

THE COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION

No. 258 • JULY - SEPT, 2015

**The NER
Joins the
MER in
Mt. Laurel, NJ.
Complete Convention
Details**



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What's Old is New Again:

**Building with Digital Photos,
Strathmore® and Foamcore**

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www.nernmra.org

THE COUPLER

The official publication of
The Northeastern Region of
the National Model Railroad
Association

Issue No. 258

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The editorial policy of *The Coupler*, the official publication of the Northeastern Region, shall be to contribute, wherever and whenever possible, to the promotion, growth, and understanding of the hobby of model railroading. *The Coupler* is published four times a year by and for the members of the Northeastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association. Subscription rate is \$7.00 per year. Any items related to the activities of the Northeastern Region and its member divisions are gladly accepted. Please address all correspondence, news, photos, and drawings to the Editor. Any submissions sent by mail will be gladly returned if the sender provides a self-addressed stamped envelope.



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COVER PHOTOS

Recreating a large city station in scale can be a challenge. Jeff Paston shows how he updated some old technology using digital photos, Strathmore®, and foamcore to bring the prototype's colors, stonework, and detail to an O scale model. The story starts on page 13.

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Next submission deadline is August 14.



It's late in the schedule for this *Coupler* issue, and it's just about time to go to press. Still, this week we have learned that Scooter Youst has reluctantly decided to step down as president of the NER. Though Scooter has enjoyed his five years at the NER helm, personal and family health issues need his immediate attention. I know all of us are grateful for Scooter's service and dedication (I can picture him standing in the NER recruitment booth at Springfield for two straight days each winter, while the rest of us play and shop). Our best wishes and prayers are with Scooter and his family.

So, now what? Well, the NER bylaws say that I am to become your new president right away. And yes, my head is spinning! (Take a look at my editorial column nearby, written in the last month, to see how I myself was positioning for a little less active effort in railroading affairs while I settle in to a new job in a new company). Best laid plans.



How did I get here? Just a few years ago I was a newly minted NMRA member with no connections and no experience. Then I volunteered for the NMRA membership table at a couple of local train shows. In 2011, I raised my hand to help with *The Coupler* and became editor. Last year, I ran for a spot on the BOD of both my division and region and was successful in each. (And of course everyone knows that the vice president doesn't have any real responsibility - right?)

I'm reminded at this moment that as Thomas Edison once quipped, "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

So, here we go! There is a lot to talk about, but let me just mention a few highlights.

1) We've had an outstanding response to the NER Survey - with some 330 completed surveys (almost twice as many as I'd hoped for). We'll provide analysis of this feedback in the next *Coupler* and use your input as we kick off our region strategic planning initiative - led by NER Director and Little Rhody Superintendent Steve Erickson.

2) I plan to appoint an interim vice president to fill in for the

remainder of this current term (three years). Our VP leads the ongoing, bi-annual superintendent meetings, where leaders from the NER divisions come together to share ideas, collaborate on new stuff, and generally learn from one another. I'd like to get this effort up and running again as soon as possible.

3) We must build a new convention team to lead our annual Region Convention Program - arguably our most important NER activity. This begins with appointing a new convention chair. But it can't stop there. Conventions require a good deal of effort, and we need a team of volunteers (at the Region level) to be sustainable. [It's just not reasonable (or fair) to ask a host division to bear all of this effort alone.] Our 2016 Convention is now in the able hands of The Hudson-Berkshire team, but we need to finalize (this Fall) a plan for 2017, and at least a tentative bid or two for 2018. We need real leadership in this area *right now* to build out a great NER convention program.

4) The Region Web site could (and should) be a source of information and assistance for NER modelers. I'd bet that (like me) you can envision of a number of good ideas for our Web site (and for information and communication in general). But to achieve something more useful than we have today will also require new leadership - and new ideas. I'm sure we have the talent (several of our division Web sites are pretty good). So if this is your area of expertise and passion, let me hear from you.

Let's stop there, and pick up the conversation again later this Fall. In the meantime, please do plan to come in October to the MER/NER convention in New Jersey. I'd like to meet you and hear your ideas - and of course, there's going to be lots to do for train nuts like us.

Though our opportunity now looks a lot like coveralls and hard work, I see a tremendous chance for success - all of us, working together to unite and build the NER, to bring information and value to the model railroading community, and to have fun playing with trains as much as we can.

I'm ready to go. What say you? ☒

FROM THE EDITOR

Seasons In and Out

By JOHN DOEHRING
Coupler Editor

Are you a dedicated and consistent model railroader who has diligently plugged away on your railroad (or at the workbench) for years and years? If so, then you've probably got a lot to show for it - a nice layout, craftsman structures and rolling stock, lots of railroad buddies, and maybe even an MMR.

But that's not me. My path in the hobby has been much more of a meander - this way and that, up and down, in and out. During long periods of life my focus has been elsewhere (you know where), and trains took a back seat. I've had a lifetime love of railroads and modeling, but not so much in the way of building to show for it.

All of this began to change a few years back. I realized that I needed to get going (lest I eventually run out of time)! I wanted to be a real model railroader - with my own layout, projects, modeling connections - and yes, maybe even an MMR!

I've made progress - joining the NMRA and other groups and becoming more active. I've built my first module and participated in many train shows. I became editor of *The Coupler*, and this year joined both my region and division BODs. I've even received my first certificate in the Achievement Program - for *Volunteer* - just recently.

But this spring, I took a new job with a new company, and as is want to happen with me, I'm covered up by all of the new opportunities and responsibilities. I had a long list of model railroading activities planned for this summer, but I've had to readjust. Many of these must move now to the back burner for a while. I

can't keep up with it all, and once again making a living (and my career) will have to come first.

But on reflection, I find myself more at peace - and less apologetic - about these developments than in the past. It's more obvious to me now that this is the normal course of life - on and off, up and down, in and out. My focus in model railroading waxes and wanes in these seasons - and it's natural, it feels right. Meanwhile, new jobs, other volunteer efforts, and family activities also rise and fall on the list as well - though somehow we all seem busier and busier every day.

