

**CHEAP & EASY BOXCAR COIN BANK** p. 62

# CLASSIC TOY TRAINS®

O AND S GAUGE FOR THE OPERATOR AND COLLECTOR | January 2018

**INSIDE**  
**85**  
**TIPS &**  
**IDEAS!**

**REVIEWED**  
**O GAUGE**  
**SKYSCRAPER**  
**BY MENARDS**

## MAKE A SPLASH!

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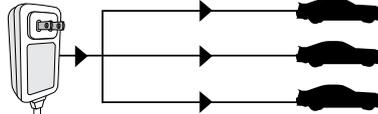
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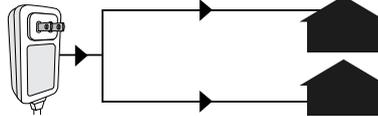
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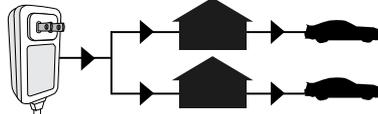
Plug directly into our lighted vehicles.



Plug directly into our buildings.

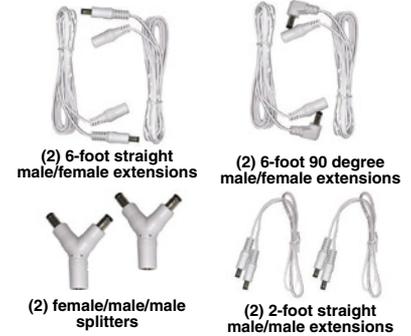


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### Lit Headlights & Taillights!

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### Lit Headlights & Taillights!

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### Lit Headlights & Taillights!

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### Lit Headlights & Taillights!

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### Lit Headlights & Taillights!

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## Jump in – the water's fine!

PLANNING SCENERY CAN BE AS IMPORTANT AS A TRACK PLAN



Jay Cain photo

Harbors, lakes, and rivers, Jay Cain writes in his cover story, add interest to any layout. The best results depend on planning – a lesson I learned too late.

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As Jay Cain writes in this month's cover story on modeling water, which starts on page 34, "There is something about making a lake or pond, a river or harbor, even a puddle along the right-of-way or a country road that seems difficult to tackle."

Perhaps that's why bridges are common on O and S gauge layouts, but well-crafted river or lake scenes are harder to find. That's a pity for, as Jay demonstrates in his article, these effects are not difficult. They do, however, require a certain amount of planning.

As I have learned, poor planning can be an expensive lesson.

Many years ago, I set out to build an O gauge layout. I started by calculating the largest possible train table for the room's size and awkward shape. I spent countless hours revising my track plan.

I then built a large and admirably sturdy table. To this I added track, wiring, accessories, structures, and – very much an afterthought – scenery.

I have a prewar bridge, which I repainted long ago for a *Classic Toy Trains* article ("Reviving a Lionel no. 270 bridge," February 1999). How nice it would be, I thought, to display this attractive tinplate accessory somewhere on the vast and featureless expanse of plywood that was my new railroad.

Only then did I realize I had missed an important step. Just like the arrangement of track, effective scenery has to be planned from the start.

Water always seeks the lowest point. Which, in my case, logically put it below my plywood table amid the painstakingly constructed 1 x 4 benchwork grid.

But what could I do? Using a jigsaw, I cut a pond-shaped hole in the plywood. Atop the 1 x 4s I set a piece of blue rippled stained glass I purchased from an art supply house. Its surface ended up half an inch under the bridge.

If you were feeling charitable, you might describe my pond as whimsical. Or you could call it unbelievably stupid looking, and I wouldn't argue.

That pond, along with the layout's awkward arrangement of buildings, improbable roadways, and endless electrical problems, combined to put an early end to that particular railroad.

The track plan I so carefully developed for that railroad was a rather nice one. I just wish I had given as much thought to my scenery – because paper is so much easier to erase than plywood!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carl Swanson".

### DO YOU HAVE A STORY?

**Readers just like you** provide stories featured in *Classic Toy Trains*. To submit an article and photos, send your work to *Classic Toy Trains* magazine, 21027 Crossroads Circle, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187. Write the words "Manuscript Enclosed" on the envelope and include a suitable stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of your material if we cannot use it. Articles are paid for on acceptance.

We assume no responsibility for the safe return of unsolicited material. Email submissions can be sent to [manuscripts@classictoytrains.com](mailto:manuscripts@classictoytrains.com).

Before preparing an article, contact us to determine whether we're interested. Guidelines for writing articles and taking photographs are available from our Website.

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# CLASSIC TOY TRAINS

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# LETTERS

FROM OUR READERS

## 30 YEARS OF CLASSIC TOY TRAINS



Reader David Karol's father brought home a Lionel no. 2115WS O gauge outfit led by a no. 726 Berkshire in the late 1940s. The story of that train was one of childhood memories featured in the November 2017 issue. Photo courtesy David Karol

### A happy pastime

Wow! The November 2017 30th anniversary *Classic Toy Trains* was full of interesting and timely content about our hobby, such as the article about family retailers and their contribution to our happy and creative pastime.

It was also nice to see all the ads from key outlets, which shows how important the print media is – even in today's cyber world.

Keep up the good work!

*John Tingle*

*Miami Lakes, Fla.*

### Charter subscriber

I just want to take a moment to commend the *Classic Toy Trains* staff for an excellent 30th anniversary issue. I received my copy yesterday and was glued to it most of the evening. The articles, advertisements, and general content are fabu-

lous. I, for one, sincerely appreciate the effort and quality that went in the issue.

I have subscribed to CTT from the first issue to the present. I have always enjoyed each issue and found all to be special – but this issue, tops them all.

I commend the staff for a job well done. Keep up the tremendous effort!

*Bob Fladung*

*Pine River, Minn.*

### Families and toy trains

I really enjoyed the special stories about people receiving trains from a beloved relative (“Sharing warm memories of first toy trains,” November issue). My story has a different twist to it and I'm very proud to share this with you.

Christmas morning 2016 was a special day for my 6-year-old grandson Elijah. I presented him with a tiny 2 x 2-inch length package. He unwrapped it to find a sign for a model hotel. After some discussion we headed to the basement to see what that sign belonged to. There before him was an Old West layout complete with buildings and businesses named for family members. The town's railroad station featured his name plus a recording mechanism so he could record his own announcements.

The layout was the setting for a Lionel Lone Ranger train set, which my father-in-law had purchased several years before when Elijah was still in diapers. He gave me the set and asked me to build a layout when Elijah was ready to enjoy it. Sadly, my father-in-law passed away 2 years ago.

I had the privilege of building this layout and telling my grandson this was a special gift presented to him by his grandfather on behalf of his great-grandfather.

*Larry Brookhart*

*Harwich Mass.*



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3-17030	Reading PS-1 Boxcars	42.95
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3-17150	Santa Fe ACF 4-Bay Cov. Hopper	42.95
3-17160	C&N W (UP) ACF 4-Bay Cov. Hopper	42.95
3-17703	Crayola 2-Bay Hopper (LionScale)	60.95

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17783	DC Coal Hopper 3pk (Rdg/Wabash/IT)	129.95
25727	California Zephyr-WP 18" 2/Car Pass	139.95
25731	California Zephyr-C&W 18" 2/Car Pass	139.95
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26660	Coca-Cola Vat Car	31.95
27676	Canadian Nat. Smoking WS Caboose	49.95
27917	B&O Baggage Mail Budd Car Non-Pwd	39.95
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28883	Diesel (Thomas the Tank) Conv. Engine	59.95
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37195	100th Ann. Grand Central Terminal	149.95
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37966	Lionel Cylindrical Oil Storage Tank	59.95
37977	Hooker Tanker Accident Scene	64.95
38219	Texas Special MKT FT B-unit Non-Pwd	49.95
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38386	Wabash F-3 'AB'	224.95
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38567	B&O Sharknose Non-Powered B-unit	89.95
38572	NYC Sharknose Non-Powered B-unit	89.95
38573	SP Daylight LEGACY Sharknose 'AA'	350.00
38577	Southern Pacific Sharknose Non-Pwd 'B'	89.95
38761	Jersey Central SCALE F-3 Non-Pwd 'B'	99.95
38763	C&N SCALE F-7 Non-Powered B-unit	99.95
38845	Great Northern LEGACY Diesel #2519	299.95
39334	Monopoly Boxcar #5 Set 3-pack	74.95
39547	Pennsylvania F-3 Non-Powered B-unit	129.95
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81439	Pumpkin Head Motorized Handcar	39.95
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81649	773/774 S.P. Baby Madison 7-Car Set	269.95
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81739	78/78 Santa Fe Baby Madison 7-Car Set	269.95
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1071	Mid Atlantic Seaboard SD-9 Frt. (sealed)	250.00
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1160	Burlington 'Great Lakes' Frt. Set	295.00
1260	N&W 'Continental Limited' Diesel Frt	295.00
1361	Gold Coast Ltd. SD-40 Frt. Set (sealed)	395.00
1502	NYC 'Yardchief' 0-4-0 Freight Set	195.00
1552	Burlington North. SD40 Boxcar Set-sealed	395.00
1579	Milwaukee Road F-3 1973 SSS Frt-sealed	350.00
1652	B&O GP-7 Freight Set	195.00
1867	Milwaukee Road Frt. Set 9 (sealed)	295.00
1970	Southern Pacific Frt. Set (sealed)	295.00
1971	Reading 'Quaker City' Set (sealed)	295.00
11700	Conrail SD-40 Freight Set (sealed)	325.00
11704	Southern GP-9 Freight Set	195.00
11705	Chessie SD40 ACF Hopper Set	350.00
11706	Virginian Truckee 'Dry Gulch' General Set	295.00
11712	Great Lakes Steam Passenger Set	295.00
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11719	Delaware & Hudson RS-3 Freight Set	245.00
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11738	Soo Line GP-38 Freight Set	275.00
11744	NYC RS-3 Diesel Frt/Pass. Set	245.00
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31706	Union Pacific Broad Crane Set	175.00
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11775	U.S. Navy NW-2 Frt. Set (sealed)	265.00
11770	SEARS Circus Steam Freight Set	195.00
11775	Budweiser Steam Freight Set	145.00
11785	Union Pacific 4-4-2 Steam Frt (sealed)	195.00
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8250	'55 Santa Fe Black & Gold GP-9 P/D	175.00
8252	'53 Delaware & Hudson Alco 'AB'	150.00
8265	Santa Fe SD-40 blue/yellow (St 'O' size)	195.00
8353	'56 Grand Trunk GP-7 Power/Dummy	175.00
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8370	'71 New York Central F-3 'ABA's	395.00
8380	Lionel Lines (Blue & Orange) SD-28	175.00
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L82968	Lionel Lines LionChief Plus 4-6-4 Pacific	359.95
L82975	Baltimore & Ohio LionChief Plus A5 0-4-0	374.95
L83608	B&O LionChief Plus Mikado w/Bluetooth	359.95
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AF48032	Union Pacific GP-7 #125	224.99
AF48037	Nickel Plate Road GP-7 #514	224.99
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AF42592	NS Auto Carrier #NS 171253	53.95
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L82178	Conrail LionChief Plus Rectifier	284.95
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L84141	WM USRA 2 Bay Hopper (3 Pack #1)	159.95
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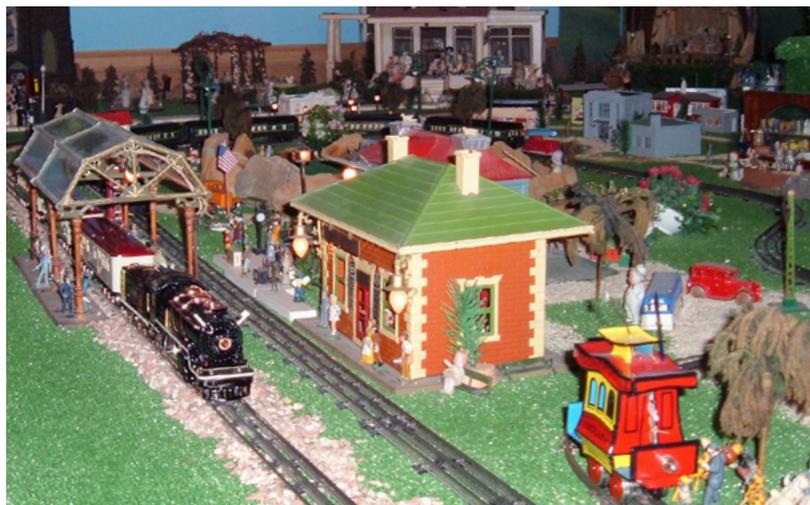
## ▲ JOE GOZZO'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

When toy train enthusiasts set out to design and build a holiday display to showcase what they own, they occasionally go over the top and include items that otherwise would have no chance of being together. Joe Gozzo regularly operates Lionel O gauge trains from the pre-World War II period, so all visitors get plenty of opportunities to admire this stunning Union Pacific streamliner. But how often in Gilroy, Calif., where Joe makes his home, or anywhere else, do you catch two Santas racing down a snow-covered Main Street, one in a coupe with tailfins and skis and the other in a tractor?



▲ **BRIAN AND ELIZABETH VAILL'S O GAUGE LAYOUT**

Just about every O gauge operator's favorite holiday thoroughbred – the *Polar Express* 2-8-4 Berkshire steam locomotive from Lionel – stars on the Christmas layout Brian and Elizabeth Vaill constructed at their home in Naples, Maine. They spent years adding to their collection of porcelain structures and figures before arranging so many of those colorful items on their tabletop display. Dozens of lights and plenty of artificial snow completed vignettes such as this one. No wonder folks love to visit.



▲ **LUTHERAN HOME OF TOPTON, PA.,S O GAUGE LAYOUT**

Hobbyists may describe the O gauge railroad at the Lutheran Home in Tipton, Pa., as a layout, but purists with a sense of the past, including Pastor Philip Smith who took this picture, refer to it as a "Christmas Putz." The sort of display families once built at the holidays mixed toy trains, structures, and figures amid Christmas scenes. Ida Henry, whose husband ran the Lutheran Orphans Home, acquired those items one by one between 1909 and '46. She hoped the "Putz" would inspire their wayward charges by teaching the story of and values linked with Christmas while conveying its cheer. Seniors now enjoy the tinplate trains.



**SEND YOUR BEST** pictures of toy train subjects to CTT Photo Album, 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612 or email them to [photoalbum@ClassicToyTrains.com](mailto:photoalbum@ClassicToyTrains.com). Include your name, address, and daytime telephone number; a description of each image; and the name of the photographer or layout owner.

## PHOTO ALBUM



### ▲ LARRY SHUGHART'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

In the November 2015 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*, which showed Larry Shughart's Northern Florida Ry., he pointed out an area in his train room that didn't feature S gauge trains. Then he explained how O gauge models from the prewar era also intrigue him. In fact, Larry assembles a special display on which to run a dazzling assortment of American Flyer and Lionel passenger trains through his own winter wonderland. The snow and ice inside contrast with the sunshine outside Larry's home in Jacksonville, Fla.



### ◀ ANDREAS REISSMANN'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

The engineer and fireman in charge of the Lionel steam engine and tender Andreas Reissmann runs when snow falls on his O gauge layout in Greiz, a town in Germany, have to figure out just what to do when a herd of reindeer comes out to greet their *Polar Express* train in the days right before Christmas. The railroaders aren't afraid of the curious animals, but they do need to clear the main line so travelers can reach their destinations by the 24th of December.



#### ▲ WENDELL CALLAHAN'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

The scene is timeless, even if the characters are made of porcelain rather than flesh and blood. A little boy who had dreamed for ages of getting an electric train gets to hold one of the cars in the Lionel outfit his kind-hearted dad just purchased from the retailer along the boulevard. Put together by O gauge enthusiast Wendell Callahan, the layout features his favorite Lionel trolley about to give the shoppers a ride home. Other elements in this popular holiday-oriented vignette from Wendell's display in San Diego, Calif., include colorful structures from Department 56 and Lemax and FasTrack from Lionel.

#### ▼ HUBERT AND MARTI MOUNTZ'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Little touches give special meaning to the displays people create around the holidays. Adding snow isn't really unusual, but finding whimsical signs warning that elves are at play fills a layout with loads of personality. Hubert and Marti Mountz enjoy arranging neat touches like that one or the soldier over on the left, who is heading home after serving overseas. Oh, did we mention the outstanding passenger trains the talented husband and wife run on their O gauge layout in Louisville, Ky.?



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LIO627946 Christmas Savings Bond Box	\$39.99
LIO627948 GN Christmas Boxcar	\$44.99
LIO627949 PRR Christmas Merch. Box	\$56.99
LIO629698 Tree Topper Transport Flat	\$59.99
LIO629699 Silver and Gold Mint Car	\$52.99
LIO629931 2005 LRRR Christmas Boxcar	\$22.00
LIO630205 Silver Bells Remote Set	\$179.99
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<b>LIO636243 2002 Christmas Boxcar</b>	<b>\$19.99</b>
LIO637127 Angela Trotta Art Gallery	\$56.99
LIO637151 Christmas Street Lamps Red 3	\$29.99
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LIO637814 Christmas Crossing Shanty	\$17.99
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LIO637997 Christmas People Pack	\$17.99
<b>LIO638848 Christmas Zephyr Set</b>	<b>\$899.99</b>
LIO639335 Kinkadee Charisma Boxcar	\$44.99
LIO639364 2013 Christmas Boxcar	\$44.99
<b>LIO681284 Frosty Train Set</b>	<b>\$229.99</b>
LIO681425 Frosty Station	\$48.99
LIO681428 Frosty Boxcar	\$40.99
LIO681985 Christmas Mail Boxcar	\$44.99
LIO681990 Gondola w. Reindeer Feed	\$47.99
LIO682000 PRR Christmas Crane	\$55.99
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LIO682003 Christmas Water Tower	\$25.99
<b>LIO682005 Christmas Clock w. Wreath</b>	<b>\$28.99</b>
LIO682053 North Pole Central Ice Car	\$56.99
LIO682699 Angela Thomas 2015 Boxcar	\$55.99
LIO682736 North Pole Central Water Twr	\$29.99
LIO682739 North Pole Central 6464 Box	\$59.99
LIO682740 Winter Wonderland Aqua Car	\$71.99
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LIO682742 Candy Mountain 4 Bay Hopper	\$48.99
LIO682743 Santa Reindeer Station	\$37.49
LIO682746 Christmas Floodlight Tower	\$56.99
LIO682748 Silver Bell Casting	\$52.99
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LIO682954 2016 Christmas Boxcar	\$49.99
LIO683164 Frosty Belly Whopper Tank	\$44.99
LIO683176 Christmas Caboose	\$55.99
LIO683177 Angela Trotta Caboose	\$59.99
LIO683191 Snow Transport Tank Car	\$63.99
LIO683284 Peekaboo Reindeer Stockcar	\$55.99
LIO683291 Christmas Half Covered Bridge	\$52.99
LIO683292 Cookies & Candies Store	\$67.99
LIO683305 Winters Covered Bridge 24"	\$62.99
LIO683311 Egg Nog Reefer	\$48.99
LIO683312 Cookies Vat Car	\$52.99
LIO683313 Reindeer Express Flat w. Trailer	\$52.99
LIO683315 Christmas Toy Stock Car	\$59.99
LIO683316 Santa's Sleigh Aquarium Car	\$59.99
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LIO683777 Elf Boxcar	\$63.99
LIO683923 Angela Trotta Cookies Boxcar	\$63.99
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LIO922012 1942 Catalog Ornament	\$9.99
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LIO933044 Lionel Railroad Clock	\$29.99
LIO941028 Lionel Neon 15" Clock	\$127.99
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LIO942024 Lionel "L" Marquee Sign	\$164.99
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LIO682020 Burning Switch Tower	\$97.99
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LIO683634 Keystone Smoke Fluid Loader	\$262.99
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<b>LIO630191 Sodor Work Train 3 Pk</b>	<b>\$64.99</b>
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### Rolling Stock

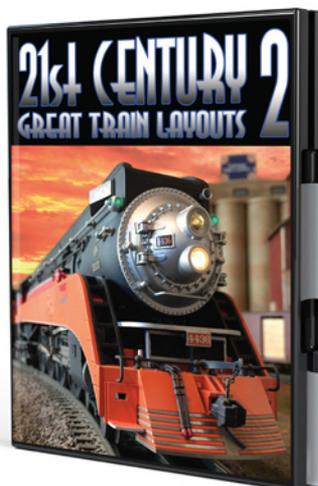
LIO684312 Alaska Gondola w. Canisters	\$42.99
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# PRODUCT NEWS

WITH BOB KELLER



**ADD SOME COLOR TO YOUR STREETS:** MTH is offering four new O gauge PCC streetcar road names in colors sure to please. These include the nos. 30-5163-1 Philadelphia Suburban Transit red car (shown), 30-5165-1 Kansas City Public Service beige PCC, 30-5164-1 San Francisco blue-and-yellow streetcar, and 30-5166-1 Illinois Terminal green-and-white PCC. The cars cost \$259.95 each. See your MTH retailer or go to [www.mthtrains.com](http://www.mthtrains.com) for more information.



