



Ties and Rails

Official newsletter of the Crossville Model Railroad Club
and Div. 16, Southeast Region, NMRA

April 2020

(931)210-5050

www.crossvilletrains.org

The Prez. Sez:

First, let's say, I hope everyone has remained safe and healthy throughout this isolation or the minimal exposure procedures.

With the confirmed presence of the Coronavirus here in Cumberland County, maintaining the prescribed personal space and washing your hands frequently is even more important.

Should any member need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me as we have members who are willing to help.

On the lighter side, toilet paper supplies have arrived and so has a variety of sanitizing products. All vendors are limiting which needed to be done before people left the store with 200 rolls of toilet paper. Hopefully by April 1st our robust supply chain will have other high demand items back on the shelves as well.

It has been determined that reopening to the public safely may be months away and that is why all April activities at the suite have been cancelled. It is also disconcerting that events scheduled for as far ahead as July, like the Olympics, have also been postponed.

Attempting to reopen the country by Easter, which is being proposed seems a bit premature. Hopefully rational and the correct medical decisions, based on accurate medical science, will be forthcoming. Apparently Tennessee schools will be closed until at least April 24. However other states have cancelled classes for the entire school year.

I read a report which was the collaboration of the world's top twenty infectious disease specialists and they predict hospital admittance will not peak until mid to late May or even later. They have also determined that the Corona Virus will return in the fall.

Even when it is determined we can open safely, posing no threat to our members or the general public, visitor numbers will take six to nine months to return to numbers which will sustain us financially.

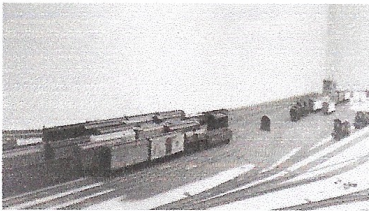
We will have some tough decisions to be made in the first few months but, keep in mind, that the Board members hold your health as a much higher priority than donation dollars at this time.

God bless and stay safe.

If you have something you wish to put in the newsletter, contact Tom Shallcross at chipmonk4@comcast.net

Attention Members

**All Club meetings and other Club activities
For April have been cancelled.**



Operations

Richard Morris

As you have seen in emails, organized activities in the Club are being suspended through the end of April, at least. That means no Operating session on Monday, April 6.

That gives me some time to try to work up some further improvements for the next session. I want to have at least a basic timetable or schedule for trains. I saw an article showing an example of a 'stringline chart' that is basically a table of all the stations versus hours of the day. Trains are represented by 'strings' or lines from station to station representing the times at each station. One is under development and will help plan what trains run and when and where meets should occur. This will concentrate on mainline trains, but will help locals or turns by telling them what trains can be expected to pass them or have a meet.

The last two sessions have featured one pas-

senger train in each direction. I am going to try to add local passenger trains in addition to the 'express' ones. This will mean we will have additional opportunities for members to run trains.

I also hope to get the train sheets reworked to show the revised trackage in front of Glacier Gravel that gives an additional crossover into HoSu yard. Because multiple turnouts have to be thrown to access the various routes through the shared passing siding there, Tom has set up routes that will be aligned using your throttles. Diagrams showing the routings and 'turnout' numbers to throw will be added to the train sheets.

I hope to have mainline freights stopping at HoSu yard to drop and pickup cars. This will give the Yardmaster additional work in addition to preparing blocks of cars for the various locals.

Finally, if you have Digitrax throttles at home, bring them to the next session. You can run trains using your tablet or phone, but the throttles are more reliable. We have several throttles available, both wired and wireless.

From the Treasurer

Some members have asked me about making a donation to the Club. If you wish to make a donation, put your cash or check in an envelope in the cash box and mark it "donation".

The good news is CMRC is financially sound - we have all our bills paid through the first quarter.

The only obligations that we have through the end of our lease are some 1st quarter scale expenses, our phone and the rent.

We could meet all our financial obligations through the lease period without further income and not have to use our reserve funds.

Jim Grogitsky



N Scale Thank You - Jan Novack

Big thanks to Bill Bly and Art Landrigan for their help in track cleaning and engine rotation while I was away. It kept the N scale trains rolling along nicely.

Important Dates in Railroad History

From NMRA calendar

4/18/1934—Burlington Zephyr dedicated

4/23/1866—Westinghouse patents first air brake

4/29/1873—Eli H. Janney patents knuckle coupler

4/30/1900—Casey Jones rides into eternity

Did You Know

Did you know that the Club has a microwave in the office where members can warm up meals if they so desire.

