

THE CALL BOARD



A 100% **NTRAK** CLUB

Celebrating Our 14th Year!

September 2005

Volume XIV

Number 9

TRAILER FOR SALE

By John Drye, BOD Trailer Committee Chair

Now that NVNTRAK has transferred club modules and equipment from the old trailers into the new ones, the club has a spare.

So, we will offer our long-serving “small trailer” to club members. The trailer is a 1996 model **Wells Cargo** 5 x 8 trailer, which can hold at least a dozen modules and associated equipment and trains. Max trailer GVW is 2900 lbs, which does not require any additional brake equipment. It can be hauled by almost all pickups and vans (small, medium and large) and other vehicles with towing packages.

To determine a buyer, the club will hold a sealed bid auction. Bids are in the form of a check made out to “**Northern Virginia NTRAK**” and either mailed to the club’s P.O. Box address (postmarked by October 10th —labeled “TRAILER BID”) or hand-delivered to Marc Sisk at the October *Fairfax Station Show* (October 16th). Club members have first priority in bidding. Unsuccessful bids will be returned. In case of ties, the bid with the earliest postmark will be the winning bid.

Winner must take possession of the trailer and remove it from the Fire Department lot by November 6th, 2005.

THE MINIMUM BID IS \$800. The high bidder will be determined at the October *Fairfax Station Show*. For questions, ask any Board Member.

Along the Orange and Alexandria

Brian Brendel, President

Education on the Road: It’s the Cumberland Express!

Wow, what a picnic! Our thanks to **Ann Prentice**, for doing the lion’s share of the shopping and planning, and **Matthew Prentice** for wielding the spatula for what turned out to be a really great get-together on the 20th of August, celebrating the one-year anniversary of the convention and “*World’s Biggest Train Layout*”.

NVNTRAK has quite a history of infamous get-togethers that we host in order to enhance our educational abilities and help satisfy our educational requirements regarding both railroading and railroad safety. Of course, these events are also lots of fun, and we learn more things to convey to our public every time we go on one.

Folks may recall or have heard us speak about the fabulous excursion up to Altoona after our wildly successful 1996 convention, which included museums and the Horseshoe Curve, and lots and lots of trains. We actually got to ride trains in 1998, both on the **AM-TRAK/NVNTRAK** “*Raisin-Bran Cannonball*”, where we did an excursion out to Staunton, and on the **Strasburg Railroad**, during a club trip to the **Pennsylvania Railroad Museum** in Lancaster.

Well, it’s been too long since we’ve had an opportunity for more “education.” I’m very proud to announce that we are hosting another

(Continued on page 4)

It wasn’t just simply a picnic...

By Brian Brendel, President

...it was THE Picnic!

What do you call a Cookout/Trainathon/Sleepover/Breakfast Buffet/Luncheon/Open House? I’d call it AMAZING!

August 20th -21st was Picnic Weekend for NVNTRAK, and it was the Social Event of the summer! The layout in the Station was in place and running trains by early afternoon, and the picnic-ers (and ants) arrived between 5 and 6PM. **Ann and Matthew Prentice** outdid themselves by getting the provisions together and then grilling for us. (Thanks a million, guys!) Food was plentiful and excellent! But most importantly, about 50 old friends and new got together for a fun time at *Fairfax Station*. Even our *Quartermaster General Bill Baldwin* got into the act and provided shrimp for all!

Most “picnic stories” end there, but not ours, of course. We’re the most train-obsessed folks around! As the sun went down, the picnic-ers became train-runners, and ran well into the wee hours of the morning, finally pulling the plug (literally) on the layout at 0345 hours. (Yikes, that sounds like a quarter to FOUR!)

(Continued on page 4)

Club Trip, November 6th—Ride on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad

See President’s Article (Page 1)

Contact Brian as soon as possible to establish a headcount for busses

BILL OF LADING

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R A I L E V E N T S T I M E T A B L E

BOLD Events are NTRAK module events.

[September Back Shop cancelled due to Labor Day Holiday Weekend.]

Saturday, September 10 – Sunday, September 11; “The N-Scale Weekend” for N Scalors by N Scalors; Bedford, PA, [Exit 146 on PA Turnpike]; Fairgrounds 4-H Building; Bedford, PA; Coordinator: Edd Braithwood (703) 860-2899; Trailer: NVX4 [trailer hauler needed for trip up]; Set-up: Friday 1600-2200 Hrs., Saturday 0800 – 1000 Hrs.; Clamp-down: Saturday 0900 Hrs.; Layout Type: Medium oval. Show Hours: Saturday 1000-1700 Hrs., Sunday 0900-1500 Hrs. Tear-Down: Sunday 1500 Hrs. Other: Pig Roast + Silent Auction/Swap Meet Saturday evening. Cost: \$8.00 per participant, \$10.00 extra for pig roast dinner, \$10.00 extra for event t-shirt. Contact Edd about accommodations.

Saturday, September 17, 2005, 1200 - 1900 Hrs. National Burn Camp Arlington Cook Out, Arlington County Fire Station # 5, 1750 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA (703) 228-0105. Coordinator: t.b.d. Trailer: NVX3 [Trailer Hauler needed]. Set-up: 1000-1200 Hrs.; Clamp-down: 1100 Hrs. We run trains for ourselves noon through 3 p.m., then we are joined by Burn Campers, whom we let run trains on our layout, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Free food and a good cause.

