

THE CALL BOARD



A 100% **NTRAK** CLUB

Celebrating Our 16th Year!

October 2007

Volume XVI

Number 10

National Burn Camp 2007 Jeff Peck

Sunday, September 27th brought beautiful weather to our area and the opportunity for **NVNTRAK** to participate in IAFF Burn Camp 2007. This event, sponsored by the *International Association of Firefighters*, brings about 50 kids who have suffered burn injuries to the *Nation's Capitol* where they are paired with a mentor and get to participate in activities such as sightseeing and have the chance to forget about their injuries and bond with their fellow campers. An endeavor such as this isn't easily handled by one organization so for our area, the IAFF Locals of Arlington County, the City of Alexandria, and Fairfax County all pitch in to help. The kick-off event took place as a cook-out at Arlington County Fire Station #5, who graciously provided us with a large carpeted room to set up in.



The **NVNTRAK** crew consisted of **J. B. Weilepp, Mike Landgrover, Leonard White, Mat and Ema Chibbaro, Paul O, Rod Bohlmann**, my son **Christian**, and **John Steitz** provided a little late-inning relief. The layout consisted of *M & O Junction, M & O Jct. Rd. Curve, Springfield, Alantown, Bikini Bottom* and a few "trailer dwellers" to fill in the gaps. Instead of the Aristo's, we decided to go with CTC (Centralized Throttle Control) in the form of the '92 Lindsey; which worked fine once we went back into the dark recesses of our minds and remembered how to hook

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Along the Orange and Alexandria Brian Brendel, President

Change your clock, change your battery...change your module!?

Well, it's getting to be that time again, where we'll have less daylight, and potentially more time for train-ing.

When fall actually "falls", as it has according to the calendar (but not according to the near- 90-degree temps we had this first week!), we supposedly will be making more time for hobbies overall, but particularly for our favorite hobby. Next month is Model Railroading Month, but October always seems to me to be very railroading-friendly as well, what with the Timonium show, BCC and the Fire Prevention Day layout (note the "change your battery" theme...for your smoke detectors!) and the other stuff that we do that keeps us pretty busy this month.

Hopefully we'll all be able to pull out that project that we've had on hold due to beach vacations, football and band practices, back-to-school nights and the like. I recently took my vacation in North Carolina, and as usual, took a ton of train stuff to do, but only really got to fix up a few freight cars and complete just one kit, a Walther's bridge for the soon-to-be-revamped Shenandoah Junction module, which I suspect will also be getting a new name at some point. After all, the module isn't anything like the real Shenandoah Junction (just look at Dave Davies' pictures online to confirm *that*.) It is also no longer the actual "junction" it once was, when it was the entrance to the very first yard the club had, an inside-the-

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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

BOLDED dates indicate a set-up

Saturday, October 6, 2007, 1000-1500 Hrs. BCC Rescue Squad Open House, Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD. Coordinator: John Steitz (703) 371-5171, steitzj@georgetown.edu Trailer: NVX3 [J. Steitz, hauling] Set-up: 0800-1000 Hrs. Clamp-down: 0900 Hrs. Small layout.

Sunday, October 7, 2007, 1300-1700 Hrs.: October Back Shop. Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310; (703) 971-5858. Contact: John Steitz (703) 371-5171, steitzj@georgetown.edu Trailer: N/A Projects: 1) Module Scenery 2) Certification of modules for Fall Shows 3) Continuation of power-pole conversions on modules 4) T-TRAK set-up

Saturday/Sunday, October 13-14, 2007: Great Scale Model Train Show, Cow Palace, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Timonium, MD. T-TRAK layout only. Set-up: Saturday, 0800-0900 Hrs. Tear-down: Sunday, 1600 Hrs. Show Hours: Saturday 0900-1600 Hrs., Sunday 1000 - 1600 Hrs. Coordinator: Steve Jackson (703) 362-3568, nvntrak_stevej@verizon.net. No trailer. T-TRAK modules only.

Saturday, October 13, 2007, 1000-1700 Hrs. Fire Prevention Day, Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310; (703) 971-5858. Coordinator: t.b.d., Trailer: Coordinator's discretion. Small NTRAK layout.

Tuesday, October 16, 2007, 2000-2200 Hrs. NVNTRAK Board of Directors Meeting, Prentice Home, 7314 Briarcliff Drive, Springfield, VA 22153 Non-module event.

Sunday, October 21, 2007, 1300 1600 Hrs.: Museum Layout, Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, P.O. Box 7, 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 .

