanup crew signs, and — best of all — them electric orange/lime colored reflector vests (although I don’t recommend night work).

But the real kicker will be the **Adopt-a-Highway** signs at either end of the road proclaiming NVNTRAK. Those should be in place in six to eight weeks. Just imagine, if you will, the club’s exposure.

This is an excellent opportunity for community service and should help keep the IRS and OLI happy, too. I have all the information and will soon pick up the video and supplies. So, be prepared to participate in a little walking along our newest acquisition; helping to keep Virginia clean.

[Editor’s Note: If the truth were told, we all know that Noll really did this because he wants one of those vests!!!]



The Super's Desk

(Continued from page 3)

space, we've been contacting individuals directly about modules for this event. We'll be letting the kids run trains, too. But, we can use help in working with the kids on use of the **Aristos** and in set-up and tear-down. There will be more details on the other events next month.

OCTOBER EVENTS

BACKSHOP MODULE SETUP, CLINIC, AND WORK SESSION — October 1, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, VA. 12:30-6 pm.

Clampdown: 1:30 pm.

NMRA MER TRI-REGIONAL CONVENTION — October 6-8, Altoona, PA.

Show hours: Fri, 5-10 pm; Sat & Sun: 8 am - 5 pm. Setup: Fri, 1-5 pm.

Clampdown: Fri, 4 pm. NVNTRAK Coordinator: John Drye.

BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE RESCUE SQUAD OPEN HOUSE — October 7,

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD. Show hours: 11 am-4 pm. Setup: Fri, 7-10 pm; Sat, 8-

11 am. Clampdown: Sat, 10 am. Setup Foreman: TBD.

MONTHLY SETUP — October 15, Fairfax Station Museum, Fairfax Station,

VA. Setup. Show hours: 1-4 pm. Setup: 11:45 am - 1 pm. Clampdown:

12:30 pm. Setup Foreman: TBD.

SPOTSYLVANIA MALL SHOW — October 28-29, Spotsylvania Mall,

Fredericksburg, VA. Show hours: Sat, 10 am-9 pm; Sun, noon to 5 pm.

Setup: Fri, 9:30 pm to whenever; Sat, 7:30-9:30 am. Clampdown: Sat, 8:30

am. Setup Foreman: Peter Pfothenhauer

NOVEMBER EVENTS

RAILROAD DAYS AT THE LIBRARY — November 4, Damascus Public

Library, Damascus, MD. Show hours: 11 am - 4 pm. Setup: 8-11 am.

Clampdown: 10 am. Setup Foreman: Dave Freshwater.

BACKSHOP MODULE SETUP, CLINIC, AND WORK SESSION —

November 5, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, VA. 12:30-6

pm. Clampdown: 1:30 pm.

ROCKVILLE LIONS CLUB SHOW — Nov 11-12, Rockville Senior

Citizens' Center, Rockville, MD. Show hours: Sat, 11 am - 5 pm; Sun, 11

am - 4 pm. Setup: Sat 8-11 am. Clampdown: Sat, 10 am. Setup Foremen:

Dave and Charles Greenacre.

GAITHERSBURG MODEL RAILROAD CLUB SHOW — November 12,

Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Gaithersburg, MD. Show hours: Sun, 8

am - 4 pm. Setup: Sat, 3-5 pm; Sun, 7:30-9:30 am. Clampdown: Sun, 9 am.

Setup Foreman: Keith Holzapfel or Dave Freshwater.

FAIRFAX WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S CENTER SPECIAL EVENT —

November 18. Details TBD. Setup Coordinators: Paul Diley and Chester

Freedenthal.

MONTHLY SETUP — November 19, Fairfax Station Museum, Fairfax

Station, VA. Setup. Show hours: 1-4 pm. Setup: 11:45 am to 1 pm.

Clampdown: 12:30 pm. Setup Foreman: TBD.

DECEMBER EVENTS

FAIRFAX STATION MUSEUM ANNUAL TRAIN SHOW — December 2-3,

Fairfax Station Museum, Fairfax Station, VA. Times: TBD. NVNTRAK

operations on the Caboose Layout only.

BACKSHOP MODULE SETUP, CLINIC, AND WORK SESSION

(Tentative) — December 3, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield,

VA. 12:30-6 pm. Clampdown: 1:30 pm.

NVNTRAK ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY — December 17, Prince of Peace

Lutheran Church, Springfield, VA. Details and times: TBD.

THE MONTHLY SETUP AT FAIRFAX STATION MUSEUM IS

CANCELLED FOR DECEMBER.

GREENBERG GREAT TRAIN SHOW — December 30-31, Capital Expo

Center, Chantilly, VA. Show hours: Sat, 11 am-5 pm; Sun, 11 am-4 pm.

Setup: Fri, 3-8 pm; Sat, 8-11 am. Clampdown: Sat, 9:30 am. Setup

Foreman: TBD.

Along the River Line

(Continued from page 1)

time to make sure that our illustrious editor or the Board know. We are going to have to make a decision soon so that there is a transition period. Now is the time to step forward, to make use of all the time available.

