

THIS IS MODEL RAILROADING, THIS IS THE NER.

ISSUE 287 AUTUMN 2022

NER COUPLER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHEASTERN REGION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



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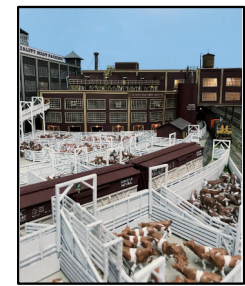
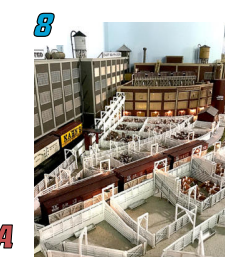
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OUR COVER PHOTO

Dave Gunn's superb work on his abattoir (slaughterhouse) is captured on our cover. His work on the structures, yards, and rolling stock is outstanding. See more on pages 8 through 11.

TRAIN ORDER #5
ED O'ROURKE, MMR
PRESIDENT NORTHEASTERN REGION, NMRA



Not too long ago, Jack Hamilton, MMR, in his "Tool Car" column in NMRA Magazine, referenced safety tips around knives and cutting tools. I think it is important enough to expand on that and talk about safety in general.

My chosen profession, Music Education, carries with it the risk of occupational injury. I'm speaking of hearing loss, in my case the result of 40+ years in a loud environment, plus other self-inflicted abuses. As you may have noticed, I have hearing aids in both ears, which improve my hearing considerably, but in no way replace what I have lost. The current ones are my third pair - I've spent enough on them in the last 10 years to buy as many Rapido EP-5s as the New Haven owned. Looking back I realize I should have been more careful and worn earplugs when in a loud environment.

What's a loud environment? Pretty much any place where sounds get above a normal conversation volume. Almost any power tool is loud enough to do damage. The damage is incremental, can't be undone, and sneaks up on you. If your wife is starting to think her name is "WHAT?" it might be time to have your hearing checked. Any time you are using power tools, including a lawnmower, snow blower, or vacuum cleaner, you should have hearing protection. I have a set of "ear muffs" on my workbench, but actually find the green ear plugs sold in drug stores to be the most effective. It doesn't repair the damage but does avoid further loss. Once it's gone, it's gone.

Familiarity may breed contempt, but it also brings about complacency and carelessness. Most injuries from tool use can be avoided with proper safety procedures. Many serious injuries from tools involve saws, with table saws probably the most common. Blade guards and push sticks are in place to keep your fingers firmly attached to your hand. Use them. Not using them "just this once" may be the last time you use a couple of fingers. Don't take the risk. And remember the rules about loose clothing around spinning tools.

Dull tools are another injury maker. Again, I'm the poster boy for trying to get the last few cuts out of the number 11 blade. (I do the same with shaving cartridges.) Besides not making clean cuts in the work a dull tool is more apt to slip and become embedded in some fleshy part of the body. A bulk pack of #11 blades costs \$20 at Micro Mark before you take your NMRA discount - less than \$0.20 per blade. Throw the dull one away (in a sharps container of some sort, not in the trash) before it ruins a project. Blood is not a good substitute for Caboose red.

Paints and other liquids (glues, track-cleaners, etc.), especially solvent-based ones, need ventilation and a spray booth. This protects your shop from overspray and your lungs (and therefore, your brain) from fumes. Damage from this sort of thing is also incremental and generally irreversible. You usually don't find out until it is too late.

Finally, remember to wear eye protection at all times. Drilling, sawing, or using a Dremel tool requires eye protection, which means more than just your regular prescription glasses. Protection is also needed when using things that may splash. Your modeling will not look nearly as good viewed with one eye.

Be careful out there! - Ed

NER returns March 20, 2023 for four nights to a computer near you.

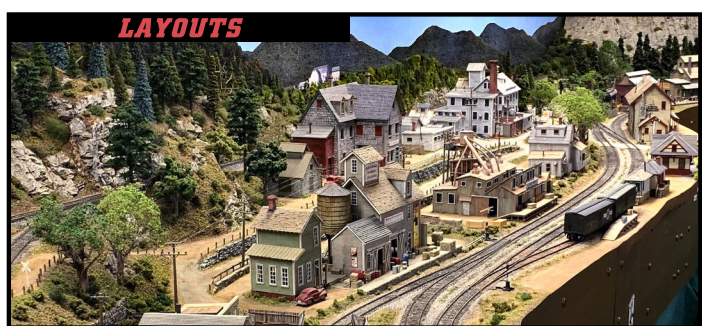
NERx is the annual virtual convention of the Northeastern Region, NMRA. Beginning on Monday, March 20 we will stream four hours of content each evening, showcasing the work of your fellow NER members. We will have clinics, layout tours, roundtable discussions, and a model showcase.

New this year, we will be adding Tips & Tricks, which will be short 5 to 10 minute segments to improve your modeling and enjoyment of our great hobby.



CLINICS

The NERx team is looking for volunteers to provide clinics. This is a great venue to test out a new presentation. Reach out to us at: clinics@nerx.org



LAYOUTS

Layout tours are a highlight of NERx. We'd love a 25 minute video tour of your layout. Don't wait until your railroad is "complete" or "perfect." Contact us at: layouts@nerx.org

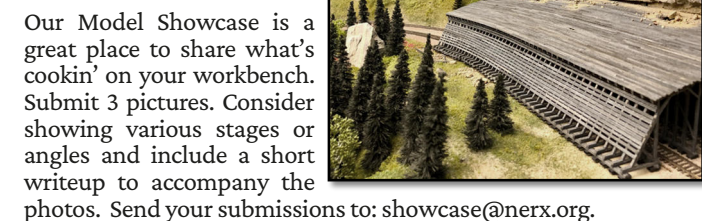


Liquitex Basics and Static Grass

TIPS & TRICKS

Do you have a great idea, a tip, or a trick that you want to share, but it is not enough to create a full clinic? We have you covered with our new tips and tricks segments. Submit a 5 to 10 minute video to: tips@nerx.org

MODEL SHOWCASE

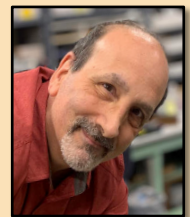


Our Model Showcase is a great place to share what's cookin' on your workbench. Submit 3 pictures. Consider showing various stages or angles and include a short writeup to accompany the photos. Send your submissions to: showcase@nerx.org. To get an idea of how the Model Showcase works, check out last years submissions at <http://nerx.org/model-showcase.html>.