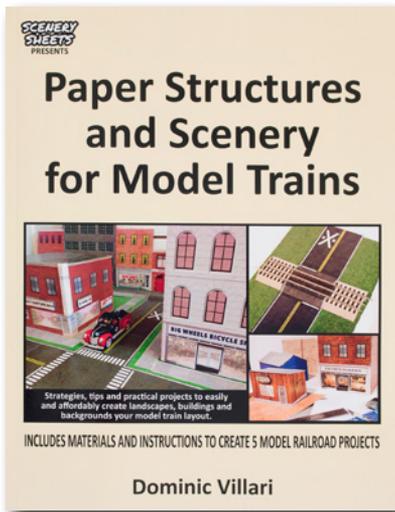
## MODERN LAYOUTS AND TODAY'S TECHNIQUES:

TM Books & Video continues its coverage of contemporary O gauge layouts with *21st Century Great Train Layouts 2*. Four modern layouts are profiled in the 60-minute DVD, which costs \$14.99. All the layouts feature scale details and authentic scenery while illustrating the varied approaches to O gauge model railroading in this century. See your hobby retailer or go to [www.tmbv.com](http://www.tmbv.com) to order.





**IN STORES NOW:** Menards is stocking an assortment of 14 new boxcar road names for the holidays. Shown here are four cars from the group: Chessie System (B&O), Illinois Central, and Milwaukee Road (all shown above) and Baltimore & Ohio, Norfolk & Western, and Santa Fe (Santa Fe shown at right). The O gauge cars cost \$19.99 each plus shipping. See all the road names at your local Menards store. Live far away from Menards? Order online at [www.Menards.com/trains](http://www.Menards.com/trains).



**PAPER POWER:** Using paper for structures and scenery is a time-honored skill in the toy train world, and Scenery Sheets wants to introduce you to the craft. *Paper Structures and Scenery for Model Trains* explores the tools, skills, and strategy for using paper on your layout. It also contains instructions and material for five projects to help you develop your technique. The 96-page book costs \$19.99 plus shipping. Also from Scenery Sheets are background kits of paper products representing scenery, structures, or elements such as fieldstones and cobblestones. Sheets are available in packs of five for \$9.99 or packs of 10 for \$15.99 plus shipping. For more information, visit [www.scenerysheets.com](http://www.scenerysheets.com).

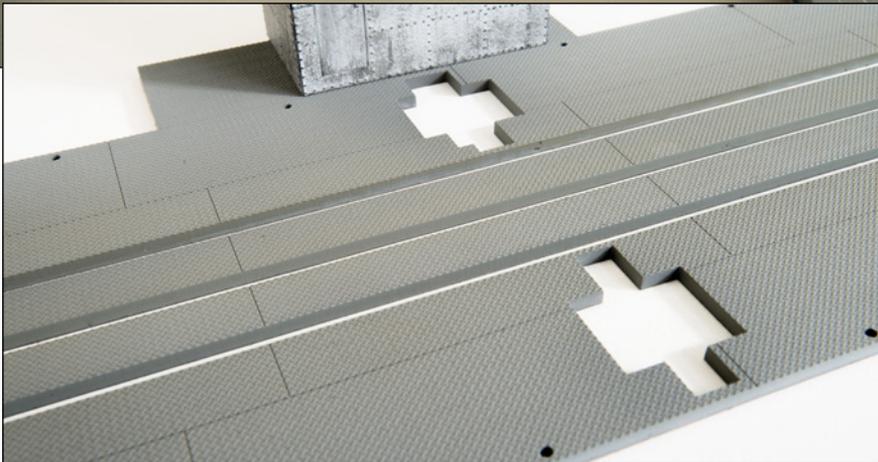
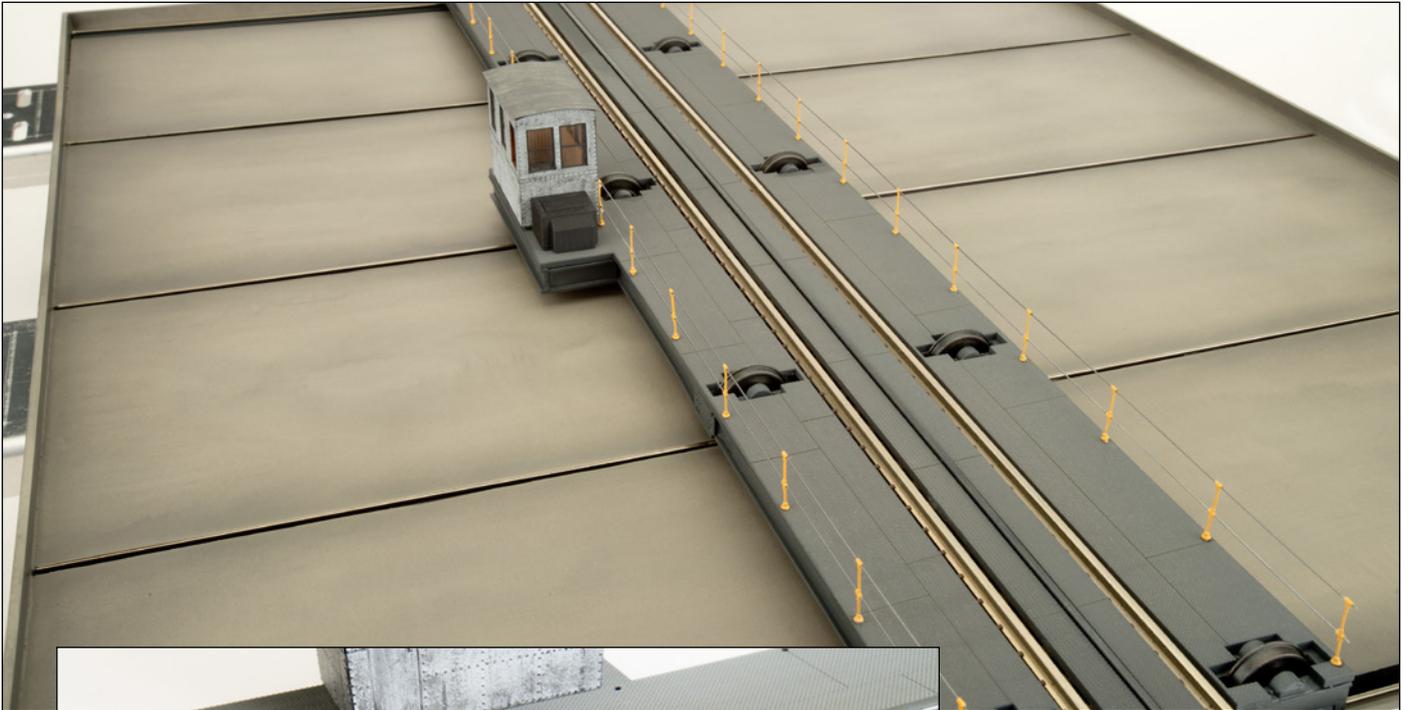


**LOGOMANIA:** Menards has released five famous railroad heralds for your train room. The full-color emblems are made from wood and feature (top to bottom) the nos. 279-3766 Santa Fe, 279-3763 Milwaukee Road, 279-3765 Chicago & North Western, 279-3762 New York Central, 279-3761 Pennsylvania RR, and 279-3764 Union Pacific. The heralds cost \$9.99 each plus shipping. Check your local Menards or order online at [www.Menards.com/trains](http://www.Menards.com/trains) and opt for free shipment to your local Menards store.



**SUNNY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN:** The latest mobile home from Woodland Scenics is the no. BR5863 Sunny Days Trailer. The colorful O gauge structure has multiple awnings, a TV antenna, wood railings, and details that include chairs, a table, and a trash can. The structure comes with interior and exterior LED lighting and is designed to be used with the Just Plug lighting system. The structure costs \$94.99. Go to [www.woodlandscenics.com](http://www.woodlandscenics.com) for more information.

## PRODUCT NEWS



**DECKED OUT:** Millhouse River Studios has a new fix for heavy metal maniacs: A new diamond plate deck and riveted cab option for their transfer table. This allows operators of modern gear an option for a transfer table with a more up-to-date appearance. This is a new option for the table and is a \$100 upgrade. For more information, go to [www.studiozphoto.com/millhouse.html](http://www.studiozphoto.com/millhouse.html).



**COLORFUL CARGO CARRIERS:** Two new vehicles added to the Menards vehicle fleet are the nos. 279-4212 Penske rental truck and 279-4214 Jack Link's delivery truck. The die-cast metal and plastic vehicles are 1:48 scale and cost \$9.99 each. Check your local Menards store or order online at [www.Menards.com/trains](http://www.Menards.com/trains).

# TO ORDER, VISIT [MENARDS.COM/TRAINS](http://MENARDS.COM/TRAINS)

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279-4260	Norfolk Southern (Gray)	\$19.99
279-4262	Norfolk and Western	\$19.99
279-3981	Southern Pacific	\$19.99
279-3983	The Rock	\$19.99
279-3985	Union Pacific	\$19.99
279-3884	Great Northern (Green)	\$19.99
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279-3888	New York Central Pacemaker	\$19.99
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279-3816	Penn Central	\$19.99
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279-3832	Great Northern (Blue)	\$19.99
279-2619	Rail Box	\$19.99
279-3066	Alaska	\$19.99
279-3067	Chesapeake & Ohio	\$19.99
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279-2641	Pennsylvania with Maintenance Truck	\$19.99
279-2642	Soo Line with Maintenance Truck	\$19.99
279-2643	Union Pacific with Maintenance Truck	\$19.99
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279-3050	Union Pacific with Two U.P. Panel Trucks	\$24.99
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279-3688	Container Car with Two Containers	\$49.99
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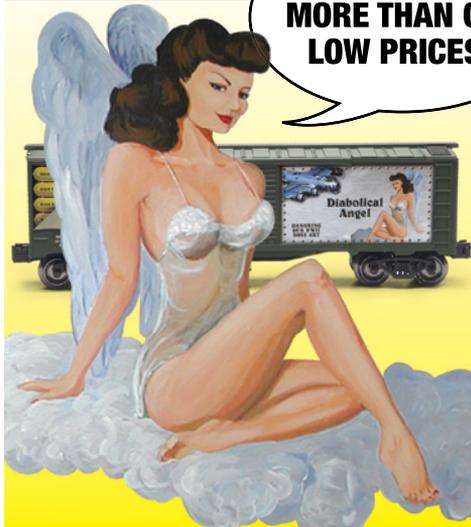


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279-3065	Alaska Coal Hopper	\$19.99
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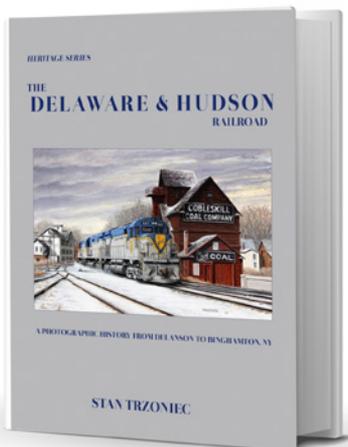


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## ADD A TRACTION TIRE TO A POSTWAR STEAMER

**Q** I have a Lionel postwar no. 2020 turbine steam engine, which was made before the addition of Magne-Traction. Although my locomotive is a good puller, it tends to spin out when I apply power to start it. Is there a type of traction tire I can install on one of the drive wheels to give it better starting traction? –

*Mitchell Rebeck, Millersburg, Pa.*

**A** A properly serviced O gauge locomotive should start to move at around 7 or 8 volts on its own and at a slightly higher voltage with a string of cars. If it requires more current, there may be a problem similar to what happens when you start



to apply power. It may also be dirty wheels or track. Or you may be trying to pull too much. Are the wheels on the cars clean and properly oiled?

Locomotives with traction tires have a groove in the wheel for the tire to sit in. It serves two purposes. It keeps the tire from sliding off, and it compensates for the thickness of

the tire, keeping all the wheels (with and without tires) the same diameter.

While there are instances where a tire can be stretched over a non-grooved wheel, it is difficult to do with the turbines. The clearance between the wheel treads is very small.

Adding a tire (depending on the thickness) will cause it

to rub on the adjacent wheel. Also it will make that wheel higher and lift the other wheels off the track.

### TRUCK SWAPPING

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20-3628-1	PRR Atlantic Pass Set	899.99

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20-3024-1	N&W J Steam Locomotive	599.99
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20-2152-3	L+N F3 A-B-B-A	549.99
20-2152-4	L+N F3 A-B-B-A - All For	549.99
20-2055-1	UP F3 A-B-A	499.99
20-2055-3	UP F3 A-B-A - Both For	499.99
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20-80006B	CN SD70M-2	499.99
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20-80003B	NH F-3 ABA	599.99
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20-80003A	BNSF GS-4	999.99
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20-40020	Alaska 5 Car Madison	399.99
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20-65256	Alaska ABS 5 Car Set	299.99
20-66279	C+O 2 Car Pass Set	149.99
20-41027	LIRR 2 Car Madison	149.99
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20-40023	NYC 5 Car Madison	399.99
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20-2283-3	R-32 2 Car Add-On	299.99

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# QUESTIONS • ANSWERS

**A** Yes, that little plate has to come out, because the screw comes down from the top of it. I have not worked on one of these trucks for a long time. I recall the plate having tabs out toward the



sides of the car as well as the two pointing toward the end. Spreading the sides slightly one side at a time and getting them to release may work.

If the sole issue is the springs, it may prove easier to

just take them from the new truck and put them in the old truck without removing it. The springs simply “spring” into place. It is easier to put them in the pocket in the top of the bolster first and bring it over the pin in the bottom of the truck side. A small pair of pointed tweezers works well for that.

## TOO MUCH JUICE?

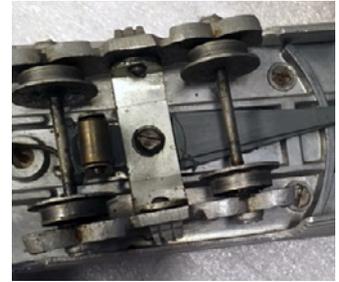
**Q** Can you use a 24-volt transformer to power accessories? I know it’s not advisable for motive power but what about the accessories?  
– Ed Studinarz, Kodiak, Alaska

**A** When you say 24 volts I’m assuming it is a constant 24 volts and not variable as high as 24. For most practical reasons it’s not

advisable. Most accessories and even lights were designed to operate at a level substantially below that. Lionel accessories from the postwar period were designed with an operating range of 12-14 volts. Some use a little more, some a little less, but nothing approaching 24 volts.

## AMT COUPLER INSTALL

**Q** I bought a couple of AMT passenger cars. One has a broken coupler. I have a replacement AMT coupler. Can I install it by just unscrewing the truck from the bottom and swapping it out, or do I need to open the shell to dismount the truck



from the inside? – Charles Fenton, Little Rock, Ark.

**A** The screw you can see when you flip the car over goes into a threaded hole in the die-cast metal frame. You need to remove the screw, swap parts, and screw it back together. **CTT**

**HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT OPERATING NEW OR OLD TOY TRAINS?** Write “Questions & Answers” on your letter and mail it to Classic Toy Trains, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612, or email us at [qsandas@ClassicToyTrains.com](mailto:qsandas@ClassicToyTrains.com) and put the words “questions & answers” in the subject line.

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### Atlas O

#### Zephyr Passenger Cars

Baggage Car - Amtrak #1002, #1004, WP Silver  
Beaver, Reg 160 SALE 150  
Dome Chair Car - DRGW Silver Pony, DRGW Silver  
Bronco, Reg 160 SALE 150  
Sleeper - Amtrak 16-Section #4807 Silver Cedar,  
Amtrak 6-5 #2200 Silver Dove, Amtrak #2202 Silver  
Thrush, Reg 150 SALE 140  
Dome Observation - Amtrak #9250 Silver Horizon,  
Amtrak #9252 Silver Solarium, Unlettered  
Reg 160 SALE 150  
Dome Observation w/ Conductor’s Window - Alaska  
#7021, Amtrak Silver Rifle, CB&Q Silver Rifle, DRGW  
Silver Colt, WP Silver Sage, Unlettered  
Reg 160 SALE 150  
Dome Chair Car - Alaska #7032, Alaska #7034, Amtrak  
Silver Saddle, CB&Q Silver Lariat, CB&Q Silver Bridle,  
DRGW Silver Bronco, DRGW Silver Pony, WP Silver  
Dollar, WP Silver Feather  
Reg 160 SALE 150  
Dorm-Buffer-Lounge - Amtrak Silver Club, Amtrak  
Silver Lounge, CB&Q Silver Roundup, CB&Q Silver  
Lounge, DRGW Silver Shop, WP Silver Hostel  
Reg 160 SALE 150



### Atlas O

#### Diesel Locomotives

0405-1 SSW RSD-4/5 #270, Reg 230 SALE 188  
0406-1 SSW RSD-4/5 #271, Reg 230 SALE 188  
0430-1 SSW RSD-4 #270 TMCC, Reg 370 SALE 305  
0431-1 SSW RSD-4 #271 TMCC, Reg 370 SALE 305



1298-1 BNSF GP60B TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 417  
1428-2 SP GP-9 TMCC, Reg 530 SALE 500  
1618-2 ATSF F-3B TMCC, Reg 480 SALE 425  
1626 Undec F-3A TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 470  
1628 Undec F-3B TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 470  
1645-2 CNJ F-3A #56 TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 470  
20021018 C&O U23B Conv., Reg 250 SALE 225  
20021025 ATSF U23B Conv., Reg 250 SALE 225  
20031027 WP U23B TMCC, Reg 400 SALE 370



30134008 PRR F7A 9764A TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 470  
30134009 PRR F7A 9782A TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 470  
30134023 PRR F7B 9764B TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 470  
30134024 PRR F7B 9782B TMCC, Reg 500 SALE 470

### Atlas O

#### Freight Cars

2002605 TTX 62’ Flatcar 2 #s, Reg 53 SALE 48  
2002610 NS 68’ Flatcar w/Load 2 #s, Reg 65 SALE 60  
2002614 TTX 68’ Flat w/Load 2 #s, Reg 65 SALE 60



3001120 KYLE 5161 Hopper 3 #s, Reg 90 SALE 82  
3001126 CSX 5161 Hopper 2 #s, Reg 110 SALE 102  
3001128 RG 5161 Hopper 4 #s, Reg 110 SALE 102



3001264 BNSF Caboose 2 #s, Reg 80 SALE 75  
3001265 MKT Bicentennial Caboose, Reg 80 SALE 75  
3001266 ARR Caboose 2 #s Reg 80 SALE 75  
3003601 GN Caboose 2 #s, Reg 80 SALE 75  
3003603 NS Caboose 2 #s, Reg 80 SALE 69  
3003604 NP Caboose 2 #s, Reg 80 SALE 75  
3003605 NS Caboose, Reg 80 SALE 75  
3005201 DOD 89’ Flatcar 2 #s, Reg 115 SALE 105  
3005208 ARR 89’ Flatcar 4 #s, Reg 115 SALE 105

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February 3-4 • Costa Mesa, CA Orange County Fairgrounds	
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# COLLECTIBLE CLASSICS

WITH ROGER CARP



Set courtesy Dennis Bagby

This original example of American Flyer's no. 20435 Meteor steam freight set from 1958 features a rare five-digit (no. 25031) action caboose. The nos. 24216 Union Pacific hopper and 24419 Canadian National refrigerator car were new that year.

## AMERICAN FLYER'S NO. 20435 METEOR TRAIN SET

Deciding components of sets had to be the best assignment at a toy train company. The primary factor behind the selections was to create appealing combinations of engines and cars at a variety of price points. It was crucial to offer customers sets any of them could afford, no matter how modest their household budget.

An example of how decision makers at the A.C. Gilbert Co. sought to make up S gauge sets was the no. 20435 Meteor. Gilbert added that four-car steam freight to its American Flyer line in 1958, when demand for electric trains had started to decline across the U.S.

### New and old together

Top brass developed sets aware they had different steam

engines to use – from the 4-4-2 Atlantic and 4-6-2 Pacific to the 4-6-4 Hudson and 4-8-4 Challenger. Diesels followed a similar spectrum, although a set could be made better by adding a non-powered version.

