

President - Mark Ferracane Vice Pres - Dennis Yip
Treasurer - Chuck Tremblay Editor - Roland Kelley

Editor - Northeast Ntrak, 41 Easy Street, Lowell, MA 01850-1731, or
e-mail: NortheastNtrak@msn.com Web Site - www.northeastntrak.org



President's Message

Well, Winterfest 2007 was great again. I want to thank all the clubs who participated in the convention. Also, thanks to Bob Pawlak, Dan Pawling, Jr., Ed Smith and Chuck Tremblay. They make Winterfest happen. They are unsung heroes, making everything work in the background. Thanks to "The N-Scale Collector" for jumping on board and helping out. And last but not least, our sponsors. The manufacturers who supply the door prizes, Thank You.

Attendance for the show was up this year 20,799 people for the two days. I have heard that next year they want to go to a forth building. WOW!! Mark



WINTERFEST 2007 SUPER-EST CONVENTION EVER!!

Story by D Pawling, Sr.

Because of train delays on Friday, January 26th, I arrived at the Better Living Center at 2 PM rather than Noon, as planned. But already, the Northeast NTrak (NE) layout had begun to take form -- a scattered lonesome few modules were in their places along the chalk marks on the floor. Mike Walker was showing helpers how to erect the NE yard. The pace picked up as more exhibitors arrived and set up their modules according to John Dunne's plan. By 5 PM the last 24 feet of modules were being put into place, the layout squared up, clamped together and electrical connections made. Good positive energy was felt at the layout and throughout the building in anticipation of opening the show to the public on Saturday. By 10 AM, Saturday, trains were running on all lines. Later, the Red Line was switched to DCC operations. Thanks to superior cooperation and collaboration by all hands during the two days of operation, the Winterfest layout performed well for the public, our sponsors and for ourselves. This spirit continued in the hotel and in the Sunday night knockdown, packing aboard cars, trucks and trailers. You'd think we had worked together before!! In fact, we have - several times, and many old hands were present. On this 13th year of Winterfest, eleven NTrak clubs participated (see side bar). About 100 persons were present at various times during the show and at the hotel. It is safe to say that we Ntraker's are worthy of the support received from the many manufacturers and other sponsors of our efforts. It seemed that many more of the over 20 thousand who attended this year's show stopped and studied the modules and activity than in previous years.

So, Northeast thanks heartily all those who brought one or more modules to create a layout that was the equivalent of 41 4-foot straights, 5 corners, an end loop, and, a most welcome lift bridge (thanks, Bob Gatland), altogether 184 feet of running track on each of the three lines. The module scenery was an interesting mix of rural, urban, industrial and recreational areas, some spare, some

(continued on page 6)



Ed Majury giving the clinic "An Intro to the Java Based JMRI PalelPro and Decoder Pro on Friday evening.

New Members

Garry and Nancy Keil
26 Red Rock Street
Lynn, MA 01902

ngkeil@verizon.net

781-581-8832

We would like to welcome them to your club. They are building 3'x6' with three 2'x4' modules.

The Richard Marko Commemorative Award

For the Most Creative Animation Feature on a module at the annual



NORTHEAST NTRAK CONVENTION

In 2005, the Valley NTrak Club of Connecticut lost one of its most valued members when Richard Marko passed away. Richard made innumerable contributions to the club with both his modeling talents and woodworking expertise. We all turned to Richard for help in solving our construction problems. Richard's easygoing personality endeared him to all club members and so, to honor his memory, **Valley NTrak of Connecticut** created the **Richard Marko Commemorative Award**.

The plaque is made of walnut to reflect Richard's preferred wood in cabinet making and his passion for animation is reflected in the award's theme. When approached about including the *Marko Award* as part of the Northeast NTrak Winterfest, the committee wholeheartedly agreed to include it as an annual event category.

Bill Pontin had the honor of presenting the first award at Winterfest '07 to Roland Kelley, a member of Northeast NTrak. His modules meticulously detailed a large carnival filled with creative animation and lighting.