Get the latest information on NERx at <https://www.nerx.org>
We are looking forward to some great evenings. Join us!
Hey! tell a friend. This is a great way to introduce the NMRA.

A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE
CHRIS S. CARFARO EDITOR, NER COUPLER

The AP and Judging



I am a calligrapher and one thing I know for sure, is not to correct my pen strokes while making them. To do so is to activate your right brain, creative side, while critiquing with your left, analytical side - you are sure to make a glitch.

So, if you wish to build a model for the AP, you have got to know that the left brain, analytical focused judges are not going to give you a happy pin and a hug for your hard work. It is not what they do. Most of the judged certificates are based on technical excellence. You've got to know that going in or trouble will ensue. I know on a personal level how it can work. You create a great model and submit it to a contest, only to have people tear it apart, right? Damn rivet-counters! Excuse me but the judges are not the problem, nor is your model. If you are looking at your entry from a right brain-creative side of your mind, without taking in the technical excellence that may or may not be there, you are setting yourself up for disappointment.

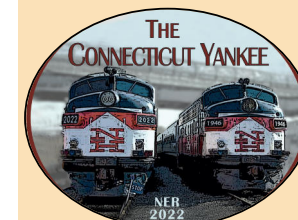
Recently, I submitted material for my author certificate and Glenn Glasstetter, my AP Chair in the division took one look at it and said politely, "this isn't ready for submission." What the hell? I was a little annoyed. Of course it's ready, I've got it all, right there. God bless my wife, Karen who, after hearing my whining said "Get over your bad self, Glenn is actually trying to help you - you just don't see it." She went on to say, "He sees things differently than you do. You don't always cross the t's, dot the i's, or organize things in a clean fashion. You need him and people like him." She is amazing and correct, but you all know that.

I interviewed Chuck Diljak just after he received his MMR (Master Model Railroader) award. He asked me if I understood brake rigging? No, not really and I'm not excited to learn, was my reply. Exactly, he said. The AP nudges you to do things you ordinarily would not want to do or know about. It makes you a better technical modeler.

At the Connecticut Yankee convention last month, I received my Model Railroad Author Certificate. Immediately after the meeting was over, the very first person standing in front of me, grinning ear to ear was Glenn. He was absolutely delighted and excited for me. And I for one, was touched. This doesn't have to be a frustrating or contentious or anything but fun and pride. Thank you Chuck, Glenn, and Karen. I think I'm going to build that Z-1 boxcab - what the hell!



PS: AND since I am showing some appreciation, as a preview to what's coming in the next issue...



Connecticut Yankee was a great convention! I will get into details in the next issue. Right now, let me draw your attention to the various businesses that contributed to the silent auction. Sure, it's "advertising" for them. Sure they can write

it off their taxes. BUT THEY COULD HAVE SAID "NO". BUT THEY DIDN'T. They could have chosen to be in medical supplies - making a lot more money- but chose to earn their living making things for our hobby. For us, instead. A ton of amazing, high quality products were given to the NER and I see it as smart advertising, yes. But also as good will that I look forward in paying back when I need to purchase something for myself. I encourage everyone to keep a list of the vendors and contributors handy throughout the year. -Chris



Building the Oneida Division

In the June issue of Red Markers, the Central New York Division's newsletter, Bob Wilkins shares his story of building the Oneida Division, a section of his Mohawk Valley Central layout.

This newsletter issue also contains some terrific layout photos from the CNY and Hudson-Berkshire Division joint meet.

Visit <http://www.cnymra.org/index.php/newsletter> to find all issues of Red Markers.



Stations, DCC for an Athearn Rubberband-Drive RDC, and Semaphores

In the September issue of The Hotbox, the newsletter for Eastern Canada Division (ECD), Wendell Lomax shares photos and information on two beautiful scratch-built stations.

If you have any of those Athearn Blue Box rubber band-drive RDC's, ECD President Greg Williams shows you how to tune them up to improve their performance, convert them to DCC, and add LED lighting to the model in the same

newsletter.

Also in this issue, Doug Margison shares how he uses an Arduino and infrared detectors to control a train order semaphore on his Lacka-money Railroad.

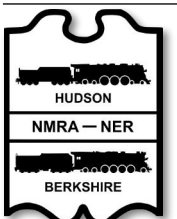


The Gulliver Effect

Most of us have looked at full-scale objects and wondered how to model them. We have also often looked at full-sized objects and thought of ways to use them in models.

Jim Walsh, the Garden State Division's "Tools and Tips" columnist talks about both in his latest article, "The Gulliver Effect". You can find Jim's column in the Summer issue of The Whistle Post.

Visit <https://www.nergsd.com/newsletter> to find all issues of the GSD division newsletter, The Whistle Post.



Passenger Train Operations

Some sad news, first. Ken Nelson, who earned his MMR in 2021, passed away. Many members remember his Poco Valley and the great series of articles on operations that appeared in the Hudson-Berkshire's newsletter, Form 19. Ken shared the knowledge he learned from his work experience on real railroads. Ken's latest operations column is "Passenger Train Operations." You can read about Ken and his article in the June 2022 issue.

All issues of Form 19 can be found on the division's website at <https://hudson-berkshire.org/form19.html>.



Mountain and Tunnel Liners

There are two articles in the July 2022 issue of the Lakeshores Limited related to mountains.
1. John Socha shares the process he used to build mountains for his NYO&W Southern Division.
And 2, in the next article in this issue, Dick Senges, MMR, shares his techniques for constructing

tunnel liners. You can find all issues of the division newsletter at <http://lakeshoresnmra.org/index.php/our-newsletter>.



