



Ties and Rails

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

April 2021

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www.crossvilletrains.org

The Prez. Sez:

Your Voice and Opinion Matter

The 1-3-5 Committee, formerly referred to as the “Plan B” Committee, has developed a very thorough and complete survey asking every member for input and suggestions on your current opinion of the Club and its current operation. They would also want to know what the Club needs going forward with a long-term plan

The Committee is trying to create a comprehensive plan for one, three and five years and is requesting that you help determine the path the Club will take in the future. They are requesting each member complete the survey and submit it on or before April 14. Please try to do so.

On March 30th, the EXPO committee met to continue planning our anniversary event. Major important issues have already been coordinated and confirmed. Their next vitally important factor is developing a comprehensive marketing and public relations plan for the event.

The anniversary EXPO has the potential to be an incredibly significant fundraising event and one that will be beneficial to Club finances and only to the Club. This is a club event and you will be asked to help. Prior to, during, and after the EXPO, we will need volunteers to assist in different aspects of the show. I hope we can count on all to get involved. The more help we get, the less burden on the few who step up to work.

Sales tables will be available for \$20. for an 8 foot table. Contact Sam to reserve your tables as soon as possible.

Need for Life publishes Videos of CMRC Layouts

During this challenging Covid time I find myself at home searching for modeling tutorials online. In my case I can shout at the TV a query "Model Trains" and a bunch of video selections come up on the screen to choose from.

While surfing through the videos, a familiar image appeared and it was the CMRC HO layout. After clicking to watch, there was a nicely produced recent video tour with a sound track. At first it looked like it was one of our own productions but the music was different and we had posted on Facebook and this was on Youtube.

We get online requests from our website and Facebook. The author was Need4life trains. I reached out to Igor and thanked him for his productions. The videos are well done and his channel gets a lot of traffic which is great PR for the Club.

We took his videos and posted them on the different scale pages where you can view them or click the links from the message below. We also shared them via Social Media on the Clubs Facebook page.

"Hello guys!!! It is Igor. I visited your Club a couple of weeks ago and took some videos. I just finished editing the last one and posted it on my Youtube channel. If you'd like to see those videos, there are the links below and thank you so much for your great job!!!

- HO Scale part 1—<https://youtu.be/jkcliYVSpRc>
- HO Scale part 2—<https://youtu.be/RWLMyb7leC0>
- O Scale—<https://youtu.be/pcofFOYpgqo>
- N Scale—<https://youtu.be/5BHpWNj8u5Y>
- G Scale—<https://youtu.be/b1uQCcRh3PI>

Best regards, Need4life YouTube channel

Please have a look at the videos and share them with others if you can.

Submitted by Bill Bly

HO Scale News - Paul Falk

We are resuming HO meetings. An HO meeting is scheduled for April 5 at 3:00 PM. With only a small agenda, it will be immediately followed by our first Operation Session of 2021. Remember to bring your favorite hand held controllers and locos. Sign up at the Club or contact Richard Morris so he can have enough setups for everyone. Agenda items

include budget constraints, fascia repairs and improving DCC electrical capacity. See you there.

Upgrade work has been completed on the DS-64's throughout the layout. The DS-64 is the stationary decoder that is used to control the Tortoise switch machines. During the upgrade procedure, numerous minor situations were corrected. Contact Tom if you have a problem with a turnout that isn't working.



The DCC Shed @ CMRC

Paul Falk

Art Landrigan

Welcome, come on in and get comfortable.

This month, as promised, more about reversing loops with DCC. Specifically, how to auto control the turnout as the train approaches a turnout thrown against it.

Wait! The O-scale readers are saying, "What's the problem? Our non-derailing turnouts work perfectly". Through clever internal wiring in the turnout of the normally connected outside rails, they can be used to sense an approaching train and align the points correctly. A tip of the hat to three rail AC.