Saturday, October 27, 2007: Ravensworth Road Trash Pick Up 0900-1130 hours. Meet at Smith and Clarkson's Deli in the Ravensworth Shopping Center (corner of Port Royal and Braddock Roads in Springfield, VA) at 0900 hours. Coordinator: J.B. Weilepp (571-643-8923). Bring work gloves.

Sunday, November 4, 2007, 0900 - 1600 Hrs.: Gaithersburg Model Train Show, Montgomery County Fairgrounds (Old Auditorium), Gaithersburg, MD. Coordinator: t.b.d.

Trailer: NVX3 Set-up: Saturday, 11/10/07, 1800-2000 Hrs., Sunday, 0700-0900 Hrs.; Clamp-down: Sunday, 0800 Hrs. 30' x 14' max. NTRAK layout in a revitalized train show (adjunct to railroadania show in next building).

Sunday, November 4, 2007, 1300-1700 Hrs.: November Back Shop. Fairfax (Franconia) Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria VA 22310; (703) 971-5858. Contact: John Steitz (703) 371-5171, steitzj@georgetown.edu Trailer: N/A Projects: 1) Scenery clinic (subject t.b.d.) 2) Certification of modules for Nov./Dec. Jan. Shows 3) Continuation of power-pole conversions on modules Last chance to certify a module before February!

Saturday/Sunday, November 10-11, 2007: Rockville Lion's Club Train Show, Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive, Rockville, MD, (240) 314-5019 Coordinator: t.b.d. Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer Hauler still needed] Set-up: Sat. 0700-1000 Hrs. Clamp-down: Sat. 0900 Hrs. Show Hours: Sat. 1000-1700 Hrs., Sun. 1000-1600 Hrs. Unload and park in rear lot, or in overflow parking on grass. Layout type: Medium Oval. Anniversary of NVNTRAK's first public layout.

Saturday, November 10, 2007, 1000-1600 Hrs.: Damascus Railroad Day, Damascus Community Library, 9701 Main Street, Damascus, MD 20872, (301) 253-5100 Coordinator: Dave Freshwater (301) 717-6501 Trailer: NVX3 Set-up: 0800-1000 Hrs. Clamp-down: 0900 Hrs. Layout Type: Small oval, OLI. After Tear-down, haul trailer to Gaithersburg for Sunday show.

Sunday, November 18, 2007, 1300 1600 Hrs.: Museum Layout, Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, P.O. Box 7, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 (703) 425 - 9225 Coordinator: John Steitz (703) 371-5171, steitzj@georgetown.edu. Trailer: NVX4 [J. Steitz, hauling] 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.

Tuesday, November 20, 2007, 2000-2200 Hrs. NVNTRAK Board of Directors Meeting, Prentice Home, 7314 Briarcliff Drive, Springfield, VA 22153 Non-module event.

Saturday - Sunday, Dec. 1-2, 2007: Holiday Train Layout, [TENTATIVE] IKEA College Park, 10100 Baltimore Ave., College Park, MD 20740 (301)-345-6552 Coordinator: **Paul Diley** (301) 317-1068 Trailer: NVX4 [Trailer Hauler still needed.] Set-up: Friday (12/2): 2100 -2300 Hrs.; Saturday: 0700-0900 Hrs. Clamp-down: Saturday, 0800 Hrs. Show Hours: Sat. 0900-2100 Hrs., Sun. 1000-2000 Hrs. Layout Type: 30' X 10' oval. This show is the functional equivalent of a mall show. Please come out to help run trains all day and

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View from Zoo Tower

John Steitz, Superintendent

The month of October starts with a small NTRAK layout at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad on Saturday, October 6. That one-day show is timed to coincide with Taste of Bethesda, and I hope most of the Maryland Corps of the club can help us out. As of this writing, there is still plenty of room in the layout for additional modules.

The following day, Sunday, October 7, we have our October Back Shop, one of our last two Back Shops in 2007. If you built a frame at Cotton's a week earlier, bring it out and put some roadbed or track on it here. It's also a good opportunity for new modules to be certified as show-ready – a pre-requisite to participation in NVNTRAK public layouts. And if your module is anywhere between bare frame and show ready, bring it out and do some work on it. At the very least, the act of packing it up and placing it in your MTV ("Module Transport Vehicle") will give you practice in that very necessary skill – moving a module to a public show without damaging it, and then setting it up easily and quickly.

The weekend of Oct. 13-14 features a large T-TRAK layout at the Great Scale Model Train Show at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium. Steve Jackson is coordinating this layout, so if you can bring your T-TRAK module when you come up to shop, please let him know.