Modeling a Pulpwood Yard & Using Craft Acrylics to Paint and Weather Track

Here are a pair of clinics presented and recorded during the June meeting of the Nutmeg Division. Jeff Hanke covers the pulpwood industry and how to make pulpwood loads from scratch. You can watch

the YouTube video using this link: <https://youtu.be/YGcHx2RX0xU?t=718>

Many of us are using acrylic paints in our modeling projects. Jim Mayo shows you how craft acrylic paints can be used to paint and weather track. You can watch the YouTube video using this link: <https://youtu.be/YGcHx2RX0xU?t=3194>



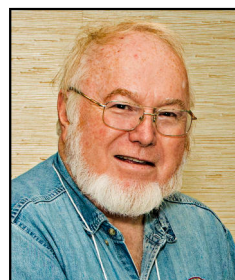
Easy Panels for Turnout Controls and An Affordable Workbench from Harbor Freight

Dennis DeAngelis, President of the Sunrise Trail Division, shares what he found in Home Depot for use as panels for his turnout controls in the spring issue of the Cannonball.

Also in the spring issue, Nicholas Kalas provides a review of an affordable workbench from Harbor Freight.

You can find all issues of the division newsletter by visiting <http://sunrisetraildiv.com/default.htm> and clicking on CannonBall Downloads at the top of the page.

In Memoriam



We are sad to report that Larry Cannon of Lewiston, Me. passed away unexpectedly on July 2, 2022, at his home as a result of a fall.

Larry enjoyed hunting, fishing, and woodworking, and sharing and these enjoyments and teaching these skills as he raised his children, but his lifelong passion was model railroading. His model building skills and contributions were admired by his peers in the National Model Railroad Association and the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. One of his proudest accomplishments was being nationally recognized as a Master Model Railroader in 1999. He was a loving, devoted and hardworking husband, father and grandfather who will be dearly missed.

To leave a message for the family in their online guestbook, please visit <http://www.thefortingrouplewiston.com>.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Great Falls Model Railroad Club: <http://www.greatfallsmod-club.org/support-our-club>



Tom Emmett of the Little Rhody Division's has earned Master Model Railroader #714.

Tom's certificates earned are:
Master Builder - Cars
Master Builder - Structures
Master Builder - Scenery
Master Builder - Prototype Models
Model Railroad Engineer - Civil
Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical
Association Volunteer

Congratulations, Tom!

The NMRA has a new SIG: Women in Model Railroading

The NMRA is excited to offer the opportunity to women around the world to become members of this new Special Interest Group - Women in Model Railroading! As a recognized SIG within the NMRA, we expect this group to be vibrant in the world of model railroading.

The purpose of the Women in Model Railroading (WIMRR) SIG is to introduce, encourage and connect women in or interested in the hobby of model railroading. The SIG is designed for education, enrichment, social interactions, and all-around fun. This group is meant to be inclusive and supportive of all women in the hobby and railfan world. A few social meetings per year are planned, including online and at train shows/conventions around the country. The SIG will provide women in their local NMRA regions the support needed to create activities or gatherings, in order to grow the hobby and remove perceived barriers for women modelers.

Visit the SIG page: <https://www.nmra.org/sigs/women-in-model-railroading>

Also, Facebook Pages:

"Women in Model Railroading" is for women in the model railroad hobby to share their world.

"The Steam Sisters Group" is for women railfans to share their photos of steam AND diesel trains.



NEW MEMBERS	
<p>Connecticut Lois Witalis David Watt</p> <p>Massachusetts Philip Anthes Jorge Roman</p> <p>Maine Jean Barry</p> <p>New Brunswick Luc Nowlan</p> <p>New Jersey Neal Weiss Brian Scharfstein Diodato Dilorio</p>	<p>New York Robert Platel Jonathan Adams Dennis Colucci</p> <p>Rhode Island James Moccia</p> <p>Vermont William Rutherford William Garrett</p>

TIMETABLE		
COMPILED BY JACK LUTZ ALTON_HOUSE@YAHOO.COM		
ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES POINTS NORTHEASTERN REGION NMRA USA & CANADA		
DATES	EVENT	LOCATION / TRACK
October 1-2, 2022	Railfair 2022	Boxborough, MA
October 2, 2022	Model Railroad, Train & Toy Show	Ansonia, CT
October 8, 2022	Seacoast Division NMRA 2022 Fall Event	Stratham, NH
October 16, 2022	The Great Batavia Train Show!	Batavia, NY
October 16, 2022	35th Upper Valley Model Railroad Show	White River Junction, VT
October 22-23, 2022	South Shore Model Railway Club Fall Model Railroad Show	Hingham, MA
October 23, 2022	Kingston NY Train Show	Kingston, NY
October 29, 2022	The Great Northern New England Train Show	Dover, NH
October 30, 2022	50th Annual Poughkeepsie Train & Hobby Show	Poughkeepsie, NY
November 5-6, 2022	The 47th Great New York State Model Train Fair	Syracuse, NY
November 12, 2022	Saint John Society of Model Railroaders 36th Annual Mod	Quispamsis, NB
November 19-20, 2022	Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show	Wilmington, MA
November 25-27, 2022	Tour de Chooch	NH & MA
November 26-27, 2022	Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show	Edison, NJ
December 3-4, 2022	HUB Division NERNMRA New England Model Train Expo	Marlborough, MA
January 28-29, 2023	Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show	West Springfield, MA

Enhancing Your Scenery Through Forced Perspective *By Bill Brown, MMR*

The term "Forced Perspective" is one used often in model rail-roading. According to the all-knowing online Google, "Forced perspective is a technique that uses optical illusions to make objects appear...farther away...than they are." Often in our hobby we are limited by our space. In order to gain depth and a believable scene the techniques of Forced Perspective can fool our eyes and brain into believing our scene has virtually unlimited depth. The methods I describe here have been used often on my home layout The Leadville and Red Cliff.

I admit I am blessed with a 60' x 40' basement under our ranch house, and a loving wife that has granted me trackage rights to use most of it for my dream hobby. The LARC was started in 2009 after I retired and we built a new home. The layout is a two-level endeavor with below being an HO Scale modern-day depiction of the former Rio Grande/Southern Pacific/now closed Union Pacific Tennessee Pass sub through central Colorado. The upper level is a combination of several HO_{N3} lines in southern Colorado and New Mexico from the early last century.