Now with DCC, the turnout needs to also be set so the points align with the approaching train. In the most simple example, the operator needs to remember the turnout needs to be correctly aligned. If you are using ground or manual throws, there is no automatic method. But this is DCC so let's up the game and automate that turnout. Any electrified switch machine style can be used. Both solenoid and motor type switch motors can be automated. If you are changing the turnout with a simple toggle switch and just want to automate the turnout, the easiest automation is with an offering from Azatrax. (www.azatrax.com/reverse-loop-system-1.html) This solution has the ability of working for DC use, too. It consist of a track occupancy sensor and a relay module that energizes the turnout motor. This means there are different modules for two and three wire turnout machines.

If you already have electrified switch machines

working with your DCC system like with a Digitrax DS-64 stationary decoder, all you will need is a track occupancy sensor. Several types are available. One is done by using a photo cell to detect a change in lighting above the track before the turnout entrance. The passage of the train interrupts the light. Another is accomplished with current detection in block ahead of the turnout.

Each of these techniques are used to sense an approaching train, and then provide the electrical signal needed to trigger the turnout switch motor to align the points. Look for track detection offerings from Azatrax, Digitrax, MRC and others to include these devices to automate more of your railroad. After-all reversing is not backing up, it's moving forward in style....automatically!

Next month: Next month?? Till then, stay well.

Remember, one-on-one DCC training is always available, so let us know. We are here to help. If you experience any unexplained issues with the current DCC installations, HO or N, please document what you have encountered in an E-mail or a note to Paul and Art, 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.

Marketing Committee

John Conor

We are looking into various promotional options about our Anniversary train event in October. It's a big deal for our Club. If you would like to join in on the PR side of this event, please join us at the suite meeting room at 10:30, Thursday, April 8th.

Storm Damage

Member, Ron Selliers, submitted the two pictures below showing the damage to the South Wall of the Tennessee Central Railroad Museum during a recent major wind storm in the Nashville area.



Photos by either
Brenton Jones or
Tanner Peterson

News Report

The violent storms that raced through parts of Middle Tennessee late Thursday, March 25, caused significant damage to the Tennessee Central Railway Museum and Nashville Steam's shop facility.

While there were no injuries, high winds and debris destroyed a portion of the structure housing the 576's restoration, leaving the locomotive, tools, displays and equipment exposed to the elements.





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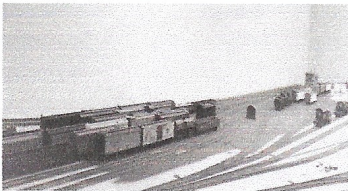
www.piedmont-div.org

Roof Leak(s)

With the heavy wind and rains we have experienced the second half of March, it appears that the new roof and HVAC unit installed by the new Mall owners has done the job. Following these storms, we have not experienced any leakage in the suite.

Speaking for myself, I wish to thank the Mall owners and the Mall manager, Chris, for their constant effort to solve the problem (that has existed for years) and responding in a timely manner whenever we had a concern.

Tom Shallcross



Operations

Richard Morris

We will be having an operating session following the HO meeting on Monday, April 5. We will be running a few freight and passenger trains, as well as working the yard and maybe a local or two.

We will try a 'new' car routing method for the industries in Golden Valley district. No car cards. No switch lists, just a dot on the car with the number of the location to spot the car. Can't get much simpler than that!

If you have a smooth-running DCC engine or two that you would like to use, bring it. We do have a good selection of Club engines as well.

All members are welcome to come, and you can watch to see if there is a job you would like to try!

Please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board, or email Richard at rmorris52@twlakes.net

Membership

John Conor

Once again we have no new applicants pending for the Board's review. Maybe we will have someone by the next meeting. Keep the faith. It seems that a lot of folks have looked into the hobby since the China Virus put folks in lock down and these folks could be looking for insights, help or fellowship in their new chosen hobby. Our Club membership could be just what they need or what they may be looking for! Don't forget to inform our visitors we are a membership Club and memberships are open to all. Thank you all who work the shifts to share what we have with the visiting public.

