



Ties and Rails

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

September 2022

(931)210-5050

www.crossvilletrains.org

The Prez. Sez:

Fall is coming up fast.

We are going to have to do a revote on the conversion to 501c3. It is not a simple thing.

According to the Tennessee Attorney General's office, we have to revote because the original vote did not include a lot of information.

I had Ed. The Secretary, send out an email to all members about a revote at the September meeting.

This process is not a quick sign some papers and it is done.

No, there are a lot of steps to proceed including members who voted no having the right to challenge the vote.

On another note, I would like to thank Ann and Jim for their gracious use of their home for the Club's picnic. I saw a good turn out but there should have been more members. I am asking members to get more involved in Club activities. Thanks to all of those that brought food and helped cook.

Pat is sending out some information on the upcoming swap meet so please read and send the info required to Pat or Ralph.

As the old song goes, "See you in September".

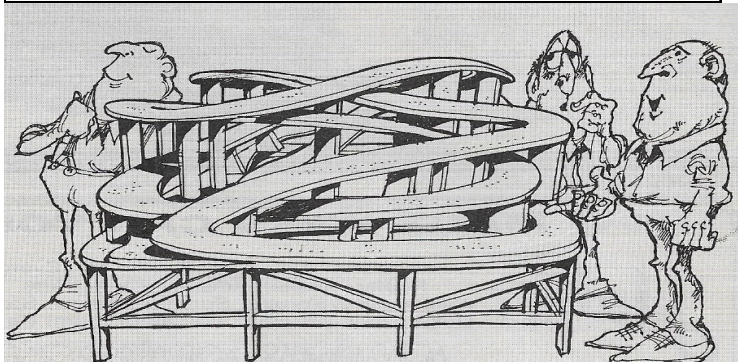
Roberta

G Scale News - Ted Polczynski

Important Call Out: If you have personal items located in G-scale, please contact me so they can be added and protected on our inventory sheet. This also includes your personal monies used back in the day to get G-scale going. With the possible merger or acquisition of CMRC, it is necessary to have an accurate inventory of our displays.

The G-scale Inventory Status: Rolling stock is at about 80%, buildings and people is about 25%, Track and power supplies at about 75% as of this date.

G-scale Going Green Report: Solar panels are on some of the buildings, one wind turbine on Alien mountain and there is more to be added. Freight cars that transport fossil fuels have been eliminated. (Premium/Regular) EV chargers have been placed in front of the old gas pumps. The diversification of people around buildings on the display has also begun.



"He was so proud of his benchwork he decided not to spoil it by covering it up with a layout."

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

Visitor's Log

Tom Shallcross

During the month of August, we had 1,669 visitors to our display. Of these, 375 visitors represented AK, AL, AR, CA, CO, FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, MI, MO, NC, ND, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, and WI, as well as the countries of Austria, Brazil, Canada, Dominican Republic, and New Zealand.

Some of the comments offered by our guests are:

A family of 9 from New Zealand were referred to us by a friend and offered, "Awesome for the kids (and adults)".

A family of 3 from Columbia, SC saw our signage and said, "Y'all are super friendly! Thanks for the hospitality!"

An individual from Akron, OH saw our reference on Facebook and said, "The lights were amazing!"

A family of 2 from Kansas City, MO and representing Woodland Scenics saw our website stopped, saw us and offered. "Great Layouts!"

A couple from Ft. Lauderdale, FL commented, "A lot of work! (and added) Ridge Live Steam, Dundee, FL".

A family of 2 from South Carolina saw our website and had one of our rack cards and said, "Neat! Brings memories of father and his RR layout!"

A family of 5 from Milford, PA were referred to us by Atlas Obscura! and offered, "We love it. Great food trip stop"

Operations

Richard Morris

We have had Operating sessions on the first Monday the last few sessions. Since Labor Day is the first Monday of September, we WON'T have a session then.