It might seem to most modelers that having a roughly 2000 square foot space for my railroad would allow deep scenes void of the necessity to artificially create depth. The reality is that most of our railroads twist and wind their way around with some scenes only inches from our backdrop. With this being the case I have used several techniques of forced perspective to create visual expanses necessary to give the feel of the real wild west.

The photos below and to the right illustrate how I have used N Scale vehicles placed just a few inches behind my HO scale structures to create the illusion of depth. In addition, reducing the scale of objects on my photo backdrops make the scene look like it extends for miles. The photo below was taken looking across my Minterm Yard. The actual depth from the LARC coal hopper to the backdrop is only 6 inches. The roadway in the distance shows two N Scale vehicles only 5 inches behind. Also by reducing the scale of the distant pines on the backdrop to around an inch, one gets the impression of miles and miles of depth.



The photo below is of the County Route 24 bridge over the Red Cliff Eagle River Gorge. The bus on the bridge is full HO scale, with the bus on the distant road in N Scale...only about a foot behind. The trees on the distant hill are also reduced to help create the illusion. The bottom right photo shows these techniques as well as the use of reduced scale structures. The trains and structures at the bottom of the gorge are full HO scale. At the top of the cliff N scale buildings are used. In



the distance is a village of Z scale paper mockups. Photo 4 shows those N scale and Z scale areas and photo 5 illustrates the Z scale paper mockup technique. The reduced size trees and distant mountains make one feel that the scene goes forever when the actual depth is only 30 inches.

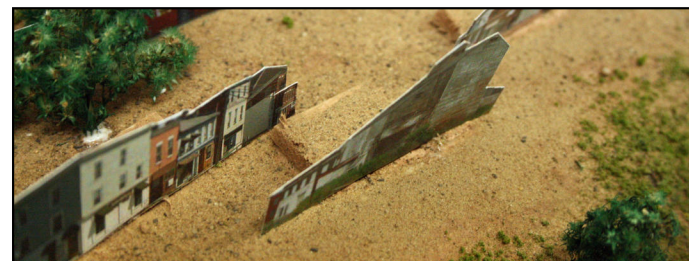


ALL PHOTOS BY AUTHOR UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.

The center left photo below also illustrates a combination of several of these techniques. Full HO structures and vehicles appear in the foreground right behind the fascia and walkway. The second level of structures are reduced in size. The back three much smaller structures actually are on the photo backdrop which is only 3 feet from the operator.

In the scene at the bottom left, the tramway starts with the bottom of the track in full HO scale. The rails of the tramway get closer together, and the ties are progressively reduced the further it goes upward. The tram house at the top is N scale, making the actual depth of 12" seem much greater.

All modelers are limited by space to some respect. Clever use of these techniques should help us to never have to make excuses for our limited space...even when one loses the battle of negotiated real estate! 🚂



NER COUPLER

The *NER Coupler* encourages your submission of articles and photos. There are guidelines on the NER website - [NER Coupler section](#).

ALSO **NEW**, in the same section of the website, there is a "publication schedule" of articles. If you have submitted material to the *Coupler*, you can always check this list to see when it will be published. If you don't see it, that should be a red flag to contact us.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

November 20th for January 2023 issue

February 20th for April issue

May 20th for July

CINCINNATI DIVISION 7 CAR PROJECTS



NMRA Cincinnati Division 7 is now offering for sale limited edition Accurail 2200 Series ACF 2-Bay Covered Hopper kits. Pricing is \$25 for a single car or \$70 for a 3-car set. Shipping (via USPS Priority) is \$9.20 for one car and \$16.25 for two to three cars. Please contact them at <https://www.cincy-div7.org/projects.html> for details on the model, purchasing, shipping and other car projects.

STOCK PENS!

Filling a Layout Corner

BY DAVE GUNN. PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR.

This project, filling in a corner on my layout, is all down to a friend and fellow modeler in our division, Jim Cripps, whose mother just happens to be an abattoir inspector. Who would have thought to build an abattoir? Why not! If I am going to build an abattoir, then I will need a meat packing plant, possibly a cannery, and even a tannery all close by. With so much business depending on livestock, I needed to supply lots of cattle, pigs, and sheep. It then became obvious I needed a sufficient quantity of stock pens to keep up with the whole process. This also meant I needed both rolling stock and road trucks to keep up with the demand. A rather large project began to unfold.

It is always a challenge to disguise an inward and or an outward corner wall of the layout and that was exactly what was necessary. The wall of the house came into the room some 2 feet deep and 9 foot long, and as the layout was designed at a maximum width

of 3 feet, this meant I had a section running along this protruding wall of only 1 foot wide. On this portion of the layout, I intended to have a paved two-lane road, a two-track main line, and a siding leading to this building complex. I also wanted to have buildings along this wall too. The only way to do this was to construct the building on pillars so the tracks yet to be designed could run under the building work. I also decided to maximise the space available for all these industries by building a curved abattoir rather than a square one thus using less ground area. This would also give another dimension to the layout. However, it also meant I would need a stock pen layout to match the curvature of the building.

My first step was to construct the abattoir, keeping in mind what will be needed for the rest of the project. I had a space available for the entire project of 3 feet wide by 9 feet long. I built the structure using my normal construction methods, 4 stories high