Sunday, September 18, 2005, 1300-1600 Hrs. Museum Layout Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, P.O. Box 7, Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039 (703) 425-9225 Coordinator: John Steitz. Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer Hauler needed]. Set-up: 1130 - 1300 Hrs. Clamp-down: 1200 Hrs. Unload in parking lot, then move vehicle across street to overflow lot. Layout Type: Small Oval, DCC option, run Caboose Layout, OLI

Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2005, 2000 - 2130 Hrs. NVNTRAK Board of Directors Meeting, Mark and Carol Sisk's Home, 4020 Kloman St., Annandale, VA; Non-module event

Saturday/Sunday, September 24-25, 2005, Altoona Railfest, Memorial Hall, 1300 Ninth Ave., Altoona, PA 16602, (814) -946-3088 Coordinator: Edd Braithwood (703) 860-2899. Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer hauler needed for trip back]; Set-up: Fri. 9/23 1700-1900 Hrs.(?); Sat. 0700-1000 Hrs.; Clamp-down: Sat. 0900 Hrs. Layout Type: Medium Oval.

Saturday – Sunday, September 24-25. Danville’s Old 97 Rail Days [Road Trip]; Danville Science Center, Pepsi Building, Danville, VA, Layout Coordinator: Tom Fredenberg [tfredenberg@bellsouth.net, (919) 771-0747]

Saturday, Oct. 1, 2005, 1000-1600 Hrs., Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue Squad Open House [in conjunction with *Taste Of Bethesda*] B/CC Rescue Squad, 5020 Battery Lane [x Old Georgetown Rd.], Bethesda, MD (301) 652-0077 Coordinator: t.b.d. Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer Hauler needed] Set-up: Fri. 9/30 1900-2100 Hrs., Sat. 0700-1000 Hrs. Clamp-down: Sat. 0900 Hrs. Unload in parking lot behind station, and use elevator to 2d Floor. Layout Type: Small oval, OLI.

Sunday, October 2, 2005, 1300-1700 Hrs. October Back Shop; Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310; (703) 971-5858; Contact: John Steitz

- Projects:
1. Testing and certification of new modules;
 2. Scenery Work on new Club POFFs and Corners

Use parking lot behind fire station.

Saturday - Sunday, Oct. 8-9, 2005: Great Scale Model Train Show; The Cow Palace, Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD 21094; (410) 252-0200. NTRAK Layout Coordinator: John Steitz. Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer Hauler needed]; Set-up: Friday 1200-2100 Hrs., Sat. 0700 – 0900 Hrs.; Clamp-Down: Sat. 0800 Hrs. Show Hours: Sat. 0900 – 1600 Hrs., Sun. 1000 – 1600 Hrs. Layout Type: Medium - Large Oval with members of Keystone NTRAK. Also: **T-TRAK Layout** (same hours as above); Coordinator: Steve Jackson.

Saturday, October 15, 2005, 1000-1600: Fire Prevention Day; Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310. Coordinator: John Drye, (703) 922-8131. Trailer: in place. Set-up: 0800-1000 Hrs.; Clamp-down: 0900 Hrs. Show Hours: 1000 - 1700 Hrs. Layout Type: Small oval. OLI.

Sunday, October 16, 2005, 1300-1600 Hrs. Museum Layout Fairfax Station Railroad Museum

Tuesday, October 18, 2005, 2000 - 2130 Hrs. NVNTRAK Board of Directors Meeting,

Sunday, October 30, 2005, 1300-1700 Hrs. Second October Back Shop; Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5,

Saturday, November 5, 2005, 1000-1600 Hrs. Damascus Railroad Day; Damascus Community Library, 9701 Main Street, Damascus, MD 20872; Coordinator: Dave Freshwater (301) 717-6501. Layout Type: Small oval, OLI.

Sunday, November 6, 2005; Club Bus Trip to Western Maryland Scenic Railway. See President’s Column, Page 1.

November Back Shop is cancelled. [But note Back Shop on Sunday, Oct. 30 in lieu of November Back Shop.]

Saturday - Sunday Nov. 12-13, 2004: Rockville Lion’s Club Train Show; Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive, Rockville, MD, (240) 314-5019 Coordinator: t.b.d. Layout type: Medium Oval. OLI.

Tuesday, November 15, 2005, 2000 - 2130 Hrs. NVNTRAK Board of Directors Meeting, Mark and Carol Sisk's Home, 4020 Kloman St., Annandale, VA; Non-module event

Saturday - Sunday, Nov. 19-20, 2005: Greenberg Train Show Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA. Coordinator: John Steitz. Layout type: Large single oval. OLI.

View from Zoo Tower

John Steitz, Superintendent



September already? Those of us in education (and those of us paying for someone's education!) are probably wishing it was still May or June!

But, with the (hopefully) cooler weather comes another surge in activity in our hobby, and the club calendar over the next three months reflects that level of intensity. The fall and spring campaigns are always the busiest time for our club.

This fall, we split out time between Maryland and Virginia, between community festivals and commercial shows, between out-of-town shows and local shows (one so local, that we don't even need a trailer hauler!). We also alternate between smallish layouts and layouts of quite a decent size. The capstone is our return to the *Dulles Expo Center* in November with a layout, our first layout there since our *big* layout at last year's convention and train show.

We will not wait for more than a year to return to the *Dulles Expo Center* after November. As you may have heard already, we have been invited to organize a nice little NTRAK layout at the *World's Greatest Hobby Show* at Chantilly, February 11-12. The WGH Show is an industry-sponsored exposition of the hobby, heavy on manufacturers and operating layouts, less so on vendors. More as we get closer.

September brings us two road trips to the Keystone State. First off, on Sept. 9-11, we are neck deep in the *Bedford N Scale Meet*, a mini-convention of N Scalers, right off the PA-Turnpike, barely 2-3 hours from D.C. **Edd Braithwood** and his *M&K Yard* are leading the charge of stalwart road warriors of the club, in what looks to be the first edition of a tradition.