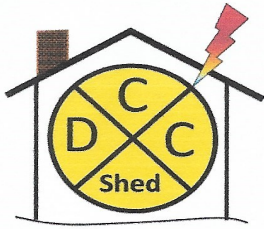
We are re-evaluating sessions and when to have them. The last few have seen attendance drop off to the point we don't have enough crew members to have a satisfactory session. Why? We don't know and need to find out.

Is Monday afternoon a bad time for our members to come? Is the session boring? Is it too hard?

Are you afraid to come since you haven't ever attended an operating session and don't think you can do one?

We currently have a wide variety of trains to run, ranging from through freights and passengers, to locals to a Yardmaster position. We will pair a less experienced operator with someone familiar with the layout and the run. We are not using car cards or switch lists at this time, so you don't have to juggle a lot of paper while running your train.

If you have any comments, email Richard Morris at rmorris52@twlakes.net



The DCC Shed @ CMRC

Paul Falk

Art Landrigan

This month we will devote the majority of the article to the recently expanding world of ESU Loksound decoders (21-pin), their current and future uses (as best we can determine), and most importantly for our subject, their added difficulties imposed on the everyday DCC user.

First, let me begin by stating that, in my opinion, the overall quality of the ESU Loksound decoder is superb. I have yet to run into a proven decoder problem. The bulk of the issues encountered relates to the inability of most manufacturer's DCC Systems hardware not being capable of performing all the programming functions which users may wish to perform using their particular system's protocols. The ONLY methods that we are aware of, which can perform a full range of Programming functions on these decoders is with either: 1) an ESU Programmer in the hands of someone fully aware of the requirements, and above all competent on the use of the ESU Programmer (if you can find one readily available to purchase), and can understand the voluminous Documentation Manual (several inches thick) (I have had no luck so far...), or 2) the use of JMRI (Java Model Rail-

road Interface) software, which has a remarkable ability to both analyze, as well as Program and decoder we have tested.

Recently, Paul has built, and we have tested the use of a relatively inexpensive alternative to the analyzing and programming issue utilizing an Arduino based command station hooked to a PC or Laptop containing JAVA and JMRI software. This combination has allowed us to analyze numerous locomotives which have sat 'on the shelf' for several years, and successfully re-program them to full functionality in an afternoon. One additional benefit of this combination, is that no additional education and experience with a different 'operating system' software is required as was the case when we were using a Raspberry Pi computer to host similar processes. Quite a solution for this issue at a remarkably low cost. We are continuing to upgrade the Arduino hardware and fully expect a much larger use in our near future. Please check with Paul and/or Art for additional information.

One question yet to be answered is: "Why did ESU change to a more complex, and more capable decoder, using a 21-pin decoder and socket vs. the normal 8-pin decoder and socket we have become used to seeing over the years?" While there is no definitive answer in the documentation that I could find, numerous conversations with Mark McAllister,

ANOTHER FANTASTIC SWAP MEET

CMRC is holding another swap meet for members and the general public to buy, sell and trade EVERYTHING railroad. This will be a **2** day event on November 5th and 6th, Saturday and Sunday, from 10 AM to 4 PM.

The location is the friendly confines of Lander's Crossroads (Outlet Center) in a larger space than previously used and with no limit on tables. Tables will be \$15. per 8 foot space. Bring your own if you want, but the price is the same so why haul that heavy thing around? The round tables will NOT be used.

Publicity will be done in local media, Facebook, CMRC web site, Hobby shops, other clubs and NMRA Southeastern Region magazine. We are inviting Scale Trains to set up a booth, putting a notice on Model Railroad Hobbyist forums, and sending a copy of our flyer to other RR clubs.