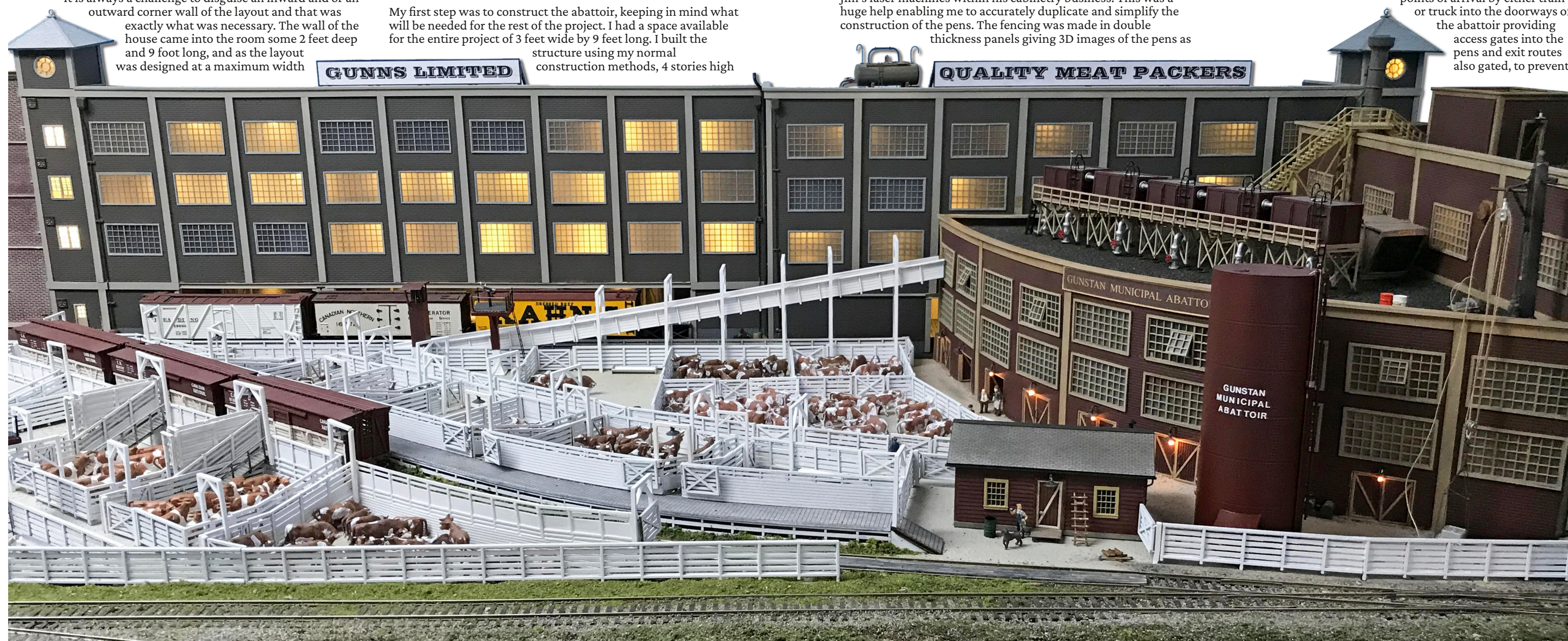
with the ground floor extending outward to give plenty of roof space for details. It also wrapped around the external wall corner mentioned above suspended over the tracks which had recently been laid in place. Below the suspended portion of the building at track level housed 8 roller shutter doorways to supply reefer cars of frozen carcasses, and the end of the upper section housed an enclosed ramp down to the "Express Meat Service" outlet to supply fresh or frozen meat supplies to passing passenger dining car traffic. I also left room at the back of the main building to fit the intended meat packing plant with a roadway between.

The next part of the project was to design the layout of the stock pen arrangement. Most of the actual pens and fencing pieces were made of 1mm thick marine plywood laser-cut on one of Jim's laser machines within his cabinetry business. This was a huge help enabling me to accurately duplicate and simplify the construction of the pens. The fencing was made in double thickness panels giving 3D images of the pens as

shown in the photos. I also had long sections of basic fencing I could cut to suit. Other parts not supplied by Jim, I scratch built myself.

I laid out the design on a 1:1 scale on the reverse side of a roll of wallpaper. I had a service track curving into the area of the pens to offload cattle so the pen arrangement had to follow the curvature of the abattoir and the curvature of the service track. It all adds to the fun! I concentrated initially on the area between the track and the abattoir with a platform and down ramps into the unloading pens. I then drew up the plans for the holding pens to suit the sections of the laser cut panels I had available.

I also had to take into consideration the flow of livestock from points of arrival by either train or truck into the doorways of the abattoir providing access gates into the pens and exit routes also gated, to prevent



Stock Pens! Continued...

the free wandering of the stock.

I constructed the adjacent mainline tracks on cork roadbed and built the base of the pens to the same level using two pieces of 1/4" hardboard, combined dimensions of 18" X 42". One edge was cut to suit the radius of the abattoir enabling the doors to be at ground level. The boards were screwed down through deep countersunk holes which were later filled with wood putty.

I coated this board with a layer of wet mix of cement and diluted white glue including 1-2 drops of liquid soap. This was brushed on and allowed to dry thoroughly. Once I had decided on the location of the pens, I cut out water drains in the concrete base for each of the pens approximately 1/2" square deep enough to give the impression of a drain to an underground tank system of collecting tanks. I also inset steel grill meshes flush with the top concrete surface. In some of the pens I put water pipes coming out of the ground with valves mounted on the ends of right-angle pipes. These were allowed to swivel with the intention of hosing down the pens after each usage. The whole area of the pens was designed to be cleaned on a constant basis. I included a small pump house structure adjacent to the tracks which also acted as a herder's cabin. The pens are maintained in a clean environment with a constant smell of



The base of the stock pens, made out of 1/4" hardboard.



An overhead spray nozzle for keeping cattle clean and cool.

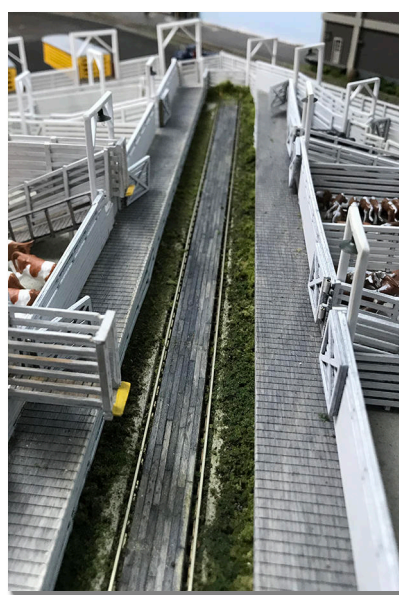
whitewash paint in the air. I designed and scratch-built a gas tank car for the removal of methane gas from the tanks and a small fleet of sludge tank cars for the removal of the future fertiliser destined for the local farmer's fields.

I also constructed 2 overhead water spray platforms with swivel heads, built from a photo of the real thing, which covers a large area of the pens making it easier to keep the area clean and at the same time be able to spray hogs to keep them cool and wet. Each pen has a water trough to supply the animals with fresh water.