Sales executives envisioned the 20435 as falling near the low to middle side in price among the 18 sets planned for the cataloged line in 1958. Three sets ended up with prices less than \$30, and three sold for more than \$80. The 20435 was announced in the catalog as having a price of \$44.95.

### Meteor's contents

On the point of the four-car freight was Gilbert's top Pacific. The no. 21099 had Pull-Mor power, a smoke mechanism with "choo-choo" sound, and True-Tone electronic whistle.

Its tender came lettered for American Flyer Lines with the insignia of the New York, New Haven & Hartford RR. The K5 steamer and tender, if purchased separately, were listed in the catalog at \$39.95.

The three cars proved to be a curious blend of new and old. New were the nos. 24216 Union Pacific three-bay hopper and 24419 Canadian National refrigerator car.

Next rolled a single-dome tank car. The no. 24316 Mobilgas model grabbed attention, thanks to its red body with white graphics. Yet as with every tanker, there was little a kid could do with it.

Finishing the train was an illuminated action caboose. Virtually every reported example of the 20435 had the earlier version of the action caboose

(numbered 977). Only a few had the new one designated 25031 – so few, in fact, that the five-digit action cabooses are considered rare.

### Still worth owning

The 20435 Meteor promised an excellent locomotive and a lot of play value for \$44.95 (\$379.42 in today's dollars). Yet for \$2.45 less, a Flyer fan could take home the no. 20430 Sunshine Special, a five-car freight led by a Texas & Pacific GP7. – Roger Carp

*The Gilbert Co. cataloged set no. 20435 in 1958. The third volume of Greenberg's Guide to American Flyer S Gauge (1992) values examples with the no. 977 action caboose at \$400 in very good condition and \$710 in excellent.*

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M11-40014	Std. Gauge State Baggage Car	\$399.95	\$399.00
M11-40015	Std. Gauge State Coach Car	\$399.95	\$399.00
M11-40016	Std. Gauge Solarium State Car	\$399.95	\$399.00



Pennsylvania (Tuscan Brown)		MSRP	Sidetrack
Item	Description		
M11-2039-1	Std. Gauge Super 381 Electric Engine w/PS 3.0	\$1,299.95	\$1,149.00
M11-40103	3-Car Std. Gauge State Set	\$1,199.95	\$1,099.00
M11-40104	Std. Gauge State Solarium Car	\$399.95	\$359.00
M11-40105	Std. Gauge State Coach Car	\$399.95	\$359.00
M11-40106	Std. Gauge State Baggage Car	\$399.95	\$359.00



Two-Tone Brown		MSRP	Sidetrack
Item	Description		
M11-2040-1	Std. Gauge Super 381 Electric Engine w/PS 3.0	\$1,299.95	\$1,149.00
M11-40107	3-Car Std. Gauge State Set	\$1,199.95	\$1,099.00
M11-40108	Std. Gauge State Solarium Car	\$399.95	\$359.00
M11-40109	Std. Gauge State Coach Car	\$399.95	\$359.00
M11-40110	Std. Gauge State Baggage Car	\$399.95	\$359.00



New Haven (McGinnis)		MSRP	Sidetrack
Item	Description		
M11-2041-1	Std. Gauge Super 381 Electric Engine w/PS 3.0	\$1,299.95	\$1,149.00
M11-40115	3-Car Std. Gauge State Set	\$1,199.95	\$1,099.00
M11-40116	Std. Gauge State Solarium Car	\$399.95	\$359.00
M11-40117	Std. Gauge State Coach Car	\$399.95	\$359.00
M11-40118	Std. Gauge State Baggage Car	\$399.95	\$359.00



Great Northern American Flyer 4696 Set		MSRP	Sidetrack
Item	Description		
M11-1042-1	4696 Steam Engine w/PS 3.0	\$999.95	\$879.00
M11-40111	3-Car Std. Gauge Presidential Set	\$1,199.95	\$1,099.00
M11-40112	Std. Gauge Presidential Diner Car	\$399.95	\$359.00

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Lehigh Valley American Flyer 4696 Set		MSRP	Sidetrack
Item	Description		
M11-1043-1	4696 Steam Engine w/PS 3.0	\$999.95	\$879.00
M11-40113	3-Car Std. Gauge Presidential Set	\$1,199.95	\$1,099.00
M11-40114	Std. Gauge Presidential Diner Car	\$399.95	\$359.00

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## VIEWS FROM THE UNDERGROUND

WITH LOU PALUMBO

# A time to every purpose

THE VALUE OF AN INVENTORY AND INSURANCE

**T**o everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."

These are the opening lyrics of one of my favorite songs, *Turn, Turn, Turn*, recorded by The Byrds in 1965.

The holiday season has arrived at last – the best time of the year for toy train hobbyists. At the beginning of every year I'm reminded of that tune, which folk singer Pete Seeger based on words found in the Book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible.

Seeing the calendar change and January open has a similar effect on me as hearing *Turn, Turn, Turn*. It serves as a reminder to regroup and plan for the coming year.

The top priority for every toy train enthusiast involves making a complete inventory of every item in his or her collection. Following through on this necessary if challenging task will guarantee peace of mind and help your family.

Why am I adamant about a detailed inventory of every piece in your collection? Because doing so is the critical step leading to properly insuring a collection. Without adequately protecting your trains, you put yourself and family at risk.

Anyone who is doubting the wisdom of my advice or procrastinating about making an inventory and getting adequate insurance should listen to what happened to a customer of mine.

This individual had spent years assembling a large collection of "high-end" sets and locomotives from the post-war era. Most of the items were in like-new or mint condition and came with their original boxes. Naturally, he enjoyed displaying what he had worked to collect. Shelves filled the walls of his train room and elsewhere in the home.

This gentleman's home had a large crawl space under a first-floor addition that was accessible from the basement. He carefully insulated that space. He went out of his way to limit moisture and heat. He knew this area had to be perfectly climate controlled.



This was where he "safely" stored all the original boxes from his collection.

Months passed before he returned to the storage space to check on the boxes. He opened the door and found a moldy, wet, sopping mess of ruined cardboard!

The cardboard boxes were so wet and moldy, this collector told me, many had to be scooped out of the storage area and placed in plastic bags for removal.

Turns out a refrigerator equipped with an ice maker on the first floor used a water supply line located along the top of

**The top priority for every toy train enthusiast involves making a complete inventory of every item in his or her collection.**

the storage space. The line had developed pinhole leak and sprayed a fine mist over the area before it finally was discovered.

Luckily, the collector had insurance for his train collection. His only concern was figuring out how to determine the value of the dozens of destroyed boxes.

I got to work helping him – and that wasn't an easy task. Boxes for like-new to mint trains vary in value. There's no price list. We had to research all the items.

Between the two of us we managed to come up with an itemized list and submitted it to his insurance company.

Even though my customer did end up being paid for the loss, he was deeply hurt because many of the boxes were irreplaceable. In fact, his interest in collecting took a big hit. These days, he focuses on collecting newer trains, since they are easier to replace.

Frankly, this was not the first time I had heard of water damage caused by leaking refrigerator lines in a basement.

Many people have constructed their O or S gauge layouts there – with skinny water lines going across the ceiling and leading to an upstairs refrigerator. Always check these lines, as it does not take long for an overhead water leak to do extensive damage to various collectibles.

One more tip: even after you have acquired insurance on your trains, remember you need to regularly updated

the inventory because prices change. That means the costs of replacing what is in your collection change as well, especially for vintage pieces.

This holiday season is a good time to reflect on the past year and plan for the new one. With planning and care, you can always enjoy the best hobby in the world.

“A time to every purpose.”  
Happy holidays and keep searchin’ **CTD**

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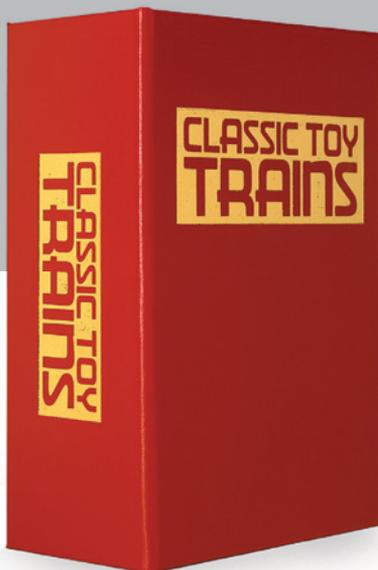
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P29432



A Lionel no. D-146 display has become a regular part of every Christmas for Jay Zalewski and his family since his dad brought it home in 1955. Jay's daughter was only two when she was watching her dad's postwar trains run in 1969.

### Focus on classics

# GIFT FROM LIONEL

JAY ZALEWSKI'S  
DAD CARTED  
HOME A  
COMPLETE  
LAYOUT  
IN 1955

By Roger Carp

Just about every member of the toy train hobby can recall with a smile his or her very first train. Proof of how much folks cherish the opportunity to look back at their first toy train touched us at *Classic Toy Trains* during the past year. We asked readers to share their memories and pictures of the trains they played with as youngsters.

For some writers, a Marx or American Flyer set provided the excitement. Others described a Lionel outfit. But Jay Zalewski upped the ante in a neat way. Or, more accurately, his father did.

For Christmas of 1955, William Zalewski presented his son with not just a Lionel set, but an entire layout constructed at the Lionel plant.

Jay, who had celebrated his eighth birthday earlier in 1955, became the owner of a Lionel

display. Before his eyes stood a small rail empire consisting of track, signals, stations, and freight loaders. He played with the 4 x 8-foot O gauge layout throughout his youth and then passed it along to his kids and now their children.

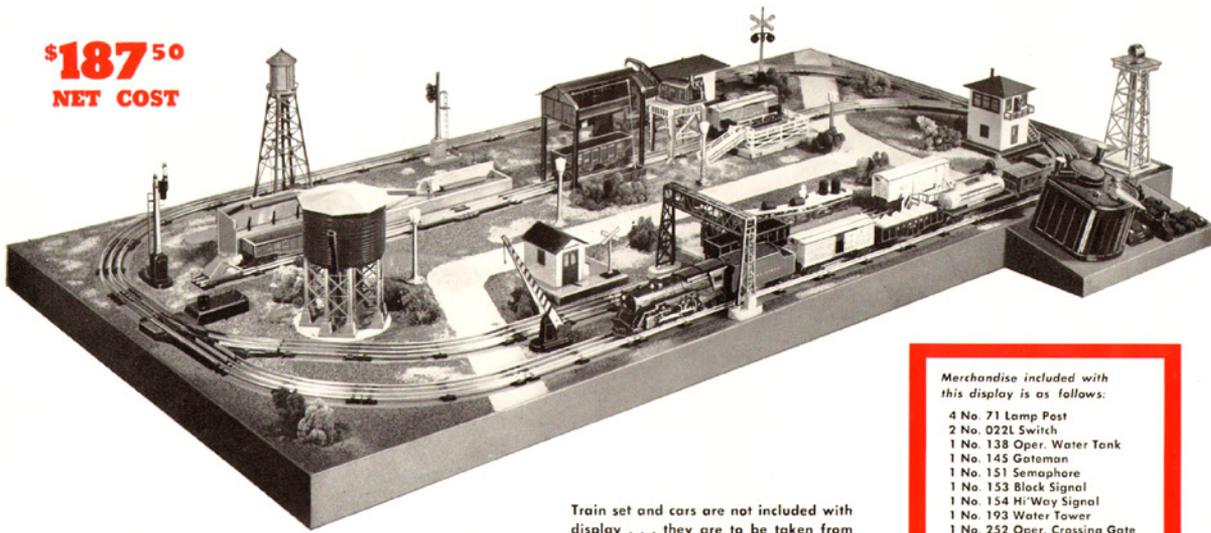
### Lionel's use of displays

By the time Jay got his Christmas gift in 1955, the trend of Lionel developing unique displays, including layouts, to promote sales of its trains and accessories had deep roots. Since the 1910s, the largest manufacturer of electric trains in the U.S. had offered retail accounts special items so they could boost their profit margin by demonstrating sets to potential consumers.

Displays had become in the late prewar and early postwar eras basic parts of the marketing

# LIONEL TRAIN DISPLAY D-146

**\$187<sup>50</sup>**  
NET COST



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**AN EXCITING DISPLAY – SURE TO  
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- 1 No. 193 Water Tower
- 1 No. 252 Oper. Crossing Gate
- 2 No. 260 Ill. Bumper
- 1 No. 282 Op. Crane
- 1 No. 356 Op. Frit. Station
- 1 No. 362 Op. Barrel Loader
- 1 No. 364 Log Conveyor
- 1 No. 494 Rotating Beacon
- 1 No. 445 Op. Switch Tower
- 1 No. 450 Over. Sig. Bridge
- 1 No. 497 Cooling Station
- 1 No. 3462P Platform Milk
- 1 No. 3656-150 Corral Platform
- 1 No. KW 190 Watts Transformer
- 9 No. OC Curved Track
- 21 No. OS Straight Track
- 2 No. O55 Ins. Straight Track
- 2 No. UCS R. C. Track Set
- 1 No. OCS Ins. Curved Track
- 2 No. 1/2 OS 1/2 Sec. Straight Track

Lionel announced the D-146 as one of its three new layouts for 1955 in a catalog available to dealers, including Horst Electric in Chambersburg, Pa. The 4 x 8-foot O gauge display had accessories and accommodated two operating cars.

campaigns created by the Advertising Department each year. Executives had depended on employees at their plant and at outside firms to design countertop and window displays and small layouts.

The role of displays grew after Lionel marked its 50th anniversary in 1950. As explained in *Lionel Trains: Best Store Displays and Layouts* (a special-interest publication put out by *Classic Toy Trains* in 2015) carpenters and electricians with the Display Department constructed dozens of O-27 and O gauge layouts.

Typically in the 1950s, the workers came up with three new layouts and a countertop or window item every year. They did so early enough in the production year that members of Lionel's sales team were able to show the proposed displays to clients, who would then place their orders.

As a consequence of the timing, the new layouts could feature only items available during the previous year. In other words, accessories Lionel planned

to introduce in, say, 1956, were not going to be ready in time to be installed on the layouts pictured in the special display catalog printed during the first months of 1956. Therefore, the latest signals, loaders, and so forth shown were from 1955.

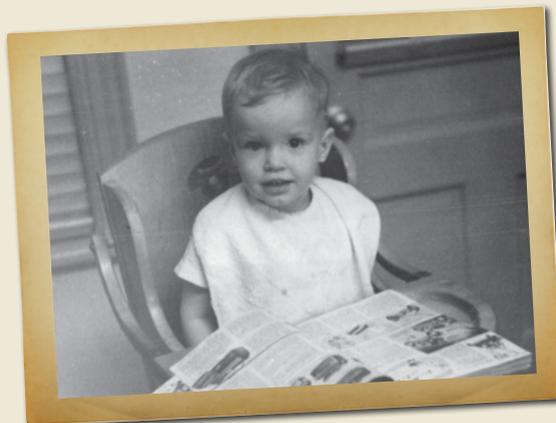
## One store's inventory

For 1955, Lionel offered a trio of new layouts, one new and one old stationary window displays, and three merchandise

assortments of trains and accessories. Retailers could read about them in an eight-page two-color display catalog.

A copy of that catalog was delivered to the owner of an electrical supply and hardware store in Chambersburg, a borough in south central Pennsylvania. The business, established by Enos H. Horst in the early 1930s, carried a variety of electrical equipment and parts, hardware, paint, and even farm implements and seeds. Like similar businesses throughout Pennsylvania and neighboring states during the postwar era, it stocked and repaired electric trains.

According to Tom Burkey, who worked alongside his father-in-law, Enos Horst (son of the founder and the store's owner after World War



**The smile on Jay's face as he held a Christmas catalog from Sears, Roebuck & Co. hardly compared with his grin years later when he saw his new D-146 layout.**

II), the business sold Lionel and American Flyer until the mid-1950s. Then it was a Lionel dealer. Horst Electric continued to stock and repair trains into the 1990s.

Among the regular customers at Horst Electric was a local architect named William Zalewski – Jay’s father. He had introduced Lionel railroading to his only son three years earlier, when he had bought a low-end outfit. Jay recalled his first train consisting of a Scout locomotive and tender, a gondola, and a caboose.

A couple years later, probably in 1954, Mr. Zalewski had nailed an oval of three-rail track to a 4 x 8-foot sheet of plywood to make for his son a basic layout. Something larger and grander represented the logical next step for the family.

During the autumn of 1955, William Zalewski walked into Horst Electric and explained his wish to buy a nicer Lionel train for his family. He ended up contemplating something bigger than any set shown in the new consumer catalog.

What evidently caught Mr. Zalewski’s attention was the no. D-146, the smallest of the three layouts available from Lionel. The incredible assortment of accessories wired to the painted platform must have amazed him, overcoming the fact that Lionel did not include any locomotives and cars with its display layouts.

### Brand-new 4 x 8 display

The special catalog described the D-146 as an “action packed island-type display [showing] operation of train and a number of accessories – fascinating 4 x 8 foot landscaped platform – completely wired for operation – control panel with transformer operates train, switches and remote control accessories.”

For \$187.50, the purchaser of a D-146 got a compact O gauge railroad featuring one main line and two sidings. Those interior tracks, each entered via a no. 022 switch, ended with no. 260 illuminated bumper. They were perfect for shifting freight cars alongside a few of the most interesting operating accessories.

Along the layout’s perimeter were five mainstays: nos. 151 semaphore, 153 block signal, 154 highway flasher, 252 crossing gate, and 494 rotating beacon. Nearby stood nos. 138 operating water tower, 145 automatic gateman, 193 industrial water tower, 356 operating freight station, and 445 switch tower.

Yet the true highlights of the D-146 could be seen in the middle. They

**Horst Electric, established by Enos H. Horst in the 1930s, occupied this storefront at 124 Lincoln Way West in Chambersburg until Tom Burkey decided to close it in 1996.**

Photo courtesy Franklin County Historical Society, Chambersburg, Pa.

included nos. 282 gantry crane, 362 barrel loader, 364 conveyor-type log loader, and 497 coaling station.

Platforms used with two great operating cars – the nos. 3482 milk car and 3656 stockcar – promised more fun.

### What a gift!

And fun was exactly what Jay recalled more than half a century after his father bestowed upon him the finest gift any Lionel enthusiast could imagine.

“My older sister, Linda, and I played with the layout all the time,” Jay remembered. “We used to operate the different accessories together after we had backed the train into the two sidings.” After New Year’s, they had to pack it up.

What’s curious is that Jay got the display layout in time for Christmas of 1955 and not afterward. He was, in addition, certain about the year, because for Christmas of 1956 he received the new no. 2368 Baltimore & Ohio F3 diesels.

Based on Jay’s recollections, Horst Electric had sold the D-146 before Christmas to his dad rather than using it in the store. As he stated, the display “came in a wood and cardboard crate that we kept for many years to store it.”

Jay’s father must have learned about the display through Horst Electric, which ordered it from Lionel for him to take home for his family. Far from Lionel’s usual practice yet within possibility.

### Still treasured

Jay reports being overwhelmed by the



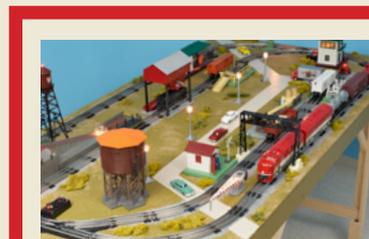
D-146. He initially used his little Scout freight train with it, in spite of lacking the operating cattle, log, and milk cars needed to work with three of the accessories installed on the display.

Over the next few years, Jay remedied that situation by expanding his roster of Lionel rolling stock. He bought a Baby Ruth boxcar and a Sunoco single-dome tank car with money earned by mowing lawns in his neighborhood.

Better yet, Jay won a \$25 gift certificate to Uptown Toys in Chambersburg by entering his B&O F3 diesels in a local competition to see whose Lionel trains were the fastest. He took home first place, immediately using his prize money to buy a no. 3356 operating horse car and corral and a no. 3662 operating milk car.

Jay eventually replaced the 3656 operating stockyard originally wired to his D-146 with the corral necessary to enjoy the operating horse car. Otherwise, he refused to modify the display he treasured it for the rest of the 1950s. Indeed, after New Year’s, he would pack it away carefully until the next holiday season.

Taking such good care of the 4 x 8-foot O gauge railroad means Jay was able to pass it along to his children when they were young. These days, the next generation spends part of each Christmas operating the accessories and running the post-war and modern Lionel trains belonging to Jay, who’s now Grandpa. **CTT**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION** Lionel’s D-146 display was the basis for a project layout built by the staff of *Classic Toy Trains*. To learn about the display and how to construct and wire your own version, check out the articles printed in the November and December 2012 and January through March 2013 issues of CTT.