This event is open to the public and admission is FREE. At that point, there will be only 50 more days until Christmas.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED-VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED-VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

Now the bad news. To make this happen, there will be a need for many people to:

1. distribute flyers and posters
2. Set up the room with tables and chairs
3. Staff the CMRC suite for members who are involved as sellers or helpers
4. Greeters, Ambassadors and Security (bouncers)
5. Housekeeping
6. Selling popcorn and drinks
7. Gophers for anything and everything

The first to sign up for tables (and pay) or for a job gets to pick the location or job. There will be a sign up sheet on the front desk in suite #109 for tables and for tasks starting on 9/1. More details will be on the sign up sheets. Money for tables can be left in the club cash box. PLEASE include your name and what date and time you put it in there.

For questions, details and suggestions, contact RALPH WATSON 931-248-4263 RXALPH@GMAIL.COM OR CROSSVILLETRAINS@GMAIL.COM

N Scale News - Jan Novack

Since I have been N scale coordinator, we have had an issue with the layout in that only one line could be operated on DCC at a time. Going to two would create a short and would force us back to one line only.

The Club's most knowledgeable in DCC operations and electrical issues have looked at it, but no solution, until today. Talking about the issue over lunch, Paul wanted to test an idea (polarity).

We bypassed the Zephyr and hooked all three lines to the same power pack. With the direction control set, the engines on each line should move in the same direction. They did not. The main line engine went the opposite direction from the freight and mountain lines, a polarity problem.

We traced the wires that connected to the center position on the toggle switch that controlled the DC/DCC option and found where they were connected together with two other wires with a wire nut and then onto the buss for the main line.

We swapped the connections from the toggle switch and bingo, the three engines moved in the same direction when tested again. After reconnecting the Zephyr and trying multiple lines on DCC,

the short circuit disappeared and we were finally working properly.

There is still a minor issue to be corrected, but with this bigger issue finally solved, it opens up the possibility with the changes/improvements we are making on the N scale layout, that in the future we could try a junior version OPS session. There are several more changes to be made first.

A BIG THANKS to Paul for his help today. It was a good day!



Freight cars

O	K	B	T	V	E	N	T	I	L	A	T	E	D
X	K	O	T	L	N	I	N	P	R	G	T	E	C
I	O	X	C	E	N	T	E	R	B	E	A	M	A
V	E	L	K	C	I	P	F	E	H	I	E	A	R
T	S	N	W	O	O	D	C	H	I	P	O	I	P
N	C	O	V	E	R	E	D	H	O	P	P	E	R
A	N	E	G	B	A	W	T	R	E	F	X	N	E
C	K	E	O	P	E	N	C	S	L	L	L	G	O
K	K	X	N	K	C	S	N	A	L	A	T	O	C
N	C	C	D	S	H	H	T	T	B	C	C	T	K
A	O	O	O	O	K	D	I	T	O	O	W	C	O
V	T	I	L	R	A	N	E	L	D	I	O	B	L
L	S	C	A	I	S	D	A	A	C	I	B	S	O
E	O	D	T	E	L	T	C	T	L	L	E	W	E

VENTILATED
TANK
STOCK
FLAT
WOOD CHIP
COVERED HOPPER
CABOOSE
WELL
BOX
GONDOLA
PICKLE
CENTER BEAM

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/3895965/>

HO Scale News - Paul Falk

With the end of the month of August, we will be losing a valued member. Jack Holland will be leaving us and moving to the Cartersville, GA area to be closer to his family.

For the next year or so, he will be returning to the area to check on his rental property and will probably be stopping in for a visit.

Good luck in the phase of your retirement, Jack, and we will miss your expertise

and valued commitment to the operation of the HO layout.

We also want to announce that a returning member, Phil Buck, will be taking over the duties (with Jim Affinito) of Rolling Stock Repairman.

If you find a piece of rolling stock that needs some repair, please write it up on the appropriate form, attach the form to the piece of rolling stock and place it in the second drawer of the appropriate cabinet of the second pier so these gentlemen can get it fixed.

Want clean track? Don't forget the wheels.

Has this happened to you? You clean your track and within a day or so, it looks like it's losing its luster.