I'm not going anywhere, but for the next several months, I'll likely be just hanging on - a little less visible and a little less active in the trains scene. But I'm still interested in building my own railroad empire. There's a season for everything. ☒



ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM ROUNDUP

By BILL BROWN MMR, AP Chair

Great Reasons to Attend Convention in New Jersey

Attending the annual Region convention has always been a thrilling few days for members in the NER, where we have a history of outstanding convention production. But as many of you already know, for various reasons this year we will be coupling with the

Mid-Eastern Region to our south for "The Delaware Valley Turn" in Mount Laurel, NJ. (When first announced I have to admit this plan made me a bit nervous, but the more I look into this convention, the more excited I get!) I can think of a number of reasons for us

NER folk to get on board and meet up in The Garden State.

Check out the convention Web site at <http://www.delawarevalleyturn.org> and you will see a full slate of events just as we in the NER are accustomed...and at AFFORDABLE PRICES! (How about a hotel rate of \$94 a night at a first rate hotel. And the convention pre-registration is only \$35). The convention agenda is packed with 50 clinics, 40 layouts to visit, 130 operations slots, a raffle, a silent auction, multiple prototype tours and a banquet. In addition, your NER Brass Hats have figured out a way to make some events particularly special for our Region members. Here are some examples.



CONTESTS – The New Jersey Division will have a full contest room in which all of our NER members are welcome to enter models and photos (just as we would do for our home conventions). NER members will be eligible for full participation in convention judging and awards. Our NER contest staff will then break out our contestants for presentation of our own special awards (like the Baldwin Trophy for the Best in Show for an NER member, the Hub Award for the second highest point total for an NER member, and the Sunrise Trail Award for the highest score for a new NER modeler – and some other special awards.)

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM RECOGNITION – We will continue to recognize all of our AP certificates earners since our last convention. As of the end of May, this includes some 45 awards...on pace for a new yearly record with almost five months to go! This total also includes at least two more Master Model Railroaders!

NER SPECIAL AWARDS BREAKFAST – These contest awards and Achievement Program recognition will be shared at an NER-only breakfast at 8 AM on Sunday (at a location to be announced).

So folks, all of the reasons are in place to support this year's convention in Mt. Laurel, NJ. First, we get to meet up with special railroad friends for a weekend of camaraderie. Also, we get the opportunity to see how another region does it, and to visit a whole bunch of new layouts. All of this – and still we will have our own recognition program for our NER members. And the drive to central New Jersey will be no longer for most of us than to own annual events. (I have even heard that Governor Christy may have all the bridges open for us!) I'm looking forward to seeing ya'all in Mount Laurel! ☒

News and Events

NATIONAL CONVENTION

August 23-30: *Portland Daylight Express*, Portland, OR.

MER REGION CONVENTION

October 22-25: *Delaware Valley Turn*, MER Regional Convention in Mount Laurel, NJ. Convention Web site is www.DelawareValleyTurn.org > or <groups.yahoo.com/groups/MER2015>.

CENTRAL NEW YORK

<<http://www.cnymra.org>>

August 8 (Saturday) 12-4: Division Picnic at Bill & Judy Brown residence, Jamesville, NY.
September 20 (Sunday) Tentative visit to the Oswego Valley Railway Museum.
November 1, (Sunday) 2-4: Tentative visit to Gary Frost's layout in Camillus, NY.

GARDEN STATE DIVISION

<<http://www.nergsd.com>>

August 1 (Saturday) 11-4: *Summer Meet* – an enjoyable day out near the Delaware Water Gap, in sight of the Paulinskill Viaduct, and the old stomping grounds of the DL&W, the NYS&W, and the L&NE railroads, with a side trip to the Slate Belt of Pennsylvania. Layout visits to Ed Suhy, Harold Werthwein, and Tony Koester.

HUB DIVISION

<<http://www.hubdiv.org>>

September 18 (Friday): *Railfun Meeting*, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston. Topic: "Digital Command Control (DCC) 101 & 201", presented by Shack and Dick Johannes.

LITTLE RHODY DIVISION

<<http://www.trainweb.org/lrddivision>>

October 18 (Sunday): *Second Annual Model Train Show*, Pawtucket Armory.

SEACOAST DIVISION

<<http://www.seacoastnmra.org>>

Seacoast Division will be a co-host of the 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention in Augusta, ME, September 7-10, 2016.
September 19-20 (Sat-Sun): *Maine Model Railroad Tour* – self guided layout tour, more information at <<http://www.mainemodellrtour.com>>.

SUNRISE TRAIL DIVISION

<<http://www.sunrisetraildiv>>

November 7 (Saturday): *Fall Division Convention*, St. David's Lutheran Church, 20 Clark Blvd. Massapequa Park, NY. ☒



NEW MEMBERS

COMPILED BY MARK HARLOW, NER Office Manager

As of 5/15/15

QUEBEC

Sam McLavehlan

NEW BRUNSWICK

Greg Williams

CONNECTICUT

Susan Cooley
Cooley Family
Amanda Davis
Frank Dubas Jr.
Howard Miller
Bob Murphy
Martin Piech
Charles Rothbart

MASSACHUSETTS

Robert E. Burt
John Canadas
Ralph Capalbo
James Goldston
James Kirby
Edward J. LeCouteur
Peyton Long
John Lozowski
Lisa Marsh
Steve Muise
Quinn O'Donnell
Harold Olsen
Jerome H. Perry
Sarah Porter
Nick Toroni

NEW HAMPSHIRE

George Allen

NEW JERSEY

Christopher J. Adams
Bonnie De Young
David F. Garretson
Charles Lewowski
Jim Rizzolo
Raymond Watrous
Robert Ziegler

NEW YORK

Roger Bingler
Bingler Family
Colum Cross

Barbara Dunham
Ron Engel
Steven Ganzell

Steven Gittleman
Matthew Glazer
Robert T. Johnston
Mary Nummelin
Chris Olivia
Anthony Petro
Glen Schulz
Philip Valenti
Sheila Valenti
Thomas Whyte

RHODE ISLAND

Dean Johnson

MER Fall Convention Exciting Lineup Planned at Mt. Laurel



Three Lehigh Valley diesels are on the head end of a freight on Ralph Deblasi's layout on tour during the Delaware Valley Turn. Ralph is most interested in prototype operation and the track plan closely follows the prototype through the Lehigh Gorge.