# PLUNGE INTO MODELING WATER

ADDING A HARBOR, LAKE,  
CREEK, OR RIVER IS **EASIER**  
THAN YOU THINK

Story and photos by Jay Marshall Cain

**M**ost readers of *Classic Toy Trains* know that modeling mountains and forests is easier and more enjoyable than they originally thought. Although worried, they plunged ahead and created wonderful scenes.

But many left out water. Something about making a lake or pond, a river or harbor, seems difficult. Let me show how simple and fun modeling water can be.

## It's everywhere

Realistic model railroads, whether they have two-rail or three-rail track, should have a pond, stream, or waterfall. After all, water is everywhere. Most of the surface of our planet is covered by water. Why, even our bodies are mostly water (about 75 percent, scientists tell us). Water is essential to every kind of life.

Water takes on importance for toy train operators for yet another reason. It looks fascinating and improves every scene with beauty and interest. People viewing our home layouts, regardless of how big or small, are drawn to areas where they notice shimmering water or waves.

## Success is eight steps away

My experience building O gauge railroads for myself and others has taught me to think before I dive in (sorry about the pun!). There are several steps in the preparation of your scenes that precede the addition of whatever modeling material you're going to use to simulate water.

**Jay's 12 x 30-foot O gauge model railroad features a breath-taking naval facility and harbor. The steps he has outlined here for detailing a large depression and then adding water effects, ships, and more can be used by any layout builder.**



**What a shot of a tugboat churning full speed ahead on Jay's layout! The contact between the still water and the waves created by the boat fascinates. So do the reflections of the helicopters, piers, and rocks caught by the water he modeled.**

Generally, I begin by thinking about how the final body of water on my layout would look if it were drained on the surface of the earth. I do this regardless of whether I am modeling a pond, lake, stream river, puddle or harbor.

Once I have that vision in mind, I get to work. Here are the eight steps I follow. Again, years of experience have shown me the wisdom of the sequence.

**1** Form a well-supported depression in the designated area. You need to make everything, from the banks along the perimeter of the body of water to the center. You must imagine what the

shallowest parts as well as the deepest areas would look like.

**2** Add details intended to make the body of water seem alive and active. I have in mind piers and bridge abutments, fields of debris, and aquatic plant life. Don't forget models of boats and ships. You can't rely on clear styrene boat cradles to hold ship models at the proper water line height. You must calculate the exact depth of the water rising around the hull of your ship or boat. The hull is at a fixed height, and the water has to look correct as to its displacement; otherwise, the vessel will appear to be sinking!



**How often do modelers remember to paint rust stains wherever water ebbs against seawalls? Or lay flat stones in the shallow depths of harbors? Touches such as these enhance Jay's O gauge layout and cause viewers to linger by the large harbor.**

Later in the process, you can put in more boats by cutting their hulls to create what are called "waterline models" that do not extend below the surface.

**3 Use silicone** along all the embankments to seal completely the depression you want to serve as your body of water. It helps prevent the clear resin used from leaking.

**4 Seal the bottom** and the banks of the depression with the concoction of ground-up commercial cardboard, sawdust, shredded vinyl, and white glue called "goop." I explained everything about "goop" in the article about my layout in the December 2013 issue of CTT.

I follow by arranging commercial ground cover along the edges of the basin. I opt for earth tones, such as shades of

brown and gray. I also like to use dark green and loam.

Finally, I secure everything in place with white glue before letting everything dry thoroughly. Be aware that thick cross sections generally take longer to dry completely because, as I have learned over my many years in the hobby, moisture and epoxy don't play well together!

**5 Build a dam** for any body of water meant to flow off the layout, notably a stream or river. I glue and then screw a ¼-inch-thick sheet of clear Plexiglas at the edge of my tabletop, making sure it rises 1 or even 2 inches above the level of water to prevent anything from spilling over. Later, you can cut down this barrier with a router to provide a beautiful finished edge and even polish its top to make the edge seamless.



**The orange-and-blue scheme of the Central RR of New Jersey is just one of the colorful designs on Jay's layout. He named the scale trawler tying up at the dock after his wife. Cindy shares in operating this great model railroad.**

### Ready for water

Take time to check out the look of the depression you've finished. If you notice anything you don't like, this is the best time to modify it and even redo the area.

The next stage is, of course, the critical yet still enjoyable one. You need to carefully select the commercial material you want to serve as the water and apply it with care and patience.

Different materials can be found on the market now to simulate still or moving water on a model railroad. I've tried many and believe all of them have merit.

There is one thing I suggest avoiding when modeling water. Do not use actual water! Avoid real water because it leaks, it molds, and it is bad for electrical contacts and components. Some of you may ignore my words, but don't say I didn't warn you!

**6 Decide on the color** of your body of water. Keep in mind that water in nature is clear. It has no color, but takes on the color of its surroundings. Ponds, lakes, and rivers get their color from their bottoms and foliage of nearby forests, so they are clear yet have a brown to green shade at the deeper parts.

My O gauge model railroad features a harbor. I used a proper green pigment to represent the sea spilling into the inlet. From a light green along the shore to a deeper green in the channel.

Blue water results only if you have a



In addition to modeling a realistic harbor, including simulated water filling one dock, Jay built from scratch the naval structures, ships, and facilities. *Classic Toy Trains* showcased his spectacular 12 x 30-foot O gauge layout in the December 2013 issue.

totally clear sky above and shallow depths below with a reflective bottom. Believe me, few places in the world offer the blue water of Hawaii or the Caribbean Sea.

**7** Study full-color photos of the body of water you want to model and then decide on what hue will give the desired effect and look.

Water is important because it looks fascinating and improves every scene with beauty and interest.

**8** Add the minimum amount of color to the clear resin you use (it will be the part-two resin if you use a decoupage epoxy) only in the second or third pour. All remaining pours should be clear in order to give a look of greater depth. You want to maintain a colored transparency to your water.

### Right material

What works best? I recommend a 50/50 decoupage epoxy with a very low heat-generating signature and a longer cure time. Otherwise, you risk having the details embedded in your water warped by the excessive heat as the epoxy cures.

The brand of clear resin I prefer generates only 97 degrees heat and takes 12 hours to cure. The resin was formulated for this type of application for my layout.

Be sure each pour is no more than ½-inch thick over the entire water basin. If your pour is too thick, you risk increasing the low cure temperature you want to maintain. You might end up doubling or even tripling the heat signature!

Mix each pour thoroughly. Doing so likely means air bubbles will be trapped in each pour. You can remove them by lightly passing a small propane torch after each

pour over the surface before it has cured. This will cause the air bubbles to come to the surface and dissipate. Do not go near your details or foliage along the banks with the open flame.

If you want ripples or turbulence on the surface of your water, take a pair of tweezers and place spun glass (known as “angel hair”) in the resin after removing air bubbles. Then tuft up the glass for the desired effect just as the resin is curing.

If a leak occurs, you should go under the benchwork and place oil-based modeling clay on and around the leaking drips. Later you can scrape off the clay.

### C'mon in – the water's fine!

Water is a precise and time-intensive scenic gem for any layout. The results will be well worth the effort – be patient and follow the steps outlined here.

If you feel unsure about any part of the process, do what I do. Make small tests. They are best for learning about color intensity, resin cure, and setup time. **CTT**

# Realism + whimsy



## THE CLARKE FAMILY'S RAILROAD SALUTES THE NORTHEAST



Story and photos by Ian Clarke

# I

always know where they are,” says my wife, Jamie, when asked about all the time our sons, Sam and Daniel, and I spend in the basement of our home, working on the O gauge Allentown-Clarkesburg RR. Jamie will admit it’s all her fault because it she gave me a Lionel starter set for our first Christmas in our first house in 1993. Perhaps it was part of a cunning plan.

Things have grown quite a bit since I mounted an oval of O-27 track on an unused door astride two sawhorses in a spare bedroom in our home. The sixth and latest incarnation of the Allentown-Clarkesburg RR (ACRR) measures 19 x 30 feet, boasts 600 feet of GarGraves flex-track, and lets us run as many as eight trains, including a trolley and two subway lines.

### A long way to travel

Many years ago, when Jamie and I moved to our second house awaiting the arrival of our first child, we looked for a basement with an open expanse for a train room. Thus began the Allentown-Clarkesburg RR, so named because of where we live and our name. We think it’s a branch of the Pemberton-Hightstown RR, which ran about a mile



**1** Pennsylvania RR steam and diesel motive power dominates the roster of the O gauge Allentown-Clarksburg RR. Ian Clarke and his family constructed the 19 x 30-foot three-rail display over several years, giving it their unique blend of realism and fancy.

from our house and ended up as part of the Pennsylvania RR.

The first version of the ACRR measured 16 x 24 feet. It boasted three levels of action, with trains dashing over GarGraves flextrack. I used it to hone my techniques for building scenery and structures.

The unfinished basement, even with a painted floor and walls, didn't seem inviting enough for people to

stop to see the trains. I had to redo the basement, which meant dismantling the first ACRR to make way for drywall, paint, and carpeting.

While refinishing the basement I embarked on creating an expanded three-rail layout. For that purpose I relied on the XTrackCAD model railroad design program, which is available as a free download from [www.xtrkcad.org](http://www.xtrkcad.org).

This excellent program has many elements, including built-in libraries of track and accessories, and you can construct custom switches, track sections and buildings to suit your needs. You can enter your locomotive and rolling stock characteristics and then place trains on the track you've designed and run them to see whether there will be any issues with clearance or track connection.



## 13 TIPS FOR SUCCESS FROM THE CLARKE FAMILY

**Ian Clarke and his two sons** enjoy sharing the secrets to the successful design and construction of their ACRR layout almost as much as they do running trains on it. When asked what advice they would pass along to fellow model railroaders, they came up with these 13 kernels of wisdom. Follow them as you work!

**1 Tackle a particular task or a small area of the layout at a time.** You'll get a sense of satisfaction at having completed something tangible.

**2 Work on whatever strikes your fancy at any particular time.** Just try to complete each task before moving on to the next one.

**3 Don't be afraid to make mistakes. You can usually redo what you've messed up or cover up what you don't like.** And only you will know.

**4 Use commonly available materials:** house wire for bus circuits, wire nuts and suit-case connectors for connections, plaster of paris for rock formations, lightweight joint compound for roads, dirt from the garden, regular white glue, and red rosin paper. Anything labeled for modelers or hobbyists usually has a premium.

I used XTrackCAD to create the overall plan and L-girder benchwork. Everything was there, from the 2 x 2 legs and 1 x 4 L-girders to the joists running parallel to the L-girders at roughly 24-inch intervals.

### Backdrop and benchwork

Next, I painted a backdrop consisting of blue sky, clouds, hills, trees, and greenery on the walls of the 24 x 38-foot train room. The scheme, influenced by the Tuscan red and elegant gold stripes used on Pennsylvania RR engines, carried over throughout the room as well as the stairs leading up from the basement.

Reading Linn Westcott's classic *How to*

*Build Model Railroad Benchwork* (Kalmbach Books) taught me about L-girder benchwork. In particular, I learned how to use risers to get my track levels just right.

Then I cut subroadbed out of plywood and finished the Homasote roadbed at a 45-degree angle. From there, it was a matter of gently bending the GarGraves track to conform to my XTrackCAD printouts. My rotary cutting tool came in handy for cutting the track and fitting it together.

### Wiring and transformers

Wiring consists of buses formed using 14-gauge single-strand household wire, which I bought in 500-foot spools. I used

black for the common, white for lighting and accessories, green for controls and turnouts, and red for track power.

Trains run in conventional mode with blocks and relays. Two Dallee Electronics circuits add a degree of automation.

Four Lionel type-ZW transformers handle the track power. A twin pack of 12-volt, 300-watt outdoor lighting transformers take care of the lights, switch machines (no. DZ-1000 from Z-Stuff for Trains), and various other accessories.

Finally, I used 18- to 22-gauge wire drops to connect the track, switches, lights, and accessories to their respective buses and feeder lines. Those lines all run

**2 LEFT** Didn't any of the bosses overseeing operations on the ACRR's main yard notice the hobos in that abandoned boxcar? While the tramps nestle by a fire, a Williams Pennsy boxcab from transfers cars.

**3 RIGHT** Amid the brick structures dating from the early half of the 20th century, local developers financed work on the skyscraper in the distance. Residents and rail travelers enjoyed watching it rise.



**5** Color-code and/or label your wiring. It makes troubleshooting a lot easier.

**6** Experiment with different modeling and landscaping techniques; stick with those methods you like. There are no hard and fast rules.

**7** Remember that random is real, meaning very little in nature is straight, of a uniform color, or exactly like a similar

object next to it. Only humans strive for order and symmetry.

**8** Leave your layout in running order after a work or scenery session. If you let stuff pile up, you'll find it takes forever to clear it up.

**9** Personalize your businesses, and towns with names that resonate with you. On the ACRR, our family has included local businesses,

alluded to favorite movies and television shows, and invented names that pun horribly.

**10** Painting a backdrop is easier than you think. I relied on brushes, sponges, and cloths to get different shades and textures.

**11** Latex molds serve as realistic rock formations. I made them with rocks found on my travels. I poured

them in batches using plaster of paris. Then I stained the with washes of browns, grays, ochers, and yellows.

**12** When making trees, consider mixing commercial types you can just plant with some you make by hand from materials you find near home.

**13** Take chances, keep on learning, and have fun!

back to a 1 x 4-foot control panel I designed in full scale using Photoshop.

I took the file to a print shop, where it was run off in color and laminated at a reasonable cost. I glued the printout to Luan and wired the double-pole double-throw switches that control the layout.

Momentary center-off toggles control turnouts, and center-off toggles provide fast and slow modes for the blocks, each of which is powered by one side of a ZW.

### Great scenery technique

A model railroad depends on scenery to bring it to life. On the first ACRR, I experimented with plaster cloth, building

a hard shell for mountains and other formations. It worked well, but it seems that no matter how careful you are, it makes a mess, even with drop cloths on the floor.

Fortunately, I stumbled upon mention of a paper shell scenery technique in one of the Yahoo train and scenery forums. As Howard Zane noted in *Railroad Model Craftsman*, it has builder's red rosin paper (available at any home-improvement center or large hardware store) hot-glued to a cardboard-strip lattice that sits atop wood supports. The paper costs less than \$15, and I still haven't used a full roll, though my landscaping is pretty much complete.

I brushed white glue on the paper and,

before it had dried, applied a base of dried, sifted dirt. I followed with ground covers, foliage, and other vegetation. A misting of wet water to break the surface tension and a liberal application of white glue diluted with water sealed the deal.

If I didn't like the results in an area or decided alterations were in order, I took a utility knife to the paper and cut away what I didn't want. Then I glued new cardboard lattice as I preferred, refashioned the rosin paper, and landscaped anew.

Cutting holes to add rock formations, streams, and other features was a breeze. Best of all, there was little mess throughout the process.

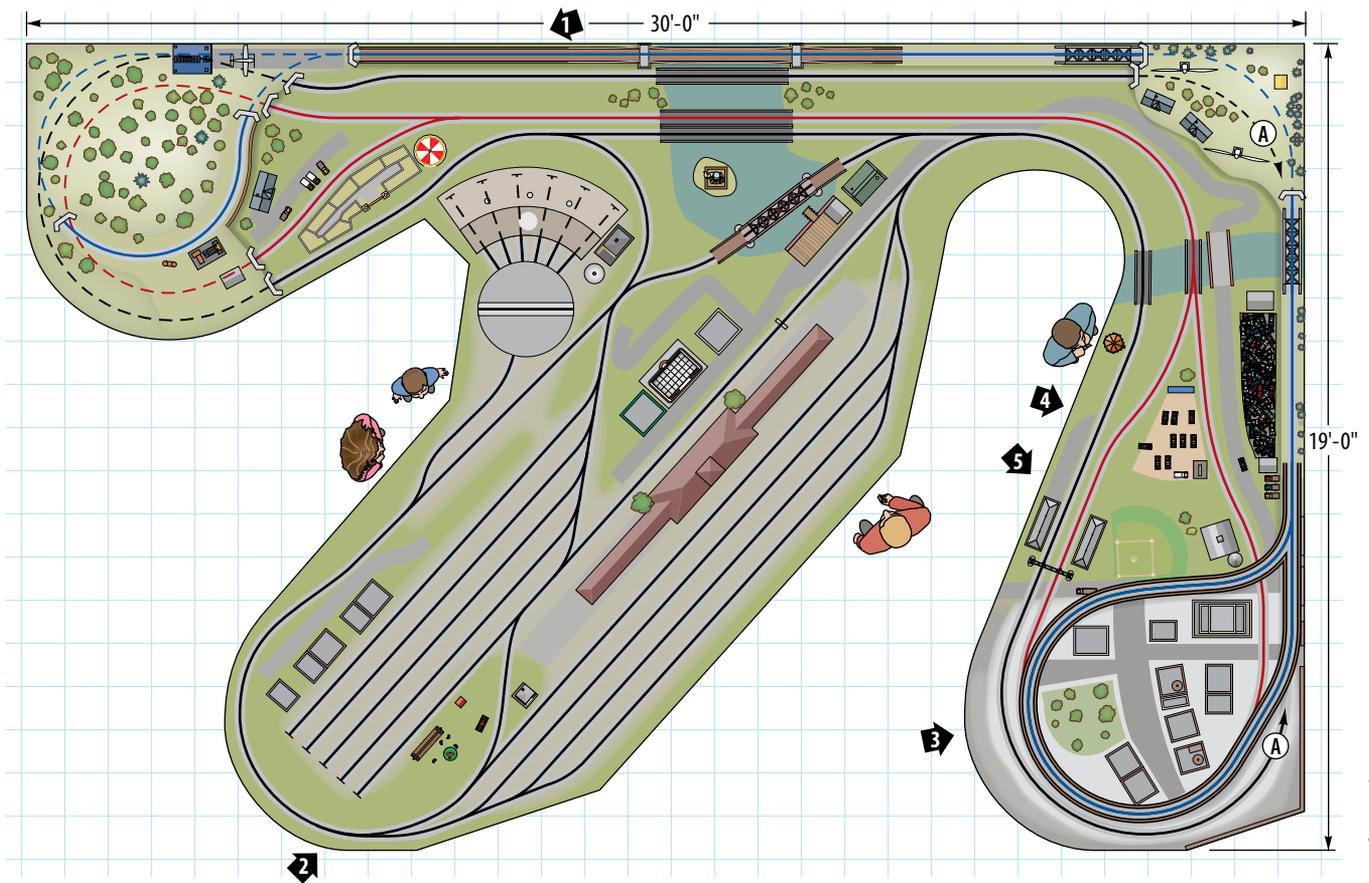


Illustration by Kellie Jaeger

## LAYOUT AT A GLANCE

**Name:** The Clarke family's Allentown-Clarkeburg RR

**Gauge:** O

**Dimensions:** 19 x 30 feet

**Track and switches:** GarGraves, Ross Custom Switches (O-120 maximum curves)

**Motive power:** Atlas O, Lionel, MTH, RMT, Williams

**Rolling stock:** K-Line, Lionel, MTH, Weaver

**Controls:** Lionel type-ZW transformers (4)

**Accessories:** K-Line, Lionel, MTH, Walthers

**Structures:** Ameri-Towne, Clever Models, Crescent Locomotive Works, Korber, Lemax, Lionel, scratchbuilt

**Vehicles:** Corgi, Maisto, Mondo Motors, Road Champs, Road Signature

**Figures:** Arttista, Bachmann, Lionel, Model Power, MTH, Railmen Company, Woodland Scenics

While satisfied with the look and operation of the ACRR, Ian and members of his family predict they'll be modifying the layout in coming years. The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photographs taken by Ian.

### Hillsides and rock formations

For extensive hillsides, where it was difficult to get the ground cover to stick vertically, I prepared sheets of landscaped paper on the floor and left them to dry. I would wet the underside to get a pliable terrain I could drape over the framework. I finished by securing it in place using hot glue.

For rock formations I rely on latex molds I made with rocks found on my travels. I pour them in batches using plaster of paris. I stained them with washes of browns, grays, ochers and yellows, followed by dry-brushed white highlights and a wash of black India ink diluted with rubbing alcohol to blend the colors and give them depth.

### Handmade trees

Our trees are a mix of the ready-to-plant variety and handmade specimens. For the latter, I fashioned tree-trunk armatures from stripped copper cutoffs. The armatures allowed for different branch and root configurations and were an economical way of obtaining large, realistically scaled trees (12 to 18 inches high) that suited the northeastern landscape we wanted.

I covered the armatures with drywall compound, let it dry, and stain it with brown, ocher, and gray washes to get realistic-looking bark. Using full-strength and diluted white glue, I applied a blend of black microfiber from Micro-Mark plus various brands of foliage and ground foam to the armatures. I've had some success with hair-spray, though it is messy to work with.