The sections of fencing had extended legs to the vertical members on every 3rd one 1/8th inch longer so that holes could be drilled in the concrete base to suit. In corners, posts were fitted to give added strength. This was also used to support the gates. I constructed overhead support arches over each of the passageways and ramps, giving extra support to the fencing and helping to prevent the livestock from crashing through to freedom. Some of the arches had centre lights fitted to give night illumination. In order to construct these arms, I used 2 strips of "North-eastern" scale wood angle joined together to form a hollow square. This was the same for the top cross members, to allow for the bulb and wires to be hidden internally. The other vertical arm was made from solid wood of same size made longer than the hollow one to allow it to be sunk in the base. The fences going through these arches were cemented to the uprights. I used 1.5 volt bulbs and brass lamp shades made by "Miniaturics".

I then constructed the outer section of pens to the left of the stock car track, with the intention of having the facility of unloading double-deck stock cars carrying sheep and hogs. This meant I had to scratch build two ramps to discharge the upper levels and be able to slide back to allow access to the lower level of the same car.

You will also notice in this photo the track has been filled in with individual timbers and of course the inevitable weeds and grass.



The completed stock pen track.

After watching a presentation on stockyards by Douglas Harding of Iowa, I decided I needed a ramp up to the upper level of the abattoir for the slaughter of sheep as I have a selection of sheep ready for the pens it appeared to be a sensible thing to have. Where do I put it? The only place to site it is along the far side where the meat packing plant was being built. The problem then arose that this location was the main thoroughfare for the cattle to go to the abattoir from the pens. This meant I had to make it so the ramp could lift up clear of the lower level and yet come down for the sheep to go up. I designed and built the ramp with a hinged section that would be held up or down using a counterbalanced weight.

I came up with a design and location, removed part of one of the third-floor windows to the left of the abattoir replaced it with a door and built the hinged ramp up to this doorway. I then constructed a tower to house the counterbalance, and through trial and error, came up with an operational counterbalance mechanism.

I had 200+ cows to paint and like Tom Sawyer roped in a friend of mine to help with this. He did a great job too.



The Express Meat Service, where finished cuts of beef and pork are swiftly loaded aboard dining cars.

FRESH AIR, STALE BASEMENT

MAX BRISBEN ASSISTANT EDITOR, NER COUPLER

Online resources are a great place to find prototype photos from any time period, so I thought that for my column this time around, I would highlight the ones that I frequently use for freight cars and locomotives.

The best place for detail and roster style shots with the most comprehensive data is rrpicturearchives.net. There are several ways to search for photos using this website, but the one I use most frequently is to search by railroad. You can type in the reporting mark of the freight car or locomotive you're looking for and away you go! When using this website for freight cars, I find it helpful to view the results list organized by car number range. This way, you can easily narrow down the specific number series that you're looking for.

The runner-up to RR Picture Archives is rr-fallenflags.org. Everything on this site is organized by railroad and appears in alphabetical and numerical order, making it easy to scroll down to find what you're looking for. I use this site in combination with canadianfreightcargallery.ca for rolling stock reference photos. The Canadian Freight Railcar Gallery is organized by reporting marks and also has a really good Search Site Database function that can be helpful to narrow down results. This site also has a ton of freight car builders' photos.

Another solid resource, especially for modern freight cars is railcarphotos.com. The only downside to this website is that you have to create an account (it's free) and be signed in to use it. Searching by reporting marks is the way to go here. Instead of scrolling to find it in the very long list, here's a handy shortcut: On a Windows machine, press 'Ctrl' and 'F' simultaneously ('Command' and 'F' for Apple). A text input will pop up on the upper right side of your screen where you can type in the reporting mark you're looking for, then press Enter. Voila!



One of my recent weathering projects, a Rapido F30D flat car and an Athearn Fruehauf trailer.

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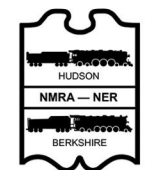
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It's always a minor victory when we find a hobby use for something we would usually throw away. Now that Covid appears to be on the run we're lucky enough to be able to go out for dinner occasionally, and often as not we are fortunate to be given more food than we can eat. This isn't a bad thing, but it seemed a waste when our extra food was packed in substantial and reusable plastic "doggie bags." After a few dinners out, we had a stack of containers and seemed a shame to just throw them away or even recycle them. We quickly found we could use part of our collection to hold small parts for workbench projects or to use a few for the also free natural scenery textures we can find outdoors around our neighborhood.

One rainy afternoon at a Sand Dune Central gathering we saw Ziggy (Sigfried Hertz) commandeer one of his containers for use as a weatherproof throttle holder. It was small and light enough to be easily carried, yet large enough to hold the handheld throttle plus a small flashlight and uncoupling tool he brought from home.



A covered take-out container is ready to go in any weather. In order for a layout owner have enough throttles for a large crew, it is common practice to have members bring their own throttles to an operating session.

Not long afterward Paul St. Martin showed us the wet palette he purchased at a nearby Michael's. Acrylic paint squeezed out onto a conventional palette usually dries in less than an hour, but the sealed moisture of a wet palette allows paint to remain usable for at least several days. Paul found the palette most useful for painting the small figures and castings that required small amounts of many different colored paints over several days. With this idea in mind, I reasoned I could fashion my own wet palette from a take-out container with some packing foam to serve as a sponge and a bit of parchment cooking paper to hold the paint. I found that my small blobs of paint would remain wet for as much as a week. The foam sponge was still damp well over a month later.



My home brew wet palette consists of several layers of foam packing material to serve as a water sponge, and a piece of parchment cooking paper to use as a paint palette. Several layers of foam were used to allow more sponge material and fill up as much air space inside the container as possible.

I am certain other uses can be found for these ubiquitous take out containers. Please send us a photo and a note if you come up with any.

All photos by author.

Repurposing ANOTHER Kitchen Tool

By Tom Wortmann

Have you ever found the need to replace a turnout? Frog or points are just worn out or gone bad? Or in my case, a non-DCC friendly 3-way that drove my operators crazy. I think we all have crossed that road at one time or another. Now, what if that turnout was controlled by a tortoise machine? Or any machine that uses a thin steel wire actuator to reach into the throw bar to move it. You really would rather not have to remount that tortoise machine with a new, longer actuator wire, would you? That can be a pain or if you're my age, the days of getting under the layout are limited or otherwise gone.