October starts quickly, since by the time you read this, the *Backshop* will have already occurred. Some of us will head off for Altoona this weekend, braving the 12,000 folks who attend **Railfest**, which coincides with a three-region NMRA convention. Many of you who aren't traveling will hopefully participate in the set-up at the **Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad** on October 7. If you hadn't already figured out from our members who are firefighters, these squads know how to do things. They really take care of folks who come help them out. It's all good preparation for **Model Railroad Month**, when we really pack in the events.

See you at a show.



Fairfax Station Museum Setup

by Cotton Bowen

Despite a much larger operation being conducted at the **Prince Georges County Equestrian Center**, like Mosby's Rangers of the Civil War, when the call went out a small contingent of the *Army of Northern Virginia* rallied on the **Fairfax Station Museum** on Sunday, September 17 and conducted their own operation. Nick Sklias, Bill Baldwin, Chester Freedenthal, Dave Davies, Bill Rutherford, Howard Beall, Chauncey Durden and Cotton Bowen, all armed with modules, converged on the **Fairfax Station Museum** and presented a 10 module display. Besides the veterans of many runs, notable in the display was a new and impressive POFF constructed by Howard Beall. If you want to see a slick set up, Howard's got it, all self-contained in its own box, and with the best solution to the perennial problem of legs that I have seen yet. Good job Howard! I am looking forward to seeing your module written up in the *Module of the Month* column.

Another notable new item was Nick Sklias' addition to his new module of *Manada Gap, PA*. Since Manada Gap is part of the Indiantown Gap Military Reservation it needed a barracks building of the WWII variety. Nick's first attempt at scratch building a WWII barracks is most impressive. I'd swear I lived a while in the one he built back in '68. Aside from the members armed with modules other club members, Matt Schaefer, Mitch Brown, Steve Jackson, Dave Greenacre and other members rendered valuable support and slipped in and out all afternoon. It was an impressive show of support. Thanks guys, it was a great day.

—✂️ Operation Lifesaver Crossing ✂️— by Dave Freshwater, OLI Presenter

Maryland's **Operation Lifesaver** Committee met on September 13 at the **B&O Museum** in Baltimore. The meeting was actually conducted in the rail car outside that serves as the Museum's conference room. We had a real full house for the meeting.

There have been a number of individual efforts ongoing while the Maryland program has reorganized. Many events have been covered by one or two individuals. These meetings should help get the word out for upcoming events and ensure that there are volunteers available. There is a list of events at the end of this column. A few of these are events that **NVNTRAK** will set-up a layout at; others will not have a layout. If you are free and would like to help on anywhere the club isn't going to be there, even if you aren't an **Operation Lifesaver** presenter, let me know and I will get you in touch with the coordinator for the event.

Maryland **OLI**'s caboose was being worked on at the **Maryland Midland** shops and by the time you read this should have been shipped by the **Maryland Midland** and **CSXT** to Cumberland for the **Railfest** there on Oct. 14 - 15. There is an idea about building a layout inside the caboose - we have a little experience with that. I have seen photos of the outside of the caboose (which is a bay window) but have not seen the interior yet. It's hard to guess whether we could take on this project without seeing the interior. It would certainly be a challenge, since the layout would move with the caboose. We don't have quite the jolting problems with the layout in the **Fairfax Station Museum** caboose.

Part of the meeting provides the up-to-date statistics for incidents and injuries, either at crossing or by trespassers in the state. There have been 8 crossing incidents this year (compared to 14 last year). Fortunately, no deaths or injuries had resulted from these incidents, where 1 death and 1 injury occurred last year. There have been 12 trespassing incidents in 2000 versus 20 in 1999. There have been 2 deaths and 8 injuries so far this year, while there were 4 deaths and 14 injuries last year. So, trespassing is still a major problem for Maryland.

National **OLI** has been working on developing a school curriculum that includes the **OLI** safety message while meeting social studies and science grade school and above education objectives. The program has been endorsed by the **National PTA** and is going to be distributed to schools free of charge. One result will be an increase in the number of **OLI** presentation requests from schools.



OPERATION LIFESAVER®

In order to meet these requests, Maryland is trying to ensure that we have enough Level I presenters. That is the rationale for the training courses that are being scheduled for this year. The biggest problem right now is getting the instructors (the Level IIs) to teach the Level I course. Between Maryland and Virginia, there may only be 4 Level IIs right now. Dates keep slipping because of the problems in coordinating the instructors' schedules.

(There are some unanticipated complications.) While we are keeping an eye out for courses in Virginia, the closest course in Maryland to us will be conducted at the **B&O Museum**. As soon as a date gets set for the **B&O**, or any other location, I'll be coordinating with our members to try and fill some slots.

Upcoming OLI Events

October 7: Bethesda City Festival and Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad Open House. **NVNTRAK Event.**

October 14-15: Cumberland Rail Fest. The MD **OLI** caboose will be at the east end of the Cumberland Station on Track 2. Saturday: 9 am - 7 pm; Sunday: 10 am - 6 pm.

October 27: Montgomery County School Train Safety Program at the Walkersville Southern Railroad, Walkersville, MD.