### Urban structures

When it comes to structures, my sons and I tend to purchase items we like, regardless of era. All the same, we've tried to keep things more or less suited to the northeastern part of the U.S. where we live.

The main Allentown-Clarkeburg station is a scratchbuilt scale replica of the old Central RR of New Jersey station in Elizabeth, N.J., done in the Romanesque Revival style. Including the platforms, this crowd-pleaser stretches nearly 11 feet in length.

I took a series of photos, found the tower dimensions on the Internet, and reduced the measurements to O scale. All the tower clocks work, and the platforms resemble those seen in a photo snapped in 1950



**4 A Pennsy 4-8-2 Mountain pulls hoppers with coal on their journey to the big city. Along the way the train passes a drive-in theater, farm, and sandlot baseball field.**

before the station was decommissioned and the platforms were truncated.

The big city bears a fleeting similarity to New York City, if only because it has a cardstock model of the Empire State Building, complete with King Kong, in the background. We used Ameri-Towne kits weathered and customized, with interior lighting and silhouettes of cats and houseplants in a few of the windows.

My sons wanted a pool hall on the second floor of the Plymouth Hotel, which they said had to be modeled after the one in *The Blues Brothers* movie. Not too far away stand a few other cardstock buildings, which I printed from a disk of paper craftsmen model kits I purchased a few years ago from Clever Models.

The highlight is a curved-platform station scratchbuilt by Dave Duhamel from Crescent Locomotive Works. It's the first thing you see when you enter the train room. Dave also built a scale replica of our house, complete with individually lit rooms, a matching shed, and Bilco doors.

### Charity open house

Jamie and I have given our sons free reign on the layout since they were little. They have been running trains for visitors and making neat vignettes. The scenes



**5 The family's surname dictated adding rolling stock embellished with Clark Bar candy to the roster of the ACRR. The train rolls by the Clarke Street Station.**

include Dan the Scrap Man's junkyard; a fire scene, complete with marauding zombies; a foreign car dealership; and a zoo.

We want our layout to benefit others. A couple of years ago, we had the opportunity to put our ideals to work by hosting an open house to help our local library, which is partially funded by donations.

About 60 people attended, including many families and friends. Many folks left

saying they felt the need to dig out their old trains from the attic and had been inspired to construct a layout.

Given the enthusiastic reception and all the fun the four of us had, the open house is likely to become a fixture on our calendar. We invite you to consider assisting your community with your layout – or just do what many visitors did and start planning and building a model railroad. **CTT**



TOY AND MODEL TRAINS SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT  
WITH MANY OTHER HOBBIES

# Three generations built Nassau Hobby Center

By Roger Carp • Photos courtesy Chris Hirschberg

**D**reams have been coming true at a successful hobby retailer whose roots on Long Island go all the way back to the end of World War II. Those dreams have belonged to the kids and adults who find at Nassau Hobby Center what they need to enjoy their favorite pastimes.

Yet dreams of a different sort originated with the family that has run the store since 1946.

Retail firms established and managed by members of one family serves as a major theme in the history of the hobby. As noted in the November 2017 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*, multi-generational businesses keep shaping people operate and collect new and old trains.

## Chemicals and coins

The saga of Nassau Hobby Center opened more than 70 years ago in the community of Freeport on Long Island. The area surrounding the waterfront had a rural feel to it after World War II. Potato farms dominated. The tracts of identical houses erected to form suburbs of New York City had yet to be constructed.

But times were changing, as farsighted and hard-working businessmen realized. Among them was a U.S. Navy veteran who had grown up in New York City yet thought his destiny lay on Long Island, where many service members were looking to settle after the war.

Ralph Hirschberg believed returning soldiers and sailors and their children were looking for meaningful and entertaining ways to pass their spare time. Hobbies would be central to them, and he wanted to capitalize on their interests.

Collecting coins had been

popular, so Ralph started as a dealer in American and foreign currency. Knowing how kids liked chemistry sets, he also established Keystone Chemistry Co. to sell liquids and powders to junior scientists.

## Electric trains, too

After the holiday season of 1945, Ralph came to a smart realization. Establishing a retail store handling many hobbies made more sense than did searching for specialty fields. He opened Nassau Hobby Center in the first month of 1946. Besides coins and chemicals, the business carried gasoline-powered model airplanes, woodworking tools and materials, and electric trains.

The American Flyer and Lionel sets, accessories, track, and more proved profitable from day one. Ralph kept his shelves filled with O gauge trains he ordered through Bronco Model Craft, a distributor based in New York City. He acquired the S gauge inventory direct from the A.C. Gilbert Co. and eventually emerged as one of the leading outlets for American Flyer.



**LEFT TO RIGHT** Walk through the front door of Nassau Hobby Center in Freeport, N.Y., and you are greeted with this impressive and exciting O gauge layout. On display are the latest products from Lionel, MTH, and others. Nassau Hobby Center, which three generations of the Hirschberg family have managed since 1946, has carried various brands of toy and scale model trains since its beginning. Shelves throughout the popular hobby retailer prominently feature releases from Lionel and MTH.

Success motivated Ralph to move to a larger, more comfortable facility on Church Street in 1948. Nassau Hobby Center remained there for almost 25 years, pulling up stakes for a better storefront on Merrick Street in 1972.

### Sadness and growth

A fixture at Nassau Hobby Center throughout the 1960s and into the '70s was Charlie Hirschberg. Ralph's son spent plenty of time at the store, observing how his father managed the business and learning about the leisure-time activities customers enjoyed. Charlie played with O gauge trains at home, though they tended to be used pieces his dad had obtained through trades.

Much as Charlie paid attention to what his father was doing to expand the business, he nurtured his own dreams of becoming a marine biologist. Then in 1973 tragedy struck. Ralph died, and Charlie felt he had to take over the store.

Despite having other plans for life, Charlie adapted to handling the responsibilities of a hobby retailer. He expanded

the products the store carried while making sure salesmen and repair technicians kept up with the latest additions. Outstanding and knowledgeable service, already a hallmark of Nassau Hobby Center, strengthened its reputation.

As the years passed, Charlie never quit searching for fields to conquer. He introduced radio-controlled cars and helicopters, kites, and more, broadening the lineup his dad had added. For residents of Long Island, Nassau Hobby

Center remained the spot to find slot-car racing sets and plastic model kits.

Toy trains from every contemporary manufacturer distinguished the store, too. Besides Lionel (and Charlie made sure to deal direct with the firm, relishing time spent with its fabled representative, Lenny Dean), O gauge enthusiasts found the latest releases from Atlas O, K-Line, MTH, Weaver, and Williams. Hobbyists who preferred new and old S gauge and Large scale trains also felt at home there.

### Stronger than ever

Under Charlie's wise guidance, Nassau Hobby Center entered a period of strong growth that has carried over into the new century. Trust from customers paved the way for continued growth, so much so that the man known as "Charlie Nassau" believed the time was ripe for building a larger facility and no longer leasing a storefront. Therefore, the store moved in 1995 to the complex of three buildings where it currently is based at 13 Merrick Road in Freeport.

Through the more than 40 years that Charlie was at the helm, many loyal and dependable employees assisted him behind the counter and in the service department. One of those regularly helping was his son, Chris Hirschberg.

Eventually, father and son understood, the reins would be handed over, at least in part, to Chris. That transition took place in the first few months of 2017, when Charlie announced his "semi-retirement" and moved to Las Vegas.

As for the future of Nassau Hobby Center, Chris Hirschberg anticipates overseeing the business for a long time. He pays close attention to the hobby world and listens when customers share their interests and expectations. Chris laughs when asked about whether a fourth generation will someday come on board. "My daughter just turned one year," he says. "She has lots of time to learn the business." **CTI**

*Nassau Hobby Center is at 13 Merrick Rd., Freeport, NY 11520; phone: 516-378-9594; [www.nassauhobby.com](http://www.nassauhobby.com)*



Nearly all the switchers had an electrically operated bell in their tender.



## Focus on classics

LIONEL NEEDED THREE YEARS TO PERFECT AN O GAUGE UNIT FOR POSTWAR MODELERS

# 1947

## THE YEAR WITHOUT A SWITCHER

By Robert Remley

**Lionel filled its roster** of O gauge motive power with great models in 1947. The new no. 2332 GG1 electric joined the classic nos. 671 6-8-6 turbine and 726 2-8-4 Berkshire. The top-of-the-line steam engines came with updated smoke mechanisms, along with three-position reverse units and whistling tenders.

But Lionel did not have a steam switcher, even though it had marketed similar models right before World War II and again with its full line in 1946.

Engineering and sales leaders corrected the situation a year later. A new steam switcher made its debut in 1948 and stayed through '49.

### PREWAR SWITCHERS

Switching locomotives were a staple of the O gauge line at the very end of the prewar era. After Lionel had introduced remote-controlled couplers in 1938, it moved forward with a nearly scale replica of the B6-class switch engine used by the Pennsylvania RR.

According to the second volume of *Greenberg's Guide to Lionel Trains, 1901-1942*, "From 1939 through 1942, Lionel made nine 0-6-0 switchers and two 0-4-0 switchers. Seven of the nine 0-6-0 switchers share the same scale boiler-cab casting and are marked 8976 below the cab window but differ in other features."

Some of the O gauge models came equipped with whistle-controlled couplers (known as Magic Electrol). Nearly all the switchers had an electrically operated bell in their tender. Offering many versions of

the B6 switcher confused potential purchasers and undermined the sales campaign for a superb locomotive.

### POSTWAR DEBUT

Able to develop a full line of engines after federal restrictions on wartime toy production were lifted in 1945, Lionel proceeded to announce a pair of steam switchers in its cataloged line for 1946. Only one of them was made.

The no. 1665 steam engine, which was based on the prewar no. 1662 locomotive, had an 0-4-0 wheel arrangement. The



Lionel lacked a solid O gauge switcher in its postwar line until 1948. The no. 1656 was available for separate sale at \$25. The 0-4-0 led O-27 set no. 1425B with a no. 6403B bell-ringing tender.

die-cast metal steamer had an operating headlight and a knuckle coupler on its pilot. It came with a no. 2403B die-cast metal tender equipped with die-cast metal trucks, knuckle couplers, and a bell.

Lionel cataloged the 1665 for separate sale and as the motive power for an O-27 work train in 1946. Outfit no. 1407B had nos. 2452X Pennsylvania RR gondola, 2560 Lionel Lines crane car, and 2419 D.L.&W. wrecker caboos.

The 1665 switcher would, unfortunately, run only through the no. 1121 O-27 turnouts. It derailed on O gauge turnouts and UCS tracks. Such a problem was odd because most of Lionel's O-27 engines could be operated over O gauge track as well or better than they could over O-27 sections and switches.

Of course, Lionel showed in its catalog a second switcher, one exclusive to its O gauge roster. The no. 403 resembled the no. 203 from prewar days except for being updated with the new knuckle couplers. But it was never produced.

### NONE AND THEN ONE

Lionel went from offering a single steam switcher in 1946 to leaving one out of its lineup the next year. Perhaps some O gauge operators who had bought the 1665 had complained after finding it wouldn't run on their track. Then executives had decided it was smarter to quit making a switcher until the problem had been solved and a reliable model could be added to their O gauge roster.

The omission of switcher in 1947 might have hurt sales. After all, Lionel was cataloging freight-loading accessories that used sidings and spur tracks on which a switcher would have been ideal for moving empty and loaded railcars.

A new steam switcher appeared the following year. Lionel announced the no. 1656 for 1948. The newcomer resembled the 1665 except for the fact that its drive wheels were slightly larger. In addition, the gearing on the 1656 differed completely, including much smaller gears on the backside of the drive wheels.

The consumer catalog for 1948 made clear the 1656 would run over O-27 or O gauge track and switches. The new switcher was prominently shown in the front of the catalog as offered for separate sale. Such placement was unusual.

The 1656 switcher served as the motive power for an O-27 outfit in 1948. Set no. 1425B included the nos. 6456 Lehigh

**ABOVE** The 1946 catalog showed two steam switch engines, each derived from a prewar model. Lionel did make the no. 1665 and used it in an O-27 work train. It chose not to manufacture the no. 403.

**BELOW** During the two years Lionel cataloged the 1656 switcher, the plucky 0-4-0 led a short O-27 freight outfit that contained nos. 6456 Lehigh Valley hopper and 6465 Sunoco double-dome tank car.

Valley hopper, 6465 Sunoco double-dome tank car, and 6257X Lionel Lines Southern Pacific-type caboos.

Lionel, which had needed three years to bring out a reliable O gauge steam switcher for postwar modelers, cataloged the 1656 for a second year. However, 1949 was also when the firm introduced its first version of a diesel switcher. The Electro-Motive Division NW2 model, which came marked for the Santa Fe (no. 622 in O gauge and no. 6220 in O-27), soon eclipsed the steam switchers. **CTT**

**LIONEL "O27" LOCOMOTIVES AND TENDERS**

The world's outstanding experts in model railroading have declared that this new 1946 line of Lionel locomotives and tenders is unquestionably the finest scale detailing in the world for model locomotives at popular prices.

**No. 221LT** Lionel Empire State 6-wheel Drive Locomotive, (2-6-0) accurately detailed, polished driving rods and hand-rails. Powerful headlight.

**No. 1666LT** New Steam-Type 6-wheel Drive Locomotive, (2-6-2) scale detailed, cast in pipes, lugs and rivets gives it a realistic appearance.

**No. 1665LT** Lionel Switcher with thermostatically controlled bell in tender. Four-wheel drive, backup light on tender. A well "goat" for your yard.

**No. 2020LT5** brand new Lionel Pennsylvania Railroad 20-wheel steam turbine locomotive (6-8-6) that puffs smoke. 8-wheel double worm drive.

**LIONEL "O" GAUGE LOCOMOTIVES AND TENDERS**

Compare the precision scale detailing of these brand new Lionel loco and tenders, designed for operation on Lionel's "O" gauge. Here is true realism and faithful adherence to detailing. These locomotives and tenders may be purchased separately.

**No. 224LT** Lionel scale detailed, 6-wheel steam type locomotive, (2-6-2) with whistle tender. Jeweled pilot lights, realistic coal in tender. Lugs, rivets, pipes cast in.

**No. 403LT** Lionel scale detailed switcher with thermostatically controlled bell in tender. Working backup light on tender. Airbrakes and pipes cast in.

**No. 671LT5** Lionel model of Pennsylvania Railroad steam turbine, 20-wheel locomotive (6-8-6) with smoke. 8-wheel double worm drive with whistle tender.

**No. 726LT5** beautiful scale proportion 8-wheel drive locomotive (2-8-4) that puffs smoke. Built-in whistle. Double-worm drive motor. Twelve-wheel tender.

**No. 703LT5** scale detailed steam type locomotive (4-6-4) with smoke - 6-wheel worm gear drive. Whistle tender. Baker valve gear. Jeweled pilot lights.

**LIONEL "O27" GAUGE SETS**

Here they are... scale-detailed miniatures of trains you've seen in the busy yards of great railroad terminals! Each car is equipped with Electro-Magnetic Knuckle Couplers which operate by remote control—a Lionel exclusive!

**"O27" GAUGE TRACK**

The Lionel "O27" Gauge Track is a new development in model railroading. It is a standard gauge track, 1/8" wide, and is designed to run on a standard gauge track. It is a new development in model railroading. It is a standard gauge track, 1/8" wide, and is designed to run on a standard gauge track.

**No. 1425B "O27" AND "O" GAUGE SWITCHER FREIGHT**

WITH BELL-IN-AUTOMATIC CLANGING BELL

The great 1656 "O27" gauge switcher, with its four-wheel drive, backup light on tender, and bell in tender, is the perfect motive power for this outfit. The outfit includes the 1656 switcher, the 6456 Lehigh Valley hopper, the 6465 Sunoco double-dome tank car, and the 6257X Lionel Lines Southern Pacific-type caboos. The outfit is priced at \$35.95.

**OUTFIT NO. 1425B WITH BELL-IN-AUTOMATIC CLANGING BELL \$35.95**



AL MAROTTA BREAKS  
ALL THE RULES ON  
HIS S GAUGE LAYOUT

# FUN IS THE THING!

By Roger Carp • Photos by Nick Andruzzi

**Full-size trains** run according to schedules set by the demands of railroad executives. The needs and expectations of shippers determine the size of those trains. Federal regulations dictate their speed and other aspects of operation.

All of which either bores or frustrates veteran S gauge enthusiast Al Marotta. Of course, he can't do much about how CSX or Amtrak handles things. However, he can operate his 8 x 15-foot home layout any old way he chooses!

"Fun is the thing!" Al declares, when asked about what happens on his far-from-prototypical North Jersey, Hudson & Hopewell RR (the name reflects the areas where Al grew up and then spent his adult life). This means freight and passenger trains run whenever Al or a visitor desires. Don't expect to see short trains. The longer they are, the better for our host, who opts to run them slowly.

Getting excited by the approach animating Al? Let's spend some time on the NJH&H while learning about his background with American Flyer.



**1** The autumn sun has just dipped below the horizon on Al Marotta's 8 x 15-foot S gauge layout on a Monday afternoon. Travelers from the little town of Hopewell Junction prepare to board the Baltimore & Ohio passenger train braking to a halt.

### Family is the thing, too

Family also motivates his love of toy trains and influences how he designed and constructed his S gauge layout. He received his first electric train in 1950, a gift from his parents. That Christmas gift was an American Flyer freight set led by a Pennsylvania RR K5 4-6-2 Pacific and tender. The duo pulled four cars, including an operating cattle car and an illuminated caboose.

Family much later meant meeting Monika, a native of Sweden, and then marrying her. They enjoyed an HO layout Al had built. But when their kids,

Maria and Mark, were born, Al realized HO trains were too small for them.

Al remembered how much fun he and his brother had had as youngsters playing with American Flyer S gauge trains on an 8 x 8-foot board on the floor. Good memories prodded Al to retrieve his boyhood treasures from his mother's attic in 1985. He has never regretted his decision to switch back to S gauge, further evidence of how family continues to leave its mark on him.

How else has family influenced Al? His grandmother worked at a Tootsie Roll plant in Hoboken, N.J., during the

1950s. To remember her plus the chewy chocolate candies Al ate, he made a replica of the factory. There's also the miniature coal barge his dad built from scratch because he served on a tugboat in the 1950s that pushed heavy barges into the coal piers in Bayonne, N.J.

Finally, Al's mother did more than store his cherished S gauge trains. She painted an urban skyline at dusk as the premier backdrop for his railroad.

Many little yet meaningful touches on the layout keep vibrant Al's family history. No wonder his four grandchildren race to the basement whenever



**2 An incredible roster of postwar trains, structures, and vehicles shares real estate with contemporary equivalents on Al's layout. Plasticville kits and Dinky cars rival American Flyer engines and rolling stock as his unquestionable favorites.**

they visit. They can't wait to see the S gauge railroad and operate trains.

### Ready to build

Al doesn't know whether unpacking his toys after more than 20 years sufficed to light the fire behind his building the North Jersey, Hudson & Hopewell RR. Certainly, Maria and Mark felt excited, and Monika encouraged her husband to start planning, constructing, and wiring.

Al simply says he felt ready. The old models invigorated him. Years of

reading model railroad books and magazines and time spent finishing an HO layout boosted his confidence. No way he was going to fail!

What Al had in mind amounted to an 8 x 15-foot centerpiece with three 18-inch-wide shelves along the walls of his train room. Two double-track bridges would connect the main layout to those adjoining lines so trains could travel to it.

Benchwork, which would stand 37 inches off the floor, used pieces of 1 x 2, 1 x 3, and 1 x 4 lumber to form a sturdy table. As the surface, he put down a layer of ½-inch-thick Homasote with cork roadbed on top.

Destiny seemed to be calling when the moment came for selecting track. Meaning, Al owned "a bunch of original American Flyer track and

switches." Obtaining more sections would be easy because they were cheap and plentiful.

But don't forget the wish to have fun kept sticking its nose into Al's preparation. He never quit exploring the products for S gaugers entering the market, and so became familiar with the improved track available from K-Line and GarGraves, American Models (code 148) and S-Helper Service (code 125).

The solution for this easy-going and non-traditional fellow? Purchase any and all of what new manufacturers were making. "They look great – better and more realistic than what the A.C. Gilbert Co. put out when I was a kid," Al says.

"I mated them together, holding the sections with nails and screws."

Good memories prodded Al to retrieve his boyhood treasures from his mother's attic in 1985.



The diversity of brands appeals to Al. He appreciates the 29-inch diameters of K-Line track and prototypical look of the straights and curves from American Models and S-Helper Service. He put them in the most visible spots, in particular an elevated loop rising 6 inches over the main level.

