

THE CALL BOARD



A 100% **NTRAK** CLUB

Celebrating Our 15th Year!

February 2006

Volume XV

Number 2

Annual Meeting—January 15th, 2006

By Marc Sick, *Outgoing Secretary*

The NVNTRAK Annual Business Meeting was convened at 3:15pm at **Franconia Fire Station #5**. The 2005 president, **Brian Brendel** presided over the meeting. All seven 2005 Board of Directors were present and approximately 40 club members. Brian opened the meeting by recognizing **Bill Baldwin** and **Gene Aldridge** for their generous donations over the past year. He then introduced the sitting Board of Directors and mentioned that **Marc Sisk** and **Matt Guey-Lee** will be leaving the board. The new module skirts with the NVNTRAK logo were shown. **Marg Anderson** produced 19 skirts this past year and **Ann Prentice** got the silk screening done. Thanks to these two dedicated members!

Brian went through the past years accomplishments. In addition to many layouts, we moved our *Back Shop* location from *Prince of Peace Church* to our present location at the *Franconia Volunteer Fire Station #5*, we presented three checks from the proceeds of *Capitol Limited 2004* totaling \$7,000 to *Fairfax Station Railroad Museum*, *Prince of Peace Church* and *Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children*, we purchased and christened two new trailers and sold NVX-2 to **Steve Zutter**, we provided **Operation**



Lifesaver (OLI) presentations, performed an auction for *Hurricane Katrina* relief and Brian and **Michelle** hosted this year's Holiday Party. A busy year to say the least. Brian read a letter of appreciation from the *Nevada OLI* for **Dave Freshwater** and **John Cook**, who taught over 1300 Boy Scouts railroad safety through OLI at the

2005 Boy Scout Jamboree.

John Steitz provided the Superintendent's report. John asked folks to look at the January **Call Board** for the current schedule of activities. He mentioned that we are still going to schedule mall shows as it provides a place to run larger layouts and expose the hobby to those who otherwise would not see it. John informed the club about the move of layout for the *World's Greatest Hobby (WGH)* show from the North Hall to the South Hall. Setup for *WGH* will be Saturday only from 6-10. The February *Back Shop* will concentrate on getting the junctions and bridge module squared away in preparation for *WGH*. He asked for those members who are taking modules to the *NMRA Convention* in Philadelphia, to let him know by mid February so that he could coordinate with the **NTRAK** layout coordinator. John reminded everyone that when they are looking for potential new layout venues, please consider the layout type that would be best for the space, any insurance requirements and the purpose for which we would be doing the layout. Sign up sheets were available for members to

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Along the Orange and Alexandria

Brian Brendel, President

"Company's coming, AGAIN..."

Let me begin this month by saying thanks again to all of you for all of your support and nice sentiments upon my re-election as your president. I am very much honored to have been chosen to speak for our group and help shape its future, and I know that the best folks in the railroad modeling world are behind me (in most cases, *pushing... <grin>*)

Well, we've gotten the high green! Yup, that's right: once again, **NVNTRAK** has the honor of hosting a large N-scale gathering, and it's only two weeks away! Although not as large as **Capitol Limited**, it will be a very big layout, along with some other niceties sprinkled in, like open houses at some home layouts (including the *West Virginia Central*—bathroom line and all), and all the fellowship these big layouts bring.

What will be very different about the *World's Greatest Hobby* layout will be the show itself, and the setup times. The show is mostly a manufacturer show and not our standard "train show." It will be much more like a national convention, but without all the vendors; vendors are somewhat limited due to the space needs of the manufacturers. Plus, lots of people come to these "national quality" shows, so be prepared for big crowds.

Speaking of big, we have a huge amount of space, and are hoping everyone in the club can bring out their modules to help fill it, along with the members from **RANTRAK**, **BANTRAK**,

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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

First appeared under the RET name and logo in Sept. 1995

BOLD Events are NTRAK module events.

Saturday - Sunday, February 4-5, 2006: Great Scale Model Train Show [Nn3 layout only], The Cow Palace, Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD 21094, (410) 252-0200. Coordinator: Marc Sisk. Trailer: None. Show Hours: Sat. 0900 - 1600 Hrs.; Sun. 1000 - 1600 Hrs. Set-up: Fri. 1500-2000 Hrs., Sat. 0700-0900 Hrs., Clamp-down: Sat. 0730 Hrs. Layout Type: Nn3 layout only

Sunday, February 5, 2006, 1300-1700 Hrs.: *February Back Shop.* Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310; (703) 971-5858. Contact: John Steitz. Projects: 1) Final check of, and repairs to, all modules for WGH Layout the following weekend
2) Test set-up of multi-loop layout with all club junctions.

Extra hands needed to set-up large layout at the Back Shop.

Saturday - Sunday, Feb. 11-12, 2006: World's Greatest Hobby Train Show Dulles Expo Center, North Hall, Chantilly, VA. Coordinator: Matt Schaefer (703) 978-2946, cando.matt@verizon.net. Trailers: All [Anderson, Landgrover and Prentice to haul trailers]. Set-up: Sat.: 0600-1000 Hrs. Clamp-down: Saturday 0800. Show Hours: Sat. and Sun.: 1000-1600 Hrs. Layout type: Large multi-club, multi-loop NTRAK/oNeTRAK layout in a 50' x 200' space. DCC Red Line and multiple Aristo blocks on each interior line. Nn2 and T-TRAK layouts, OLI, Company Store.. See details elsewhere in this Call Board. Everyone's assistance needed for layout set-up on Saturday morning.