Saturday of that same weekend (Oct. 13), we have an NTRAK layout at Fairfax County Fire Station #5 on Beulah Street (the same venue for our Back Shops) for Fire Prevention Day. We do this layout every year to thank the Fire Company for letting us use their hall for those Back Shops, and for letting us park our trailers on their back lot. Our layout helps the station attract kids and families, which then can hear the complete message about fire prevention and safety.

And then on October 21, we have our third-Sunday-of-the-month NTRAK layout at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, where we also run the caboose layout

Please look at the Rail Events Timetable, and if you see a show in October or November where you can coordinate, or haul the trailer, please let me know. Thank you!

Now that the cooler weather is upon us, it's time to think about building modules. If you are new to the club, it is recommended that you build an NTRAK module within your first year of membership. Despite our many and varied types of modules (including 1T, Nn3, T-TRAK), NTRAK modules see service in the vast majority of our layouts, and member-owned modules are a necessity in all but the smallest NTRAK layouts. If you don't already own an NTRAK module, please build or acquire one before Spring, so you can truly help us in our mission to educate the public

about railroad history, safety around railroads, and our "world's greatest hobby" – model railroading.

And if you need any help in building that module, please ask one of us. One of the best aspects of NVNTRA, is the ability to learn from, be inspired by, and receive assistance from, many others in the club. We all built our first module at some point, and virtually all of us are willing to lend a hand.

I look forward to what you come up with! Until next time, Semper Gumby!

(Continued from page 2) **Rail Events Time Table** evening.

Sunday, Dec. 16, 2007, 1330-1830 Hrs.: NVNTRAK Holiday Party Details to follow. *Non-module event.* Club members and their immediate families are invited

Tuesday, December 18, 2007, 2000-2200 Hrs.
NVNTRAK Board of Directors Meeting, Prentice Home, 7314 Briarcliff Drive, Springfield, VA 22153 Non-module event. Show [Caboose layout only] Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, P.O. Box 7, Fairfax, VA.

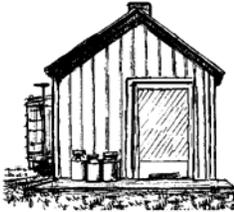
Saturday, October 27, 2007: Ravensworth Road Trash Pick Up
0900-1130 hours. J.B. Weilepp (571-643-8923). Bring work gloves.

(Continued from page 9) *BoD Minutes*

They do not yet have the car and the BOD noted we might (?) consider the construction but were not committing to material etc and this appeared to be preliminary query. **Matt Prentice** said the web site had also had a query for the Lorton Art Center in the former Lorton prison facility in that the Lorton & Occoquan RR was a spur off the RF&P to bring material to the prison site and might be an interesting historical design. **Fresh** commented that **John Cooke** had scrambled and given seven OLI presentations to the cub scouts and families at **Fairfax Station** last Sunday. These OLI educational efforts and the Fairfax Station are a principle part of the club's 501c (3) efforts to educate the public and support historical understanding of the role of trains.

BOD agreed to meet on Tuesday October 16 at the **Prentice** home, 8pm, motion to adjourn was passed at 9:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted, **Jim Anderson**
NVNTRAK Secretary



The Hostler's Shack

Matt Schaefer

RR HAZARDS - I was going to expound on curves but I feel compelled to warn everyone about RR hazards that you may NOT have been warned about. There were two (2) incidents reported all on Sept. 24. One was near Martin Blvd., North of Baltimore where a 45 year old gentleman was visiting his friend that was camping out near the RR. The conductor said the man was sitting in a lawn chair on the tracks and they were not able to stop the train in time. Why do the police call this death an accident? Maybe he was not informed that you don't sit in your lawn chair on the tracks as it can really do a number on you and bang up your chair too!

ANOTHER "ACCIDENT" - In the dark the same day in Portsmouth, VA the engineer saw a man reclining along the tracks with one arm over the rail. They locked the brakes but were NOT able to stop in time. The man was hauled to the hospital with his arm in an ice chest in hopes the arm could be put back on. Were there signs not to recline on the RR tracks? No you have to use your brain a little.

BRIDGE HAZARDS – And don't expect the warnings to protect you either. For instance in August I noted a barricade or red ribbon draped over a hole in a bridge cat walk (see picture). It was useless at night as well in the daytime. If you didn't fall all the way to the rocks below you could die stuck in the hole and never see a train! This track is not in use by trains but the locals use it for trips hunting and fishing and then folks like me just happened to be walking by. Somebody knew about the hole and put the red ribbon up.