Saturday, Sept. 17, features a repeat of one of the most worthy shows we do all year, the *National Burn Camp for Kids Arlington Cookout*. In case you've never participated, this is a layout where we let the kids run trains and have the fun on our layout. These are kids who have lost a lot from fire – their physical appearance, sometimes their homes and families, and a lot of their childhood. Fire fighting professionals around the country contribute thousands of hours each year to trying to make the lives of the kids as normal as possible; all the local fire fighters in our area roll out the red carpet when these "super" kids and counselors come to town. After we get the layout up and broken in, we turn over the controls to the kids. They run the trains – and slot trains rule the day. So, leave your brass engines and scratchbuilt cars at home and come watch kids have fun. The cook-out is a lot of fun, too, and available to the hungry NTRAKer.

Sunday, Sept. 18th, we are back at *Fairfax Stations* with NTRAK, for our usual "third Sunday" layout.

The weekend of September 23-25 is our second Pennsylvania road trip. We have a layout in Altoona for the *2005 Rail Fest*. The layout will be in Memorial Hall at the Altoona Railroader's Memorial Museum. If you are hankering for a visit to *Horseshoe Curve* country, and want to escape DC for the cooler hills and mountains for a weekend getaway, here is your chance! Contact **Edd Braithwood** for this venue as well!

This same weekend is the *Danville, VA, Old 97 Rail Days*. The club is not heading south, but, if you are interested in pointing your module-transport vehicle into **Southern RR**, and **N&W** country, there is contact info in the *Rail Events Timetable* for you.

Looking ahead to October and November to plan your participation in one or more of our many layouts those two months. If you live in Montgomery County or in the Fairfax-Alexandria area, we have layouts practically on your doorstep. Please sign up early, so we know how big a layout to plan and can share the organizing and trailer-hauling duties equitably.

Before we get to the November Chantilly show, we have a larger size layout on the horizon. On October 8-9, we are setting up two layouts at the *Great Scale Model Train Show* in Timonium, MD. One layout will be an NTRAK layout (possibly with guests from other NTRAK clubs), and the other, a TTRAK layout, like we did last April. If you are only going shopping at the *Scale Show*, please consider arriving a little early to help with set-up.

To prepare for these large layouts and the *WGH* show, one of our goals is to test and repair any modules that may have slipped a notch since last year at the Convention. While we cannot ramp up as thorough an inspection program for member-owned modules as we did for *Capitol Limited*, all of us need to check, repair, and fine-tune our own modules before we set them up at our next public show. We need to look over our modules, trains and equipment, to make sure the little problems don't become big problems for an entire layout. You should plan to have your module(s) in a show prior to the *WGH* show in February.

If you encounter problems with modules or trains that you are not sure how to remedy – let others in the club know. There is a world of experience in our members - I still learn things almost every layout, even though I've been doing modular model railroading for over a decade. Don't suffer in silence – if you're having a quandary in the hobby, pipe up. There may be an easy, inexpensive and/or neat little fix for your problem.

And, after you check your stuff and make sure it's all in tip-top shape...come on out a run a train! That's the reason we do all the layouts we do. If you're not running trains, you're just missing out on most of the fun.

The *Army of Northern Virginia* is about to embark on its Fall Campaign...by rail, of course. So whether you are a grizzled veteran of many years and multiple layouts, or a relative greenhorn with much to learn, come out and lend a hand. Help us share our hobby with others, doing a lot of good while having a lot of fun. *Semper Gumby!*

View from the Loo: TTRAK Update

By Steve Jackson

For those of you that don't know, NVNTRAK has a small troop of TTRAKers, in addition to our legions of NTRAKers. In an effort to schedule our participation, we decided to iron out a few details during discussions at the August *Back Shop* and want to publish the results of the discussions for the club. Here are the details:

- We intend to have modules present at even-numbered month *Back Shops* starting in October 2005. This will allow us to plan on meeting up without specifically scheduling it each time.
- We plan to set up at *Fairfax Hospital* in the coming weeks, as soon as that time can be arranged with their facility.
- We plan to set up at the October Timonium *Great Scale Model Train Show*
- We have offered to be a presence at a Shriner holiday show in December (Dates and details to come...)

If you are interested in seeing TTRAK, come out to an even-month backshop, or watch the schedule for one of these shows.

Junior Engineer Buttons Make Their Appearance

By Ann Prentice



It all started with a suggestion from **Chester Freedenthal**, that the club recognize and thank our loyal, young, model train fans. Chester’s idea blossomed into the creation of a small button for the kids and at the same time showcases our club support of **Operation Lifesaver**, the **INOVA Fairfax Hospital for Children** and **NTRAK**. The layout of the button would not have been possible without **Dave Davies** patiently reworking the electronic design until the final product was crafted. Five hundred 2.25-inch buttons were ordered for the club and arrived in early June. Although we have a large number of buttons, they are intended for those kids who really take an interest in the trains and layouts, especially those who come out often to our shows and drag their parents with them. We are not handing them out to everyone, so some judgment should be used in deciding which kids receive them. Obviously, it is meant as a fun item and has been well received at the summer venues. Perhaps, in the future, there will be other designs.

Along the Orange and Alexandria

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trip, this time to **B&O/Western Maryland/CSX** territory. On November 6, we’ll be taking a bus out to Cumberland to ride behind STEAM on the **Western Maryland Scenic Railroad**, and then spend an hour or two sightseeing the railroad spots of Cumberland prior to our return. The bus trip is **free** to all **NVNTRAK** members. Since we have a family membership policy, you can take along your spouse and immediate family that resides with you for **free**, as the bus is being paid for by **NVNTRAK**! (Additional seats may be purchased for non-members or friends or Uncle Ernie or that cool gal you met rail fanning, for \$25 each.) We also plan on doing an **Operation Lifesaver** presentation during the journey.