Chances are it is not because you didn't do a good job cleaning the track, but rather you forgot to clean the wheels on your engines and rolling stock.



They're a common culprit in making a mess out of the rails, but the solution to keeping wheels clean is fairly simple.

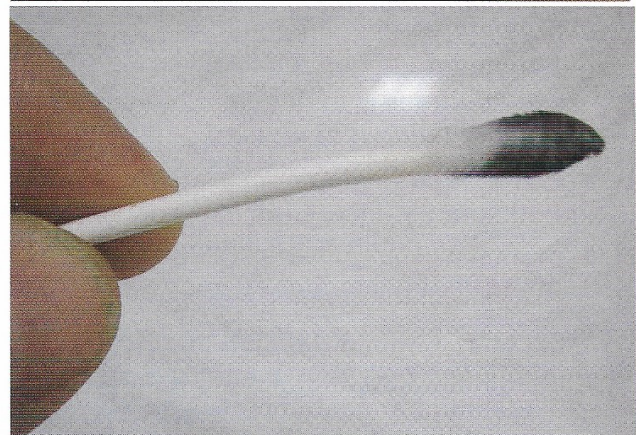
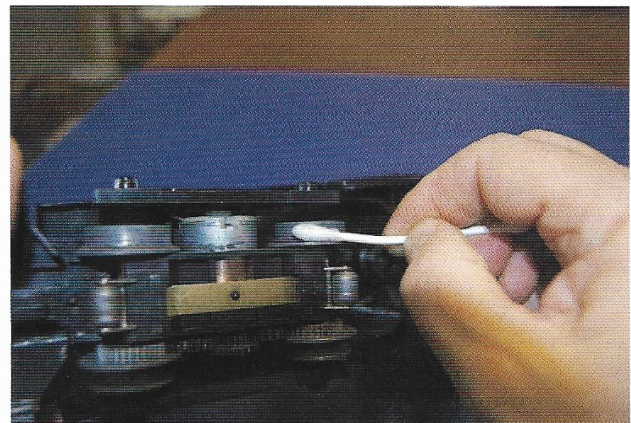
All it takes are cotton swabs and alcohol.

According to George Pope, RM-6157, who has been repairing and maintaining model trains for decades, all you need to do is saturate the end of a cotton swab with alcohol and rub the swab on a wheel. Depending on the amount of dirt build-up, you may need to use more than one swab on each wheel.

In extreme cases, Pope uses a dental cleaning tool to scrape extreme dirt of the wheel.

The frequency of cleaning depends, obviously, on how often a car may be run on the tracks. They should, however, be checked on a regular basis.

-- Stan Zoller, RM-7955

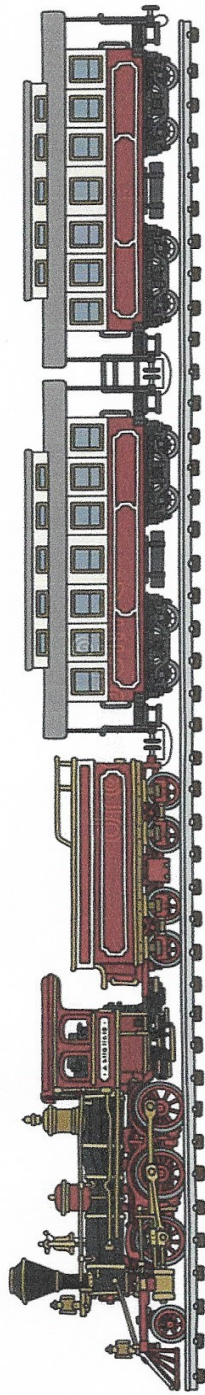


Train Show

October 1 - Casey Jones Chapter Train Show - Memphis; St. George's Episcopal Church, 2425 S. Germantown Road, Germantown, TN; Hours: 9 am—2 pm; Admission: \$5 per family; kids always free (TCA members pay \$1 additional in lieu of chapter dues); For more information, visit www.memphismodelrailroaders.com/events

