

President - Mark Ferracane Vice Pres - Dan Pawling
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 Mark Ferracane

Well, here we go again! The new season starts on Sunday September 7th at the Concord Model Railroad clubs show in Concord, New Hampshire. I hope we can show support to them and to us. They enjoy having us each year and they look forward to us displaying. We need support from ALL club members to make our shows a success this year. The major thing that has changed this year is the price we have to pay for fuel for our vehicles, but that is something we do not have control over. That means that we all will have a few less dollars to spend on our hobby. But it does not mean that we will be doing less shows. Our schedule this year is smaller than last year. I hope to attend all the shows this year and still have fun. I ask that all members with modules attend as many shows as possible. For us to grow we have to show how good a club we are. It is a pleasure being the President of this club and see all members as my good friends. Let's show how good we are and what it means to be a member of our club.

On Thursday July 24th a severe storm hit New Hampshire. Dick Brotherton lost the home he was staying in during the storm. The home was being renovated and now it is a total loss. There was a lot of damage but the rebuilding has started. Lucky there was a lot of stuff that was salvageable. Yes, the Modules and Trains are safe. He is staying in a Extended Stay Hotel until the home is re-built. Therefore he is unable to coordinate the show. I have volunteered to coordinate the show and am asking as many members with modules to attend. Please contact me via phone or email if you are able to attend the show.

Thanks, Til Next Month, Mark

If you have not paid your dues for 2009-09 then they are late.

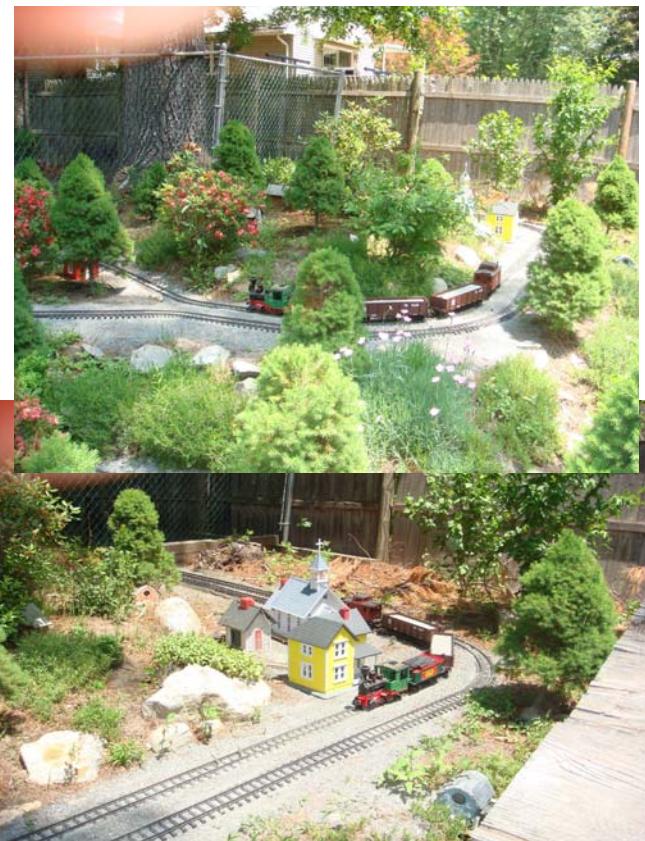
Please send your renewal for Northeast Ntrak membership of \$20.00 to:

Chuck Tremblay, Treasurer
Northeast Ntrak
59 Greenside Way
Methuen, MA 01844

If we do not get your renewal before the middle of September you will be dropped from the mailing list.

Fay Chin's Railroads

This years Annual Business meeting was hosted by Fay Chin and his wife. Fay has built a G scale garden railroad with two separate loops of approximately 400 feet of track.



The tracks are non-powered and most locos have been modified to pull a coal tender or car with onboard batteries. I have several radio controlled locomotives which allow simultaneous operation. The garden railroad includes buildings, miniature trees, ground covers, flowering shrubs and a lake (small fish pond and the fish are not to scale) including a waterfall. The children had a great time running the trains on the garden railroad.

Then we were given a tour of Fay's N track layout
(cont. on page 2)



(Cont. from page 1) Above is Fay's first N-trak module that he built. It is now at one end of his home layout. The layout is 16' x 6' with a mountain division.



He uses Aristocraft Train Engineer radio controlled throttles to operate the four mainlines.