### Getting the right look

Al was not reluctant to spend his hard-earned hobby cash on brand-new track and switches. Their superior appearance convinced him. Similarly, he knew American Models turnouts operated more smoothly and reliably than did the right- and left-hand switches in the Flyer catalog.

Yet Al's commitment to innovation and his preference for contemporary products went only so far. He intended for the North Jersey, Hudson & Hopewell RR to resemble what an

industrious kid like him might have built in postwar days.

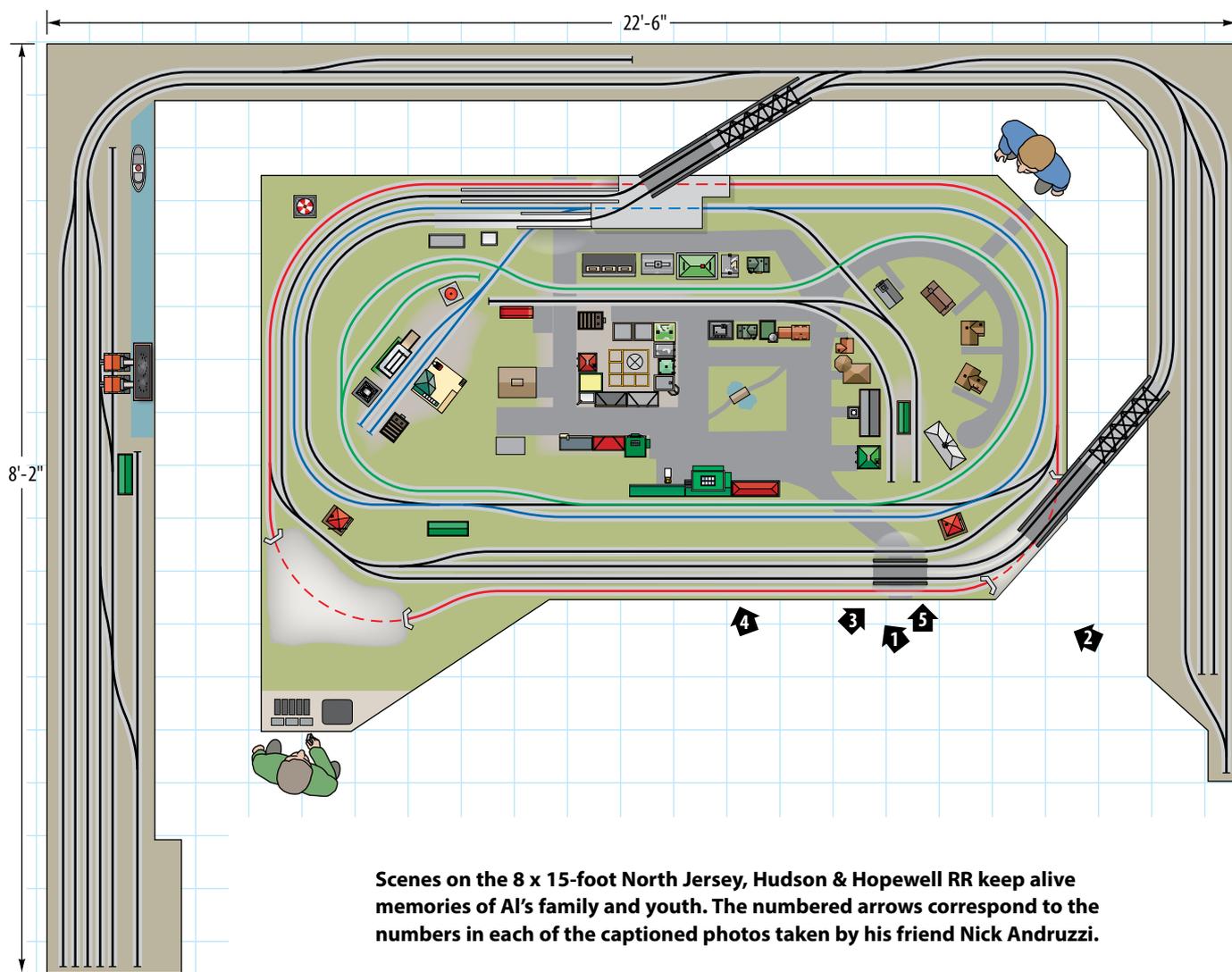
Getting the right look – ensuring the new layout had a traditional feel to it – depended more than anything else on Al's acquiring and placing the appropriate structures at the heart of the scenes. His answer was to start with Plasticville U.S.A. buildings and add a few of the Masonite ones cataloged by the Gilbert Co. They carry viewers back a couple of generations.

He saw no point in weathering any of these classics, which include residential and commercial structures, along with facilities having a civic or railroad orientation. About all Al does to modify them is wire interior lighting and hang a sign.

More satisfying to older visitors is seeing how Al has created buildings and other sights from vintage sets of Kenner panels and girders. These



**3** Nothing makes Al happier when he is operating the NJH&H than bringing out a few of the diesels and cars loaned to him by his hobby friend and mentor, Sam Powell. Sam had created the neat models for his Penn Creek Valley. The Budd Rail Diesel Car decorated for the Hudson Central belongs to fellow S gauger Stan Stokrocki.



Scenes on the 8 x 15-foot North Jersey, Hudson & Hopewell RR keep alive memories of Al's family and youth. The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photos taken by his friend Nick Andruzzi.

Illustration by Kellie Jaeger

## LAYOUT AT A GLANCE



**Name:** Al Marotta's North Jersey, Hudson & Hopewell RR

**Gauge:** S

**Dimensions:** 8 x 15 feet

**Track and switches:** American Models, Bob Pearce, GarGraves,

Gilbert American Flyer, K-Line, S-Helper Service (20- to 29-inch diameters)

**Motive power:** American Models, Gilbert and Lionel American Flyer, S-Helper Service

**Rolling stock:** American Models, Gilbert and Lionel American Flyer, S-Helper Service

**Controls:** Gilbert American Flyer no. 18B, Lionel type-ZW transformers

**Accessories:** Gilbert American Flyer, Lionel

**Structures:** Block City, Department 56, Gilbert American Flyer, Kenner Building Girders, Lemax, Plasticville

**Vehicles:** Corgi, Dinky, Ertl, Hartoy, Johnny Lightning, Matchbox

**Figures:** Arttista, Plasticville, Preiser, Steam Depot

wonderful toys from the 1950s and '60s capture a bygone era.

Modern structures reinforce the overall atmosphere. At least a few members of product lines developed by Department 56 and Lemax have done so in Al's world. The beautiful porcelain items fit neatly with 1:64 scale trains.

This blending of vintage and current characterizes the vehicles poised to run over the streets and highways Al made using mat board stocked by an artist's supply firm. Beloved are the Dinky die-cast metal cars and trucks stacked in his toy chest since boyhood. Next to them are newcomers by Corgi, Ertl, Hartoy, and Matchbox.

### Simple scenery

Some of today's model railroaders find themselves enamored of making different sorts of scenery

so they end up investing ample resources and loads of time in the process. Rewarding? No doubt! But not everybody's cup of tea.

Really not Al's favorite activity either. Common materials and techniques worked for him. For landforms he stacked Styrofoam colored with household acrylics. Lichen served for whatever vegetation he thought appropriate. Twigs and stones picked up outdoors found spots on hillsides.

Any bodies of still water Al modeled with utter simplicity. He painted the surface of his plywood with glossy acrylics in blues and greens to look right. The method proved as effective and quick as the roads he formed out of mat board.

The final elements used to develop the environment of the NJH&H were commercial and handmade backdrops. Al bought a



**4** Even before completion, S. Powell Piano Manufacturing Co., which Al assembled out of Kenner girders and panels, dominated the skyline. He named it after the late Sam Powell, a special friend and widely respected S gauge collector and builder.

harborside scene from Walthers. More to his liking were views painted on the walls or drawn in pencil by his friend Nick Andruzzi (whose photos illustrate this article). Al also preserved urban images executed by his mother.

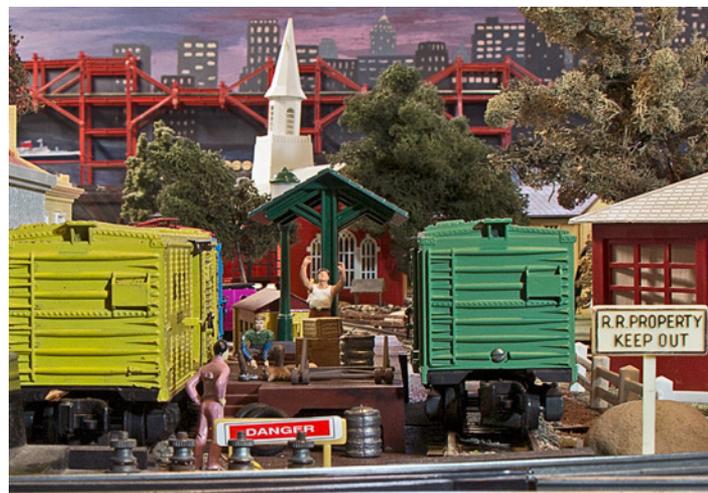
### Quite pleasing

Al has reached what he and others describe as the finest phase of constructing a layout – being so far enough along with it that he can take the time to enjoy it. He can run the trains he wants while entertaining family and friends.

Al is quite pleased with his NJH&H. He takes pride in the underground station he designed using sheets of tiles for dollhouses

and embellished with wall signs and vintage advertisements from the Internet. “I am still working on the terminal that will live above the tracks,” he says. “It will function like the famous 30th Street Station in Philadelphia, but it will resemble the Central Station in Stockholm, Sweden, which is where my wife hails from.”

A wonderful goal and one certain to delight everyone who sees Al’s S gauge extravaganza. In the meantime, he will park himself by the village square to watch his Flyer trains roar past or invite his grandchildren to join in the fun. Then he can tell them about growing up during a golden era of electric trains. **CTT**



**5** Elaborate as the North Jersey, Hudson & Hopewell RR seems, what visitors like most are the vignettes Al created using structures, figures, signs, and details.

### CTT ONLINE

TO WATCH A VIDEO of Al Marotta’s S gauge layout, please go to [www.ClassicToyTrains.com](http://www.ClassicToyTrains.com) and click on Online Extras



The Santa Fe was, reports author and modeler Eric Beheim, one of the railroads that carried freight to the imaginary Midwestern town serving as the focal point for dioramas and photo backdrops he has created to add life to his Marx locomotives and cars.

# DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MARX FREIGHT STATION

IMAGINE ALL THE TRAINS AT WORK

Story and photos by Eric Beheim

**Back in 2008**, the Buffalo County Historical Society published the recollections of a former Union Pacific depot agent, who described how railroad freight was handled during a typical day's operations some 60 years earlier in Kearney, Neb.

Let's image a similar day's operations at a Marx no. 5420 freight station (cataloged in 1952-54). Using the dioramas and photo backdrops described in the article about my love of Marx trains in *All-Star Electric Trains*, a new special-interest publication from the editors of *Classic Toy Trains*, I'll be taking you to the 1950s. We've traveled to a thriving Midwestern town situated along a busy main line. Railroads serving the eastern and western halves of the U.S. stop there. **CTT**



Not every train stops at the station. Marx tank cars with petroleum products and chemicals roll past during the middle of the morning. They're destined for specialized sites equipped to be safely unloaded.

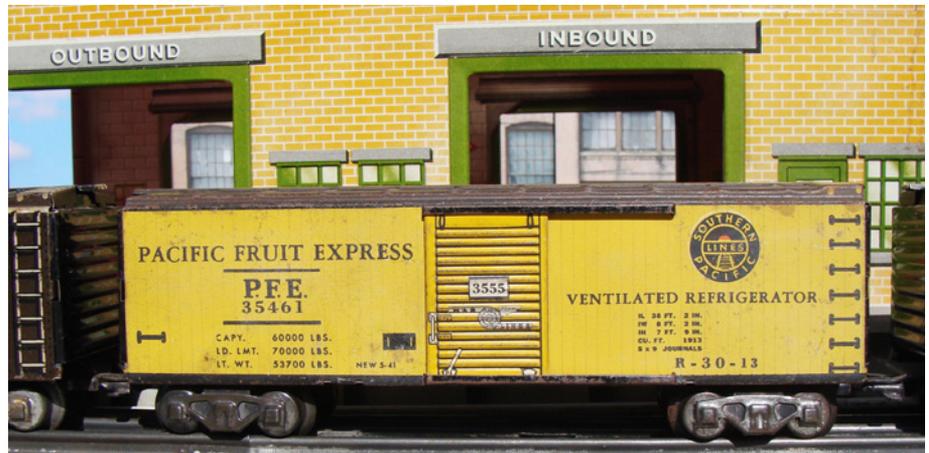


Of course, some of the cargo the Santa Fe train is carrying has this unidentified town as its final destination. So, once unloaded from boxcars, various goods end up on a fleet of trucks owned by local and regional businesses. They'll shortly be leaving the Marx freight station, getting on the highway to reach markets throughout the area.



The interchange of freight from one railroad to another is a daily occurrence at the bustling depot. The Santa Fe train, which arrived early in the morning from the West, is transporting goods destined for urban markets east of the Mississippi River. Laborers using forklifts and dollies must now unload the crates, barrels, and boxes. They had started preparing to load everything onto an eastbound train, but then broke for lunch.

The delivery and acceptance of shipments continues right up until the close of the freight station's operational day. This train originating in California includes a refrigerator car (Marx no. 35461) packed with oranges and other citrus fruit desired by residents. Early tomorrow morning, the same fascinating parade of freight trains will start again by the local station.



WHAT WENT AROUND IN 1950  
COMES AROUND ON LAWRENCE  
GOODRIDGE'S MASTERPIECE

# Childhood dream IN 3 RAILS

By Roger Carp • Photos by Lawrence Goodridge

Who hasn't heard the expression, "What goes around comes around"? The common meaning of that adage boils down to the belief that our actions – whether good or bad – will lead to similar actions being done to us in the future.

But in the world of toy trains, "What goes around comes around" assumes an additional meaning. It describes what happens on the first layout we build. Namely, our train runs in circles over the track, arriving in front of our face not too many seconds after it previously passed by.

Lawrence Goodridge remembers how the Lionel set he got in 1950 traveled over a loop of track. He also understands how that layout nurtured dreams and inspired him to recently develop an elaborate three-rail empire.

## Endlessly and tenderly

If Larry's current 8 x 24-foot layout is one bookend in his life in the hobby, then the 4 x 8-foot O gauge railroad that got him started more than six decades ago is its opposite. Truth be told, such a perspective reflects how this enthusiastic modeler sees things.

There was little doubt about who was responsible for bringing the Lionel no. 2171W diesel freight outfit into Larry's life at Christmas of 1950. The youngster awestruck by the no. 2344 New York Central F3 A-A combination knew his father had sacrificed for the magnificent gift.

Better yet, there was a layout. "The layout my dad built for my bedroom seemed huge," Larry said, reminiscing about the loop of three-rail tubular track and the four manually operated switches.

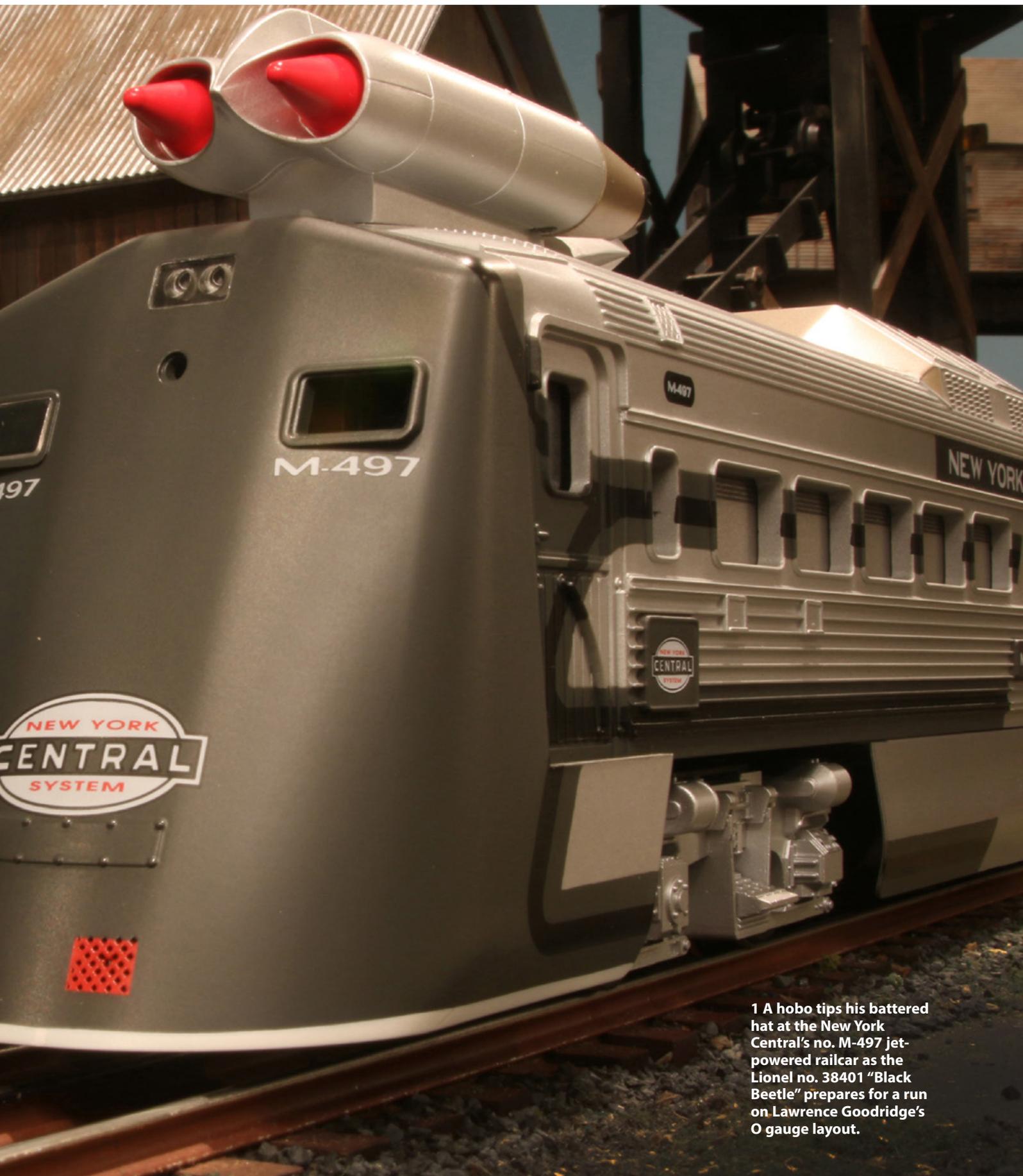
When *Classic Toy Trains* asked Larry about his boyhood trains, he mentioned the Lionel freight set. "I played with it endlessly," he responded. Only Larry's penmanship was a bit sloppy, and it initially seemed he had written, "I played with it tenderly."

A mistake? Perhaps not!

Larry would have played with that train in a tender fashion. He treated his top-of-the-line Lionel diesel freight with care. It was, he thought, the finest toy anywhere.

"What I recall about my New York Central F3s," Larry said, "was how big and heavy they seemed to feel. Those locomotives made scary, growling noises as they flew around the main line. Funny thing, they still do!"





1 A hobo tips his battered hat at the New York Central's no. M-497 jet-powered railcar as the Lionel no. 38401 "Black Beetle" prepares for a run on Lawrence Goodridge's O gauge layout.



**2** Larry ranks the New York Central as his favorite American railroad, with Lionel Lines in second place. A contender for the next spot must be the Atlantic Coast Line, if only because its purple-and-silver F units seem so sophisticated. Don't these Lionel diesels (no. 11903) look slick traveling over the weathered track?

### Never far away

As a youngster and teenager, Larry cultivated a wide array of interests. He moved beyond his electric trains, exploring activities he considered to be more intellectually stimulating and challenging.

Not for a moment, though, did Larry consider parting with his trains. It was never an option to cut himself off from that part of his past. Instead, the locomotives and rolling stock were packed away.

Until the dawning of the 21st century, Larry moved into a new house and realized an expansive area he had no plans for would be ideal for building a large O gauge railroad. "I was tired of having my childhood trains in boxes," he said. "Finally, I could take them out – permanently – and fulfill my old dreams."

### Preparation

Or at least make the effort to realize those goals on a 5 x 16-foot O gauge display! Larry had plenty to learn about model railroading – a heckuva lot had changed regarding scale landscaping and electronics since the early 1950s!