Train Show

September 24 - Atlanta Toy & Model Train Show; VFW Post 5408, 4764 Cobb Parkway NW, Ackworth, GA; Hours: 9 am—2 pm; Admission: \$7 TCA member (accompanying spouse free), \$10 general public (accompanying spouse free), under 17 free with accompanying adult; For more information, visit www.terminuschapterca.com/events



Model Train Swap Meet

NOV. 5th & 6th 10am-4pm
Saturday Sunday Set-up Nov 4th 3-7pm

Located in **the Lander's Crossroads**

**Exit 320 off I-40 Behind BUC-EES
Table Rental \$15 per 8'**

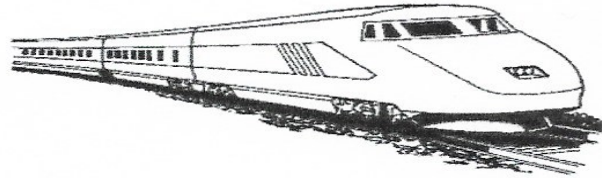
To Reserve Space Contact

Ralph Watson 931-248-4263 crossvilletrains@gmail.com

FREE Admission

SPONSORED BY THE CROSSVILLE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

South Carolina Trade Shows “Model Train Shows”



**SouthCarolinaTradeShows@gmail.com
SouthCarolinaTradeShows.com
843-621-5531 Todd**

**September 10th
Simpsonville, SC
Activity & Senior Center
310 W. Curtis St
9am-3pm**

!!!FREE ADMISSION!!!

***Visit our website to be added to show notifications!**

Digitrax DCC Equipment

Paul has received numerous questions regarding the various pieces of Digitrax DCC equipment that we use in the Club. This is the first article in a series to explain how to use the different devices.

Digitrax UT4

CMRC Aug 2022

Loco Selection

1 Dial up the 2 or 4 digit address using the 4 rotary address selectors (2-digit addresses are entered in the 2 rightmost selectors (example 0025)

2 Plug the UT4 into a LocoNet port and Auto selection occurs.

3 A Green Status light confirms selection - **You're off and running!**

4 A Red Status light means the loco is already selected by another throttle (see Stealing below).

If you are already plugged into a LocoNet port

1 Dial up the address as before

2 Press the SEL key

3 Look for the Green Status light confirmation

Moving from one loconet connection to another does not require a battery and the loco will continue at the last throttle setting until plugged in again and the UT4 reacquires the loco. If the selected loco is already moving, then the loco's speed will slowly match the current settings of the UT4. This means that if you've selected a train that's moving forward at approach speed, and the UT4 throttle is set to zero, when selection occurs, the train will slowly (and automatically) come to a stop. The addresses supported are 0-9983.

Forward/Brake/Reverse

Changing the Direction switch from 'Forward'(F) to the center 'Brake' position causes the loco to stop at the loco's programmed deceleration rate. Changing quickly from 'F' to 'R' causes the loco to stop at the programmed deceleration rate, then reverse direction and accelerate at the loco's programmed acceleration rate.

Stealing Stealing is defined as acquiring control of a loco address that is being used by someone else on another throttle.

To 'Steal' a loco:

1 Unplug the UT4 from the LocoNet port

2 Dial up the address of the loco you want to steal

3 Press *and hold* the 'STEAL' key while plugging the throttle into the LocoNet jack. Note: To steal or dispatch another loco, you must unplug the UT4 and repeat the above sequence

Dispatching

Dispatching is the process of releasing a loco so that another user can take control of it. To release, or dispatch, a loco under current UT4 control:

1 Unplug the UT4 from the LocoNet port

2 Press *and hold* the Dispatch key

3 Plug the throttle back into a LocoNet port.

The Function Keys

There are 8 physical keys assigned for functions F0-F12. The blue F7-F12 function keys share the same 'keys' as the F1 through F6 function keys. To use functions F7-F12 you must *press and hold down* the SHIFT key on the lower left row as you push the F7 through F12 key. All the UT4 functions work like other Digitrax throttles. The function keys toggle on and off with *each press*, except for F2, which is ON only when held down, and OFF when released. In Addition, only the F2 key has a 'Hold' feature for those who may need F2 to stay on. The 'Hold' feature can be set by holding the F2 key down for 15 seconds. Tapping it again turns it off.