Departure will be at 7:30 AM from Franconia, and we will make a stop along the I270 corridor in Maryland to pick up our members there before motoring off to the “Queen City”. **Mountain Thunder**, our 1916 **Baldwin Consolidation**, leaves at 11:30 AM and makes an hour and a half stopover in Frostburg, Maryland for lunch, which will be on-your-own. Tickets for the train will run \$20 a person, the group discount rate. Upon return to Cumberland, and after rail fanning, we’ll stop at a suitable family-style restaurant for dinner, which is also on-your-own. We hope to return by 10 PM.

We’ll need a headcount as soon as possible, so we know how many buses to order. Please email or call me with a count of who is going, and we’ll take care of it! Remember, meals and snacks are on your own. Of course, what made this all possible was our successful train show that was held in conjunction with the **Capitol Limited Convention** last year—and the participation of all of YOU in making it the success it was! A BIG “Thank You” to everyone who helped out last year and at every layout we have!

Fairfax Station Railroad Museum

(Continued from page 1)

Of course, our night had been made complete by the 3:30 AM “Rock Train” grinding uphill at about run-11 on the 0.8% grade past the station carrying crushed stone east from Vulcan Quarry.

Train nuts **Josh Weilepp**, **Jake Brendel**, **Brian Brendel** and **Matt Schaefer** ran trains until the end, including a stunning night-ops session where all the lights were doused and the layout was lit by the thin beams of light from the new bright-white headlight LED’s. Then, those guys hit the hay just about anywhere—telegraph office, main museum area, or under the layout. (It was too humid to sleep in the caboose...but we can try that next time!) **Paul Diley** also spent the night, but he crashed early and didn’t even budge for all that noise from the *Dash-8*’s heading up the “Rocker”.

The boys stayed up into the even “wee-er” hours playing Playstation, and finally got to sleep—only to be awoken by the early arrival of **Steve Graf** at 7:20 in order to get trains runnin’ fast! A quick trip to Food Lion yielded a great Breakfast Buffet served under the O. Winston Link photos. Other members arrived: **Cotton Bowen**, **Nick Sklias**, **Dave Balderston**, **Leonard White**, and many others including new members **Jim Nickle** and **Don Schupp**.

Jake and I jetted home to shower before the public came in at 1PM, and got back in time for a quick lunch in the Station kitchen and then a busier-than-usual *Fairfax Station* crowd. A highlight was the return of **Jim Hoskinson** and his son **Sam**, two folks who had wandered into the Station on Saturday when they saw the crowded parking lot and wound up running trains with us for hours! They had so much fun; they returned Sunday and joined the club! Welcome, guys!

August Photo Credits

Mailing Wrapper—Glenn McLain
 This Page—Dave Davies
 Pages 6-8—Matt Schaefer; Page 9—Richard Hykes

NVNTRAK BOD Meeting—August 16th, 2005

By Marc Sisk, Secretary

The BOD meeting was convened at 8:20PM. All BOD members were present with the exception of Nick Sklias. Dave Freshwater, Leonard White and John Drye were also present.

Brian Brendel mentioned that the layout at *Movies Under the Moon* was a great success despite the small layout size. Thanks to all the folks who helped with the transportation, setup and running of the trains. We may want to increase the layout size next year and potentially have the layout stay up during the entire week.

Our excess trailer, NXV-2, will be offered to club members via a sealed bid auction. The minimum bid will be \$800.00. Bids will be sent to the Club's P.O. Box and postmarked no later than October 10th. Bids must include a check. They will be opened at *Fairfax Station* on October 16th. The winner will be the highest bidder. Ties will be broken by earliest post-marked bid. The trailer must be picked up from the *Franconia Fire Station* no later than the Backshop on November 6th. For more details, see the article in this issue.

The club has received additional N scale trailers from the convention. These trailers were produced by S&R and are available for \$20.00 each. Convention cars (both runs) are also available. Contact Brian if you are interested.

The BOD discussed and approved a club trip to the **Western Maryland Scenic Railroad**. This is a benefit for the club that came from the successful *Capitol Limited 2004* convention last year. The date will be November 6th. The club will pay for the bus and members will pay for the train ride and meals. Please RSVP to Brian so that he can begin to get a headcount and to determine if we will need an additional bus.

John Steitz provided a draft schedule that went through February 2006. The purpose was to solidify events, dates and to enable the web managers to be more accurate in posting our future events. A lot of focus will be placed on the *World's Greatest Hobby* event at *Chantilly Expo Center* February 11-12th. The club has been given 10,000 square feet for a layout at this event. John will work with Matt Schaefer and Steve Jackson in the design of the layout. Brian will make the invite calls to other NTRAK clubs. As usual, upcoming events will be shown in the *Rail Events Timetable* with all coordinating instructions. Please refer to them for details on these and other future events.

Steve Jackson reported that the club is in good financial condition. Membership currently stands at 91. Dave Freshwater mentioned that the club has 12 **Operation Lifesaver (OLI)** presenters, who go through training to be certified. Dave, with some additional assistance from the presenters, is going to put together an OLI presentation for the next Annual Meeting. With the number of deaths and injuries among those trespassing along the railroad on the increase, an annual reminder of how to safe around trains is appropriate. The club currently has 1 OLI associate. Associates assist with handing out materials at events, like we currently do at shows, but do not do presentations. Associates are not required to have the same amount of training that presenters have. Dave and others are going to be working with the State OLI Coordinators and OLI National to get associate and presenter training scheduled for those interested.