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2006, 1300-1600 Hrs.: **Museum Layout,** Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 (703)425-9225 Coordinator: John Steitz; Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer Hauler still 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 one line, run Caboose Layout

Saturday - Sunday, Feb. 25-26, 2006: Great Train Expo Show Prince George's Equestrian Center, Upper Marlboro, MD Coordinator: Edd Braithwood, 703-860-2899.. Trailer: NVX3 [Trailer Hauler still needed.] Show Hours: Sat. and Sun.: 1000 - 1600 Hrs. Set-up: Fri. 2/24/06: 1500-1930 Hrs.; Sat. 2/25/06: 0730-1000 Hrs. Clamp-down: Sat. 2/25/06: 0900 Hrs. Layout Type: Medium Oval (with 45 degree corners?); DCC on one line, OLI, Company Store.

Saturday, March 4, 2006, 0900-1300 Hrs. *Lorton Station Elementary School PTA Health and Safety Fair,* Lorton Station Elementary School, 9298 Lewis Chapel Road, Lorton, VA 22079 571-642-6000 Coordinator: John Cook (703-670-9700), jcook@nvnttrak.org. Trailer: NVX3. Set-up: 0700-0900 Hrs. Clamp-down: 0800 Hrs. Layout Type: Small NTRAK oval with OLI.

Sunday, March 5, 2006, 1300-1700 Hrs.: *March Back Shop.* Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310; (703) 971-5858. Contact: John Steitz. Projects: 1) Track Laying on New Modules
2) Club corner module scenery

Saturday, March 11, 2006 , 0900-1600 Hrs. *NMRA Potomac Div. Mini-Con* Location: Laurel, MD (more details to follow). Coordinators: John Steitz and John Drye (703) 922-8131 Trailer: NVX3 [Trailer Hauler still needed.] Set-up: Friday, 1800-2100 Hrs.; Sat. 0700-0900 Hrs. Clamp-down: Saturday, 0800 Hrs. Layout Type: oNeTRAK + 3T operations layout with DCC Operations opportunities for NMRA Chief Dispatcher AP Certificate

Saturday - Sunday, March 18-19, 2006: Boy Scout Troop 964 Train Show Saunders Middle School, 13557 Spriggs Rd., Manassas, VA 20112 (703) 670- 9188; Coordinator: Edd Braithwood, 703-860-2899. Trailer: NVX3 [Trailer hauler still needed] Show Hours: Sat. 1000-1700; Sun. 1300-1700. Set-up: Sat. 0700-1000 Hrs. Clamp-down: Sat. 0900 Hrs. Layout Type: Small-Medium Oval; OLI presentations

Sunday, March. 19, 2006, 1300-1600 Hrs.: **Museum Layout,** Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 (703)425-9225. Coordinator: T.B.D.; Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer Hauler still 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 one line, run Caboose Layout

Thursday - Saturday, March 23-25, 2006: *C&O Historical Society Convention,* Hawk's Nest State Park Lodge, P.O. Box 857, Ansted, WV 25812. (304) 658-5212 1-800-CALL WVA, <http://www.hawksnestsp.com/> Coordinator: Matt Schaefer (703) 978-2946, cando.matt@verizon.net. Trailer: None. Set-up: Thursday 1800-2300 Hrs.; Clamp-down: Thursday 1800 Hrs. Show Hours: Friday: all day and evening; Saturday: all day until 2000 Hrs. Layout Type: Serpentine medium-sized NTRAK layout with members of Lynchburg NTRAK (DCC).

Saturday - Sunday, April 1-2, 2006: Great Scale Model Train Show , The Cow Palace, Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, MD 21094 (410) 252-0200. NVNTRAK participation: T.B.D. Show Hours: Sat. 0900 - 1600; Sun. 1000 - 1600.

Sunday, April 2, 2006, 1300-1700 Hrs.: *April Back Shop.* Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310; (703) 971-5858. Contact: John Steitz Projects: 1) Wiring of new Modules
2) Conversion of module wiring from *Cinch-Jones* connectors to *PowerPole* connectors.

[April Fairfax Station Layout cancelled because the third Sunday of April is Easter Sunday.]

[T-TRAK layout at Paul Spring Retirement Community, and NTRAK Layout at Landmark Mall, both to be scheduled some time in April.]

View from Zoo Tower

John Steitz, Superintendent



All aboard for the **WGH** show this month!

We start out with the largest *Back Shop* we have had in several years, on Sunday February 5. (Worry not; we will have you home in time for kick-off!) Instead of a clinic, we will be trying to test *all* of the club modules (including the old and new junctions), plus many member-owned modules (both **NTRAK** and **oNeTRAK**) that haven't been out in a while. And since this is an even-numbered month, the **T-TRAKers** will be setting up a large layout, too. All to make sure the modules (and their support crew!) are ready for the big show the following weekend.

[The only folks who *won't* be there are our *Nn3 Corps*, who will be showing the club colors by running their narrow-gauge layout that weekend at the *Great Scale Train Show* in Timonium, led by **Marc Sisk** (703-280-5290). Thanks guys! That will be our only layout at that Timonium Show. So, please do your Timonium shopping on Saturday, admire the craftsmanship displayed in the *Nn3* layout, and then hurry back for the festivities on Sunday.]