1-3-5 Planning Committee

John Conor

A survey has been emailed out and for those who don't get emails, hard copies are at the counter for you. The committee asks that you please take some time and think about your answers, be complete, thoughtful and thorough.

Your feedback is very important to us in how the committee looks forward, so we may present a set of specific, meaningful and relevant plans for our Club's journey into the future.

You do not need to put your name on the survey unless you want some sort of follow-up. Regardless, no names will be released unless you offer to be involved in some capacity and then only to the person to whom that would apply.

We are asking you to respond by the middle of April (to Bruce by email as he mailed them to you) or place your hard copies in the membership mailbox in the suite office.

Thanks so much for helping us help our Club!

John C., Paul F., Mike F., and Bruce H.

Steam engine '100% operational,' railroad officials say



Smoke billows from the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's Baldwin locomotive No. 1309 on June 29, 2020. Railroad officials said that the engine is operational.

CUMBERLAND - Officials with the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad say the massive Baldwin steam engine No. 1309 is fully operational and are confident the locomotive can be cleared for duty this summer.

The railroad board held its March meeting Monday (3/22/21) afternoon aboard the newly-leased, double-decker 1955 Budd Dome Car. The stainless steel, air-conditioned car was built for the Great Northern Railway and seats 28 downstairs and 62 upstairs.

During the meeting, Nathaniel Watts, the scenic railroad's chief mechanic, said he hopes the steam engine will be cleared by the Federal Railroad Administration for operation this summer.

According to Watts, the train can make the run to the Frostburg Depot and back but work is being done to meet railroad administration inspection standards. The WSMR has run excursions from Cumberland to Frostburg since 1986.

The scenic railroad has been using diesel engines while preparing the steam locomotive, which was purchased in 2014.

"The steam locomotive is 100% operational," said Watts. "We are waiting for a few parts that have to be cast. We had a few leaks. So before the FRA comes out to inspect it, we

want to make sure we are 100% confident that it will pass. We want to be running this summer and we think we can.”

Allegany County officials said last week that the county would take over maintenance of the 14 miles of track from Cumberland to Frostburg. The move will take the financial burden off the scenic railroad, which was ordered by the railroad administration to replace thousands of aging railroad ties before it can run.

Bob Flanigan, WMSR vice president, said conditions are improving in regard to the pandemic as more Americans receive vaccinations. He is optimistic that events like Railfest, typically held in September, and the Polar Express held in December, can happen.

President Joe Biden earlier this month directed states to make all adults, ages 18 and up, eligible for COVID-19 vaccines by May 1. Last week, Gov. Larry Hogan unveiled a plan to expand eligibility in waves, with all adults eligible by April 27.

“That is what the big push is for,” Flanigan said. “That being said, there could be another outbreak. I don’t want to tell you that no matter what, we are going to depart on this date. We still have to be conservative with the health of our riders and out staff.”

The WMSR sold 12,000 tickets, according to Flanigan, for the Polar Express excursions held in December 2019 before the train was shut down in March last year by the pandemic.

“But I hope by October everything is back 100%, but we don’t know,” said Flanigan.

WMSR officials are working with the staging company, Real Events, which grants licensing for the Polar Express brand, to receive approval to hold the Christmastime excursion this year.

Submitted by member, Don Shires

N Scale News - Jan Novack

The new industrial yard is taking shape. Craig is working on the last building. Part of the road has been added and painted with some landscaping started. Ballasting will start soon.

We have worked on the LocoNet so engines can be run from programmed phones. Additional work is being done to resolve two electrical issues, one with Tortoise/DS64 and a DCC issue. A fix is being tested.

The trains have been running pretty well. I hope didn’t just jinx them.

G Scale News - Ann Grogitsky

The Leprechauns have been located and are on their way back to Ireland.