(Photo by Earl Hackett)

Delaware Valley Turn, the 2016 MER Fall Convention, will begin Thursday, October 22 at 4 PM, and will run through noon on Sunday October 25, at the Hotel ML in Mount Laurel, NJ. During this time, you can participate in many different activities, including clinics, model railroad tours, operating sessions - and all of the other things that make a convention a lot of fun.

In addition, the Coco Key Indoor Water Park is located on the hotel grounds. So bring the family! The hotel has arranged half price daily passes for all those registered at the hotel for the convention.

(That's only \$18!) Check out all of the hotel and waterpark details at <http://www.thehotellml.com>.

The convention program is extensive. There are some 50 clinics on the schedule, with more coming! In

order to accommodate these, organizers scheduled them three at a time at 7 and 8:30 PM on Thursday, 8, 9:30, and 11 AM, 1, 2:30, and 4 PM on both Friday and Saturday, and 7 and 8:30 PM on Friday evening.

Clinics will cover a wide range of topics — some familiar, some not so much! Clinicians from all over the MER and NER will be presenting. Topics include Scenery, Signs, Structures, and Weathering; Electroluminescent Signs; 3D Printing; Computer Aided Design for Rapid Prototyping & Manufacturing; Micro Controllers; Rail Marine Transfer Operations; and prototype-specific topics on the Pennsylvania, Reading, Lehigh Valley, B&O, Lackawanna, and Conrail.

Already, there are 29 stops on the model railroad tour, and 107 slots for operating sessions (These are filling up quickly, with one already sold out, so
(Continued on next page)



These silos are on Chris Conaway's layout. Almost all of his models are scratch-built from prototype photos and the detail is exquisite. The modeling is well worth a visit!

(Photo by Earl Hackett)



(Continued from page 5)

get your Operating Session reservation in as soon as you can).

The list of model railroads is also long and varied with scales from N to G, and from small to club size. Some of the destinations are a bit of a jaunt, so they've been grouped by area to make as much good use of time as possible.

There will be prototype tours as well.

Amtrak CETC

A tour of the Amtrak Central Electrification and Train Control Center in Wilmington, DE, has been arranged and is about an hour ride from the hotel. Participants will see the control theater and be given a brief presentation on train dispatcher and power director operations.

Photos on these two pages are from Rick Bickmore's layout. Photographer Earl Hackett tells us, *"This layout is a must see! It is beautifully detailed and occupies about 30 x 20 feet. I spent three hours taking photos and still hadn't seen everything."*

Above, a passenger local slides by a scrap yard. Below, is Rick's steel mill.

Opposite, Rick's scratchbuilt pusher for his coke byproducts plant is something rarely modeled. It shoves the hot coke out the other side of the oven into the hot car. Two other examples of Rick's work are also on page 7.





Photos by Earl Hackett



Dispatching at Wilmington includes trains and electrical power on the Northeast Corridor from Washington to "Holmes" in Northeast Philadelphia and includes the Harrisburg Line.

Travel will be via coach because of security and parking restrictions. Our bus will leave the hotel at 8 AM on Saturday, October 24, arriving at the facility about 9:00, returning to the hotel after the three hour tour. The cost is \$20. There is a limit of 48 participants, and a minimum of 28 is needed to make this tour work. For this reason, early registration is encouraged. If the tour is oversubscribed, a wait list will be created.

Perdue Grain Elevator

The car pool tours include the Perdue grain elevator, which is about 30 minutes away in Bordentown. Those of you who attended the Princeton Junction convention in 2010 may have taken the tour of this facility which was then owned by Agway.

Conrail Dispatch Center

Yes, Conrail is still alive and well, and living in Mt. Laurel. There will be a tour of its dispatching facility, which is only a few minutes from the hotel. There will be two tours available, both Friday morning -one at 9 AM and the other at 9:45. The tour will take about 30 minutes.

Patco Shops

Patco, the Port Authority Transit Company, operates high speed third rail-powered passenger service from Lindenwold in south Jersey into Philadelphia. Located in Lindenwold about a half hour from the hotel, the shops of the Patco High Speed Line will be open for us to tour on Saturday afternoon.

This tour will leave the hotel at noon, and return about 3 PM. We will carpool to the Woodcrest Station, about 15 minutes from the hotel, and then take a train to Lindenwold. The shops are about a 10 minute walk from the platform.

This year's convention is taking a page from the national convention by having a silent auction, rather than a white elephant room and regular auction. For those not familiar, each item will have a tag with an item number to bid (put your registration number and your bid in the next available slot on the tag). The winner will be the highest bid and items will be available to be claimed after the banquet.

Speaking of the banquet, the convention will have a full buffet style dinner Saturday night. Check the Website for choices and enter yours on your registration form.

You can stay up to date with developments at the Web site <<http://www.DelawareValleyTurn.org>>, or sign up for the Yahoo group at <<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MER2015/info>>. 

Try Out Free-mo at the

A real eye-catcher on any Free-mo setup is Mike Prokop's Camden Ferry module.

By MIKE McNAMARA
MER

At this year's MER convention, we are excited to have an on-site, operating modular layout. This HO scale layout will be assembled with modules built by individual modelers who have followed the *Free-mo* standard (see <<http://free-mo.org>> for details). By adhering to this simple standard that defines module end interfaces, these modelers construct unique and often prototypical modules, knowing that what they build can easily be integrated into any Free-mo layout at any event in North America - including our convention.

The exciting part for convention attendees is that they too can participate in this Free-mo layout in two different ways.