It seems really strange to be asking for modules, and for layout set-up assistance, for a *Back Shop*...but we'll actually need both! In addition to 80'+ of club-owned modules to be tested, **Ann and Matthew Prentice** will be bringing out *Triggs Yard* – the whole yard – for a once-over testing. Matthew has spent many, many nights re-tracking and re-wiring the two end, or throat, modules, so they function, and perform, like **Edd Braithwood's** *M&K Junction*. This is the first time the whole yard has been out in over nine months. Even with all the Prentices present, they will still appreciate any help in hauling in/out and/or setting up or tearing down all 36 feet. There may also be others bringing out multi-module sets who could use a hand. And, there will be all those tables and chairs that have to be moved out of the way for the layout (and then moved back into position when we're through), so that will take a small army.

In the process, we will be coaching the crews setting up the layout, so this will be an excellent time to learn why we set-up layouts the way we do and to ask any questions. If you don't have a module of your own, but want to help out at **WGH**, try "adopting" a club module (*POFF*, corner or junction) or two and learn the idiosyncrasies of that module(s) set-up at the *Back Shop*. Then, when we are pressed for time the following Saturday morning, you'll know what to do and can provide really meaningful assistance as we build a 100+ module layout in under four hours.

As you've probably heard already, we have all of four hours to set-up the layout at **WGH**, 6:00 AM to 10:00 AM, Saturday morning, February 11, at the *South* Hall of the *Dulles Expo Center* in Chantilly (the same hall where we had to layout for *Capitol Limited '04*).

Apparently, there was so much interest in the main exhibit space across the parking lot in the North Hall that the **WGH** show organizers decided to sublet an extra 50,000 sq.ft. of

space at significant cost from a computer show in the South Hall. That is where all the modular layouts will be. If you have web access, you can see the preliminary space plan for the South Hall at: http://www.WGHshow.com/showinfo/wdc/wdc_southhall_fp_012606.pdf

The fly in the ointment is that there is some sort of machinery show in the South Hall the entire week prior to **WGH**, including that Friday. So both the computer show, and all the **WGH** modular layouts, can't get into that hall on Friday to set up.

But with a little perseverance, we and our friends from other **NTRAK** clubs will get the layout connected and trains running by 10 AM Saturday. Many hands make light the work, and most participants will be setting up modules with which they are familiar. If you were at *Capitol Limited* on the first day, recall how quickly the giant layout there came together, physically. All the modules that entered the hall in the first hour were clamped together with connecting track in, by lunchtime, less than four hours later. Here, we have "only" ¼ the number of modules as at *Capitol Limited* and even more experience setting up large layouts.

The plan is, as soon as each 46' x 14' oval is clamped together with all connecting track in, the mainline tracks will be tested with Lindsay throttles. And as soon as any *Yellow*, *Blue* or *Green* line passes *Lindsay* inspection, we will attach *Aristo* receivers to multiple blocks on that line, and start analog train running. Several of the analog lines will be two-train (four block) *Aristo* or *Lindsay* circuits. Under this plan, somewhere between 6 and 15 analog trains will be running by the time the gates open.

The *DCC Red Line* route around the entire layout may take a little longer, but that's OK. Everyone at **WGH** understands that we are doing a two-minute drill with this layout, so as long as we have trains – of any sort - running on each section of our layout when the show opens, the rest is gravy. And if you have a module with trains looping on private trackage – this is the show for you!

In addition to the big **NTRAK/oNeTRAK** layout, our *Nn3 Corps* and *T-TRAK Brigade* will be setting up separate layouts within our 50' x 200' space. **Dave Freshwater** and other **OLI** volunteers will have an **OLI** booth staffed all weekend long. And **John Cook** will have the **NTRAK/NVNTRAK** Company store transacting business, too. If that isn't enough for you, we may do a few clinics for the public, as well.

There are lots and lots of ways to help out at **WGH**, so **Brian Brendel** will have a sign-up job roster at the *Back Shop* on February 5. I am asking any club member available on Saturday, Feb. 11, to *please* lend a hand with layout set-up. Despite our well-attended giant layouts in 1996 and 2004, our **NTRAK/oNeTRAK** layout at **WGH** may be the largest model railroad layout that many of our guests have

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View From Zoo Tower

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ever seen.

After all that, you would think we'd be finished for this shortest of months. But, we have two more shows the week-ends after **WGH!**

On Sunday, February 19, we return to the freight house of the **Fairfax Station Railroad Museum** for our first 3rd-Sunday-of-the-month layout of 2006. For those of you who have joined the club since our last **FF Station** layout (in November), our layout there is usually 10-14 modules (including corners), **DCC** on one of the three lines, with 3 hours of train looping to entertain the many families who attend. Set-up starts at 11:30 AM, and we are usually out of the Station by 5 p.m. It's a great fundraiser for the station, and an *excellent* venue for a module's public debut once scenery is finished. If you have any questions about this, or any subsequent layout at Fairfax Station, please contact me.

The last weekend in February, Feb. 25-26, we return to the **Prince George's Equestrian Center** in Upper Marlboro for a *Greenberg Train Show*. We should be back in the "Tack Room," the rectangular room overlooking the show floor where we were last year, so we will have room for a decent-sized layout. **Edd Braithwood** is serving as Set-up Coordinator for Upper Marlboro, so if anyone is interested, please contact him at 703-966-6472. John Cook will be running the Company Store, as well, so he will also need assistance.