Infrared Operation (Only available near the end of pier 1 as the UR90 receiver needs line of sight with UT4)

The UT4 comes InfraReady for layouts that are equipped with one or more

UR90 infrared receivers. For Infrared operation

1 Install a 9 volt battery into the unit. (battery not required with tethered use)

2 *With the UT4 unplugged*, dial up the 2 or 4 digit address using the 4 rotary address selectors .

3 Plug the UT4 into the LocoNet port and wait until the green status light appears (typically 1-3 seconds)

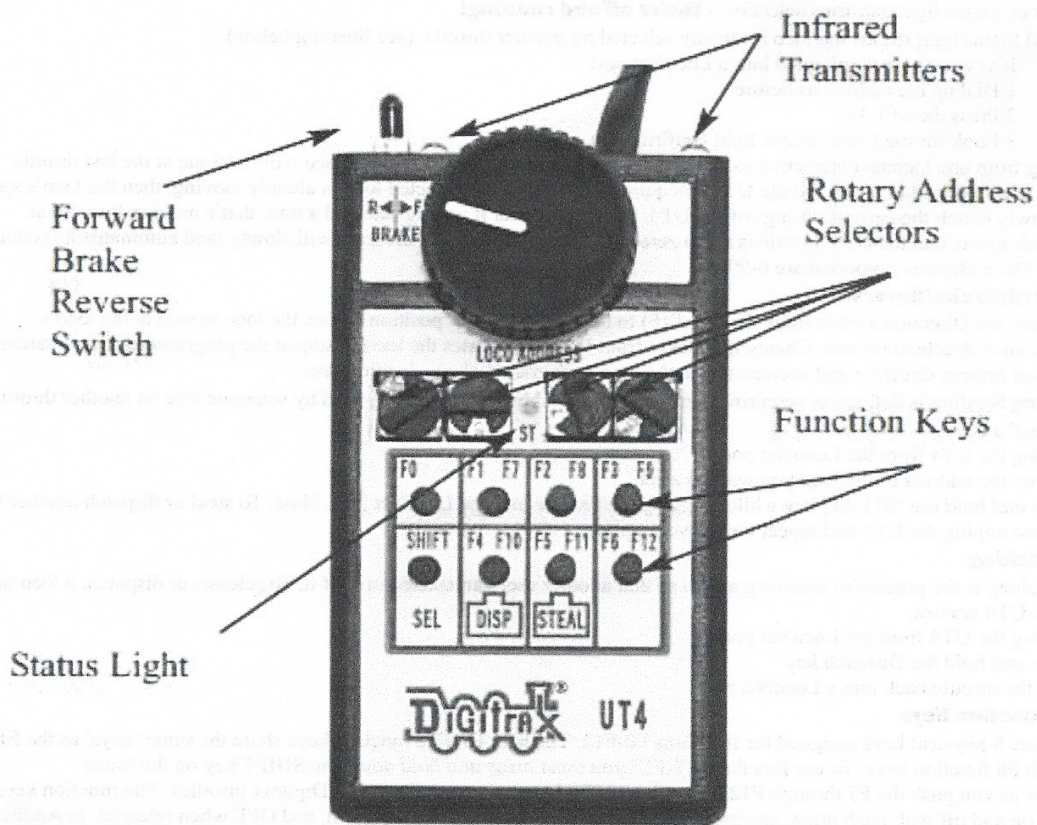
4 Then simply unplug the UT4 from the Loconet port The throttle will automatically shift into infrared operation.