First, if any member has built, is building, or is planning to build an HO Free-mo module, there is room in the convention layout space to include your module. Nor does it need to be fully finished. We can display

(Continued on next page)



Delaware Valley Turn

A father and son visiting the Amherst Model Train Hobby Show in Springfield, MA, look over Mike McNamara's Freemo module.

Photo below is another view of Mike's three-section Woodstown module.



facet of model rail-roading. We hope you'll join us. It will be relaxed and simple, and you can have some fun with a throttle in hand switching cars on the modular layout.

So, whether you want to bring along a module, or are interested in doing a little operating, the Free-mo layout at the MER *Delaware Valley Turn* will have you covered. And even if you don't participate with the layout, we hope you'll stop by and check out the modules and layout at the hotel. We think this will be a unique and interesting feature to add to your convention enjoyment! ☒

and include your module in any state. (Most model railroaders appreciate seeing projects in earlier stages to get an understanding of the build process.) If you have the track down, we can include your module in the operational portion of the layout (and even if your wiring is not finished, we can get around that). If you don't get that far, you can still display what you are building and discuss it with others.

A great thing about building a module is that it lets you try new things, whether some new scenery or track techniques, a chance to model a different locale or prototype, or just an opportunity to build something if you don't yet have a layout. With Free-mo, we encourage everyone interested to get started and attend an event. Getting started may be the toughest part, but once you do the process of building, taking your module to events, and sharing your efforts feeds into a continuous cycle where you want to keep building and participating. I know! I have logged over 4,000 miles with my modules since I started them five years ago!

If you are interested in building a module and need any help, advice, or guidance, I would encourage you to join the NJ Free-mo mailing list on Yahoo (<<http://yhoo.it/1biJXGI>>). Even if you are not in the New Jersey area, this is a good forum to ask questions and get advice. There are other mailing lists as well, such as the Free-mo national mailing list (<<http://yhoo.it/1xTPf6N>>), but if you are coming to our event, think about joining our list to get in contact with us for this convention.

The second way every convention attendee can participate is through operating sessions on the layout during the convention weekend. A sign-up sheet for specific times will be posted, and a number of trains will be available for those interested in a short op session between clinics or layout visits. It's simple and lots of fun – for those experienced in operating as well as those new to this





Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA Fall Convention

Delaware Valley Turn 2015

October 22nd to 25th, 2015

www.DelawareValleyTurn.org



Please enter (print legibly) all names **as you wish them to appear on your registration badges**. They will not be changed at the convention.

Primary Registrant's Name: _____ Any Title? _____

Significant Other Attending (living at same address): _____

Children Attending (16 & under – list all): _____

Registrar Use Only	Address: _____			
	City: _____		State: _____ Zip + 4: _____	
	Phone #: _____		E-mail: _____	
	NMRA #: _____		Region: _____ Division: _____	
	Favorite Scale: _____		Is this your first MER Convention?: _____	

Description	Act. #	Cost	#	Paying
Early Registration (thru August 31 st)	-----	\$35		
Basic Registration (Sept. 1 until at the door fee of \$45)	-----	\$40		
Non-NMRA Member Extra Fee	-----	\$10		
Significant Other & Children Under 16	-----	\$0		-----
Banquet – Dinner Buffet - Saturday Night Max # Available 220	401	\$42		
Breakfast Buffet Pre-order \$15 per meal tax & tip included. (usually \$18 + tax/tip)	▼▼	▼▼	----	-----
Breakfast Quantity - Friday	402	\$15		
Breakfast Quantity – Saturday	403	\$15		
Breakfast Quantity - Sunday	404	\$15		
Call Boards / Ops – Expanded Call Board Info Available on Website				
A & W Dick Genther Thurs. 1pm – 4pm Max# 4	801	\$5		
PS Geoff Green Thurs. 7pm – 10pm Max# 16	814	\$5		
N K RR Mike McNamara Fri. 8:30am – 12pm Max# 4	804	\$5		
J M Jack Menaker Fri. 8:30am – 12pm Max# 4	805	\$5		
L N Bill Wallace Fri. 10am – 3:30pm Max# 6	806	\$5		
K W & N Rwy. Chuck Higdon Fri. 12:30pm – 4pm Max# 6	808	\$5		
A & W Dick Genther Fri. 1pm – 4pm Max# 4	802	\$5		
H T RR Richard Bickmore Fri. 6:30pm – 10pm SOLD OUT Max# 8	809	\$5	----	-----
S & U Rwy. Rick Spano Fri. 6:30pm – 10pm Max# 5	810	\$5		
C L & W RR John Rahenkamp Sat.8:30a-12pm Max# 12	811	\$5		
W R Herb Gishlick Sat. 8:30am – 12pm Max# 4	813	\$5		
[SS] Steve Salotti Sat. 9am – 1pm Max# 12	815	\$5		
L N Bill Wallace Sat. 10am – 3:30pm Max# 6	807	\$5		
C L & W RR John Rahenkamp Sat.1pm – 5pm Max# 12	812	\$5		
A & W Dick Genther Sat. 1pm – 4pm Max# 4	803	\$5		
Prototype Tours – More Info on Website When Confirmed				
Perdue Grain – Bordentown Fri. 8 am – 11:30am Max# 20	201	\$5		
Amtrak CETC Tour Sat. 8am – 1pm Min# 30 – Max# 48	202	\$20		
Total Advance Registration Paid				

Additional events will be added when confirmed and their cost is known.

Payment must accompany registration. **Credit Card Payment Accepted Thru 10/21/15, Not At The Door.**

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____ 3 Digit Security Code: _____

An extra bank fee will be added for Credit Card Transactions. **Visa, Master Card, & Discover Card Accepted Only.**

Make checks payable to: MER Fall Convention 2015

Send to: MER Fall Convention

P.O. Box 467

Crosswicks, NJ 08515-0467

Any Questions and/or additional information, e-mail to **MER-Registrar@verizon.net**

Watch the following sites to keep up to date on new information;

www.DelawareValleyTurn.org

groups.yahoo.com/groups/MER2015

mer-nmra.com



Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA Fall Convention

Delaware Valley Turn 2015

October 22nd to 25th, 2015

www.DelawareValleyTurn.org



Convention Hotel: The Hotel ML and CoCo Key Water Resort

915 Route 73

Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054 Phone: 856-234-7300 Website: thehotelml.com for hotel and water park information.