And, if there is any doubt that the Spring Campaign of the "Army of Northern Virginia" is now well underway, take a look at our March Calendar. In quick succession, we have the *Lorton Station Elementary School PTA Health and Safety Fair*, the *Potomac Division Minicon*, the *Troop 964 Boy Scout Train Show*, another Fairfax Station layout, and last, but not least, the road trip to Ansted, W. Va, for the annual **Hawk's Nest C & O Modelers Convention**. Plenty of opportunities for you to support your club, by bringing out a module and helping set-up a layout.

At the March *Back Shop* (March 5), we will resume our annual Spring module-building series, with roadbed- and track-laying seminars and practice on any new modules that come on out. As in past years, we will concentrate on a different phase of module building each month. [In January, we built frames at **Cotton Bowen's** workshop, and, in April, we will concentrate on wiring, with scenery clinics to follow in subsequent months.] If you haven't already, gather your materials to build your module frame, in case we're snowed in sometime in the next four weeks. [Or if we have warm weather, move the woodworking outside!] Then, bring out your frame the March 5 *Back Shop* and lay some track!

And, in April, we are planning a **T-TRAK** layout at Bill Baldwin's home, the *Paul Spring Retirement Community*, and a full **NTRAK** layout in the Center Court of *Landmark Mall*. Details will be provided about those when we firm up the dates. The club Board of Directors has decided to sit out Fairfax Station in April, because the third Sunday falls on April 16, Easter Sunday. So we will have at least *one* weekend off

between now and May!

But first, our largest layout in 18 months. Next Stop, the **World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Show...All ABOARD!**
Semper Gumby!

Along the Orange and Alexandria

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South Hampton Roads, NJ Southern and others. The catch is that we are limited to a **SATURDAY MORNING ONLY** setup time, which became necessary when the WGH show outgrew the north hall at Dulles Expo. The company then spent an extra \$15,000 to rent half of the South hall just to allow setup of all the layouts that are coming. Set your alarm clock for "oh-dark-thirty", get to bed early on Friday the 10th, and be sure to brave the cold (and do the "no snow" dance) and get there by **6 A.M.** to help us get things running by **10 A.M.**

PLEASE try to make it to the *Back Shop* at the fire station at 1 P.M. on Sunday February 5th, for a big pre-show meeting. (Don't worry, we'll get you out in plenty of time for the Super Bowl!) We'll need to check out the junctions and other modules, and do lots of staff arranging, getting crews together to do track, electrical, *Aristos*, *DCC*, skirts, stanchions. Believe me, we need all hands for this one!

We're going to have to be extra-organized to make the setup run smooth and get trains running in time. Please remember to try to wait to socialize with the other **NTRAKers** until after we get trains going. Later on, we can kick back and tell lies until late at night, and then head to **Anita's** on Sunday morning for chow!

See you at the *Back Shop!*

WGH Rooms



There is a block of rooms available at the *Holiday Inn Select* across the parking lot from the Expo at a \$79 room rate. Just mention the code **NVNTRAK** for the rate (and then tell us the room number, so we can have "THE PARTY" there!)



Images from <http://www.wghshow.com/>

Annual Meeting

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sign up for upcoming layouts.

Steve Jackson provided the Treasurer's report. The club is in excellent financial condition. We ended the year with 96 members and already have 64 members signed up so far this year. The Company Store generated significant income, split evenly between the club and **NTRAK National**. We received \$631.00 from the live auction and \$191.00 for the club during the silent auction. **John Drye**, as the *2004 Capitol Limited Chairman*, turned over a Certificate of Deposit for seed money for the next convention. The remaining funds in the convention account will be transferred to the club account shortly. Steve mentioned that income from dues essentially pays for the running of the club (**Call Board**, postage, insurance, **NTRAK** subscriptions, etc.).

Old Business – Cotton Bowen mentioned that the module racks for the new trailer is working very well. The second set of racks is being produced and will be done soon. **John Drye** showed off the *NVNTRAK Author Car* that is to be presented to all 2005 **Call Board** Authors. Once decals arrive, the cars will be finished and delivered. **Dave Freshwater** mentioned that the club performed 56 **OLI** events using 11 presenters, 1 associate presenter totaling 427.5 hours to 54,000 attendees. He also stated that if you hand out **OLI** materials at a show, you need to be trained at least to the Associate level. The goal is to get many more club members certified during this coming year. **John Cook** will have forms available for those interested at the meeting.

New Business – Noll Horan has been the club's coordinator for *Virginia's Adopt a Highway Program* for the last five years. He is relinquishing his responsibility and someone from the club needs to step up and form the semi-annual posse to pick up trash on *Ravenworth Road* between *Braddock* and *Little River Turnpike*. Noll will turnover the orange vests and other equipment to the new coordinator. Brian made a presentation to *Granddad's Hobby Shop* of two **NVNTRAK** shirts for **Doc Thatcher**. Granddad's does a lot of nice things for the club. Noll accepted the shirts for Doc. Brian walked everyone through the club apparel that is for sale to include hats, shirts and jackets. The club website is being updated. **Matthew Prentice** asked for articles and photos to enhance the appearance and content. He will be working to enhance the functionality of the site as well over this coming year. A big thanks to Matt Guey-Lee for all his work on the site over the past two years. **Chester Freedenthal** said that he was approached about the live steam train that runs in *Burke Lake Park*. Apparently, a person is needed to operate this train. Chester will get more details and bring them to the Board for discussion. John Steitz discussed the new *PowerPole* and larger buss wire *Recommended Practices* that **NTRAK** has adopted. The standard remains *Cinch Jones*, however, the club and members who chose to use *PowerPoles* will have to have adaptor cables so that layout connections can be made between the two types of connectors.