Please clean up after you use it.

Thank you.

Membership

John Conor

Hey, members

Sorry to report there is no report.

Stay healthy till we next get together or, in train speak.... "stay on track"

Railroad Slang

Dinger—Yardmaster or Assistant Yardmaster

Flimsy—Train Order

Hogger—A Locomotive engineer

Teakettle—Usually applied to leaky old locomotives



The DCC Shed @ CMRC

Paul Falk

Art Landrigan

Welcome, come on in.

This month we are trouble shooting the HO layout's annoying quirk of shutting off the layout track power for a short that should be confined to just one section. The track on the HO layout has been divided into some 30 different power sections. Each of these sections is connected via a device known as a PM42. This PM42 is a power management device designed to improve operation by preempting command station/booster shutdowns when a short circuit or overload is detected by the PM42.

This is accomplished with an auto-resetting adjustable solid state circuit breaker that should open the circuit before the booster. The circuit breaker can be set to trip or open from 1.5 to 12 amps. This setting is used to allow for more locomotives to be used on a section. The desire is to use the lowest possible setting, consistent with good operation and reliable short circuit detection and recovery. Higher current settings are not "better".

The circuit breaker is adjustable in another way too. This adjustment is how fast the breaker reacts to the short or overload. The command station/booster is also adjustable in how fast it reacts to overloads. The desire is to have the PM42 operate slightly faster than the booster.

We have been in contact with Digitrax, the manufacturer of the DCC equipment found on the HO and N scale layouts. They have provided us with

some guidance of how these various settings for current (amps) and trip speed should be configured. These new settings will be our next attempt at smoothing operations. Wish us luck.

Stay well!

Remember, one-on-one DCC training is always available, so let us know. We are here to help. We welcome your interest and comments. Feel free to contact either Paul Falk (pfalk1@gmail.com) or Art Landrigan (arcy22tn@gmail.com) with questions, comments or ideas.

G Scale News - Ann Grogitsky

WE have been busy—taking advantage of the Club being closed. We are replacing must brass track on the main line with stainless steel (which means washing the table before putting the new track down). It should be done soon.

We are going to miss Roy Richardson and his wife Jackie, as they are moving back to Cincinnati. I bought 10 buildings and some figures from Roy, some of them are pretty rough from being outside. Jim and I are washing, gluing and painting houses at home (lights will be put in them as they are put on the layout). We are also refurbishing the area where the biker shop was located.

It's too bad more members are not taking advantage of us not being open - what better time to work on the layout when you don't have to put everything back together when you leave.

Shynee Rayals Sez:

The 'Hot-Load' Law The tighter the timetable for delivering a hot load, the more you will worry and the later your train will arrive.

What's wrong with this picture?



See Page 10 for answer and another picture.

Monthly Rant on HO Loco Maintenance

We have had several months of very minimal loco maintenance required. I have been rotating engines around the first of each month, so I guess that means several rotations are in good shape. There were a few locomotives in the repair drawer this month before we shut down that I am working on. These comments are based on those locos.

First, if a loco seems to take 'excessive' throttle to run on DC, check the bottom of the fuel tank. See the DCC there? That means that it will take more throttle to run. Some dual-mode decoders will take 7-8 volts to start moving! That is normal. It does not mean there is anything wrong with the loco. Don't like that? Then put the loco back in the drawer and choose another, non-DCC loco.

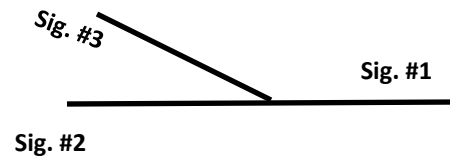
Please handle the locos gently. Newer locos have thinner handrails and it doesn't take much to tear them. If they get too messed up, sometimes the only alternative is to remove them completely, since just small sections here and there don't look good. Some of this damage may be happening in the drawer as locos bang into each other.

Thank you for writing up Trouble Tickets when you put locos in the drawer. Please try to be clear when explaining what is wrong with a loco, A note that says "Truck no power" doesn't mean much. No electrical pickup? Not providing movement to the rails? One had that note and the truck in question (I think) is actually UNDRIVEN. Yeah, it's not going to help move the loco.

Richard Morris

HO Signals - Tom Shallcross

This month, I will address the signaling of a single turnout at one end of a passing siding. These signals will be identified as follows:



Signal #1 will usually be a double headed signal. The top head will indicate the condition of the main line, depending on how the turnout is set. Generally the signal shows green, indicating the turnout is set for the main line. If the turnout is set for the diverging route, the signal will show red.