October 28: Pennsylvania Train Station at the B&O Museum, Baltimore.

October: Town of Hurlock and Chicken festivals - Maryland Eastern Shore.

November 4: Damascus Library Train Day. **NVNTRAK Event.**

December 16: Santa Train for Underprivileged kids on the Walkersville Southern.

Spring 2001: Fishing Derby. Details TBA. Looking for volunteers to help organize this event.

June TBA 2001: **OLI** Region 2 meeting, Charlottesville, VA.

August 11, 2001: Montgomery County Fair Train Day. Likely **NVNTRAK Event.**

Carolina Hospitality.....

(Continued from page 2)

we were on our way. That same swarm of hosts helped **NVNTRAK** load up the trailer and cars. Sincere thanks to Don, Bruce and his wife, Tom Joel, Jon, Dave, and the rest of the guys in Raleigh for a great, well organized show. They even invited us back with the possibility of an even bigger event next year. Conversations were held regarding....

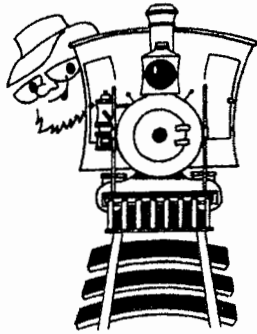
well, you'll just have to attend to find out.

But this little report ditty cannot be complete without a mention of **COFFEE CAKE!!!** Mrs. Don Cariss bakes one for each morning of this show. My fellow **NVNTRAKERS**, all I can say is I can run trains any time, any place at our setups. But I'll journey five hours just to savor one of her cakes. And if there's time,

then I'll play with trains. I tried to keep it a secret, but the word got out....

In summary, the **Southern Junction Model Train Show** is well worth the trip. As attested to by the group from **NVNTRAK**, the "Good Ole' Boy" trip to Raleigh is pure Carolina Hospitality.





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Northern Virginia NTRAK, Inc.

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Springfield, VA 22152
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The **Call Board** is produced by and for the membership of NVNTRAK and selected supporters. Membership is \$30/year or a subscription for continental USA residents is available for a \$10/year donation. Dues are payable each January. Donations are accepted at any time and may be tax deductible. Send checks to:

Treasurer
Northern Virginia NTRAK, Inc.
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Items for publication should be submitted to the editor. Send submissions to the club's P.O. box addressed to:

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P. O. Box 523051
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Submissions can also be made by electronic mail to gbrauch@lmi.org, or faxed to (703) 917-7180 (and clearly marked for Gil Brauch on the cover sheet).

Articles and other submissions for the November 2000 issue must be received by October 23, 2000.

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October '00

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Burn Camp Set-Up

by Dave Freshwater

The **International Association of Fire Fighters** runs an annual camp for kids who have been burned in a fire. **Arlington Fire Company 5** conducted a cook out for the kids, and we provided an opportunity for them to run trains on September 24

Mat and Brian Chibbaro brought *Boulder Junction* and the *Pipsqueak Division* for the layout highlight. Paul Diley brought all three of his modules. *OLI Tower*, *AD Tower* and *Clark's Mill* rounded out the POFFs, although we did make a pseudo-POFF from the 3-foot and 1-foot bridge modules to balance the layout. Brian Brendel and Bill Baldwin were on hand to help with the set-up and put together an **Operation Lifesaver** display. We had short trains running on all lines by the time the campers arrived.

As throttles were turned over to the kids, we started searching for heavier cars for the trains. Slot trains were the order of the day. When we weren't racing engines alone, there were three lap races for trains. You had to bring your whole consist around to win, reinforcing the rabbit and the hare parable. Time seemed to run as quickly as the trains themselves. We ran a little beyond our planned time because we didn't realize what time it was.

Next year, we are on the calendar for the **Burn Camp** itself in Harrisonburg, VA, and will probably also do this local event, too. If you get the chance, bring a module or come help out. It's some work, but letting the kids have fun is worth it. The best line of the day came from the camper who, when told that a helicopter was landing, said, "I'll stay here. I can drive the trains here. They aren't going to let me drive the helicopter."

Square Root Layout.....

(Continued from page 3)

as we use the **Aristo 2000s** more. But, if you are one of the many members who bought one of these, read ALL the directions for each step, because programming is different than the old **Aristos**.

Our clinics were well attended, as always. Saturday, we used Dave Greenacre's *Mirror Lake* POFF to show module construction along with a track repair clinic (unballast, soldering, laying new track and ballasting). Sunday, the victims were the *oNeTRAK/Mountain Division* bridge set. Both days had audience participation sessions – and attendees leaving to go visit vendors on the floor afterwards.

Everyone had a great time running trains and working on various projects. Don't forget that shows can be an even better opportunity than **Backshops** to work on modules. You've got more time and can go buy something that you discover you need. **The Show Place Arena** skybox is a great place for a large, single loop layout. Our 26' x 20' layout still had more than 1/3 of the room untouched and available for expansion. We won't return to Upper Marlboro until winter – when the weather will probably bring out a larger crowd. We just have to remember to bring a fan.