This is a nice time to get outside and see some real trains so don't trespass on RR property and remember to not sit your lawn chair on the tracks either.



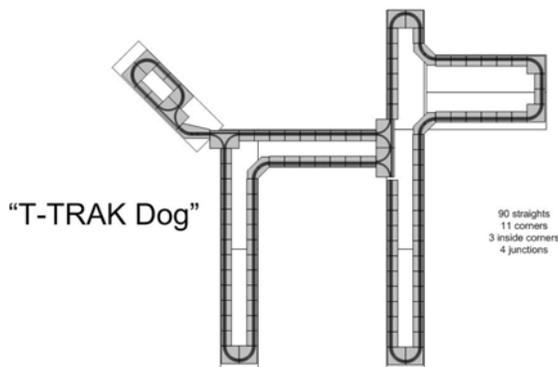
View from the Loo: T-TRAK Update

Steven Jackson

In case you have not heard, the **NVNTRAK T-TRAK Division** will be setting up at the **Great Scale Model Train Show** in Timonium, Maryland during the weekend of 13-14 October. As a follow-up to last year's very successful "T-TRAK Man", we will be continuing the theme and presenting "T-TRAK Dog" to the world. As you can see from the attached proposed layout diagram, this must be some sort of Labrador. I have received recommendations that I should try to modify the layout to make it look like either a pug or perhaps a dachshund. If we get an imbalance on the legs, then we might even end up with the unfortunate hyena. If you want to try to figure out what breed the T-TRAK Division sets up, please visit the GSMTS. Make sure you bring your checkbook because there are always lots of great items that you just can't live without! If you want to bring a module to the layout, you still have a chance to get one checked out at the October 7th backshop where we will have a T-TRAK test layout. Hope to see you soon!

Great Scale Model Train Show

Timonium, MD
October 13-14, 2007



The **NVNTRAK T-TRAK Division** has a mailing list. If you want to send a message to all of the **T-TRAKers**, you can send it to trak@nvntrak.org. If you are club member, but not on this list and would like to be, send a note to me or the list and we will get you on. Finally, if you are interested in seeing **T-TRAK**, come out to any even-month backshop (and the occasional odd-month backshop), or watch the schedule for one of the **T-TRAK** shows. If you want to set up at one of the shows, then come out to a backshop to get your module checked out and then come to a setup. The more the merrier!



(Continued from page 1) Orange and Alexandria layout stub staging yard, the entrance to which was a fly-over for the red and yellow lines over the blue line. Besides, we need a road on the old thing, so we can help take care of "the addiction", so it's time for a change. (See last month's "Mini-metals" column, where I stated the need for a Betty Ford-like clinic for those addicted to 1:160 vehicles like Jake and me...)

About Shenandoah, it has had a pretty checkered past. Leonard White always reminds me of how, when I first built the frame back in 1992, I used to carry the whole 12 feet in my Mitsubishi Tredia, all folded together and held in place by the lost-pin hinges that still function as the connectors between pieces. Such a piece of club history *must* be preserved! Some will recall when it disappeared into my home layout for over 7 years when I lived in Manassas, and then when I moved, it once again became mobile, being used in Manassas Railfests, MER layouts, and even starring in a Toys for Tots commercial (Channel 9, two years ago, the thing all covered in #*\$!% fake snow, which I *still* am finding pieces of everywhere!) It didn't shrink from "Movies under Monsoon" last year, either.

Well, perhaps someone will find some inspiration from all this talk, and maybe revamp one of their modules too. Makes our layouts more interesting, keeps you on your modeling "toes", and recycles, too!

Red, Yellow and Mostly Blue Cub Scouts

Jim Anderson

They came in droves, cub scouts on their "Cub Scout Express". They came with cub masters in uniform, parents and their brothers and sisters. The scouts were in their traditional blue with various yellow and red bandannas and badges. It was a mini-locust cloud descending at 1:30 on **Fairfax Station** on a very nice Sunday afternoon with great outdoors weather. We were ready. Fortunately, **Matt** and **Ann Prentice** had picked up the fact that Fairfax Station would host several groups of scouts. **Ann** is our representative on the Fairfax Station Board.

Matthew's email on Friday night to the BOD said "This weekend Fairfax Station will probably be crawling with Cub Scouts. This month's theme is "Cub Scout Express" and the Fairfax Station mailbox has received numerous inquiries regarding activities for the scouts." This heads-up prompted a suggestion for an **NVNTRAK OLI** presentation and hopefully more docents especially in the caboose. The advance planning and contact with Joan Rodgers of Fairfax Station paid off. The call went out for extra help and club members responded.