Room rate \$94.00 plus tax per night, (\$108.10) Single or Double

When registering, use online booking link <http://tinyurl.com/msqk6jy> or call & specify the **Mid-Eastern Region Model Railroad Assoc.** to get these special rates.

\$18.00 (1/2 off regular) day passes to CoCo Key Water Park will be available at the hotel, ask for convention price.

BREAKFAST INFORMATION

A Breakfast Buffet Pre-Order Ticket will be available if a minimum number of orders are reached for each day. Cost will be \$15 per meal/ticket, with tax and tip already included. Usual price at the hotel is \$18 plus tax and tip if it is offered.

If you submit a registration form with breakfast choices included and they are cancelled due to low responses, you will be notified ahead of time and be refunded your cost.

BANQUET INFORMATION

A Full Dinner Buffet Banquet will take place on Saturday night for \$42 per person. It will include Top Round of Beef Au Jus, Striped Bass, and Chicken Parmesan along with salad, vegetables, and dessert.

Call Boards / Ops Sessions

Act. #	RR Initials	Railroad Name	Owner	Date	Time	Max # Guests	From Hotel By Google
# 801	A&W	Arpee & Western	Dick Genter	Thursday	1:00pm – 4:00pm	4	46 miles / 49 mins.
# 814	PS	Pacific Southern HO Model Railroad Club	Geoff Green	Thursday	7:00pm – 10:00pm	16	43 miles / 44 mins.
***	***	*** **	*** **	***	***	***	***
# 804	NK	Northeast Kingdom RR	Mike McNamara	Friday	8:30am – 12:00pm	4	10 miles / 13 mins.
# 805	JM	Jersey Mercantile	Jack Menaker	Friday	8:30am – 12:00pm	4	49 miles / 52 mins.
# 806	LN	Lehigh Northern	Bill Wallace	Friday	10:00am – 3:30pm	6	78 miles / 86 mins.
# 808	KW&N	Key West & Northern	Chuck Higdon	Friday	12:30pm- 4:00pm	6	47 miles / 60 mins.
# 802	A&W	Arpee & Western	Dick Genter	Friday	1:00pm – 4:00pm	4	46 miles / 49 mins.
# 809	HTR	Harrisburg Terminal Railroad	Richard Bickmore	Friday	6:30pm – 10:00pm	FULL	3 miles / 5 mins.
# 810	S&U	Scenic & Undecided Rwy.	Rick Spano	Friday	6:30pm – 10:00pm	5	35 miles / 36 mins.
***	***	*** **	*** **	***	***	***	***
# 811	CL&W	Claremont, Lewiston & Western Railroad	John Rahenkamp	Saturday	8:30am – 12:00pm	12	13 miles / 22 mins.
# 813	WR	Windsor Railroad	Herb Gishlik	Saturday	8:30am- 12:00pm	4	35 miles / 43 mins.
# 815	SS	[Steve Salotti]	Steve Salotti	Saturday	9:00am – 1:00pm	12	38 miles / 55 mins.
# 807	LN	Lehigh Northern	Bill Wallace	Saturday	10:00am – 3:30pm	6	78 miles / 86 mins.
# 812	CL&W	Claremont, Lewiston & Western Railroad	John Rahenkamp	Saturday	1:00pm – 5:00pm	12	13 miles / 22 mins.
# 803	A&W	Arpee & Western	Dick Genter	Saturday	1:00pm – 4:00pm	4	46 miles / 49 mins.

Prototype Tours

202 – Perdue Grain, Bordentown. Fri. leave hotel at 8:00 am by CARPOOL, Tour starts 9:00am., Appr. 1-1/2 hrs.

Tour includes - Walk through interior of grain elevator and explanation of operations of grain elevator, loading of railroad hoppers and intermodal shipping containers. Exterior will have explanations of railcar movements and tracks at facility, past and present. Loading operations may be available for viewing during visit because of harvest season. Requires Hard Hat, Safety Glasses, and Long Pants. Max. # attendees is 20

203 – Amtrak CETC Tour. Sat. leave hotel by BUS at 8:00am, return to hotel by 1:00pm.

Minimum # attendees required 30, Maximum # 48

This is a tour of the Amtrak - Central Electrification and Train Control Center in Wilmington DE.



WORKIN' ON THE RAILROAD

By GLENN GLASSTETTER



The Big Hole Chronicles

In my last column, I mentioned what I call "The Big Hole." It is the largest side of the largest peninsula on my railroad and is mostly open with the mainline and some adjacent track in place. It is four feet deep by 13 feet long. This column will begin a series of articles describing my progress to complete this large area. I expect to report on my progress fairly consistently as The Big Hole is developed, but there are also other projects on the railroad that will demand attention as I work on this area.

To set the scene (referencing the overall

direction. Exiting the tunnel on a future fill, it continues across a through truss bridge at 55 inches height before entering Mike's Run Tunnel.