Member Forum – No items discussed

Elections – Marc Sisk and Matt Guey-Lee are stepping down this year from the Board. Brian Brendel and John Steitz are running for reelection. Three additional candidates were nominated before the meeting for four total open slots. They were **Jim Anderson, Dave Freshwater** and **Jeff Peck**. There were no nominations from the floor. The results were tabulated by a committee of former club presidents and, in another close vote (46 ballots counted); the four members elected to the *Board of Directors for 2006* were **Brian Brendel, John Steitz, Jim Anderson** and **Dave Freshwater**.

The new Board adjourned for a short session to select board positions. **Brian Brendel** remains the *President*, **Steve Jackson** remains the *Treasurer*, **Jim Anderson** is the new *Secretary* and **John Steitz** remains the *Superintendent*. **Ann Prentice, Nick Sklias** and **Dave Freshwater** are *Directors at Large*.

Brian thanked all the members and especially the board for an outstanding job and promised "Black Hats" to those departing board members.

The Annual Meeting was adjourned at 5:25pm.

NVNTRAK BOD Meeting

January 24, 2006

By Jim Anderson

The **BOD** meeting was convened at 8:20pm at the Prentice home. All board members were present except Steve Jackson, who was ill. **Brian Brendel** led off with a nice letter from **Gene Aldridge** commenting on the contribution of train material to the club last Fall. Brian had thanked him and **Bill Baldwin** at the Annual Meeting for their donations. Gene sent along a \$20 check for Internet sales of his trains made by **Bill Rutherford** on his behalf. The **BOD** wanted a way to honor his support and continue Gene's role as a long time supporter. A "Holmes Run" **T-TRAK** module was suggested and **Nick Sklias** agreed to build one as he had several under construction for Bill Baldwin. **John Steitz** noted that the club had received an honorarium from the *Great Train Expo* at **York**, which is typical of many show sponsors to thank the club's participation.

The discussion shifted to the *World's Greatest Hobby (WGH)* show February 11-12 to be run from 10-4 pm Saturday and Sunday. **WGH** is the **BIG layout for 2006** and will be 150 modules, (Twice **Landmark 2005** and one third **Chantilly 2004**.) The major constraint is the need to set up early on Saturday morning from 6 to 10 am. This challenges our out-of-town clubs. But Brian and John had discussed this with **BANTRAK** and **RANTRAK** and they can accommodate that schedule. See John Steitz's article for details on preparations. The **February 5th Back Shop** on the Franconia Fire House will be a critical preparation step to be ready. The **BOD** recognized the need for club ambassadors in each loop, with a job list for club members similar to **Chantilly 2004**. Please come to the **Back Shop prepared to take on your**

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NVNTRAK BOD Meeting—Jan. 24, 2006

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WGH role. (Again, we are the host in **WGH** for several out of town **NTRAK** groups). One of the critical questions is **DCC** power and John Steitz will do a final power check and coding on Friday evening before the **WGH**. Brian Brendel and **John Drye** will host home tours of their layouts. Questions were raised as to the driving directions leading to these tours. Brian will query JD. Additionally, clinics were discussed and the **BOD** noted a possible **POFF** scenic clinic but did not commit to clinics pending identification of the clinician and layout space for a clinic. **OLI** will be set up in the space and **Dave Freshwater** agreed to contact presenters to establish **OLI** coverage. Finally, a dinner on Saturday evening and breakfast on Sunday at a local restaurant are likely.

The **Back Shop** will also check out the older club corners. Based on the **York Show**, Brian noted the need for care on connector track insertion as there were several “speed bumps” at York. The connector sets in our boxes have two or three different track types. This leads to rises and falls, *aka* “speed bumps,” in the transition which also damages the module tracks over time (yours and the Club’s). The **BOD** agreed to buy new **Atlas** flex and cut and code to marked lengths for consistency. Further, members are reminded to take care in the insertion as the Club corners get extra wear and tear with use at every show. The Club modules will be checked and any other repairs made to be ready for **WGH**. A check of brochures and other material is needed for the show.

Ann Prentice was authorized to get water and the interlocking rubber floor squares to ease member wear and tear in the loops on the concrete floor at the big shows. We will try these out at **WGH**. Over the next few months, the **BOD** will also replace extension cords, rope, add steps and other items for safety and efficiency in our shows.

Brian and **Jake Brendel** are building a prototype “door yard” with a rail yard on a standard door (7’) and connecting “Tee” set up door (6’) with tracks for use with the typical club layout to ease train set-up and offer a yard display when members’ yards are not available. Another area being explored is the **BANTRAK** quick swap *Aristo* to **DCC** setup in the Jan-Feb 2006 **NTRAK** Newsletter. This would allow the rapid transition between the two power modes at shows when members want to set a track up in **DCC**.