Both new trailers have had successful outings recently and have been christened. The *Motive Power Division* of the club had a sidebar meeting at the last *Back Shop*. The primary focus is to ensure that we rotate hauling duties among the capable vehicles so that we do not burn any one individual out.

Progress on the Club Website has been slow and it appears that a different software program may be used to manage it. Brian mentioned that during this time of trying to improve it, we must keep the schedule information accurate so that visitors to the site and our own members have the correct information. Matt Guey-Lee will discuss the website with Matthew Prentice during the Club BBQ at *Fairfax Station*.

Old business - The BOD agreed in the past that Call Board authors will receive a special car for their efforts. Dave Freshwater reported that as of now, approximately 25 authors have qualified so far this year. We will need someone to paint and decal these cars. Brian and Dave will work to seek out the best solution.

New Business - The **KSONS NTRAK** club in Louisville formally announced that they will host a convention in 2008. They are seeking help from other clubs to make this event a success. The BOD will discuss potential assistance possibilities via email over the next few weeks so that a logical decision can be made for the club. Ann Prentice mentioned that we may want to look into decaling NVX-1 to match the new trailers.

The BOD meeting adjourned at 10:00PM.

What Do All These People Have in Common?

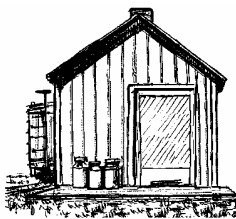
By Dave Freshwater, Editor

Kenneth Allen, James Altobello, Jim & Marg Anderson, Leo Bicknell, Cotton Bowen, Gil Brauch, Brian Brendel, Mat Chibbaro, John Cook, Dave Davies, John Drye, Chester Freedenthal, David Freshwater, Richard Hykes, Steve Jackson, Glenn McLain, Ann + Matthew Prentice, Dale Rinker, Matt Schaefer, Marc Sisk, Nick Sklias, John Steitz, Douglas Stuard, and J.B. Weilepp.

Besides being club members, they all have made a submission to the *Call Board* this year. As announced back in the February *Call Board*, members who submit an article or a photo to the *Call Board* will receive an "author" car at the Annual Meeting in January. There is still time to add your name to the list. There are three more issues of the *Call Board* this year and there are few articles on backlog. Contact the editor if you need help or have questions.

The Hostler's Shack

By Matt Schaefer



TRAINS, TRAINS, TRAINS - I had a wonderful article for you last month about the *National Train Show (NTS)* in Cincinnati, but the computer ate it. (I don't have a dog.) Then, we had to rush off to the **C&OHS** convention in Cumberland, MD July 20th . This was the first ever **C&O** convention that was not held in a **C&O** served town. But, it was located near the *Potomac Eagle* tourist line that was running a **C&O** engine, a **C&O** heavyweight colonial diner (Raleigh Tavern) and two lounges on one end. The other end had **B&O** coaches and a **B&O** geep. On Friday, July 22nd, that train hauled 150 attendees to Petersburg, including a 1st class sit down luncheon. In Cumberland, we had the opportunity to ride a **C&O** train, a **B&O** train on the other end and then the **WM** steam to Frostburg AND **Amtrak**. Cumberland has convenient schedules for travel on the *Capitol Limited* both east and west. Our rooms in the **Holiday Inn** convention hotel overlooked the **B&O** mains.

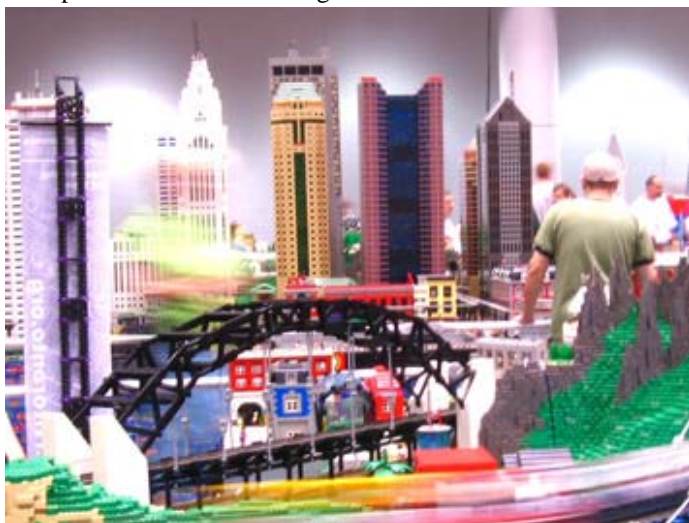
CINCY NTRAK - The layout planning was excellent and confirmations were sent out well in advance (see layout in our June Call Board.) The layout was an S shaped loop of 120 modules, or about the size of our *Landmark* layouts. Many of the sections were also at Chantilly in '04. Paul Downs won a pile of **NMRA** awards for his customized engines. [Our own *Noll Horan* took at least one contest and second in another. – Ed.] Awards will all be covered by Jim FitzGerald in the **NTRAK** newsletter, as well as other publications. **NVNTRAK** took 22 feet of modules; 2 modules were carried on a platform on the back of the van and inside we had 12 feet of *New River*. We picked up two more crewmen off of *Amtrak #51* in Huntington, **Brian and Jake Brendel**.



TECHNICALS - The layout was different in that it did not have any complicated junction wiring or any junctions at all. This was not without trade offs. There were no smaller loops for individual clubs to take over, operate and to get up and running quickly. The whole layout had to be up and wired

before the 3 main lines could be run.