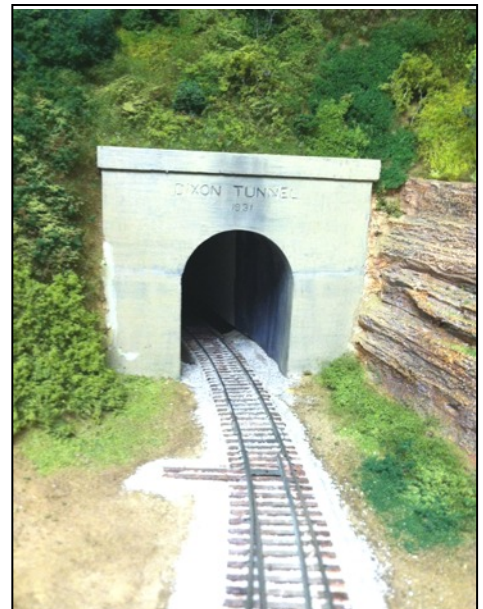
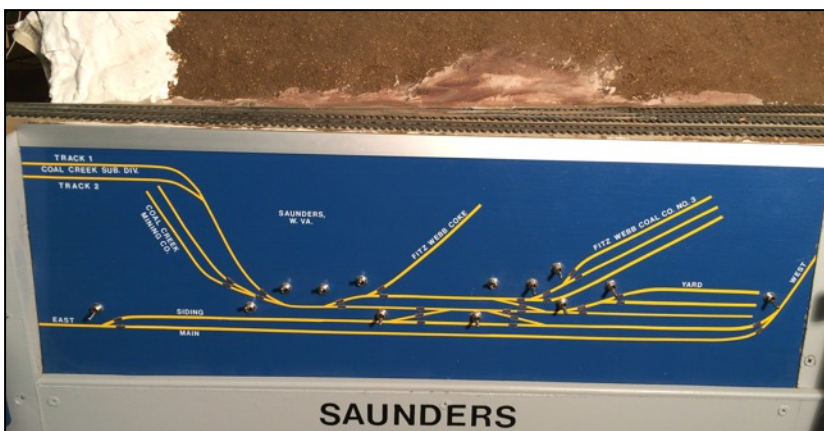
Whenever I have guests over to visit the railroad, and I describe to them my plans for this area, I clearly see the finished scene in my mind. But last year, it dawned on me that all they see is a large open space with some track. To be sure, this area has included for many years a model of a coal tippie that my friend Brian Whiton built, but with no way to get hopper cars to it.



photo), the main line enters from the right at the front edge of the layout – in front of the brown and white hillside – at a height of 46 inches. Continuing left for eight feet, it dives into Ackert Tunnel, and proceeds through a reverse curve to reenter the scene from the left at an elevation of 51 inches in the coal mining town of Saunders. The mainline continues to the right for 12 feet before entering Big Bend Tunnel to again reverse

Looking at the photo of the Saunders control panel, the mainline is at the bottom. The Coal Creek Subdivision in hidden staging is shown at the top left of the panel with the two tracks for the tippie on an angle just below it. The single track in the center (angling up to the right) will serve a bank of coke ovens, while the three tracks angling off to the right will serve another larger coal tippie. A small three track yard between the tippie tracks and mainline

will facilitate switching this tippie and the Coal Creek Sub Local that enters from, and leaves, to the East, reversing direction each time. In the large bowl area between the



Coal Creek Sub and the coke ovens will be the coal town of Saunders. As usual, there is never enough space for everything I have in mind, but I think that once completed, this scene will convey the look of a coal mining town in West Virginia in the early 1950s.

Tunnel Portals

There are six tunnel portals in this scene – five concrete portals on the mainline and one stone portal on the branchline. Although not considered a good layout planning practice these days (due to the mainline running through the scene three times in two different directions), I designed the railroad in the mid 1980s after being inspired by Allen McClelland's Virginian & Ohio. Allen also included a coal tippie for his Virgino Mine located up a "holler" (hollow) behind a through truss bridge. That was always a part of my design. The idea to continue that branch to a hidden staging yard for expanded operations came later. Being a branchline, this tunnel did not see the upgrades the mainline C&O tunnels experienced during the early 1930s. This portal is a Chooch resin casting.

My concrete portals are castings I made from a wood and styrene mold I created based on C&O portals from that mainline upgrade. My mold has yielded sixteen castings, including two faces for a concrete arch bridge and two for a carved stone arch bridge.

The C&O had standards for everything, including tunnel portals. New portals constructed during this tunnel upgrade have the name of the tunnel and upgrade dates cast into the faces. I hand carved the names and dates on my portals with dental tools. Although I am not building my railroad based on prototype C&O locations, details like these help convey the idea that this is the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway in 1952.

OK, break's over. Back to work! ☒

Digital Photos, Strathmore® and Foamcore Make Convincing Model!



By JEFF PASTON
Associate Editor

You've got this huge structure with more windows than you can possibly afford or would want to construct. Or, you're modeling in O or S scale, and large structures are hard to come by. Or, you need some nice looking background (or foreground) structures that aren't available as kits. Have I got an answer for you!

You've heard the expression that "everything that's old is new again?" From the earliest days of model railroading, cardstock/cardboard structures were once the norm. They are relatively easy to scratchbuild, and materials are reasonably priced. Now take that old technology, mix in some newer materials – like foamcore, digital images and printing, and spray adhesive – and you can have great looking structures for reasonable cost and effort.

That's how I came to build the one-time New York Central station in Syracuse, New York, for a local O scale high-rail layout. The building – built in 1936 – still exists as a cable television news operation, but the tracks have been gone for more than 50 years. Studying the structure, it was apparent that it would be huge if built to 1:48 scale, would need many, many specially

built windows, and it would be difficult to replicate the ornate designs and coloring of the Indiana Limestone exterior.

The solution was to make it from digital color photographs printed on cardstock. To enhance its dimensional facade, I built it in layers utilizing some of that "old" technology. And finally, I settled on a reduced scale (1:64) for the structure, which actually looks really good with those O scale trains around it.

"Building" on the Computer

First thing was to photograph the existing building. It's sometimes not easy to get photos of entire walls as neighboring structures prevent you from backing up far enough. More problems become apparent when you notice the windows have been updated (replacing metal with vinyl), and some doorways have been moved or eliminated from the original. That's where utilizing a computer photo-editing program, such as Adobe® Photoshop® Elements, can help. But first, I drew a floorplan so I knew what size to print the walls. It is a good idea to make the wall pieces an eighth of an inch longer on each end so corners can be covered.