As one of the early supporters for new standard for Anderson power pole connectors, the Club is setting up a process to transition to Power Poles (PP) now \$9 a **POFF** set (about half the cost of Cinch Jones (CJ)). The **BOD** discussed several options and approved a Club funded mass swap-out of Club and members’ modules. It will be free to members during the swap out period. Those wishing to remaining in Cinch Jones would get removed CJ to PP connector sets. The PP offers better line loss and less resistance to corrosion in our trailer environment. Details are being worked and the swap out should occur before the Philadelphia show this summer.

Given our Convention experience, ‘96 to ‘04, the club is often asked to participate in other conventions. Brian has a

sub-committee of **John Drye**, **Dave Freshwater** and **Brian Brendel** to offer advice on the request and **NVNTRAK** roles. The immediate need is **KSONS** request for Louisville 2008 and the committee inputs are needed for the June **BOD** meeting.

John Steitz covered the upcoming schedule of events for the club, which is busy for the next seven weekends. The **BOD** agreed to opt out of *Fairfax Station* on Easter Sunday. **Ann Prentice** asked about the **BOD**’s role in *Fairfax Station* board, especially since **Mark Sisk** was leaving. Brian noted we are a *Fairfax Station* board member and asked that she be the point of contact and nominal board member for *FS*. He asked that others share in the actual board meeting attendance as Mark had attended in the part. John noted that Philadelphia would be the other big Show this summer. Finally, the **BOD** recognized the need to schedule and support the highway maintenance in Annandale as **Noll Horan** discussed at the Annual Meeting.

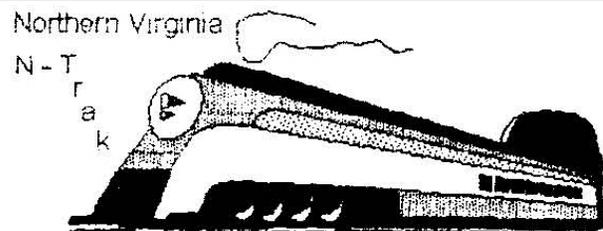
Call Board articles need to be to Dave by January 26th, if you want them in the February **Call Board**. The **BOD** meeting adjourned at 10:50PM.

Really the last new member of 2005

By Steve Jackson

Last month, I reported that **NVNTRAK** ended the year strong with 96 members. It turns out that **John Painter**’s paperwork was lost; this means that John, as well as his sons **Ben** and **Nathan** and wife **Nancy**, were the final members, making the total 96. John and his family are brand new to N-scale. John had a train as a child, but only recently got back into it with his sons when they purchased an estate layout in Fairfax. He has about 6 engines but doesn’t think that any of the engines that he has are any good. He has been upgrading the electrical connections on the layout and replacing some bad track. It sounds like John and his family are already getting neck deep in it!

Please make a point of introducing yourself to John and his family at one of the upcoming meets and be prepared to lend a helping hand as he learns more about N-scale trains and what a great club this is.



From the Crystal Anniversary Files

After the club was founded, it needed a logo. **Tom Reid**, the first Superintendent, created the logo above.

How many logos has the club had? Two. Tom’s logo was replaced by a club vote among three different designs at the December 1992 Holiday Party at **Monroe Stewart**’s home. The winning design was created by **Bernie Kempinski**. And we continue to use this logo to this day!

York Train Show

By Dale Rinker

The weekend of January 21-22, 2006, brought a small but dedicated group of **Northern Virginia NTRAKers** to the **York Expo Center** for the *Great Train Expo* (formerly *Greenberg Train Show*). **Edd Braithwood**, who now understands the idea that size does matter, was somehow able to pack not only his *M&K Junction* in his new van but 2 additional *POFFs*, for a total of 32 feet of modules. Not to mention utilizing a car top carrier to carry a change of clothes. He also willingly brought **NVX4** along with him on Friday so we could get as much ready Friday evening as possible. I brought my 2 *POFFs*, **Jim Nickle** brought 1 and **John Steitz** brought a personal *POFF*, plus a *POFF* and a set of bridge modules from **NVX3** in case we needed them. Upon arrival in York on Friday, Edd enlisted the assistance of **Daniel Adams**, whose father is one of the dealers and has been a frequent visitor at our set-ups in the past, who graciously provided an additional *POFF*. With the corner modules and *POFFs* from **NVX4**, we were able to set-up a 30 by 14 foot oval to delight the crowd of several thousand show visitors.

In addition to the above, **Jeff Peck**, his son **Christian**, our newly re-elected president **Brian Brendel** and his son **Jake**, as well as **Robert Parsells** who joined us on Saturday to assist with set-up and running trains during the first day of the show. Fortunately, yet unfortunately, there were only four of us on Sunday to run trains (that's the fortunate part) but only four of us to take down and pack up the layout for the trip back. I'm not sure what was harder, packing the trailer or packing Edd's van.

A special thanks goes to Edd for going above and beyond and John Steitz for all his help in making the show work as well as bringing **NVX4** back from York on Sunday night.

At the risk of editorializing, I was really disappointed that we had such little support and participation for this show. I was born in this part of the country and I know that Pennsylvania has a great deal of train history to offer. Pennsylvania has *Steamtown* in Scranton, the *PRR Museum* in Altoona, not to mention Strasburg and all it has to offer. All of these places are within an hour or so from York. For those of you who don't know, York is only about two hours from the DC area and probably less than an hour from **Klein's**.