People Choice Award Winner

John Dunne

John Dunne attended the Hanger B, Brooklyn N-Trak show and his bridge module won first prize in the People's Choice Award for best module. Congratulation John.



Show Schedule for 2008 – 2009

Sep 7, 2008 Concord Model Railroad Show, Concord, NH

Everitt Arena, Concord, NH (off I-93 at exit 14)

Set up 7:00AM Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Mark Ferracane - 781-245-3886 (cell 617-938-0385)

Sep 28, 2008 Old Colony Model Railroad Show, Taunton, MA

Holiday Inn, 700 Myles Standish Blvd, Taunton, MA

(Exit 9 off I-495 onto Bay St, go south to first right which is Myles Standish)

Set up 7:00AM Show 10am to 3pm

Coordinator: John Dunne - 508-697-7635

Oct 5, 2008 Pepperell Siding Show, Pepperell, MA

Varnum Brook Elementary School, Pepperell, MA

Set up 7:00AM Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Ron Wood - 603-889-0741

Nov 2, 2008 Bedford Boomers, Bedford, NH

McKelvie Middle School, Liberty Hill Rd/Gault Rd, Bedford, NH

Set up 7:00AM Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Mike Walker - 603-426-8620

Nov 9, 2008 Wells, Maine Show

Wells Elementary School, Rt 109, Wells, ME (Maine Trk exit 10 on Rt. 95, left off ramp about 1 mile on right)

Set up 8:00AM Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Mark Ferracane - 781-245-3886 (cell 617-938-0385)

CANCELED

Nov 22-23, 2008 Great Train Expo, Wilmington, MA

Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM - Sun 10PM to 4PM

Coordinator: Fay Chin - 978-657-7913

Jan 23 to 25, 2009, WINTERFEST 2009, West Springfield, MA

Big "E" Exposition Center, West Springfield, MA

Set-up Fri noon to 5pm & Sat 7am

Show Sat 9am to 5pm - Sun 10am to 5pm

Coordinator: John Dunne - 508-697-7635

Winterfest Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

Feb 14 & 15, 2009 Museum of National Heritage, Lexington, MA

Set-up Sat 7:30am Show Sat 10am to 5pm - Sun noon to 5pm

Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

Mar ??, 2009 Great Train Expo, Wilmington, MA

Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM - Sun 10PM to 4PM

Coordinator: Dan Pawling - 617-244-5261

Apr ??, 2009, Billerica Train Show,

NEW SHOW

Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: Peter Matthews - 978-667-7906

Apr ??, 2009, Hooksett Lyons Club, Hooksett, NH

Cawley Middle School, Hooksett, NH

Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: ????

June 17-21 N-Scale Collector Convention, Portland Oregon

All Show Dates **Subject to Change**...Check Newsletter for Updates as well as **Showing Club's Website** for Exact Date.

Putting the new Intermountain SD-45-2's Into service on the Montana Rail Link

by Ernie Poole



I recently took delivery of two new Intermountain SD-45-2's in MRL blue. MRL 304 and 305 are true to prototype in the early Washington Company slanted white stripes over blue and black. The detail and detail painting is very well done. My only initial concern is the paint on the railings. The paint looks good, but I am concerned about whether the paint will stay put in regular use. The railings are flexible, and two small spots that are pressed into the packaging during shipping, showed some paint separation from the plastic to the packaging. In prototype use on the MRL, the units take a beating in Montana weather, as well as in smoke filled tunnels. Minor defects are common, and weathering will hide the effects on the models.

Mechanically, they are a custom hybrid. They have a unique Intermountain frame, and Atlas running gear. The motor, gear train, and trucks match the Atlas SD-60. The frame, brass contact strips and driveshafts are all shorter than an SD-60, and are unique Intermountain parts. The frame contact areas for the decoder board are also shorter than the SD-60, and I used the indicated Digitrax DN163I0 decoder.

These Plug N' Play decoders are supposed to simply replace the stock DC circuit board. No such luck with this locomotive. The DN163I0 board is much to thin to work as a direct replacement. I choose to add thickness to the board by adding some solder to the four pads that contact the frame. Another approach is to carefully bend (read hammer) the four frame contact points down. Once installed, programmed, and tested, they work as advertised. The mechanics also need some work, so read on.

The trucks bind in the frame as they rotate. To address this problem, Peter and I have experimented with homemade shims to space the frame halves further apart. This does seem to help.