Show Schedule for 2006 – 2007

Mar 24-25, 2006 Great Train Expo,
Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA
Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM - Sun 10PM to 4PM
Coordinator: Fay Chin - 978-657-7913

Apr 15, 2006, CVMRR Show, Lebanon, NH
Coordinator: Doug Lawson - 603-543-0226

Apr 22, 2006, Hooksett Lyons Club
Cawley Middle School, Hooksett, NH
Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm
Coordinator: Mike Walker - 603-426-8620

May 10 Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Dr, Boston, MA
Set-up 7am Show 9am to 3pm
Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

Aug 9 - 14 N-Scale Collector Convention, Hartford, CT
Coordinator: Mark Ferracane - 781-245-3886

Model Contest Winners

Motive Power - Steam 3rd Austin Plyem
2nd Rick Hartung
1st Ted Dilorio
Motive Power - Diesel 3rd Dan Leavitt
2nd Ted Dilorio
1st Austin Plyem
Motive Power - Other 3rd Alan Grabsch
2nd Chris Oliva
1st Chris Oliva
Rolling Stock - Passenger 3rd (not awarded)
2nd John Becker
1st Mike Krembel
Rolling Stock - Freight 3rd Ted Dilorio
2nd Mike Krembel
1st Alan Grabsch
Rolling Stock - MOW 3rd Rick Hartung
2nd Austin Plyem
1st Bill Pontin
Structures - Online 3rd Chuck Tremblay
2nd Sam Haas
1st Mike Krembel
Structures - Offline 3rd Mike Krembel
2nd Austin Plyem
1st Peter Wisniewski
Humor 3rd Mike Krembel
2nd Austin Plyem
1st John Becker
Photo Contest
Prototype Photo 3rd Art Frankforter
2nd Sandy Ward
1st Rick Hartung
Model Photo 3rd Austin Plyem
2nd Mark Ferracane
1st John Becker
Module Contest 3rd Coleman Clark
2nd Charlie D'Avanzo
1st Ken Harstine
Parade of Trains 3rd Jeff Faust El Freight
2nd Ned Schwartz Military Train
1st Bob Woerpel Galloping Goose

Best in Show Peter Wisniewski Jim's Bar
Paul O'Hegyi (Scenery Excel) (not awarded)
Richard Marko (Animation Ex) Roland Kelley Carnival

My Amtrak trip across country
by Peter Wisniewski
Part two - Chicago to Los Angeles



(l to r) Sandy lounging out on the comfortable bench of our full size bedroom on the Southwest Chief. What a difference from the Roomette. Even the facilities are quite spacious. This is also the shower stall, but having only cold water made for some interesting showers. Next I was impressed by our wash sink and medicine cabinet.

Next, we picked up some snacks and sat down at a table inside the station to eat them. There, I've also noticed that it felt like the train station's floor was rocking gently! So did Sandy! But this didn't make sense. What made sense is that we both were experiencing "train legs"! Our bodies got so used to the train's rocking motion that even on solid ground, we imagined that our surroundings were in motion. Quite a strange experience which stayed with us for the rest of the trip.

We went back to the Amtrak Lounge and from there departed on time on the last leg of our journey. This was the Southwest Chief. Train 3. This train consisted of 3 locos (2 P42s and a Dash 8-32CWB) and 9 cars. They were: 1 Baggage, 1 Crew Car, 2 Sleepers, Dining Car, Lounge/Observation Car and 3 Coaches. All but the Baggage car were Superliners. Our compartment was in the first sleeper car (3rd car behind the locos).

Even though Superliners are older cars, they are very impressive! They have 2 levels. It is also nice that passengers are able to easily walk the length of the train (unlike on commercial jets). That makes the trip so much more interesting and pleasant!

The full size bedroom was quite roomy and nice (compared to the roomette). It had a private toilet/shower and sink. It also had a nice long bench seat and a comfy chair. This compartment was 6'7" X 7', which is twice the size of a roomette. We felt like we were living in a mansion!

Since the Superliners are taller than the standard cars, and we were on the upper level, any track irregularities were amplified. So, we experienced quite a bit of shaking and swaying on this route. The train was traveling at 79 MPH for a good part of the journey. I've been told that 79MPH is their speed limit. Few times there were dips bad enough to actually bottom out the suspension (with a loud bang). Most of the route had welded rail, but there were many random areas with jointed rail (but never as bad as we encountered on the Lake Shore Limited in New York).

The service and food quality was also quite a bit better than on the Lakeshore Limited. We had seating reservations for all meals. And again, all the meal prices are included in the ticket price (except for alcoholic beverages).