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(Continued from page 5) *Cub Scouts*

Sunday morning saw **John Steitz** arrive at the station with NVX3 trailer. **Cotton Bowen** was unloading his three module central NY POFFs and the Wallace Drive-in movie theater corner (we got to watch John Wayne in action). **Phil** and **Janice Poole** brought their rebuilt (former Bill Baldwin) Ferris wheel POFF. **Rod Bohlmann** and **Jim Altobello** came to help set up and hauled equipment in from the trailer. **Jim** later took a number of pictures and **Rod** migrated to the caboose. The **Gaudette** family, **Kurt**, **Kim** and **Aaron** came to set-up, participate and let **Aaron** run trains. **Jim Anderson** ar-



rived with the pair of POFFs; Doswell Diamond and Central VA.

Nick Sklias hobbled in on one crutch and verbally supervised the setup and running. **Nick's** grandson, **Jeremiah** also ran trains. **Chauncey Durden** had his power station. **Jim Nickle** came and matched up his 1950s autumn scene with **Howard Beale's** corner and POFF. **Steve Graf** brought his new wind farm corner. **Edd Braithwood** came and looked over the power setup equipment. **Richard Hykes** had his desert tan church POFF tucked between **Jim's** green Central VA and the green tones on the "Service Corner" from the trailer.

We also had **John Steitz's** "Portage" and **Jake Brendel's** "Rocky Bridge" which was returning from Rowlesberg, WV show. We had a 4 by 2 POFF oval up and running before 1 pm. **John Cooke** arrived with **OLI** material.



Later in the afternoon **Phil La Perta** and **Paul O'Hegyi** came to see trains running. The ca-

boose was packed with busy, gotta see everything cubs and **Rod** and **Jim** were assisted by several members and the docents to keep control.

John Cooke set up the **OLI** story on the deck outside the door and had access to all who entered and many who departed. He gave a steady stream of presentations about **Operation Lifesaver** to cubs and parents, many of whom were most thankful to understand how to be safe near trains. Each member was busy running trains, or answering questions from station visitors, scouts, parents and leaders. The afternoon went by quickly. We packed up in 45 minutes as we had an experienced crew.

We did great, and so did Fairfax Station. Joan Rodgers sent us a nice thank you afterward. "Would you please pass the word to everyone that we had a great day on Sunday. Appreciate the NTRAKers stepping up and talking to all of the cub scouts that descended on us that afternoon! We had over 150 folks and took in --- (several hundred dollars at the door) --- and in the gift shop." We supported two of our principal charity organizations **OLI** and **Fairfax Station** and had a nice day running trains.

Northern Virginia NTRAK Board of Directors Meeting Aug 21, 2007

The **BOD** meeting was convened at 8:10 pm at the Prentice home. Six board members were present: **Brian Brendel**, **Ann Prentice**, **Jim Anderson**, **John Steitz**, **Phil Poole** and **Dave Freshwater**. **Nick Sklias** was absent.

Ann Prentice brought the meeting to order. Noting the club now had 89 members.

Phil Poole asked if we could get Fairfax Station for a weekend (Phil noted it was a **Jim Nickle** idea) and Ann said she would check as FFX Station doesn't rent out the facility for a fee to other groups and paying customers would have first choice.

Jim Anderson noted the Holiday Party can be held at their house again on Sunday, December 16th. He commented that a note from a realtor indicated the need to remove a train layout's bench work in Herndon to prepare the house for sale. They were prepared to donate it but needed it out quickly. **Cotton Bowen** viewed the setup and since it was HO, 40+ inches height and not transportable, the club was not interested. Further, it was a complex transport as it existed in the house, attached legs, etc. Jim said he and Marg spent a day dismantling same and moved it to their basement as the realtor wanted a quick removal. Additionally, the club has received an invite to Fredericksburg Show Nov 17-18. The BOD agreed to consider it but took no action.

Dave Freshwater discussed **OLI**. He is aware that other groups are nominating their presenters for Presidential Service Awards with thresholds of 100 hr, 250 hr and 4000 hr lifetime awards. Virginia **OLI** needs to certify. BOD asked him to pursue these awards as another way to recognize our members who give their time to **OLI**. **Fresh** said he plans to do landscap-

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(Continued from page 1) *Burn Camp*

it up. It's much easier to keep control of the junior engineers if they stand in one place...