Using historic photos for reference, I was able to cut-and paste

(Continued on next page)



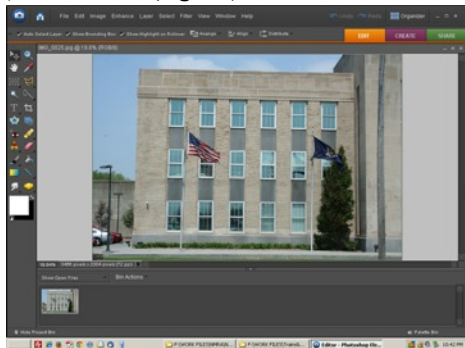
The prototype NYC station in Syracuse, NY, served trains between 1936 and 1962. It is now on the National Register of Historic Places and was restored by current owner Time Warner Cable News. *(Photo by Jeff Paston)*



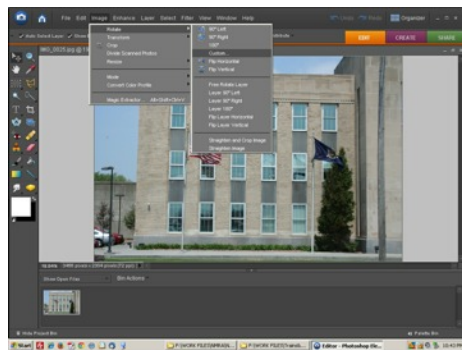
You get an idea of the size of the model in this photo of the author making an adjustment to it. *(Photo by Phil Edwards)*

Digital Photos, Strathmore® and Foamcore

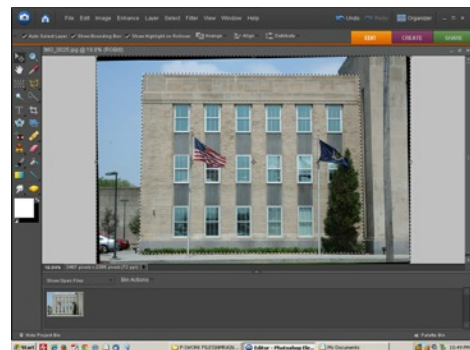
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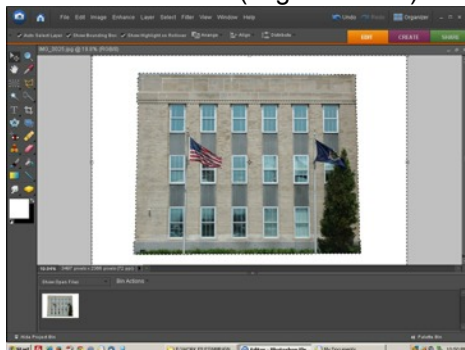
Making Photos into Digital Walls:
The picture is "keystoned" and has visible obstructions (flags and tree).



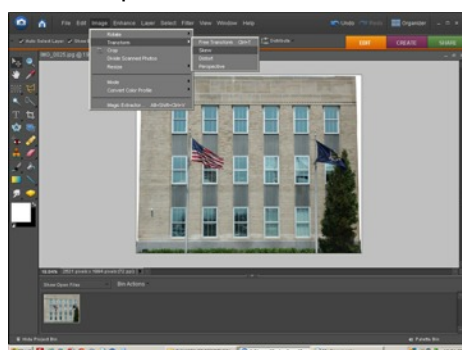
1. First, rotate the picture so it is level. Use the *custom* rotation setting in Photoshop®.



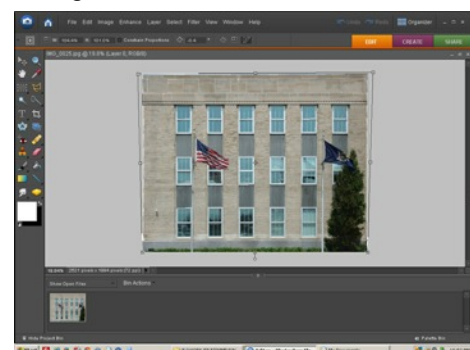
2. Now that the wall is level, trace its outline. *Invert the selection* to allow background elimination.



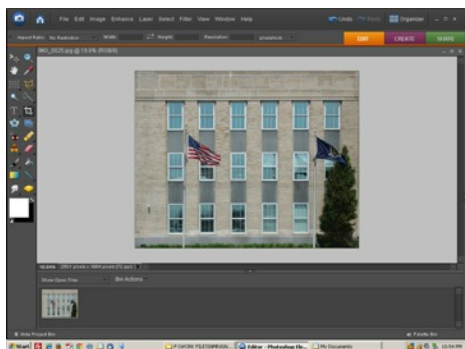
3. *Fill* the background with white. Then *crop* the picture leaving mostly the wall remaining.



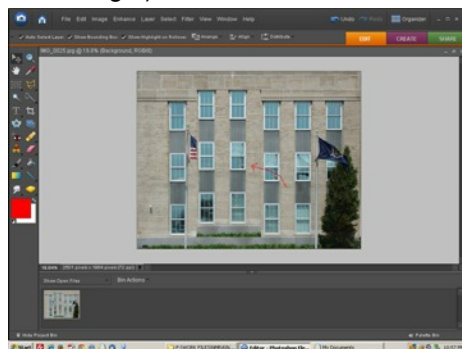
4. Since the wall photo is "keystoned" (because the picture was taken from a lower angle), click *transform* and *skew*.



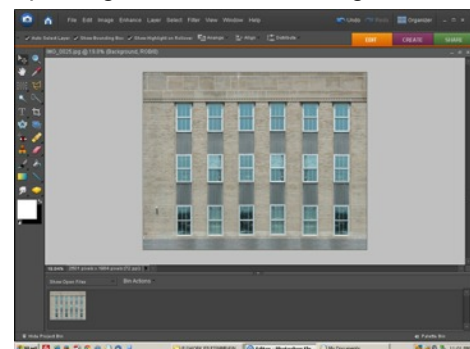
5. With the cursor, you "pull" the corner boxes in *skew* mode until the walls line up straight with the frame edge.



6. With the wall now "squared," crop the edges. It is time to address the obstructions.



7. The "beauty" of this building is its repetitive design. So, pick an unobstructed section, and copy and paste.



8. The "finished" wall is now free of obstructions and ready for photo retouching with new windows and doors.

doors to former locations, and backdate modern windows by changing frame coloring. The digital walls and windows pictures included reflections that actually made the windows appear more realistic.