Overall, this was the nicest leg of the trip. Meal's sitting was



Here I am lounging out in the Lounge/ Observation car. What a great idea for a car! We spent a good chunk of our trip in this car and seats were always available.



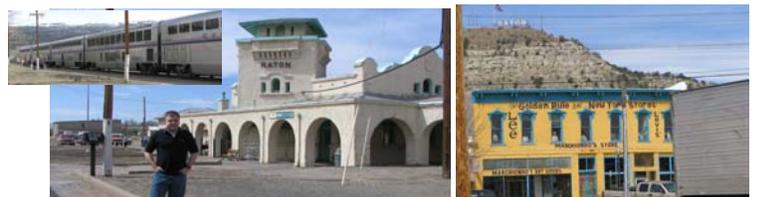
(above) La Junta, Colorado. That means "Junction", of Santa Fe Trail and Cimarron Cutoff. It is a typical small Colorado town. (right) Me posing next to our sleeper car in La Junta.



Lots of "nothing" in Kansas. But it was still interesting to see all of this, from the ground level and not from 30,000 feet.



The headend power at La Junta, Colorado. (left above) During the steep climb to Raton Pass, we traveled through many very sharp curves. that allowed me to photograph our train from inside. Notice the snow cover. This is the highest point during this trip at 7,559 feet above sealevel. We also passed through a tunnel but I didn't take any pictures there.



(above l to r) View of our train at Raton Station. Note the white capped mountain tops in the background. Here I am in front of Raton Station, and picturesque Raton.

always randomly assigned. So, we met and conversed with a variety of passengers and each time we ended up finding something in common with them. Like a couple from Flagstaff, AZ who were also traveling on a train for the first time. The wife grew up in NH, while her husband went to school with Sandy's dentist! What are the odds of us meeting like this in the random seating arrangement in the dining car on this cross-country train?

We've also spent a good chunk of time in the wonderful Observation/Lounge car and in our room, looking at the incredible scenery and taking many photos. Even though we missed some scenery during the nights, we've seen the flat expanse of Missouri and Iowa, mountain peaks in Colorado, and wonderful red rocks of Arizona and New Mexico. We've also saw many other wonderful places like Raton Pass, Dodge City, Kansas City, Albuquerque, Flagstaff, the famous Route 66, and many, many more places! Raton Pass area was full of very sharp S-curves and steep grades, which gave me good opportunities to take photos of our slowly traveling train. It was also great to see cowboys on horses and lots of cattle and wild horses galloping through the countryside.

Surprisingly, against all the expectations, we were for most part running ahead of schedule and arrived in LA early!

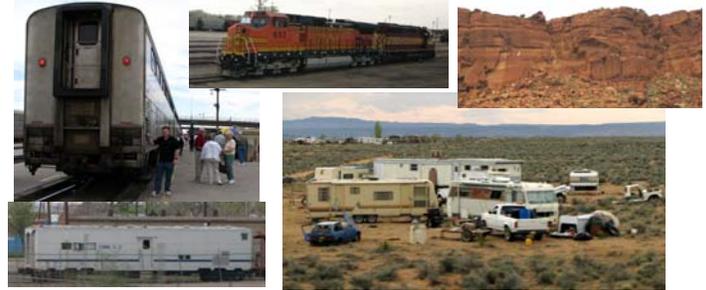
Conductor told us that since Amtrak doesn't own the track, it is treated as a secondary priority train and frequently the revenue freight trains have higher priority. That is too bad... CSX is especially infamous for this. BNSF on the other hand, tries to better accommodate Amtrak trains, which explains why the Chicago to LA trip was staying on time.

I was under the impression that the American Railroads are in decline. Well, judging by the number of very long freight trains we encountered on this trip, I would disagree with that statement (at least for that part of the country). Railroadng seems alive and quite well in the western part of the US. The most impressive sight was a large flat area around Gallup, NM where I could see an entire coal drag with 3 engines and 2 pushers and also 3 long double-stack container trains following each other very closely.