This doesn't follow our usual setup procedure where we run the trains so that new Athearn steamer with the sound system or that brass H-8 is best left at home. I like to bring out what I call the "beaters" - if they get launched off the end of the table in a slot train race, no big deal. We let the kids take the reins and let 'em rip if they so desire. Some like to run 'em, some like to watch 'em. Doing things like this helps them come out of their shell and be a kid again. In another deviation from our usual operation, we ask the kids a lot of questions. All come in quietly, some politely answer our questions and say nothing else while others like to ask lots of questions. We had a great interaction with the campers and this worthwhile event provides our organization with the chance to educate and give something back.



At around 7 pm, the campers climbed back aboard their bus to do a little nighttime sightseeing around the *National Mall* and our little group, a bit tired, bellies full, packed up and headed off into the moonlight.



THE GHOST TRAIN

By Cotton Bowen

The year after the strange occurrence with the Lantern (see October 2006 Call Board), Judi and I again paid our annual visit to Wallace. Due to NVNTRAK activities and other commitments, we were a little late in our visit and arrived just on the eve of Halloween. It was a bit cooler than down in Virginia, but the folks up in the "Southern Tier" do really go all out to celebrate Halloween. The decorations on the houses and stores on Rt. 415 were really neat; it seemed that every house had several jack-o-lanterns and other seasonal decorations. I guess in the



smaller towns any excuse to celebrate something will do.

Wallace had another side-walk sale; and Cohocton, the neighboring town just a few miles north of Wallace, had a

late celebration of the annual Leaf Festival. The regularly scheduled festival had been rained out two weeks prior; the town fathers still felt it was the right thing to do, even if it was late and the leaves had already reached their peak and were coming down in droves. At least this time we could better see the tree sitters in their perches.

Part of the Cohocton, NY, Leaf Festival is a contest to see who can sit in a tree, with only a minimum amount of personal comfort items, for the duration of the festival. The one remaining at the end of contest gets a monetary prize. After a few hours of tree sitting, most contestants decide that they have better things to do than wonder when their bones are going to penetrate their epidermis from the inside out, and down they come. Only the heartiest survive three days and two nights sitting on a tree limb with only minimal potty breaks.

It was on Saturday night that we again found ourselves in the Caboose Motel. It was a bit brisk, but that didn't stop me from suggesting that we walk down to Wallace and watch the trick or treaters make their rounds. Judi was a bit tired and declined to do the walk, but Celeste, my black Labrador retriever was up for the walk and eager to go out. So, the two us wandered down the road and crossed over the old Lackawanna, now the Bath and Hammondsport Railroad tracks. Once in the town we stood at the old Erie

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(Continued from page 7) *Ghost Train*

Railroad station site and watched the kids run up and down the streets with their light sticks and pumpkin shaped candy containers. Then it was over, the streets were empty, there were no cars moving on the road, it was suddenly very quiet, only the leaves whirled in the breeze, and the town took on a ghostly appearance. Celeste looked up at me, and we just stood there watching the clouds scud past the moon.

Suddenly, there was a faint wail of a whistle far down the valley. I could have sworn it sounded like a train whistle, a steam whistle! The Bath and Hammondsport Railroad, "The Champaign Road", runs about one train a week and when they do, it is during the work week, not on a Saturday evening. I wondered, what is this? Last year this mysterious lantern appears at the front door of my motel room after I spent the day with a pair of folks that were supposed to have passed on. Now I hear steam locomotive whistles!

I decided that the sound I heard was just a distorted echo from the nearby Interstate. But then I looked down the old Erie right of way toward Avoca, which has not had tracks in years, and it seemed there was a light that was moving toward me. Again, I heard the faint but growing report of a steam whistle; this time Celeste looked too! We stood there, watching this eerie light moving toward us, and then I could see the faint shadow of smoke and steam rising from down the right of way. Before I knew it, the outline of a steam engine and freight cars seemed to materialize just down the block by Mr. Sick's old hardware store. Suddenly, the apparition was even with us and it seemed that the old Erie station and the long gone tracks just materialized around us as we stood there. Celeste looked at me like, "Daddy, if you say it's ok, I'll just sit here; but I am not sure about this!"

After a brief stop, the apparition moved on; but not before I saw what appeared to be a human form on the front of the locomotive and a spectral Engineer with glowing eyes peered down at me. Celeste growled. As quickly as it appeared, it disappeared heading towards Cohocton. The building seemed to just melt away, the tracks that supported the apparition disappeared into the ground mist that had started to rise, the caboose light of the train wobbled and just faded away. I stood there in disbelief. What did I just see? Was it a ghost train or did I have an hallucination? Do such things actually happen? But what about the human form on the front of the locomotive, what was that about?