The lower head indicates the condition of the diverging route. In the event the turnout is set for the diverging route, the signal will display a yellow indication. If the turnout is set for the main line, the signal will display red.

Signal #2 will show the condition of the main line. In the event the turnout is set to permit trains to operate on the main line, the signal will show green. If the turnout is set for the diverging route, the signal will show red and, in many cases, the 'safety zone' will stop the train before it reaches the turnout.

Signal #3 will show the condition of the diverging route. In the event the turnout is set for the main line, the signal will show a red indication. In the event the turnout is set for the diverging route, the signal will have a yellow indication. Many times this signal will be a dwarf signal instead of the regular block signal.

Marketing Committee

Art Landrigan

The Marketing Committee held it's meeting on Mar. 5, 2020 with 6 folks present (Art L., Ann G., Paul F., John C., Pat T. and Bob H.

Expenses for the Kid's stickers and the large Mall banner have been processed and recorded.

The 20th Anniversary booklet was discussed with members agreeing to bring prospective, potential names to our next meeting. Our next meeting will also select the photos (courtesy of Pat T.) to be used on the calendar.

Bill continues to work with Bobbi and Ann on historical books and the booklet.

The small signs (4 ea.) for the Outlet Center driveway entrances should be ready for installation soon.

Pat stated that the Ohio Club is anxious to come back to Crossville. Art suggested that possibly we could incorporate their trip with our 20th Anniversary Celebration. John stated that we could possibly get the building at the County Fairgrounds free of charge, if we advertise that children are free admission.

John also mentioned that the Bon Air History Fair is scheduled for May 3rd, from 11AM to 4PM. WE could ask Bill to publish something about our involvement and would want to be included in Bon Air's publicity efforts.

It should be noted that we have recently determined that all public events/meetings, etc. are cancelled for the foreseeable future due to the current Covid-19 virus. As a result, our meeting scheduled for April 9th is cancelled. We will continue to

Cont. on page 8

Public Relations

Bill Bly

Our public relations team has been busy.

Ann and Jim attended an event, hosted by the Crossville Chamber of Commerce, and did a bit of networking.

We have been working on a publication for the 20th Anniversary. A big thanks to Tom Shallcross, John Conor, Mike Ferry and Ann for sharing photos, newsletters and news clippings. We have been scanning photo albums and binders full of media. Ann will be organizing interviews to help tell the story behind the Club.

We also have been posting regularly, photos to social media and making short video clips which seem popular on Facebook. We are receiving positive feedback from visitors.

For now, trips to visit other Clubs and network with organizations is on hold due to health concerns.

Day 4 of social distancing: Struck up a conversation with a spider today. Seems nice. He's a web designer.

Marketing—*cont. from page 7*

monitor local status and provide updates as they may occur.

Everyone is asked to remain safe in their daily activities. Hope to see you all soon.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM

The next Marketing Committee meeting is scheduled for: TBD

N Scale News - Jan Novack

I've made good progress on our lighting project since returning from vacation and while we were closed to the public. The new lighted American Flag was installed in the park area, and more town build-

ings had lights installed. I have a few more street lights and buildings to light to finish that area.

Several street lights have been installed in the town where the trolley runs from the far end of the town all the way to the drive-in theater. The last part of the lighting in this section is to install the floodlight that will light the Fairfield Glade water tower.

Next up after the lighting in these two areas is complete is improve the operation of the three lines so trains can operate in either direction without issue. Turnouts that do not operate properly will be replaced with Tortoise controls added.

(See picture below and the pictures on page 9 showing Jan's progress - Ed.)





HO Scale News - Paul Falk

During the Club's shut down this past month, we have been able to complete the installation of all the track in the new section of Pier 4.

With that, we have also completed the installation of the Tortoise turnout machines as well as the powering of the frogs.

The installation of the 'scale track' in front of Glacier Gravel has been completed. At each end of the scale, there is a signal installed to indicate the 'condition' of the trackage through the scale. If the signal displays a green indication, it means that the

route is set for the bypass track. If the signal displays a yellow indication, the trackage is set for the train to go over the scale at a much reduced speed.

We have completed the installation of 'safety zones' on the main lines in the new section on Pier 4. These are in effect for only the main lines where the shared passing siding is located. At this time, there are no 'safety zones' on the stub sidings.

Work has started on the installation of signals on the new section. At the present time, some signals will remain 'dark' as we are waiting for a shipment of special controllers from the manufacturer. In the mean time, we will activate those that we can.