THE NTS SHOW - **Mitch Brown** was there with his **Precision Train** table. The **Cincinnati Ntrak Ngineers** and **T-TRAK** had a nice layouts separate from the main **NTRAK** layout, one reason being to avoid the complications encountered with some large layouts. **NTRAK** space is being squeezed by newer layouts that are very impressive. The *Lego* and *Z scale* layouts were almost as large as the 120-module **NTRAK** layout. The *New River* section is insignificant in comparison to *Lego* buildings 8-feet tall and *Z* climbing grades 8 feet off the floor. However, we never did see a train run on the beautiful *Z scale* Swiss-looking layout. The operators stayed under the modules the whole time looking at the computer controls and wiring.



BACK TO THE PIZZA BOX - We have **THE WORLDS GREATEST HOBBY SHOW** coming in February and, if *Lego Trains* are there, they will again have impressive bridges and buildings rising to 8-feet above the floor. There is no reason **NTRAK** can't have impressive structures 8-feet above the floor! From our 40-inch mains to 96" is 56", or 746 scale feet, or about 70 stories. Las Vegas would even have a roller coaster on top! Or, we could have a mine train shuttling back and forth two-thirds up the mountainside with a chute or cable buckets running down to the mains. If you aren't into the coal thing, you can have a marble quarry with working cranes or a red iron ore pit switchbacks and a tunnel out to the mains. I like gold and uranium mines with their yellow piles of tailings and with less trees to glue on. The Colorado tipples can be as high as you want to make them and mountains can be built on flats only 6" thick that fold or stack above a module.

BRIDGES - I also favor bridges and refer you to the Cleveland's Cuyahoga "rolling" (rotating) lift bridge with ship lights that could be exaggerated to reach up 36" (500'). I would like to see big bridges we could walk under like suspension bridges and the abandoned Poughkeepsie RR bridge and Cleveland's straight vertical lift bridge with ship lights ... if Brian OK's it. Get a pizza and get an impressive display going for February!

(Continued on page 7)

Hostler's Shack

(Continued from page 6)

TRAIN RIDES - As I write this I am packing to take my daughter Laurie back to Seattle on the *Capitol Limited* on August 22nd. On a long 3-night trip, lateness is not a concern. The summer scenery will be completely different from the run we made to Portland in January of 04 stirring up the snow in the long moonlit nights. From Ohio to Montana, the track speed is 79 MPH most of the way. Ride them when you can ... and while you still can!

Ridin' that New River Train to the National Train Show

By Brian Brendel

Jake and I had a very unique experience last month; something that I frequently encourage everyone to do: ride the rails! What was so unique was that he and I rode the train - to the trains. The **National Model Railroad Association's National Train Show** was in Cincinnati, Ohio. We picked a very cool conveyance to get there, the **Amtrak Cardinal**.

Train Number 50 departed Manassas at 2 PM on Wednesday, July 6. Jake and I had our trains, club shirts, Nats baseball caps, and loads of enthusiasm, for we were headed to Jake's first **National Train Show**. Our trip led us through Manassas Yard and down along the old **Southern** main line—literally, *Along the Orange and Alexandria*. Soon we were in Culpepper, had settled down in our seats, started snacking, and started watching the world of train facilities that one can only find when actually riding the rails.

We passed fields and farms, many industries, and forgotten lineside structures. Inspiration happens on a train trip, and we got more and more jazzed about the show, our modules, the trains we would see, and all the fellowship we would exchange with our brother and sister train guys.

We rolled through Orange, and onto the old **C&O**, now **CSX**, bound for Charlottesville and beyond. Waynesboro, Staunton...fond memories that many in the club will recall,

from our days riding the *Cardinal* on the *Raisin Bran Cannonball* back after the last convention in '96. Up through Allegheny Tunnel and along the Greenbrier River and into Hinton on the New River at dark. We traversed the gorge in dark-



ness, and arrived to be picked up in Huntington, WV, by **Matt and Georgia Schaefer**, who were hauling our modules (and us) the rest of the way to the show.

Early the next morning, we hit the road for Cincy. Of course, along the way we spied quite a bit of that prized scenery material, New River shale. So, we stopped to sample some for future scenery projects. We then rolled on into Ft. Wright, Kentucky, and checked out our very excellent accommodations (hot and cold running Interstate traffic, and a hairdryer in your room right next to the safe!), which were just a few miles from the convention center.

The **National Train Show** was gearing up for a weekend show for some very excited train folks from all over the world, especially the attendees from the **National Model Railroad Association** Convention, which had begun the weekend before. We waited our turn at the loading dock, and before we knew it, we were dropping our modules at the 'big layout' and setting up to be part of a layout that included modules from 20 clubs. Many of the attendees knew us very well after our monster show last year, and all fondly remembered the fun we all had in Chantilly.



Trains leaving *KSONS "Endless River"* and entering our *New River* section.

The layout went together well. All modules were in place, and the layout was running by the next morning. It was rumored that some of the layout was running on Thursday evening, but we did not know for sure because of a stroke of good fortune. Through the kindness of one of our members, **Mitch Brown**, we were able to secure VIP passes on an excellent layout tour for show participants that ran at 6 p.m. on Thursday, only four hours after we had arrived at the show.

The layout tour was phenomenal! There were two very good N-scale layouts, one completed with a **Santa Fe** theme. There was a very big and completed **C&O**-style HO layout with its own New River Gorge and a running main of over 300 feet. And then the absolute topper, an indescribable 1500-square-foot, HO Scale empire owned by a young retired millionaire model railroader (we should all be so lucky,) who designed his layout, then his basement...then hired an architect to design the house over it! When this thing is finished, it will be even more of a wow. But, it was fantastic even in the benchwork stage. (The **POOL TABLE**, **KITCHEN** and **WIDE**

(Continued on page 8)

National Train Show

(Continued from page 7)

SCREEN TV in the crew lounge should give you some idea of how over-the-top this guy is. He even has provisions for installing an elevator in a few years—"when I need it", he says. And his wife ran all the non-rail events at the convention, including the BELLY DANCING class...