I hurried back to the motel and related what I had seen to Judi. At first she thought I was joking, but then I reminded her of the apparition she saw at Spangler's Spring during one of our trips to Gettysburg, PA. A man, dressed in rather anachronistic clothes, had approached us while we were having refreshments at the base of Culp's Hill and asked Judi for directions, she checked the tourist map, and turned

to respond but he was gone, completely, in a matter of seconds. Since he was on foot, and no other cars were around, we never figured out how he just seemed to disappear.

After a sleepless night, I got out my copy of "Sweet Vale of Avoca", a local history of the area. In it, I found an account of a tragedy that took place in the valley in the late 19th century. It seemed that a young man traveled to one of the valley towns to visit a local family during the Christmas holidays. Upon arrival, he was met by his hosts, and while crossing the tracks and talking excitedly to his friends, he failed to notice and was hit by an on-coming freight train that had neglected to sound its whistle as it approached. The young man was not only hit and killed instantly in front of his horrified friends, but his body was stuck to the front of the locomotive for miles; and was only recovered when the train reached Painted Post/Corning, NY a good 20, or more miles down the line.

Was that what I saw? Was it a Flying Dutchman of trains? Or, was it a railroading version of "ghost riders in the sky", the 1950's rock and roll hit? Was a train condemned to run for eternity, with its tragic victim riding the cow catcher? I don't know, but I didn't stick around for another night in Wallace either.

(Continued from page 6) *BoD Minutes*

ing of the new corner recovered from the fire at **John Dry's** house. He and others will do a scenery demonstration at **Dulles Expo** and then we should consider a swap out of modules in the corner rack to get use of the new corners. That may lead to a rummage sale at the Annual meeting.

John Steitz reviewed the schedule. **Greenberg's** at **Dulles Expo** and the train show at **Bedford PA** on Aug 26-27. **Edd Braithwood** will take the trailer to **Rowlesburg WV** on Labor Day weekend. We will also support the **Fairfax Station** in the caboose that weekend. Sep 16 is normal **Fairfax Station** setup. **Burn Camp** is Sep 23. **Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue** is Sat, Oct 6 and is conducted in an open fire hall bay, we will have NTRAK and T-TRAK. Sunday Oct 7 is the **Backshop** with NTRAK and T-TRAK (comes on even numbered months). Oct 13-14 is **Great Train Show** in **Timonium** (T-TRAK only). Saturday, Oct 13 is an NTRAK layout at **Franconia Fire Station** for their open house. The following weekend is **Fairfax Station** Oct 21, and **Cotton Bowen's** off-site **Backshop** at his house for module construction is Sep 29. Nov and December were also discussed. Our Nov **Backshop** is on Nov 4. We have a possible triple header on Nov 10-11 weekend with **Gaithersburg**, the **Rockville Lions** show and **Damascus**. John said he needed to confirm these dates.

Brian Brendel led a discussion centered on recent board changes at NTRAK national. Their board has expanded

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to five members from three and they are reassuming the business management function. Thus, the role the NVNTRAK assumed in the 2000 on behalf of NTRAK and **John Cook** carried out for many years is shifting to a NTRAK board member, Dave Porter, in Colorado.

BOD agreed to meet on Tuesday September 18 at **Prentice's** home 8pm for the next meeting, motion to adjourn was passed at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted, **Jim Anderson**
NVNTRAK Secretary

Northern Virginia NTRAK
Board of Directors Meeting
Sep 18, 2007

The **BOD** meeting was convened at 8:05 pm at the Prentice home. Five board members were present: **Ann Prentice, Jim Anderson, John Steitz, Phil Poole** and **Dave Freshwater**. **Nick Sklias** and **Brian Brendel** was unable to attend. **Janice Poole** and **Matt Prentice** also attended portions of the meeting.

Ann Prentice brought the meeting to order. She noted she had paid the annual trailer property taxes. She had picked up several returned **Call Boards** at the club's post office box. These usually are re-mailed to members when we have a current address and she updates the mailing list for the next CB. The electronic version is also posted the Yahoo within a week or two but occasionally can get delayed due to other commitments. BOD briefly discussed the gallery of pictures which has not been kept up to date. **Dave Freshwater** noted the gallery is limited to files of roughly 150kb size while CB quality is often 750kb size.