Articles in *Model Railroader* and CTT guided Larry as he expanded his knowledge. Books proved useful, in particular, *50 Ways to a Better-Looking Layout* and *Model Railroads Go to War* (both from Kalmbach Publishing Co.).

Quickly, however, Larry felt the need for a much bigger stage on which to show off his model railroading talents. He wanted visitors to experience the same feeling of awe he had felt as child the moment his father unveiled that 4 x 8-foot green-painted Plywood Central.

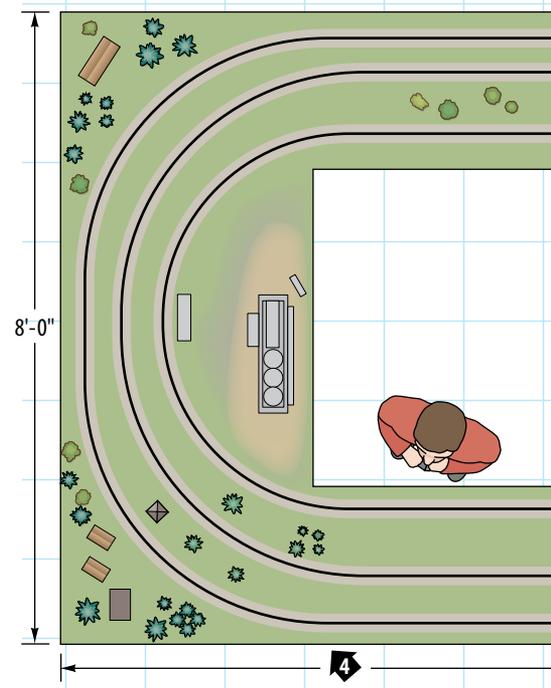
### Opposing bookend

Satisfied with everything he had done on the 5 x 16-foot layout, Larry was ready to proceed with a more sophisticated project. The 8 x 24-foot railroad he had in mind would be the culmination of his dreams. It would complement and honor what his dad had given him in 1950.

Up went a series of tables, each framed with and supported by 2 x 4 pieces of lumber. Covering each of them was a smooth sheet of 3/8-inch-thick plywood.

The boy who had been enraptured by the "scary, growling noises" of his Lionel diesels had no wish to silence them now. Asked if he had added sound-reducing roadbed, he said with a laugh, "Of course not. I wanted to hear all the racket!"

On the topic of track, however, Larry has become pickier. Along with many other contemporary modelers, he favors the realistic straights and curves found in the GarGraves line. Larry varied the diameters to accommodate his engines, with the widest curves being 72 inches.



### LAYOUT AT A GLANCE

**Name:** Lawrence Goodridge's O gauge layout

**Dimensions:** 8 x 24 feet

**Track:** GarGraves (O-72 maximum curves)

**Motive power:** K-Line, Lionel (postwar, modern), MTH

**Rolling stock:** K-Line, Lionel (postwar, modern), MTH

**Controls:** Lionel type-ZW transformers (3)

**Structures:** Korber, Lionel, MTH, Plasticville, Walthers

**Vehicles:** Corgi, Ertl, Lionel, MTH Maisto

**Figures:** Life-Like, Model Power, MTH, Woodland Scenics



Back to the postwar era for controlling the stable of new and old Lionel motive power Larry owns. Even the presence of modern steam and diesel models from K-Line and MTH failed to get him to budge from his plan to run everything in conventional mode using three Lionel type-ZW transformers.

### Love the simple stuff

One of the essential lessons Larry had gleaned from the 4 x 8-foot layout of his youth was that effective and memorable scenery need not be difficult. After all, his

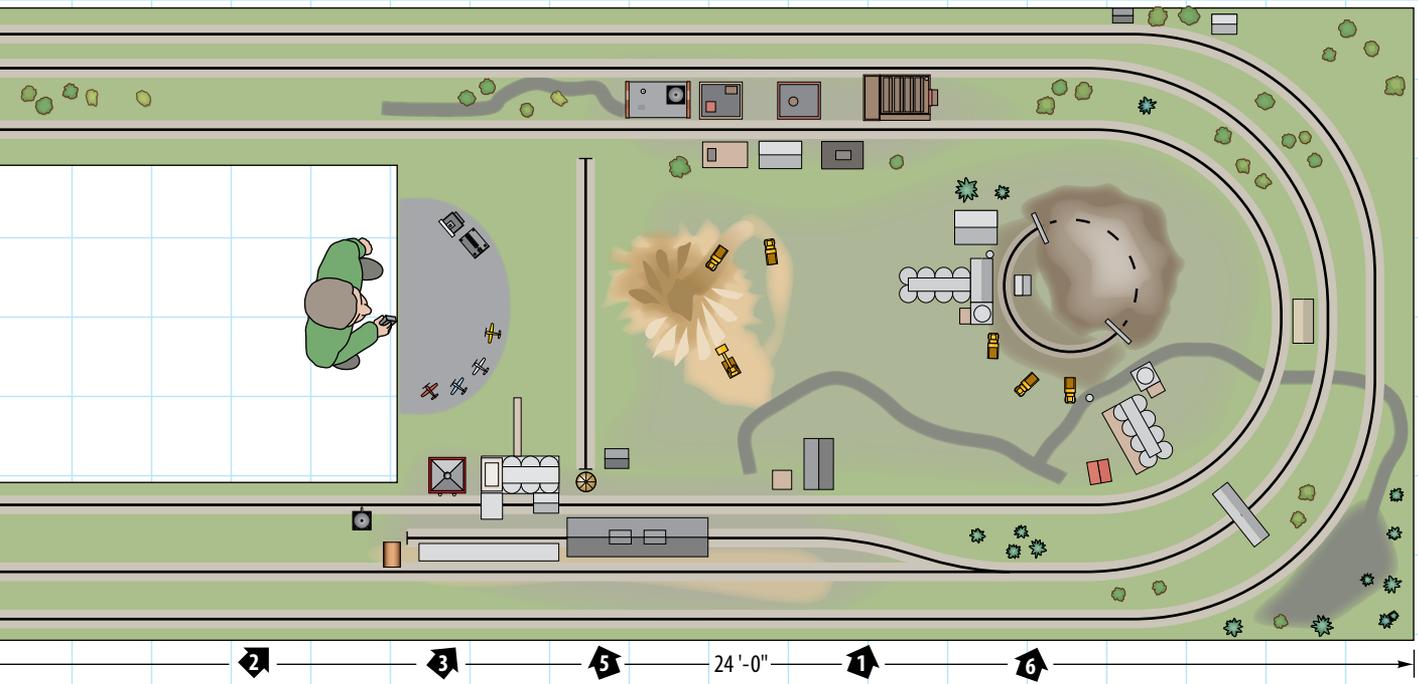


Illustration by Kellie Jaeger

**ABOVE** Are you shocked to realize that Larry's eye-catching and busy O gauge empire consists of only three concentric main lines with just one turnout? The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photos.

**3 BELOW** The age of steam power has never ebbed, thanks to the swift locomotives Larry regularly operates on his layout. Different refining industries still thrive, keeping residents employed. Construction of a new facility is underway.





**4 TOP** Few spots surpass this corner when it comes to showing off the array of modeling skills Larry has developed. Meticulously detailed trackwork complements the realistic scenery, uniquely painted and weathered structures, and a backdrop.

**5 ABOVE** Can you imagine the look on the faces of the laborers at that locomotive-servicing facility when they learned they'd be prepping the Aerotrains from General Motors for its run? They got the MTH RailKing no. 30-2954-1 lead unit to gleam.

father had just painted the surface of the plywood green and let his son's imagination take over.

Larry naturally wanted to do more than just daub bright colors on the tabletop. Reading magazine articles would teach him the methods and materials of creating eye-catching landscapes.

Blocks of Styrofoam worked nicely as the foundation of the landforms Larry hoped to develop. He carved them with a hot knife and then covered the surfaces with Structo-Lite Basecoat Plaster. Over

that hard shell next went layer after layer of acrylic washes. Larry opted for craft paints locally sold under the Americana and Liquitex brands. He kept applying light coats until he was pleased.

Ground cover varied significantly. Larry spoke favorably about the fine green grasses available from JTT Scenery (distributed by Model Rectifier Corp.) and Woodland Scenics. He purchased fine earth turf, foliage clumps and clusters, and deciduous trees from Woodland Scenics.

From the three-dimensional realm

encompassed by the landscapes on the layout, Larry shifted to two dimensions to supplement the hills and trees. He recognized the benefits of having his scenery blend into backdrops. He painted them to suggest his world extended for miles.

Larry's careful attention to detail was critical to the success of his O gauge model railroad. So also was the assistance provided by his fiancé, Nancy Bell. Her landscaping and handmade structures proved to be great assets to the layout.

### Places to live

Not very long ago, one of Nancy's friends stopped by to see the layout for the first time. The structures interested this visitor as much as the trains. After investigating the buildings he said, "It looks like someone could actually live there." Larry



**6 Miners scatter and trucks brake to avoid the tough steam locomotives rounding the main line on this overcast afternoon. Larry is as likely to run his postwar Lionel steeds as he is any of the modern engines he owns produced by K-Line and MTH.**

and Nancy felt no higher compliment could have been given.

Of course, Larry did more with the residential, commercial, and industrial kits he acquired than mindlessly plop them in empty areas. He considered the Korber, Lionel, MTH, Plasticville, and Walthers buildings raw material for painting, detailing, and weathering.

Larry enhances the exteriors with washes of acrylic paints and weathering powders. A specialty has become adding “rust,” using a light misting of red oxide automotive primer. When results fail to meet his standards, he simply starts over.

“I continue to search for details to put in to add realism to my scenes,” Larry said. “Animals, roof details, barrels, lawn mow-

ers, and roadway debris: Those are just a smattering of what I hunt for at train shows and in hobby shops.”

To that growing list of wanted items we need to add picking up kits whose parts Larry combines to create unique structures. He, like so many other builders, has discovered the artistic pleasures and challenges of what folks in the model railroad hobby call “kitbashing.” Now it has reached the top of his agenda.

### Memories come to life

Reactions to Larry’s grand enterprise vary – much to his delight. He had hoped to construct a tribute to the country in which he had come of age. The scenes and the color palette used to characterize them

were intended to suggest the grit and hard work he remembered from growing up in postwar America.

What do others see and feel when they visit Larry’s home? Older men and women grasp the message he sought to convey. They focus on vignettes and praise the modeling as they try to figure out where certain areas are supposed to be set and how he managed to complete them.

Younger viewers look at the entire display and express fascination. That Larry could dare conceive of such a project and then amass the skills needed to finish it amaze them. Their host only smiles at their kind words as he recalls with joy the lifelong journey his father launched for him way back in 1950. **CTT**

# WEEKEND WORKSHOP

WITH THE CTT READERS AND STAFF



Select the coin of your choice and laugh all the way to the boxcar bank!



The components for this project amount to a boxcar, a section of track, and some wire bundle ties.



The project begins by drilling of one hole in the boxcar shell (left), then drill another hole, and then another hole. As you drill later holes, tilt the drill bit to dig out plastic between them. Obviously, don't use a valuable car for the project!

## Make a boxcar bank

SIMPLE, QUICK, AND FUN

It is easy to think all of us have the skills to do something creative with our old trains that are past their prime. A pet project of mine is to take an old car and convert it into a bank and then present that car to a friend or family member.

No exotic tools are needed. You just need a drill and assorted drill bits, a small file or two, a section of track, and a few wire bundle ties. When you're done, you'll have something that will probably make somebody smile!

It should be easy to find the type of car best for this job. You need a boxcar with a metal frame, doors that don't open, and a simple method of removing the shell from the frame (preferably with a single screw). You don't need to spend a fortune on the rolling stock. You can probably find plenty of common

Lionel or Marx cars plastic cars for \$5 or \$10 each.

### LET'S GET STARTED

Remove the shell before drilling the coin slots. It's easier that way!

I begin drilling a series of  $\frac{1}{32}$ -inch holes spaced  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch apart for a total span of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Continue using larger drill bits as large as  $\frac{5}{16}$  inch while at the same time using side movement of the drill bit. This creates a slot next to the paralleling roofwalk.

You may want to use a small file or fine-grit sandpaper to clean up rough edges.

MAKE THIS  
PROJECT  
IN LESS  
THAN  
**30**  
MINS.

I like to use traditional tin-plate track because I have options that track with a plastic base doesn't offer. I attach the metal frame to a section of track using four wire bundle ties. After that I reattach the shell to the frame.

**YOU MADE IT!**

This is a simple project that's perfect for any skill level. You can paint the track to appear rusty and add ballast or even place scenic details on the base. Add another section of track or two, along with a gondola or hopper, and you can store keys, rings, or a wallet.

Should you give this piece of handiwork as a gift, it will be happily received as something you've crafted yourself.  
- Leon Sigman



After you create a gap between the holes, you may want to try a larger drill bit to widen the coin slot.



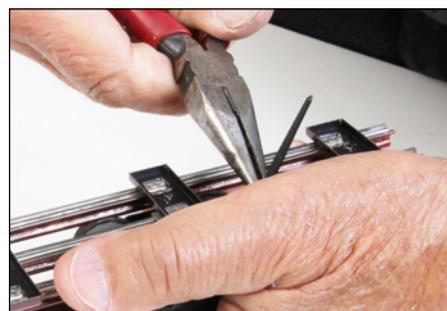
You may want to feed a coin or two through the rough slots to see if they are wide enough for coins to slide through.



Select a file of appropriate size, and start squaring and smoothing out the coin slot.



Once you've finished the slot, secure the car's frame to the track. Slide a tie through each of the trucks, wrapping it over the axle.



Cinch the ties tightly, and trim the excess plastic before reattaching the shell.

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# PRODUCT REVIEWS

WITH BOB KELLER



**The Menards O gauge World Headquarters can be the financial and industrial centerpiece of your Train Town. The structure has a decorated exterior, 250 LED bulbs, and a Starbucks with an interior. The roof has HVAC equipment and aircraft warning lights.**

## CORPORATE HQ KING

This is the grandest contemporary office structure I've seen for the O gauge market. This is also the most imposing structure I've seen that wasn't from a custom builder.

This is a magnificent structure on the one hand, for size and on the other, creativity. While the footprint and height of the structure are not that different from those of the previously released York Hotel, the latter has a more vertical look, while the headquarters appears wider. The base is 13 inches wide and 16 inches deep. It stands approximately 23 inches high. The headquarters is 10 inches deep and the Starbucks juts out 5 more.

I think this wideness is an optical illusion of sorts caused by the styling of the windows: They are modern single units that appear somewhat short and wide. The hotel's windows are similar to the windows on a house, narrow and tall. As any stout person knows, hori-

# Hail to the chief, baby

THE O GAUGE WORLD HEADQUARTERS BUILDING BY MENARDS

**W**hen I was a kid, I knew a railroad needed a headquarters. Mine was an old Lionel caboose I had received as a gift. The caboose had no couplers, which limited its use, so it became my trainmaster's office. Well,

brothers and sisters, those days are gone. Other than a cryptic "O World Headquarters" on the shipping notification sent to me, I had no idea what the latest building from Menards might be. Seeing the size of the box made me wonder if they'd shipped a carpet

cleaner by mistake. Nope, right there on the side of the box was a picture of a modern skyscraper.

Is it wrong to feel, well, giddy when you open a product box? If it is, then, I plead guilty. At a time when you wonder what Menards could possibly make that would

top the York Hotel Royale, they go ahead and top it.

"Holy cow!" was my first exclamation, once I realized it was a structure with modern lines. I popped the top and found a bundle of railroad heralds, which allow the freedom to select the railroad of your choice.



zontal stripes will make anything look wider!

There are seven stories of corporate windows (employees enter from a first floor side door, by the way). There are windows on all four sides, so the headquarters will be visible from any spot you place it, except perhaps behind a water heater or a basement post!

The uppermost part of the front has backlight signage: WORLD HEADQUARTERS. There is a red tab on the left. This fits the size of the many railroad logos included. But if you don't want to use this as a railroad building, you can make your own logo on your home computer, use a large lapel pin, or find some other creative technique to make this whatever HQ you want.

The top of the roof has aircraft warning lights on the corners and four groupings of HVAC equipment to keep your 1:48 scale employees comfy in the summer or winter.

The photos don't quite catch the color, but the structure is light blue with gray trim on the corners. The base is nicely scored to suggest concrete pavement. There are also pedestrians, and Jack the pup is on the sidewalk.



As Menards did with the York Hotel, it utilizes the rear to offer a simulated parking option or let you remove a section and run your trains through the building.

I thought this was a odd when I saw the hotel, but posing it with several trolley cars looked good and made sense.

A note about the run-through: If you plan on pairing this structure with the York Hotel, the bases are not the same width. The hotel will need to be placed a bit farther back for the right alignment.

This is a great concept for placing the city skyline on the back loop of your layout for an impressive visual effect. One might hope there are other cityscape buildings on the horizon.

### HOT CUPPA JOE

Think back to old movies from the 1930s and '40s and you'll probably recall scenes in the lobbies of office buildings they were often a hive of activity. People might bustle around an information desk. There almost always was a newsstand, perhaps a candy/cigar/cigarette vendor, and maybe even a small coffee shop or gift shop. Keeping with this multi-purpose theme, the World Headquarters also has a high-visibility tenant on the first floor: Starbucks.

Starbucks is internationally known and seems to be in a race with Walgreens to be on

**This is a magnificent structure on the one hand, for size and on the other, creativity.**

**The headquarters is eight stories high. Out of the box, it comes with a rear insert for "all day parking." However, if you remove it ...**

**... It reveals a tunnel through which you can run a rail line! The Starbucks has a see-through roof for viewing.**

every other corner of every city in America. You have brand recognition. This will probably elicit smiles from non-train folks viewing your three-rail empire. But as the commercials say, "Wait, there's more."

When layout visitors look beyond the sign, they will discover they can see inside the shop from the sides and even the ceiling. Menards has positioned customers, a barista, counters, tables, chairs, and customers. Even a plate of fruity-looking stuff! All it needs is a few O scale coffee mugs, and it will be complete! This aspect should be a crowd pleaser, for certain.

Oh, keep a Swiffer handy. In the few weeks we've had this around the office, the smoked windows of the store seem to be a magnet for dust!

As for power, the LED illumination is great – and it should be with 250 LEDs packed into this model. Menards recommends using the new no. 279-4050 power adapter. It is a 4.5V/5000 mA device suitable for the largest requirements of Menards buildings. The adapter costs \$19.99 plus shipping. Order online at [www.Menards.com/trains](http://www.Menards.com/trains).

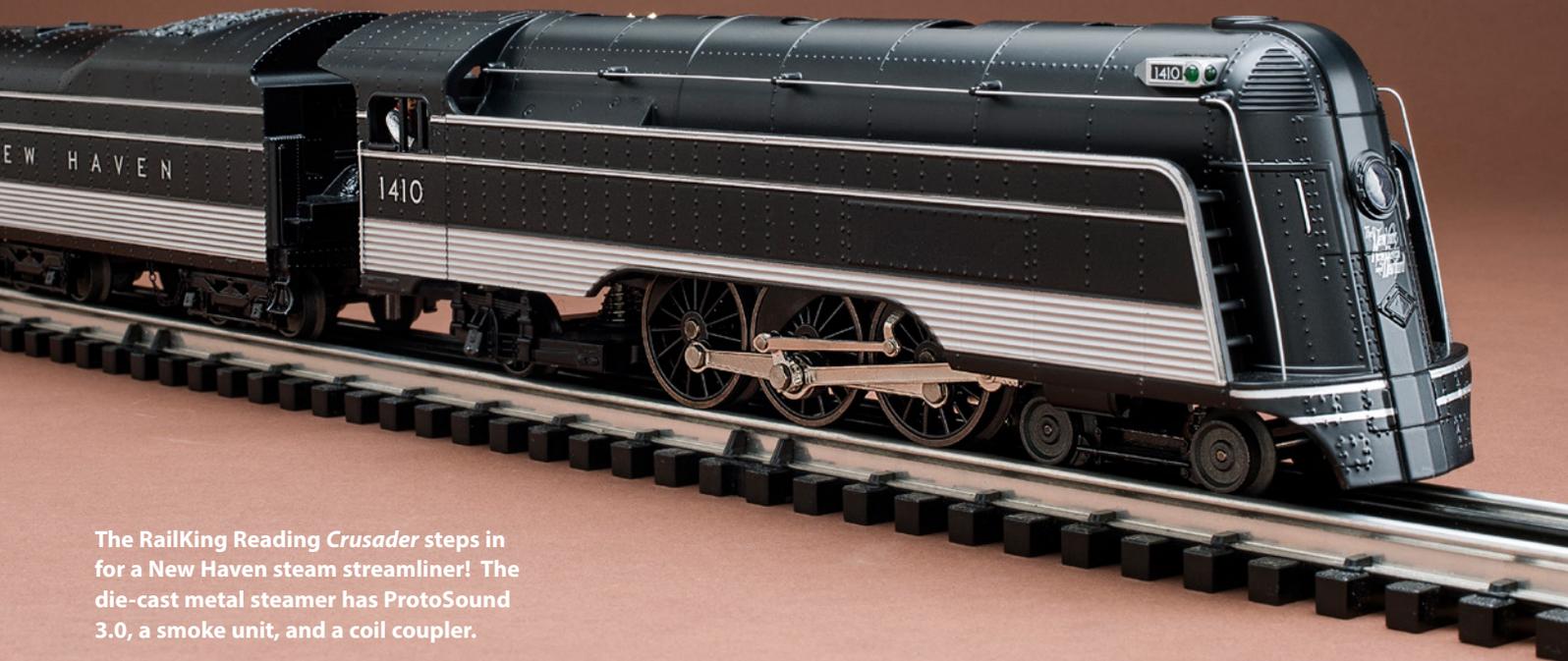
At this point, I simply refuse to ask, "What will Menards do next?" because I'm pretty certain that whatever it is, it will be a surprise and it will demonstrate some very clever out-of-the-box thinking.