Back at the show the next morning, we made sure the layout ran ok and then wandered the show floor before the multitudes of the public were allowed in at noon. One of the big perks of attending the National NTRAK layout is being able to go shopping before the thousands come in, and we were not disappointed. All the usual suspects, Tex N Rails, Neal's, etc, plus all the manufacturers (KATO F40PH's for AMTRAK! YAY!), plus some incredible layouts (the Ztrak was impressive, and the LEGO layout—well, I lost Jake for a few hours there.) Then it was back to the layout to run trains like crazy all day Friday.



Friday night we went to a German Beer hall called Hofbrauhaus. I will resist the urge to fully describe our escapades there, except to say it was loud, even for quiet, reserved little me. We did enjoy standing on the tables to toast, though they wouldn't let us dance up there...

Saturday, more train running, more shopping, more socializing, more fun! We ran until exhaustion, then all the NTRAKers adjourned to a local Brew Pub (do we see a pattern here?) so we could eat and drink and tell lies until it was late. But we had to leave a bit early, because FOUR A.M. rolls around pretty early, and that is the only time AMTRAK departs for Washington.



Brian and Jake at the Cincy's Art Deco Union Terminal

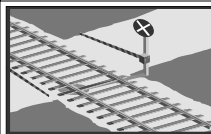
After deliciously exhaustive days of trains, trains and more trains, we rode The Cardinal, Train Number 51 now, back the whole way from Cincy to Manassas. Through the New River Gorge in daylight, the views were spectacular on a beautiful summer day, inspiring

to even the most jaded of model railroaders (like the two HO guys from NJ that were returning home with us on 51)

Sometimes a little inspiration kick starts interest in things past, or begins an interest that could last a lifetime. Jake and I came away from the train trip with a ton of ideas, and from the National Train Show with a lifetime of memories.

Get yourself to the National Train Show whatever way you

can, but of course, the best way is by train! Riding any train is also inspiring, so get out and ride one! AMTRAK, the Western Maryland Scenic in Cumberland (which is going away this year), Cass, the Strasburg Railroad, the Walkersville Southern, even VRE or MARC. Our trip has absolutely energized our modeling, and was darn fun to boot. I'm sure it will be the same for you!



The Other Side of the Tracks by Chester Fredenthal

Just some random rambling this month – It was good to see an article from Gil Brauch and see how he brings up the rear, er Southern Division of the club. With Ken Allen out in Montana, Charles Greenacre in Arizona, Gil in North Carolina and a few others around the country, we may soon have to change the name of the club to Northern Virginia and the Rest of the US or NVATROTUSNTRAK.

I was wondering if when we set up and have tracks that cannot connected – like the Mountain line or the Orange Line -- if we should designate these as Useless Trak or UTRAK – we could even establish this as a new division of NTRAK dedicated to tracks that never get used. Maybe even build special 2-foot modules that don't connect. Heck, we might even get a page or two in the NTRAK newsletter.

Okay, so let me understand this – LifeLike is now Walthers and MDC Roundhouse is now Athearn. Next to go is Atlas...

Seems like the best laid plans often go awry. I was able to auction off a good portion of my collection at the Annual Meeting, putting a nice wad of bills in my pocket and generating a good profit for the club. My intent was to use that money towards my vacation – and what do I do, go out and buy more train stuff, like the new Deluxe Innovations Military series, Lowell Smith's Circus series, the new Athearn John Deere Collectors set and order the new Atlas U.S. Army engines! I guess I will have to sell off some more stuff – anyone interested some nice BN cars and engines? Some old mixed freight? Some old SPF stuff?

What I really need to do is finish my oNeTRAK module (or is this Dead? Maybe I can make a three-foot TTRAK module!) and two 3-foot end loops. They've been sitting in my garage for over a year now. I just don't feel comfortable laying track, especially curves, and so if anyone out there would like to volunteer to come to my house and help me lay these loops I would appreciate it. Then I can concentrate on the scenery – my favorite part. I will provide food and libations of course. Any takers?

"What is the difference between a schoolteacher and a steam locomotive? The schoolteacher tells you to spit out your gum, while the locomotive says "Choo Choo Choo!"

Riding the *Transrapid*: The World's Fastest Train

By Richard Hykes

I would like to share with you a fascinating experience we had riding on a train that runs 267.8 miles per hour. It utilizes the very latest technology to achieve such an outstanding performance.

My wife, **Rory**, and I traveled to Shanghai, China, in early April 2005, and had the opportunity to ride on the *Transrapid*. This is no ordinary passenger train. It doesn't even have an engine, wheels or steel tracks! The *Transrapid* is supported by magnetic levitation (maglev) and powered by electromagnetic propulsion. It floats above a guideway perched on concrete pillars high in the sky using the basic principles of magnets to replace the old steel wheels and train tracks. Maglev trains float on a cushion of air, eliminating friction, noise, and exhaust fumes. This lack of friction and the train's aerodynamic design allow the *Transrapid* to reach unprecedented ground transportation speeds.

If you've ever played with magnets, you know that opposite poles attract and like poles repel each other. This is the basic principle behind electromagnetic propulsion. Electromagnets are similar to other magnets in that they attract metal objects, but the magnetic pull is temporary.

The big difference between a maglev train and a conventional train is that a maglev train does not have an engine-- at least not the kind of engine used to pull typical train cars along steel tracks. The engine for a maglev train is rather inconspicuous. Instead of using fossil fuels, the magnetic field created by the electrified coils in the guideway propels the train. The magnetized coil running along the track, called a guideway, repels the large magnets on the train's undercarriage, allowing the train to levitate between 0.39 and 3.93 inches (1 to 10 cm) above the guideway.