Now on a single throw turnout you can most likely get it lined up providing it is a perfect replacement once and set on that original pin and you have saved yourself a lot of work. But what if it is a three-way turnout with two controlling tortoises and two actuator pins? Now the task is greater because you would have to remount two tortoises. Not an easy task, is it? I recently replaced a Walther's 3-way code 83 non-DCC-friendly turnout with a new DCC-friendly version. It was an exact replacement thank goodness and fell right into place, all but the actuator pins that is.

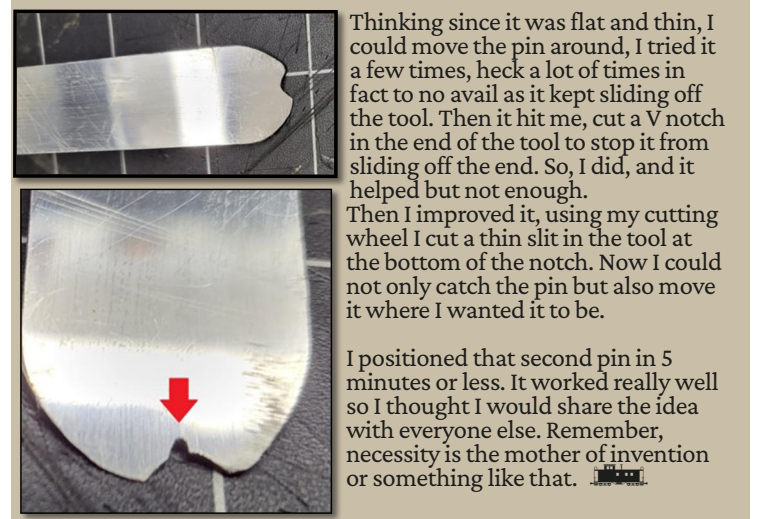
It seems you can get one on, but trying for the second can release the first pin. And you can spend hours trying this to no avail. I created a tool which allows you to position that actuator pin to exactly where you want it without too much frustration.

I spotted in the kitchen, a tool my wife has for spreading icing around a cake. It was thin, flexible, and light.



I went out and bought one of my own rather than feel the wrath of using my wife's.

I first used it for spreading white glue under my track when I replaced a section. Yes, I glue my tracks down with regular white glue. This tool really helps and for me, it works well. But now I need to get that second pin lined up with the second throw bar.



Thinking since it was flat and thin, I could move the pin around, I tried it a few times, heck a lot of times in fact to no avail as it kept sliding off the tool. Then it hit me, cut a V notch in the end of the tool to stop it from sliding off the end. So, I did, and it helped but not enough. Then I improved it, using my cutting wheel I cut a thin slit in the tool at the bottom of the notch. Now I could not only catch the pin but also move it where I wanted it to be.

I positioned that second pin in 5 minutes or less. It worked really well so I thought I would share the idea with everyone else. Remember, necessity is the mother of invention or something like that.

WORKIN' ON THE RAILROAD

JEFF HANKE



sion the Westvaco Company had a small pulpwood yard in Berkeley Springs, WV. Berkeley Springs is connected to the rail system through a spur heading south from Hancock, WV. Both towns are on my layout, so modeling the pulpwood yard was a must.

THE INDUSTRY

Pulpwood should not be confused with other wood-related loads. Pulpwood is primarily used in the making of paper. Pulpwood is cut from Aspen, Birch, Maple, Pine, Spruce, and others. It comes from four types of trees, open-grown trees, dead or diseased trees, tops cut from trees, and small trees too small for lumber use. Those multiple sources tend to make real pulpwood loads have a large variation in diameter and color of the logs, however, none are so big that a person couldn't pick one up. The ideal diameter is five to nine inches, but I have seen flat cars that look to have ones both smaller and larger than that range.

Pulpwood cars come in three main types. There are ones where the logs are loaded perpendicular to the rails in two rows, as I am modeling here. Basically, each log is half the width of the car. But there are also ones that load longer logs that are perpendicular to the rails but are the full width of the car. Finally, for the largest logs, some pulpwood runs on cars that have the logs running parallel to the rails and kept in place with large vertical beams. All are available in HO scale.

Pulpwood is also not the same as woodchips. Woodchips are shipped in hoppers and pulpwood on specialized flat cars. Pulpwood is also not finished lumber and is never protected from the elements like wrapped plywood typically is. Pulpwood does not run on center beam flat cars the way plywood does.

THE YARD

A pulpwood yard does not have to be located at the site where the trees are cut down. This was the case in Berkeley Springs, which is located practically downtown. Large trucks brought in the pulpwood cut from the surrounding towns, to be transferred to rail cars in the yard. So modeling the industry is fairly easy, you just need an open lot of gravel, some stacks of logs waiting to be loaded, a few log trucks, a forklift or grapple, and some pulpwood cars.

what the area looked like just after the Chessie Era search YouTube for "CSX Hancock Switcher at the Berkeley Springs Station 1990". It will give you see a few shots of the pulpwood yard. The yard and all the track south of the sand plant was removed shortly after this video was made.

THE WOOD

The example pulpwood load I did here is for an Atlas 40' Western Maryland pulpwood flat car. Note that this is not a bulkhead flat, which comes with a flat floor. Pulpwood flats have a "V" shaped floor to keep the pulpwood rows leaning against each other.

The twigs I use for this project are from a small tree that died in my front yard several years ago. It had lots of branches on it of the right size. In HO scale 5 to 9 inch diameters are approximately 1/16 to 1/8

wide. The single small tree gave me more twigs than I will ever use.

Start the process by cutting the logs to length. I use the Chopper from North West Short Line to make fast work of this. Each log is 5/8 inches long. A load will take about 300 logs, so this part does take a while to complete. I keep all the left over pieces for the wood pile project that I'll outline at the end.