All the moving parts are grossly over-lubricated with something similar to Vaseline. We disassembled the trucks and drive train, cleaned all the parts in solvent, (lighter fluid – be careful) and reassembled them using small amounts of quality light oil. One of the truck assemblies still makes a light grinding sound in one direction. I will break them in for several hours, and then re-evaluate. The truck will be replaced if necessary. After six hours of running, the noise was still there, but to my surprise, I never had to clean the wheels. They actually operate fairly well so far. I have always had trouble with my SD-60 wheels getting dirty in short order.

The plastic shell does not locate well on the chassis, and if not

perfectly placed, the front or back of the trucks hit the end steps. Even at that, the wheel flanges of the outboard axles are able to hit the back of the coupler pockets at certain angles. This may not be a problem in normal operation, as long as your track radii is reasonable, and the track does not bump up and down too much.

In summary then, these are good looking units that need more than a little love before going into regular service. The engineering is not as complete as I expect to see at this price. They cost as much as a similar Kato unit, and are not as fully developed. With that said, they still fill a need, and will join the locomotive fleet on my MRL. The original plan to buy four of them, however, has been reduced to two while I see how they work out. After some weathering with chalks, they should be ready to serve as helpers, or to haul the long distance sweeper trains across the railroad. Black and blue is a good thing in this case.

Salt Lake City and its TRAX light rail

by Roland Kelley



As I was told when I visited Salt Lake City this summer the TRAX light rail system was put in for the Olympic Games. At the time it was not very well received by the locals. They did not like it taking up room in the roads and did not feel that the city needed it for the games and that no one would use it after the games were over. Well they were proven wrong as it is doing very well and they are continuing to expand it.

In December 1999, TRAX light rail service debuted with the opening of UTA's 15-mile Sandy/Salt Lake Line. Two years later, the agency opened the 2.5 mile University Line linking downtown Salt Lake City with the University of Utah. In 2003, UTA completed the University Line with the 1.5 mile Medical Center Extension, which connects the school's stadium and medical center complex.

FUTURE PLANS UTA is currently constructing a 44-mile commuter rail line from Weber County to downtown Salt Lake City and has plans to eventually extend it from Brigham City to Payson. Other future rail projects include light rail extensions to West Valley City, South Jordan, Draper, and the Salt Lake City International Airport.

THIS YEARS ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING BY Roland Kelley



Our Annual Business meeting was held on June 8th this year at Fay Chins. Mark called the meeting to order around 1 PM. An update was given on the sale of our club car. Of the 300 cars ordered we have 157 left. Mark will be attending the N Scale Collectors Show this summer and will bring them to see if he can sell some at the show.

Chuck informed us that the National has increased there dues from \$6.00 to \$11.00 a year. He did not think we had to do anything this year but suggested we consider a possible increase in our dues next year to cover the increase.

Dan Pawling said we had a new supplier for our club shirts and handed out order form. Everyone in the club should have a club shirt. If you don't or need another one you will find the order form attached to this Newsletter.

A long discussion was held regarding the club buying a trailer or van to carry the club boxes and modules. This is not an easy problem as we are not an official group. It also brings up the problem of who will be responsible for it and bring it to all the shows. It was also discussed that maybe we should rent a trailer for the shows. This did not seem to be a workable idea as people would have to bring there modules to where ever the trailer was going to be before the show. Before we think of buying a trailer maybe we should look into what it would take and cost to become a non-profit organization. This has been looked into before and dropped. Maybe we need to have a couple members looking into this again. Both of these issues need a lot more thought before we

make any decision. So both items were tabled until some future date.

Next was the subject of what shows we will do in the 2008-2009 year. We are still falling short of members willing to build and bring modules to the shows. The Hub Division show in December was dropped from the list as was the Mystic Valley Railway Society show in February. Three shows at this time are in question. If Mark can find the people willing to go we will try to attend them. They are the Wells, Maine show in November, the Billerica Train Show (this is a new show), in April and the Hooksett Lions Club show also in April.

It was also requested that the show coordinators give there cell phone numbers so if anyone schedule to be at a show is having problems at the last minute they can contact him so he will know if they will be coming or not to make the necessary changes in the layout to get it up and running by the time the show opens.



Our hosts for the annual business meeting. Jane and Fay Chin making sure all the food is ready for lunch. Thank you both for a great cookout.