In infrared mode you will be able to control:

Throttle speed ,Direction, Brake and, Functions F0-F8

REMEMBER: To Select, Dispatch or Steal another loco *you must plug the throttle back into a LocoNet port.*

NOTE: The UT4 is a utility throttle that is primarily intended for locomotive control. It CANNOT program decoders, throw turnouts, or turn track power on or off. Consists are N/A with current CMRC operations. If the loco was programmed in 4 digit mode with only two digits the UT4 will not be able to acquire it. Reprogram the loco as two digit



Continued from page 3

(Scale Trains Technical Guru), and friend has explained that the new 21-pin decoder and socket allows for a considerable expansion of not only current capabilities for programming decoders, but provides a platform for the future expansion of programmable capabilities not yet defined, or envisioned. This will allow future needs to be provided for without having to purchase new and more expensive decoders in the future locomotives. Evidently,

this philosophy has gained sizeable from the hobby manufacturers, as they continue to increase their ranks with more manufacturers switching to the 21-pin ESU decoders in their new and future locomotive designs. I'm sure we'll continue to see more on the near horizons for the model railroad hobby.

As always, if you have any additional questions or needs for assistance, do not hesitate to contact Paul Falk (pfalk1@gmail.com) or Art Landrigan (arcy22tn@gmail.com).

Lionel Collectors Club of America What I learned at the Nashville Convention

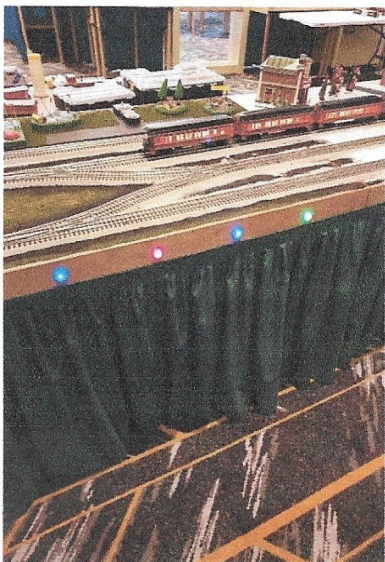
In the last week of July, the Lionel Collectors Club of America (LCCA) held its convention in Nashville. The Train Collectors Association (TCA) did the same thing a month earlier and at the exact same location, including the exact same hotel. I had to decide which of these two I wanted to attend. Since I am 95% operations and only 5% collector, I chose the LCCA convention. I am glad I did.

First off, the LCCA merged with the old Lionel Sponsored Lionel Railroader Club. All LRRC members were given full membership in the LCCA. At that point, the LCCA became the "Official" club of the Lionel Corporation LLC. That is the history, now onto the story.

Two things caught my attention at the convention. First, Lionel and LCCA joined together and developed a standard for building modular model railroad tables. The standard allows anyone in the country to build a module and know that it will be able to attach to any other module built to the same standards. Three different clubs brought over 100 modules to the convention and the end-product was, to say the least, impressive. Here is the link to the current specification document.

[FasTrack Modular Railroad Manual Ver 2.pdf \(lionelcollectors.org\)](#)

The other thing I saw and liked were the lighted buttons that one group used to run their accessories. When I got home, I immediately ordered 3 boxes of them. Those are the buttons you can currently see on the club's O gauge display. Meant to be installed though $\frac{3}{4}$ " or smaller framing, our layout posed a challenge as the framing on the Thomas & Friends table is 2 x 4 construction. So, I Gerry-rigged it as best I could.



Submitted by Bruce Herring

So, my current project is to build a set of tables. The straight sections are a piece of cake as they all measure 45 inches by 30 inches. The interesting part is that they use roto-locks to join the tables together. Do you know what else uses roto-locks? Coffins. I hope to bring a couple of tables to our next CMRC monthly meeting. I will see you there.