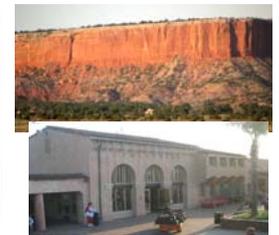
I feel great about being able to see such a large chunk of our wonderful country from the ground level! What a great country! While Amtrak is not an Orient Express, I would still recommend this type of a sightseeing trip to anyone who needs to travel to the West Coast and has some money and time to spare. Or just make it into a mini-vacation, as we did. Seeing all the sights and meeting all sorts of interesting people was both very educational and enjoyable experience.



(l to r) Cattle grazing in the praries of New Mexico as we pass by at 80 mph. Our next stop was Albuquerque. That beautiful building is not the train station. It houses the Transportation Department offices.



(l to r) Photo shows how tall the Superliner cars are. There were also many native Indian dealers at the Albuquerque station selling their wares. Next two BNSF engines. Interesting rock formations of New Mexico. Then a MOW car near Albuquerque. Then some sort of nomadic settlement possibly Indians.



A coal drag shows 3 diesels in the front and 2 pushers on the back. This was taken near Gallup, NM. Next are the beautiful Red Cliffs of New Mexico. During early morning we woke up stopped at Fullerton, CA Station.



(l to r) One of those interesting Metrolink commuter trains. We arrived in LA and another beautiful Union Station, it has the look of a church. (right) Interior of LA's Union Station. (below l to r) What is the first thing to do when in coastal California? Go to the beach of course! We just arrived via the famous Pacific Coast highway. Beach is right behind me. Notice the train tracks between the road and the beach. It must be a very picturesque train ride. Since it was an early spring we just had to stop at the San Juan Capistrano Mission to see the beautiful flowers.



We have entered the beautiful red colored areas of New Mexico. Interesting trees, the white branches look like they are covered with frost. It was too warm for that.

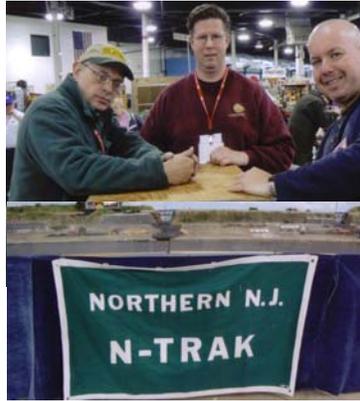
Winterfest 2007



Bob Pawlak NE Ntrak, and Winterfest 2007 coordinator starting the program at the Saturday night dinner with over 100 in attendance..



Sky boards as fence rails. Hasseling the Parade of Trains Judges are (l to r) Dan Pawling, Jr., Austin Plyem, Mike Krembel, LeRoy Blades, Jr., The 24 feet of modules were brought to the show by the Northern NJ Club.



(l to r) Wayne Shortman, Ed Majury, and Ted Dilorio of Northern New Jersey Ntrak.



Genesee0N-Ontario at Winterfest. (l to r) A Plyem, M Krembel, R Woerpel, L Blades, Jr., J Faust, and in front R Hartung and J Becker.



Dean Daughenbaugh, N-Scale Collector Show Coordinator talking with Bob Pawlak.



Some of the Long Island N-trak group. Ed, Mark and Marletta Stevenson.



Ntrak "Creative Forces" present at Winterfest 2007 included (l to r) Arthur Frankforter, and Jim Dahl, both of Valley Ntrak, Brian Hennessey of Northern New Jersey Ntrak and Bob Gatland, formerly of the Long Island Club and now with the Albany, NY group.



Dan Pawling Jr., flat on his back screwing the model display case to the table. (picture by R. Kelley)



Dan Pawling, Jr., and John Dunne layout coordinator for Winterfest 2007.



Brooklyn Ntrak crew (l to r) Rick Salcer, Paul Bennett, Chris Oliva, John Gillen, Sam Haas and Charles D'Avanzo.



"No, I am Brian, I do like Thomas." Brian Matthews helped his dad, Peter do roll-by inspections of every train on the layout.



(left) Chuck Tremblay & Ed Smith taking a break from contest registration at the 13th Annual NE Ntrak Winterfest.



Bob Pawlak studying a 3-unit Zephyr and his own multi-tank car train for the "Parade of Trains". Roland Kelley at the tower controls.