I don't know when the club committed to this show, but it wasn't until Thursday morning that a decision was finally made to go through with our participation. Numerous e-mails were passed between John, I, and other club members and several phone calls between John, Edd, and I before we agreed that we had enough support to make the trip. I believe it's a good thing we did, because York is a great venue. It is a big hall, brightly lit, clean and easily accessible for loading and unloading. I know there are several members who have participated in this show in the past and probably would have participated again this year, because it is a great venue, had it not been for other commitments. But isn't that why we have nearly 100 members?

It amazes me that when the club has a picnic in the summer

we can get half the club to participate, there is standing room only at the Christmas party, and we can fill a fifty passenger bus for a free trip to the **Western Maryland Scenic**, but we can't get a half dozen members to travel less than two hours to run trains. Have we forgotten why this club was formed 15 years ago?

My only hope is that next year, more of our club members take the opportunity to participate in some of the out of town shows we do so we can share the message, talents and knowledge that our club members have to offer.

Module Construction Back Shop

By Cotton Bowen

On January 8th, eleven members of **NVNTRAK** met at *Chez Bowen* in Sterling for yet another bench work *Back Shop*. In no particular order, attendees were **John Steitz**, **John Painter**, **Howard Beall**, **George Hack**, **Matt Guey-Lee**, **James Altobello**, **Edd Braithwood**, **Bob Tucci**, **Don Schupp**, **Donald Mackintosh** and myself.

We started the day with a trip to the local **Home Depot** for materials, and then proceeded to the garage workshop at my house. Once there, we broke down into specialist teams and went to work. By the end of the day, we had four new "plain old four footers" (*POFFs*) started by Don Schupp, John Painter, George Hack and Donald Mackintosh. Additionally, we had three corners in the works; both Bob Tucci (2) and I started corners.

The efforts for that day however, were not limited to just normal bench work. John Steitz and James Altobello started **T-Trak** bench work, including a John Steitz special - a transition unit that will do duty in more than just **T-Trak**. John's creative spirit never ceases to amaze me. Maybe next time he will create a **NTRAK**, **oNeTRAK**, **T-Trak** combination unit that will also whistle "I've working on the railroad". **NTRAK's** flexibility never ceases to amaze me.

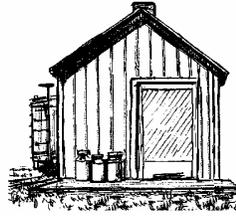
In any case, we had another successful **NVNTRAK** day of construction. I am really looking forward to seeing the newest generation of *POFFs* and corner units come to completion and go on display. Congratulations to all who participated. This workshop is the kind of effort that keeps the club growing and keeps it fun. As a closing note, I am often available on off weekends for those who missed the back shop and would like to get started before the next club-sponsored *Back Shop*. Just call and ask for Cotton.



The Hostler's Shack

By Matt Schaefer

Celebrating 10 years—
First column under this name appeared in January 1996



WORLD'S GREATEST HOBBY - I

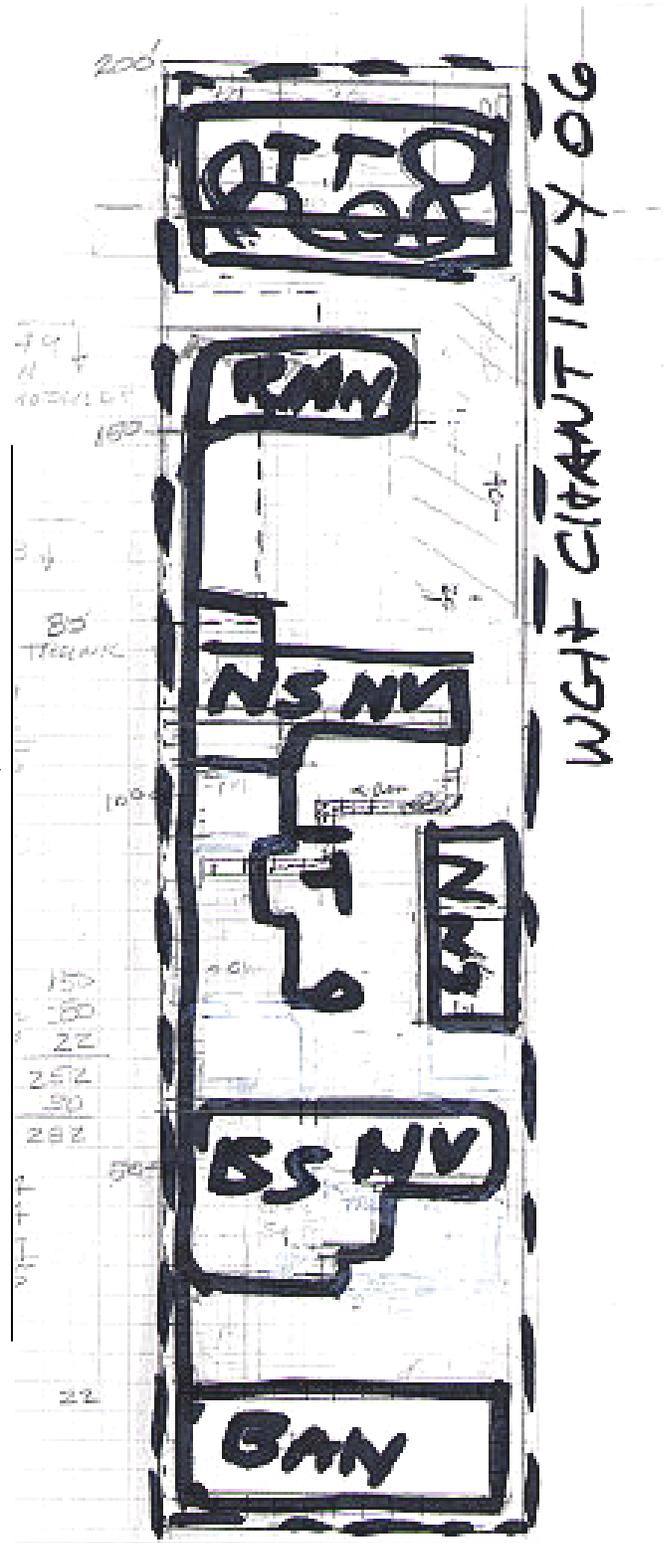
thought I would use this article to let everyone know who is bringing what to the layouts, Feb. 11 - 12. Below is a list and you can let me know of any corrections needed. **Nn3** and **T-TRAK** have space for their private railroads. **BANTRAK** and **RANTRAK** are bringing complete **NTRAK** loops. **Lynchburg** is bringing a **NTRAK** section of 8 modules, all with the *Green line - Mountain Division*. The **NVNTRAK Tarheal** members include **John Wallis**, who is hauling up a **POFF** and **Gil Brauch** is dragging in 8' of the **DD & DM RR**. The Carolina modules will be included in the two **NVNTRAK** loops.