Once the train is levitated, power is supplied to the coils within the guideway walls to create a unique system of magnetic fields that pull and push the train along the guideway. The electric current supplied to the coils in the guideway walls is constantly alternating to change the polarity of the magnetized coils. This change in polarity causes the magnetic field in front of the train to pull the vehicle forward, while the magnetic field behind the train adds more forward thrust. ^{1/} Even though the train is floating above the guideway, the coaches themselves actually wrap down and partially around the guideway (while maintaining separation from the guideway) for maximum stability and safety. It is highly unlikely this train could derail or fall from the guideway.

Currently, the *Transrapid* route in Shanghai runs between two stations, Pudong Airport and Longyang Station. The distance is 19.6 miles. Longyang Station is in the eastern suburbs of Shanghai, a convenient point where passengers can proceed downtown by transferring to a subway train. The Longyang Station is very clean and futuristic looking. We rode the escalator to the platform and boarded the sleek looking *Transrapid*. The interior was very modern and the seats were well appointed and roomy. We settled back and awaited takeoff. There was a speedometer over the doorway at the end of the coach, and I was sure we were going to experience serious g-forces upon acceleration. I was mistaken. The ride was quiet and very smooth and there was no feeling of traveling fast. It helped to be elevated because the sensation is very much like flying effortlessly. As we glided away from the station, I glanced at the speedometer and saw it was climbing rapidly. After a minute or two, it had reached a maximum speed of 431 kph (267.8 mph). The trip was over almost before it started. It took only eight minutes to reach the airport at an average speed of 147 mph. As part of our tour, we were booked for a roundtrip and enjoyed the sec-

ond experience on our return to Longyang Station.

The *Transrapid* in Shanghai is the first ever electromagnetic levitation railway line built for commercial use. The German consortium composed of **Siemens**, **ThyssenKrupp** and **Transrapid International** along with some know-how from Austria provided the vehicles, power transmission, energy supply, as well as the control and systems technology. The **Shanghai Maglev Transportation Development Co., Ltd.** built the elevated guideway and stations. The total construction cost was \$1.2 billion. Its maiden trip was on December 31, 2002.

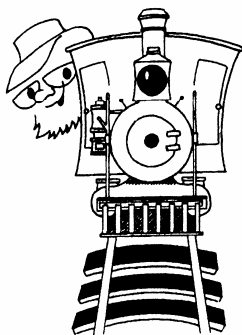
This seemingly overambitious project has been a tremendous commercial failure so far, with critics complaining about the vast distance needed to travel from downtown to board the train and the expensive price of the tickets (recently lowered from \$9 to \$6 one way). There is a plan to extend the line five miles to a point just south of the city center at the site of the 2010 World Expo. This extension would greatly enhance the commercial value of the *Transrapid*. In the meantime, it is a great tourist attraction.

Germany and Japan have been in the forefront of maglev development with the USA lagging behind. Did you know that there is a Baltimore-Washington Maglev Project? You can visit their web site at www.bwmaglev.com/default.htm. In January 2001, the Federal Railroad Administration's Maglev Deployment Program named the Baltimore-Washington corridor one of two finalists for future development of magnetic levitation technology. This 40-mile long project would link downtown Baltimore and BWI Airport with Washington, D.C. Possible future connections include Philadelphia, New York and Boston to the north, and Richmond, Raleigh and Charlotte to the south. Originally one of seven corridors under consideration, Baltimore is now competing with Pittsburgh, PA, for initial development funds. The cost is estimated at \$3.7 billion for the three station rail line. Technology would be the same as used in the Shanghai *Transrapid* as provided by **Siemens** and partners. Well, I am not going to hold my breath waiting for this project to be completed. With **Amtrak** going broke and the rail line to Dulles airport somewhere way off in the future, I am very skeptical about this maglev project in our area. While we wait, we can enjoy Shanghai's *Transrapid*, if only it were not so far away.

^{1/} *How Maglev Trains Work* by Kevin Bonser at <http://travel.howstuffworks.com/maglev-train.htm>.



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NVNTRAK E-mail Lists

NVNTRAK maintains a list server in conjunction with the club web site. A message addressed to <nvntrak@nvntrak.org> reaches all club members who are subscribed to the list. To subscribe, or if your e-mail has recently changed, contact the Webmaster, **Matt Guey-Lee**, at <matthew.gueylee@cox.net>.

NVNTRAK also has a Yahoo Group. One advantage of the Yahoo Group is that files can be uploaded and shared. To join the Yahoo Group, if you are not already a member, go to: <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NVNtrak/>>. There will be a button there that allows you to join.

THE CALL BOARD

Editor—David Freshwater

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

A subscription for continental USA residents is available for a \$20/year donation. Payment should be made to the club treasurer, at the address in the box to the left.

Items for publication should be submitted in MS Word or text format; either are acceptable. Send submissions to the Editor:

david.freshwater@west-point.org

All submissions must contain clear text identification of the author to be accepted for publication. **Articles and other submissions for the September 2005 issue MUST be received by September 23, 2005.**

Northern Virginia NTRAK membership is \$45/year Dues are payable each January. Northern Virginia NTRAK membership includes NTRAK membership.

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September 2005

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NVX-2 takes a spin on the Martinsburg Roundhouse Turntable, before heading for home and being readied for sale.

Details on the auction on Page 1.

Club Trip, November 6th—Ride on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad

See President's Article (Page 1)

Contact Brian as soon as possible to establish a headcount for busses