Those historic reference photos continued to provide guidance for cutting and pasting digital sections of brick and limestone to reconstruct older wall configurations. I also had to "build" rooftop structures seen in aerial views using the digital brick sections and cutting and pasting windows from other walls. I noticed repetitive themes on the station structure, and put those repetitions to use making side walls from sections of front walls. Once everything was done in the computer and scaled appropriately, I put all of the "pieces" on 11x17" PDFs and sent

them out to be printed – in triplicate!

Layering the Walls

With the 11x17" prints in hand, I used a sharp knife and metal straight edge to cut the pieces for assembly. Many of the walls required all three printed copies. Remember that you "added" an extra eighth inch at each end, so when you butt adjoining walls, the corners will be covered.

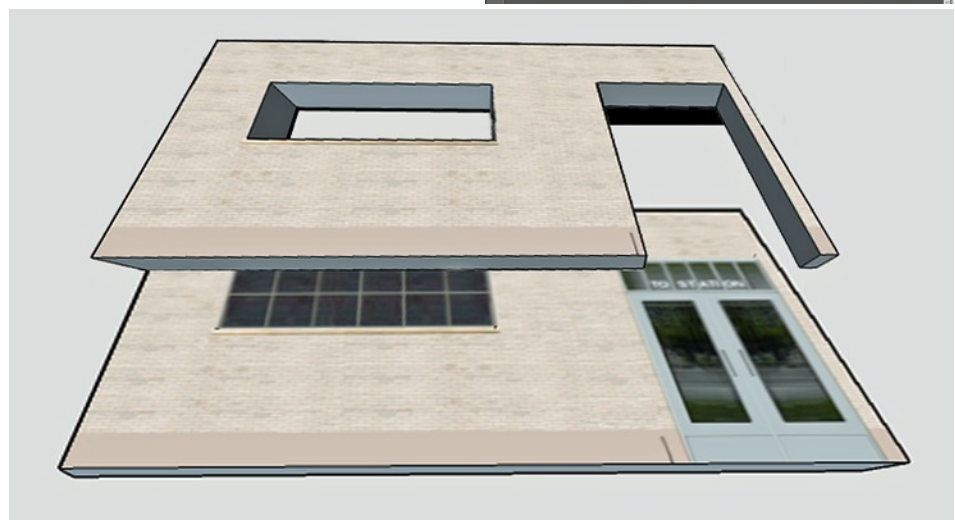
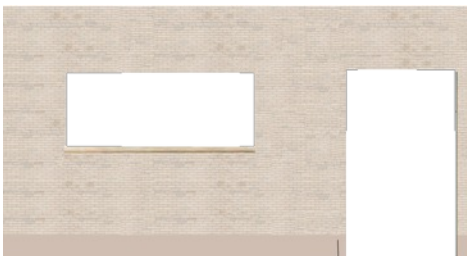
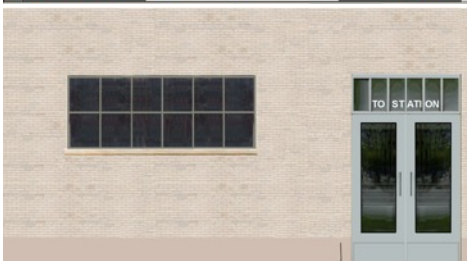
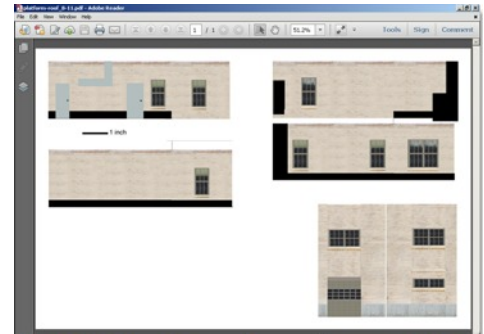
Using spray adhesive, I created the layers I would need. I placed one print of a wall piece on black foamcore; and a second copy of that wall piece on Strathmore® stock. Then, I carefully cut the windows and doors out of the Strathmore® board. The Strathmore® was glued to the foamcore, making windows and



9. The front “wing” walls contain the necessary elements for replicating the side walls. You can easily see the repetitive window arrangements. In Photoshop, windows and doors are backdated, then added to the wall sections, as shown *at left*.



10. Because of the size of the model, the completed walls were printed as PDF (Adobe® *Portable Document Format*) files on 11” x 17” cardstock on a color laser printer, as shown in examples at *left* and *right*. Three copies were made of each piece so walls could be cut out and “layered.”



11. This gives an idea of layering the wall pieces to give the model depth. *Above left*, a sample wall features digital photo doors, window, and brickwork. The printed wall pieces are cut out. The full piece is glued to the foamcore. A second

piece has the window and doors cut out, and is glued to the thinner Strathmore® board. They are glued together, *above*, to make the “finished” wall piece. The platform photo, *below*, shows the layered effectiveness.

(Continued from page 14)

doors indented into the facade. Various cornices and window sills are cut from the third copy, and depending on how much you want those elements to stand out from the facade, you may or may not decide to use a Strathmore® backing, or just use the original cardstock thickness.

Once the walls were printed and assembled, I used white glue (with clamps or pins) to connect the walls. I painted sandpaper black and adhered that to roof foamcore pieces to simulate a tar surface.

Take a look at the illustrations accompanying this article to get a better idea of what I did. I think you'll agree the finished model stands out despite using that “old” technology. ☒





BACKSHOP BITS



If you've admired how some of the newest model passenger cars have the window gaskets showing in black or silver and wished you could have the same at a fraction of the cost, here's how to do it — at least on the Walther's models.

Walther's plastic window inserts have a fine raised ridge around the outside of each window. Merely (and carefully) use an ink or paint pen to color that edge. (If you go over the edge, you can quickly—and carefully—clean up mistakes with a knife blade, eraser, or toothpick.) When the window inserts are placed back on the car sides, the result looks prototypical. It is also possible to do similar coloring of inserts on other brands without ridges. ☒