Next wrap the flat car in a folded-over two-ply piece of aluminum foil. I start by laying the foil on the floor and carefully fold it up the bulkheads of the car. I then wrap the excess around the tops of the bulkheads and down the sides of the car. If the foil tears as you bend it, start over. Any hole in the foil will allow glue to stick



to the car.

The next step is the most gratifying. Start laying the logs on the car. I begin with large logs on the bottom and superglue the first five or six together in a "V" across the car. I then build off that base with logs heading in each direction and up. For all successive logs, I use Elmers Wood Glue. Don't apply too much as it



will run out the sides of the car. It doesn't take much to make them stick. Work slowly, and let the glue set up. Doing a load completely in one sitting is next to impossible. I usually do a little at a time over three or four hours. That way the glue gets good and tacky and won't shift as you build.

Let the glue dry for about six to eight hours and then remove the load from the car. At this point peel away the foil. The glue on the bottom of the load should be wet but not runny. Simply turn the load upside down and let it dry overnight. Don't be surprised if the load shrinks some as the glue dries. That is normal and makes the loads easy to put in and take off the flat car. The final step, after a few days of drying, is to spray the load on all sides with Testors Dullcoat, sealing the wood so that no bugs will take up residence in your load.

Repeat this process for however many loads you need for your fleet. You can also do partial loads to depict the car currently being worked on. A partially loaded car is seen in the YouTube video.

THE PILE

Other than the pulpwood on the flat cars, the yard has a few piles of logs waiting to be loaded. I had lots of short left-over pieces and plenty of log-sized pieces to make a few piles of logs. Most piles



appeared to be two rows deep, but I have seen a photo of a small pile of logs made up of just one single row.

To use the small left-over pieces, I made a false back for my wood pile from a square dowel bought at a hardware store. The piles I saw were about the size in both length and height of a 50' flat car load. I glued two of the dowel pieces for the internal structure of the pile, they are 4 and 5 inches long. If I had it to do over again, I would have sanded the ends to a smooth 45-degree slope. Instead, I left them square cut at the ends and had to fill the area with many logs to get a believable sloped end.

I superglued the bottom row of the small left-over pieces, and once dry added the rest with wood glue. When I got up to the top of the dowel, I added full-length logs to cover the top. Finally, I



added the full-length logs on the end to make the ends of the pile slope at about a 45-degree angle. See photos for more detail.

Add a few piles of different sized and your pulpwood yard will look very prototypical. The tops of the piles aren't normally perfectly straight either so put the logs in with some variety in height.

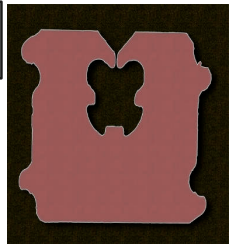
Now I just need to finish the Walthers pulp wood truck to complete the necessary elements of the Berkeley Springs pulpwood yard.

I look forward to sharing more on the new East End going forward, but until then...keep on workin'.

ALL PHOTOS BY AUTHOR UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.

"Occlupanid"

BY JAMES G. KERKAM



Model railroaders are a frugal and crafty group. We will take the most basic and inexpensive items and turn them into tools to build our model railroads. An occlupanid is an excellent example.

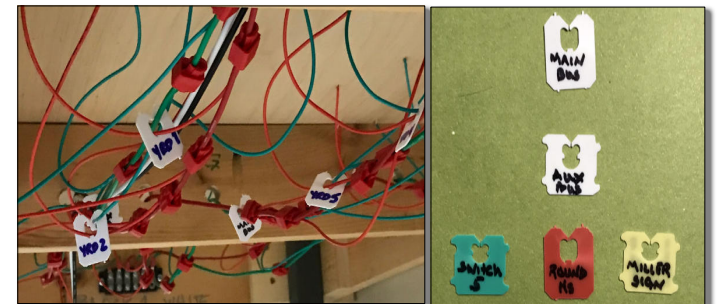
I learned about this object many years ago when I listened to an old quiz show on National Public Radio. The program was called "Says You!" The show featured two teams of three panelists and the host Richard Sher, who would ask word-related questions to the panelists. The questions might be about spelling, usage, definitions, or derivations. And while this might seem like a fifth-grade vocabulary exercise, the words were little known and very challenging. The panelists would struggle to try to figure out their answers, and the results were very humorous and fun for the listeners.

The word "occlupanid" was once featured and stumped both teams. I remember one panelist's guess was that the word had something to do with sight or glasses because of the first syllables being "occlu -." But that was very wrong! So, what is an "occlupanid?" An "occlupanid" is a clip for a plastic bag and is usually found on bread bags. Yes, it's that weird, square clip with a hole in the center and a slit opening at the top.

So, why is this little devise so important to us frugal and crafty model railroaders? And, where does it go on your model railroad? Descend below the magic of the miniature world and there you will find the occlupanid in its glory. Under the layout is a sea of wires going every which way, and all of them can be marked with a hanging occlupanid. They can mark your main power bus, auxiliary power bus, DCC ports, leads to switch machines, track feeder wires, and wires going to special features. Virtually every wire under your layout needs an occlupanid to identify its location and use. Because of their split top and two hooks, they will not fall off when you brush them with your head or shoulder as you make repairs or install additional wiring. An occlupanid is easy to mark with a Sharpie for permanent lettering and comes in various colors, which can also help identify your wiring. You may use a special color to mark the leads for a Miller animated sign or other special device. Your choices of how to use them to mark your wiring is endless.

I know you will be tempted to revert back to saying "bread bag clip" but don't. The word is "occlupanid." So, be sure to save them from your bread bags! If you decide to skip all the extra carbs, occlupanids can be purchased by the thousands from online suppliers. But as you might guess, don't search for them using "occlupanid;" look for "bread bag clip."

At the conclusion of "Says You!" Richard Sher would ask his son to give "the skinny." The skinny was the show credits. So, from Wikipedia, here is the skinny on "occlupanid." The bread bag clip was invented by Floyd G. Paxton in the early 1950s. Kwik Lok Corp is the largest manufacturer of the closure device. In 1994 John Daniel coined the word "occlupanid" for his parody website. The word combines the Latin occlu- (to close) and -pan (bread). J



▲ Occlupanids under Paul St. Martin's Atlantic & White Mountain Rwy.



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