OTHER NVNTRAK MODULES - In the **NTRAK** layout, we have about 120 times 4' of modules plus **oNeTRAK** modules and we still can make room for a few more modules. The **oNeTRAK** Division is not finalized and may contain some flea bitten modules brought in by **Brian Brendel**, **John Drye** and **Dave Davies**. Other modules signed in addition to our trailer modules include: **Jim Altobello** 3' *Junk Yd. Corner & City "E1" POFF*; **Jim Anderson** 8' *Doswell & Central VA*; **Howard Beall** outside corner, inside corner & *POFF* all w/mountain; **Cotton Bowen** 3 *POFFs*; **Brian Brendel**, *Glade*; **Edd Braithwood**. 22' *M&K Junction*; **John Cook** 8' of *Possum Point/Quantico Creek*; **Dave Davies** 16' of *Brunswick & 321*; **Paul Diley** 12' *Kilgore Yard*; **Dale Rinker** 8'; **Chauncey Durden** 3rd *Hand Luke*; **Chester Freedenthal** *POFF* & 3' corner ; **Dave Greenacre** 8' *Table Rock*; **Richard Hykes** 4' *Red Rock*; **Steve Jackson** *Rat Hole Junction*; **Mike Landgrover** 8' *M&O*; **Jim Nickle** 4' *Monument Mountain*; **Jeff Peck** 7' *Coal River*; **Janice and Phil Poole** 8' *Down by Union Station*; **Matthew & Ann Prentice** big *Triggs Yard* & maybe a lift out; **Matt Schaefer** *Looney & Monroe Bottom & Cat Creek* optional; **John Steitz** *Portage & Cassandra*; **Nick Sklias** *Nicksville*, **Doug Stuard** 8' *Colfax*; **J.B. Weillepp** 4' *Springfield*, **Leonard White** *Allentown & Scrap Wood*.

HELPER SERVICE - There will be some mighty fine modules to run your trains through. About 17 miles of modules and many you will run through twice; they are so nice. We will need eyes out ready to answer questions and help whatever the need. One module we need is a return loop to match the *Scrap Wood Loop* for the *Mountain Division*. Controls and operations are being coordinated by our Superintendent, **John Steitz**. We have 4 great layouts open Saturday evening. This is going to be a first class show and weekend. Tell all your friends. Plan to be there and enjoy every minute of it!

WGH Layout Sketch

No report on how many pizza boxes have been sacrificed to get to this stage



JANUARY PHOTO ALBUM

Module Building Back Shop



York



Annual Meeting



Annual Meeting Photos Counter-clockwise

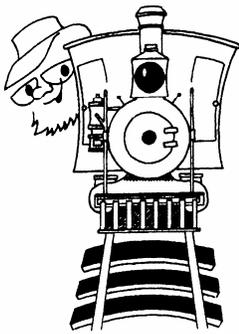
Signing up for events; T-TRAK continues to expand; a hotly contested silent auction—resolved with a sealed bid; Brian has to stop auctioning to bid himself; another item gets sold.



Photo Credits

Jim Altobello—Back Shop and T-TRAK at AM; Dale Rinker—York; Leslie Brady—Page 9; Matt Schaefer—WGH Layout Plan; Dave Davies—Annual Meeting Photos less T-TRAK; Mailing Wrapper

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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, **Matthew Prentice** <webmaster@nvntrak.org>.

NVNTRAK also has a Yahoo Group. This list is maintained by **Dave Davies**. 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.

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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 March 2006 issue MUST be received by February 23, 2006.**

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February 2006

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