(All pictures by Dan Pawling, Sr.)

detailed and all believable. Of the 184 feet of modules, 102 feet were of single themed scenes on sets of two or more modules in length, largest of these were 14, 16 and 24 feet long. The last set was brought by the Northern NJ club. The lines were kept busy most of the time and only one train wreck was reported (Shame on you, Thomas the Tank, for rear-ending a manifest freight. Several cars went on the ground, including Clarabelle, but no one was injured. The NTSB investigation continues.

We have special thanks for our many sponsors (see side bar), and the Amherst Railway Society, Tuckers Hobby and the Big E management for their help, consideration and donations.

There was excellent participation in the photo and model contests; for results, see the sidebar. Everyone who brought a module was entered into the contests for Best Module, Best in Show, Scenery Excellence, and (new this year) Animation Excellence. There were about 30 entries in the Parade of Trains contest - again see the sidebar for the results. (The judges were not influenced by the sky board sitters (see photo).

On Friday evening, three clinics were offered. Bob Gatland (Albany) demonstrated the application of static grass, a Noch product which by means of a small electrical charge causes flocking to stand up on wet paint like real grasses. One observer thought that one size of flock would be 3 scale feet tall, but this idea was not tested with an N-scale figure.

Ed Majury (Northern New Jersey) gave a 2-part session using a JAVA-based program to put a layout control system on the computer. Using the same program Ed programmed a decoder. The speed and effectiveness of using the visuals on the computer screen was later demonstrated for Dan Pawling, Jr, whose ailing loco had a bug diagnosed and corrected in a few minutes (thanks, Ed).

The Banquet Saturday night was attended by about 100 persons. We ate well! Bob Pawlak, Winterfest Chairman, MC'd the after dinner events which included guest speaker Dean Daughenbaugh, Director of Conventions for the N-Scale Collectors Society. Dean described how the society got started and how he became Director of Conventions. (See elsewhere about the Society's Convention in Hartford CT in August 2007). We then heard from about a half dozen sponsors about their plans for future product releases. Awards for the several contests were made accompanied by slides of the models, photos and modules, the latter thanks to the efforts of Ed Smith and Chuck Tremblay. In addition to the certificates, first place winners in each category received a prize.

Bill Pontin and Arthur Frankforter of Valley NTrak gave a slide presentation honoring their late member Richard Markos which featured pictures of his animated logging camp module. This was a prelude to introducing the new "Richard Markos Memorial Plaque for Excellence in Animation" which was awarded to Roland Kelley of Northeast NTrak for his animated carnival module. ((Is there a picture of the presentation and award itself????)) I understand that Bill Pontin designed the plaque.

Another new feature this year was the drawing for about a half dozen more valuable door prizes, mostly locomotives, donated by our sponsors. Finally, the award of the remaining door prizes, always an eagerly anticipated event, went off smoothly thanks to the

clearly written description of the process. Our thanks to the several donors of most excellent prizes.

Thanks, y'all, for making Winterfest the huge, vibrant success that it was. In closing I would thank Bob Pawlak for the fine work he has done to organize Winterfest 2007. We look forward to your joining us again next year on January 25-27, 2008.

The following 11 clubs were represented at Winterfest 2007.

Albany, NY N-Trak
 Brooklyn N-Trak
 Central Valley Ntrak
 Genesee-N-Ontario Model N-gineers
 Jersey Central N-Trak
 Long Island Ntrak
 Montreal N-trak
 Northeast N-Trak
 Northern New Jersey N-Trak
 Ottawa Valley Ntrak
 Valley N-Trak

Winterfest 2007 Sponsors

Athearn, Inc.	Ken's Trains
Atlas Model Railroading Co.	Logic Rail Technologies
Aztec Manufacturing Co.	Micro Engineering Company
Blair Line N Scale Collector	Micro-Trains Line Company
Bowser Manufacturing Co.	Neal's N-Gauging Trains
Classic Metal Works, Inc.	Northeastern Scale Lumber Co. y
Con-Cor, International, Ltd.	The N-Scale Architect
Deluxe Innovations	Platinum Rail Publications (N-Scale Mag)
Design Preservation Models	Squeak N Products
Digital Plus by Lenz	Sylvan Scale Models
Digitrax Tomar Industries	
Evergreen Scale Models	Tucker's Hobbies
InterMountain Railway Co.	Wm. K. Walthers
Kato U.S.A.	Woodland Scenics



"Using a Static Grass Gun" clinic given by Bob Gatland on Friday night at Winterfest 2007.