John Steitz reviewed the fall schedule; **Burn Camp** will be Sunday afternoon, Sep 23 and **Mike Landgrover** is hauling the trailer to and from the firehouse in Pentagon City for a NTRAK layout and a chance to let the kids run trains. **Cotton Bowen's** off-site **Backshop** at his house for module construction is Sep 29. **Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue** is Sat, Oct 6 and is conducted in an open fire hall bay; we have NTRAK and T-TRAK. Sunday Oct 7 is the **Backshop** with NTRAK and T-TRAK (comes on even numbered months). Oct 13-14 is Great Train show in Timonium (T-TRAK only). Saturday, Oct 13 is an NTRAK layout at Franconia Fire Station for their open house. The following weekend is Fairfax Station Oct 21. Nov and December were also discussed. The apparent triple header on Nov 10-11 has reverted to a double header with **Gaithersburg** moving to Nov 4 with our Nov **Backshop** also on Nov 4. And the **Rockville Lions** show is Nov 10-11, while **Damascus** will be Nov 11. We have been invited to Fredericksburg on Nov 18 but that conflicts with **Fairfax Station** and the BOD agreed to decline. **Herndon Depot Museum** is Dec 8 and 9th. **Phil** and **Janice Poole** have been tracking the Herndon show. **Kena Temple** (T-TRAK) and **So Columbia Baptist** (T-TRAK) is also that

same day. The club's **Holiday Party** will be at **Andersons** on Dec 16 and Greenberg's next **Dulles Expo** on Dec 29-30th. **Annual Meeting** at Franconia Fire Station is Jan 20. John pointed out a new venue on Mar 8-9 when Greenberg adds a show in the Fredericksburg Convention Center off Route 3. The BOD affirmed our interest in Fredericksburg and asked John to submit an application. John asked the BOD for authority to build a corner rack for NVX1 for the extra corners and to assemble foot lockers for the material in NVX1 to minimize the chaos. BOD voted and approved the rack and footlocker acquisition. Excess power equipment, etc. will be offered at Annual meeting for those interested.

Jim Anderson brought up the discussion of power packs which occurred at Fairfax Station. **John** and BOD reviewed the power pack history, **Edd Braithwood** built eight but trailers now only have six working packs (3 + 3) plus an Aristo and a Lindsey. John said an inventory before the 2004 Convention only had seven packs. He will contact **Edd** and conduct a new inventory and recommend appropriate acquisitions.

Jim also asked where the local alternatives to "**Granddads**" are, now that they have moved to Martinsburg, WV and will only be a mail order source at least for now. **Phil Poole** offered **KMA Junction**, on Route 28 Nokesville Road on south side of Manassas. **Matt Prentice** also mentioned "**Trains Etc**" in Newington. "**Hobby Town USA**" a chain was also mentioned. **Jim** suggested they be contacted to assess their support for N scale material. **Phil** said he believed KMA was ready to support but wanted to interface with the President. **Jim** noted the latest NTRAK newsletter with NTRAK board changes and ordering site. Additionally, the club received a nice thank you letter from Montgomery Preservation for participation in **Silver Spring B&O** with T-TRAK modules. They forwarded copies of the "Silver Spring Voice" with a write-up and pictures. Their thank you especially noted that we had made the layout "kid-height". Tim Weaver the chairman of the Tourism Commission for the Town of **Rowlesburg, WV** thanked the club officers and members for bringing "your extraordinary N scale model layout to Rowlesburg. --- We are grateful that you choose Rowlesburg as one of your places to exhibit."

Dave Freshwater indicated the **Damascus** invite/application says space supports a 6 POFF layout and they have specified "no smoke" which is not a constraint to NVNTRAK, but will help the site environment compared to past years. **Fresh** has submitted the paperwork to begin to recognize **OLI** presenters as part of **President's Award** program. Those that complete the appropriate level of service will be submitted for recognition. The OLI presentation training will occur on Sat, Nov 17 in an all day session at the **Fairfax Station**; Dave has nine seats available for training. He gave an OLI presentation at Gaithersburg on Sep 16 and they raised the possibility of a permanent N scale layout in a Budd car they are trying to acquire. They are interested in having a layout built and it is only an inquiry at this stage.

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September Photo Album



Photos by Jim Altobello, Jeff Peck and Paul O'Hegy



FOR SALE OR WANTED

This will be a new column in the Callboard where members can offer items for sale or identify items they are looking for. If there is enough interest it will be here every month, otherwise I will include it when members submit items. Send your items to callboard@cox.net.

THIS SPACE AVAILABLE FOR ADVERTISING—ASK YOUR FA- VORITE HOBBY SHOP TO AD- VERTISE HERE.

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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—Chester Freedenthal

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:

Callboard@cox.net

All submissions must contain clear text identification of the author to be accepted for publication. **Articles and other submissions for the November 2007 issue MUST be received by October 22, 2007.**

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