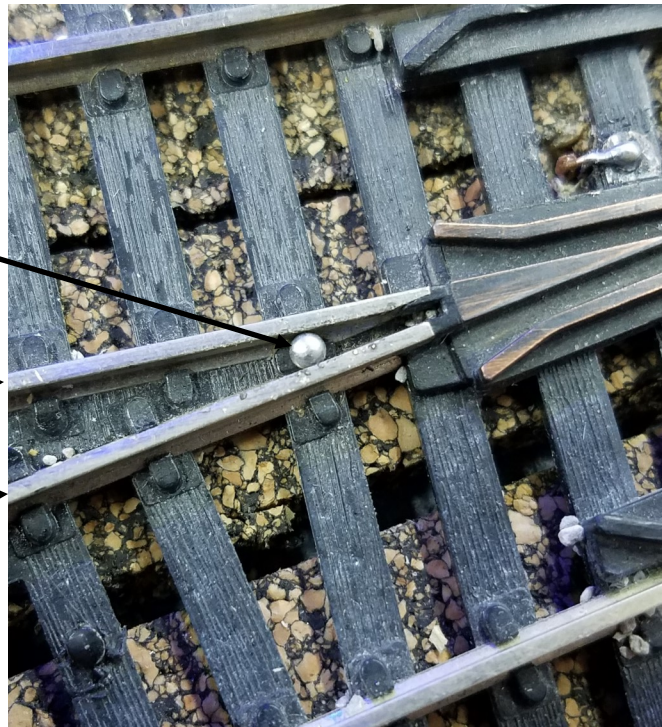
Answer to picture on page 5 - Recently we experienced a 'short' on the Southern line that shut down the whole Southern line. After spending in excess of 8 man hours going over everything, Paul was able to locate an extremely small ball of solder causing a short between Rail A and Rail B. We have to presume that the vibration on the table caused the ball to roll to the place where you see it in the photo below.

The point we are making is that that can happen to any scale in any location with any metal object. As you work on different parts of a layout, be careful to pick up any small object that can cause a problem.

This is the 'junction' of Rail A and Rail B on Turnout 401. Notice the small ball of solder .

Rail B

Rail A



Late Breaking News

Many of you experienced the wrath of the storm on Saturday night/Sunday morning. As you traveled around the area, you saw trees down, power lines down and in some cases, damage to buildings. Some of you lost power for, up to, 12+ hours.

To give you an idea of the severity of the storm, Paul provided a link showing a train in nearby Sparta. I copied the picture below:



As far as the suite is concerned, the only apparent damage was water that leaked onto the Crab Orchard section of Pier 4 of the HO layout, with some damage.

There was also leakage into the library section of the Museum, landing primarily on the tables, chairs and floors in the center of the room. Items around the perimeter of the room didn't appear to be affected.

The hallways in the mall had a fair amount of water. A HVAC unit cover over the Vanity Fair store was blown off and landed in the parking lot. The maintenance staff were hard at work cleaning up on Sunday morning.

Editor

Ties and Rails Calendar

Tennessee Central Railway Museum, 220 Willow Street, Nashville, TN has numerous excursions throughout the year as listed in the calendar. Contact them at 615-241-0436 for specific information regarding any trip.

Apr. 2020	Clean Up	Club	HO/N/Z Scales
4/4/20	Train Show	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	9:00 AM to 3:00 PM; No Admission charge
4/9/20	O Meeting	Club	CANCELLED
4/9/20	Marketing Mtg.	Club	CANCELLED
4/11/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Watertown—Easter Bunny Excursion Trip
4/12/20	Holiday	Club	Easter—CLOSED
4/13/20	BOD Meeting	Club	CANCELLED
4/13/20	Member Mtg.	Suite 112, Crossville Outlet Center	CANCELLED
4/18/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Watertown—Spring Mile-Long Yard Sale Trip
4/20/20	Ops Session	Club	CANCELLED

May 2020	Clean Up	Club	O/G Scales
5/2/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Watertown—Train Robbery Excursion
5/4/20	HO Meeting	Suite 112, Crossville Outlet Center	10:00 AM
5/7/20	Marketing Mtg.	Club	4:00 PM
5/11/20	BOD Meeting	Club	4:30 PM
5/11/20	Member Mtg.	Suite 112, Crossville Outlet Center	6:00 PM
5/16/20	Train Trip	220 Willow St., Nashville, TN	Baxter—DelMonaco Winery Excursion
5/25/20	Holiday	Club	Memorial Day—OPEN
5/31-6/8/20	G Gauge Conv.	Gaylord Opryland Resort, Nashville, TN	See ngrc2020.com