– Bob Keller

## O GAUGE HEADQUARTERS BUILDING BY MENARDS

**Price:** \$119.95 (no. 279-3792) **Dimensions:** 13 inches wide, 16 inches deep, 23 inches high  
**Features:** Interior illumination, Starbucks has tables, chairs, counter, server, and customers. Base is decorated **Power:** Requires a 4.5-volt 5000-mA AC to DC power adapter sold separately Order: [www.Menards.com/Trains](http://www.Menards.com/Trains)

## PRODUCT REVIEWS



The RailKing Reading *Crusader* steps in for a New Haven steam streamliner! The die-cast metal steamer has ProtoSound 3.0, a smoke unit, and a coil coupler.

# The Rambler

## O GAUGE STREAMLINED 4-6-2 FROM MTH

The great selling point of MTH's RailKing line is that operators with curves tighter than O-54 are able to choose from a variety of nicely detailed locomotives in body types that would never otherwise have been made for the O-31 crowd. I know that early on I bought a *Hiawatha* 4-6-4, a Dreyfuss Hudson 4-6-4, and even a Santa Fe 2-10-4. These were certainly uncommon enough on the scale side of the divide, let alone the world of modest-sized layouts.

MTH has continued this concept of offering unusual, often one-of-a-kind locomotives in a variety of paint schemes to allow enthusiasts to enhance their fleets with flashes of color and unique outlines.

Today, we're taking a look at a RailKing 4-6-2 that is a model originating with the RailKing version of the Reading's *Crusader*. MTH offers up this run in Canadian National, Chicago & North Western, New Haven, Reading, and seasonal Halloween liveries.

The *Crusader* was a streamlined train (1937-82) that ran 90 miles between Philadelphia and New York City (via Jersey

City, N.J.). It was a new train set built by the Budd Co. The cars stood out from typical coaches, thanks to their having air conditioning, color coordination, and reclining seats.

The train was notable for having an observation on each end, avoiding the

need to be turned at the end of the line.

The locomotive's tender had an extension at its rear, which slid over the end of the car to hide the rounded end. Thus only the locomotive needed to be turned at the terminus. This saved considerable labor time since the cars didn't need to be



The basis of this New Haven model is the Reading's *Crusader* locomotive, one of two that powered a train with the same name. Kalmbach Library photo



moved and re-shuffled for the next run. The Reading rebuilt two 4-6-2 streamlined engines for *Crusader* service and named them the G1sa class. The goal was to make the locomotives appear futuristic and be a natural fit with the train, rather than just another steam locomotive. The public latched on to the design and ridership rose 175 percent.

### OPENING THE BOX

The O gauge model is a good replica of the original Reading locomotive. Some hobbyists would dub the design “overturned bathtub,” but to me it symbolizes speed and power. You could probably find something that looks like this engine in a children’s book from the 1940s about the trains of tomorrow.

The pilot is smooth, with manly looking cast-in rivet heads showing where the panels were bolted together! A raised surface runs from the pilot, up over the headlight, and to the smokestack. There are grab irons on both sides of the headlight and handrails that run up and along the boiler. The number boards and classification lights are on either side of the smokestack.

The sides of the locomotive are a mix of smooth and fluted design that match the fluting of the passenger cars it pulled. Scanning the top of the boiler, you’ll find recesses in the streamlining for pop-off valves, bell, and whistle.

The cab has two crew figures, sliding windows, a decorated backhead, and fire-box glow. The model has MTH’s rigid wireless tether.



The tender looks like a rolling bank vault! It has plenty of rivet and seam detailing, and the oversized-rivet heads suggest you could hit the side with a shell from a German 88 and it would barely muss up the paint.

**There are grab irons on both sides of the headlight and handrails that run up and along the boiler.**

The rear of the tender extends to surround the observation end of the consist, which is a pretty funky concept. The tender does have a backup light. Also worth mentioning is that the coal load is the chunk style, rather than the traditionally cast-in version.

The decoration of the locomotive and tender was excellent. While most railroads probably would have had a flashier paint scheme on their locomotives, I think this fits right in with the black-and-orange scheme the line used on some passenger equipment, notably their Bradley “American Flyer” coaches.

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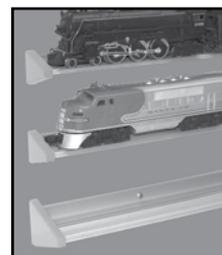
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**ON THE TEST TRACK**

The New Haven unit was very responsive. The whistle had a great tone to it, and the chuffing was capable of generating a grin, even though I've heard it all before. The crew sounds were conversational, and the background clunks and thunks helped carry off the trackside atmosphere.

Drawbar pull was very good, at 1 pound, 6 ounces. The speed range of the model ranged from 4.5 to 57.9 scale miles per hour.

This model is one of the RailKing loco-



motives dedicated first and foremost to operators with tighter curves – the men and ladies using O-31 track. There is considerable selective compression in the model, but even so, the Pacific measures roughly 80 feet in O scale.

It is a solidly constructed locomotive with a great sound package and plenty of pulling power. If you are a fan of any of the related liveries in this run, or just want a spiffy-looking streamlined train, visit your local MTH retailer and check it out. You'll be impressed. – Bob

**O GAUGE 4-6-2 PACIFIC STEAM ENGINE FROM MTH**

**Price:** \$499.95 (no. 20-20683-1) **Min Curve:** O-31 **Cmd Low:** 4.5 smph **Cnv Low:** 4.8 smph **High:** 57.9 smph **Drawbar pull:** 1 lb., 6 oz. **Features:** A can-style motor, ProtoSound 3.0 command and sound system, smoke unit, coil coupler on tender **Current-production road names:** Canadian National, Chicago & North Western, New Haven, Reading, and a special Halloween livery



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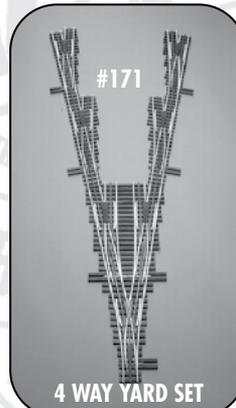
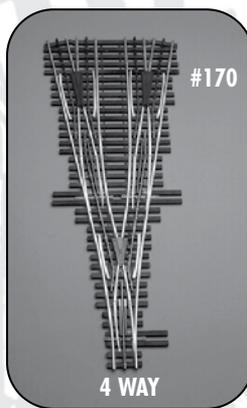
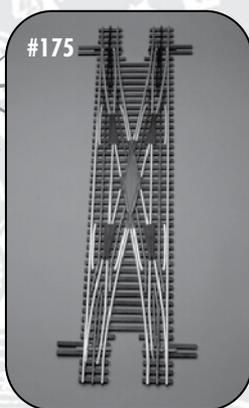
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**CLOSING DATES:** Jan 2018 closes Oct 10, Feb. closes Nov. 1, March closes Dec. 8, May closes Feb. 8, July closes Apr. 12, Sept. closes June 14, Oct. closes July 12, Nov. closes Aug. 9, Dec. closes Sept. 13.

## Events

**CO, DENVER:** Rocky Mountain Train Show March 3-4, 2018. Denver Merchandise Mart, 451 East 58th Avenue, Denver, CO 80216. Saturday, 10:00am-5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. 2-1/2 acres of model trains of all scales, 30 layouts, 600 sales tables, clinics and more. Admission \$10.00 Free Parking. Phone: 303-364-0274 [www.RockyMountainTrainShow.com](http://www.RockyMountainTrainShow.com) information@RockyMountainTrainShow.com

**CT, WALLINGFORD:** Classic Shows, LLC will hold a Train and Toy Show on Sunday, February 11, 2018 from 9:00am-2:00pm at Zandri's Stillwood Inn, 1074 South Colony Road, (U.S. Route 5), exit 13 on Interstate 91. Admission is \$6.00, children 12 and under are free with adult. For information 203-926-1327 or [www.ClassicShowsLLC.com](http://www.ClassicShowsLLC.com)

**FL, BROOKSVILLE:** Regal Railways presents Toy Trains & Hobby Show. Hernando Fairgrounds, 6436 Broad St. Saturday, January 6, 2018. 9:00am-2:00pm. Adults \$5.00. Vendors and operating layouts. Serving lunch items. Contact: Joe at 727-244-1341 or visit: [www.regalrailways.com](http://www.regalrailways.com) for more information.

**FL, DELAND:** 62nd Florida Railfair, Saturday, January 13, 2018, 9:00am-4:00pm. and Sunday January 14, 10:00am-3:30pm. Volusia County Fairgrounds (Tommy Lawrence Arena), 3150 E. New York Ave. (SR44 and I-4). Admission: \$9.00 (under 12 free). Info: Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213. 703-536-2954. E-mail: [rrshows@aol.com](mailto:rrshows@aol.com) or [www.gserr.com](http://www.gserr.com)

**FL, ENGLEWOOD:** Regal Railways presents Toy Train Collectible & Hobby Show. Elks Lodge, 401 N. Indiana Ave. Saturday, January 20, 2018, 9:00am-2:00pm. Adults \$5.00. Vendors and operating layout. Contact Joe @ 727-244-1341 or visit [www.regalrailways.com](http://www.regalrailways.com) for more information.

**FL, LARGO:** Suncoast Model Railroad Club Train Show/ Open House, December 9, 2017. SHOW- Minnreg Hall, 6340 126th Ave. N., Largo. Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm. Admission: \$7.00, Children \$2.00 and under 11-free. Free parking. Food/snacks. OPEN HOUSE- Clubhouse, 12355 62nd Street N, Unit A. Visit [www.suncoastmrrc.com](http://www.suncoastmrrc.com) Contact: [irvatten@yahoo.com](mailto:irvatten@yahoo.com)

**FL, STUART:** Martin County Model Railroads 11th Annual Train Expo. Martin County Fairgrounds, 2616 Old Dixie Hwy. January 20-21, 2018, 9:00am-3:00pm. Admission: Adults \$6.00, Operating layouts, sales tables, displays & NMRA information. Information: Bill Smet, 772-233-0279, [mcmr2616@yahoo.com](mailto:mcmr2616@yahoo.com) or PO Box 1498, Stuart, FL 34995.

**GA, ATLANTA:** 54th Model Train & Railroadiana Show. Saturday, January 20, 2018. Infinite Energy Center, 6400 Sugarloaf Parkway. 9:00am-4:00pm. Admission \$9.00 (under 12 free). Info. Charles Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213 703-536-2954 or [rrshows@aol.com](mailto:rrshows@aol.com)

**IL, CHICAGO:** Lionel Collectors Club of America will hold its 48th National Convention July 23 through 28, at Westin Yorktown, Lombard, IL. Includes area tours, banquets and train store exclusively for LCCA members. swap meet open to the public Free Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm. LCCA club membership details on club website [Lionelcollectors.org](http://Lionelcollectors.org). Convention details at website early 2018.

**NJ, WAYNE:** National Collector's Club Special Christmas Show, P.A.L. Hall, 1 Pal Drive, Wayne, NJ 07470. Saturday, December 23, 2017, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$6.00; under 10 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to [www.eastcoastrainparts.com](http://www.eastcoastrainparts.com) and click on The Wayne Show.

**NY, LINDENHURST:** Northern Spur Train/Diecast Vehicles/Toy Meet. Firemen's Memorial Park, 555 Heiling Blvd. (north of Hartford St.) January 7, 2018, February 18, 2018, April 8, 2018 September 23, 2018 November 4, 2018. 8:30am-1:00pm. \$5.00 adults, under 16 free w/adult. Handicap accessible. Contact: Carmelo Sancetta. PO Box 1286M. Bay Shore, NY 11706. 631-666-6855

**NY, WEST SENECA:** TCA Upstate NY Chapter Train Show. Ismailia Shrine Center, 1600 Southwestern Blvd., Zip Code: 14224. Sunday, January 11, 2018, TCA Members: 9:00am. General Public: 9:30am-2:30pm. Admission: Adults \$5.00, under 17 free with paid adult. Contact: Chuck 716-390-8216, E-mail: [usnyc2015@gmail.com](mailto:usnyc2015@gmail.com) or [www.upstate-ny-tca.com](http://www.upstate-ny-tca.com)

**SC, LAKE CITY:** Ragsdale Building, 245 S. Church Street. Saturday, January 13, 2018, 9:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$5.00, under 10 FREE. Over 200 vendor tables. Thomas the Train & Friends, Railroad collectibles. Contact Todd at 843-307-8674. [southcarolinatradeshow@gmail.com](mailto:southcarolinatradeshow@gmail.com) or [www.SouthCarolinaTradeShows.com](http://www.SouthCarolinaTradeShows.com)

**WI, LA CROSSE:** The 27th Annual Great Tri-State Rail Sale. La Crosse Center, 2nd & Pearl Streets. January 27, 2018 9:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$5.00, under 12 free. 300 Tables; All Scales; Model, Toy & Antique Trains & Memorabilia. Information: 4000 Foundation, PO Box 3411, La Crosse, WI 54602. 608-781-9383.

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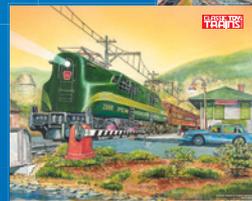
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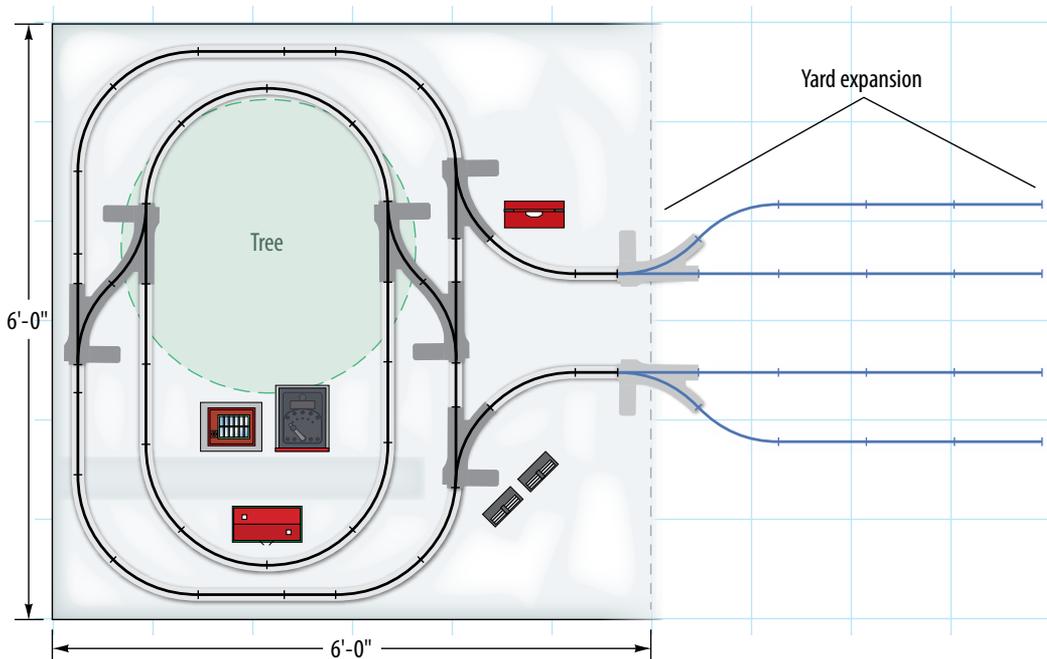
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A. Total no. copies printed (net press run)	37,683	36,934
B. Paid circulation:		
1. Paid/requested outside county mail subscriptions	27,623	27,023
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3. Street vendors and counter sales	2,979	2,697
4. Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
C. Total paid circulation (sum of 15B (1 through 4))	30,602	29,720
D. Free distribution by mail and outside:		
1. Outside county	0	0
2. In county	0	0
3. Other classes through USPS	207	292
4. Outside the mail	0	0
E. Total free distribution (sum of 15D)	207	292
F. Total distribution (sum of 15C and 15E)	30,809	30,012
G. Copies not distributed	6,873	6,922
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I. Percent paid and/or requested circulation	99.33%	99.03%
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a. Paid electronic copies	836	662
b. Total paid print copies + Paid electronic copies	31,439	30,382
c. Total print distribution + Paid electronic copies	31,646	30,674
d. Percent paid (both print and electronic copies)	99.34%	99.05%

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 18. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.  
 (signed) Nicole McGuire  
 Vice President, Consumer Marketing



Albert Reitz's mother, Anita Carmack, designed this two train yard trackplan for as much Christmas train running fun as her son could have in a 6x6-foot space.

Illustration by Kelle Jaeger

**HAVE A TIP OR TECHNIQUE TO SHARE?** Write "Tips" on your letter and mail it to Classic Toy Trains, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612, or email us at [tips@classictoytrains.com](mailto:tips@classictoytrains.com) and put the word "tips" in the subject line. We'll pay you \$25 for any tip we publish unless it was contained in a previously purchased article.

through the outer loop, then around the inner loop, then back out, and have it arrive at a different destination.

### Control

Albert's controls were standard for the time. He used two Lionel transformers, both of which were concealed in the inner loop. They powered his nos. 254E and 260E engines.

Albert managed the operation via two Lionel no. 81 controlling rheostats placed near the south yard. Opposite them, by the north yard, Anita wired a no. 439 panel board. The switch and whistle control board could be anywhere. Switch controllers were installed on polished wood.

Of course, the expansion possibilities are limited only by the space you have to fill. A few more straight sections here and there, and you end up with increased running time. I can imagine a matching double-loop on the opposite end, creating a 6 x 12-foot dog-bone design.

Albert does offer a footnote. You see, his yard had to work around a fireplace his mother decorated with a mountain made of wood from fruit crates and a sheet! And nearby was a cardboard village using C-6 light bulbs!

This nifty layout offers plenty of opportunity for running trains, and with two yards, you have plenty of space for all those those new freight and passenger cars waiting under the tree. — Bob Keller

## Christmas tree tip

A SIMPLE 6 X 6-FOOT PLAN WITH EXPANDABILITY

Albert Reitz recently sent a diagram of the train layout his mother, Anita Carmack, set up for him at Christmas when he was a four-year old lad. It may work well for your holiday train running.

Anita assessed the trains and track her son got from his uncle and started from there. The O-31 track plan covered roughly a 6 x 6-foot area, with significant potential for expansion. This is a representation of the layout as it evolved over many Christmases.

### The inner loop

The "running" part of the layout had two independent loops of O-31 track surrounding the tree. The inner loop was a fairly tight oval of O-31 track. Inside the loop were the tree and two accessories: a Lionel no. 436 power station that concealed a Lionel type-T transformer. The other was a

building assembled by his mother to hide a Lionel type-B transformer.

At roughly the 10 and 2 o'clock positions on the inner loop, Anita placed O-31 switches that connected to an outer loop (two left- and two right-hand switches).

The inner and outer switches fed into each other.

At the bottom outside of the loop, a Lionel no. 127 town station served as a station stop.

### The outside loop

On the right side of the loop, things got trickier. There were three O-31 switches (two left-hand and one right-hand). One of the left-hand switches

connected to the inner loop. The other two switches veered away toward the layout's right. There was a curve, along with a track section.

But adding an O-31 switch to each line Albert had effectively created a "North" yard and a "South" yard. One train entered the north yard from the top of the layout, and a second train entered the south yard from the bottom.

Later, Albert added an extra track section between the loop switch and the yard switch for smoother operation.

The neat thing about the two-yard angle was that you could originate a train, say an outbound freight, run it

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