

# TRACTIVE EFFORT



An O-Gauge Forum Publication

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Cover photo by:  
Don McCuaig

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Various	Sparky O's Workbench
Andy De La Rosa	The Perils of Passenger Cars
George Lazar	Whistle Stop Review
Don McCuaig	Writer at Large: "Ghost Town"
Adam Rypinski	Confessions of a Model Train Nerd
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# Editor's Comments

By Paula R. Webb

Welcome again to the wonderful world of model trains and to our third edition of *Tractive Effort*, an O Gauge Forum publication. The warm days of summer are upon us and life has begun to return to normal once again. Summer is for backyard barbecues and easy living. And with Covid restrictions reduced, train shows and club meetings are again taking place.

In this issue, we will explore many different areas that the model railroad hobby encompasses. This edition has grown with additional columnists and writers, colorful and interesting photos, and our first product and layout reviews.

This month, we have two new columnists.. Don McCuaig, our new columnist from Hawaii, has a delightful column entitled Writer at Large: "Ghost Town" and some interesting photos of his layout, one of which appears on the cover. He describes how his trip to Rhyolite, Nevada and Death Valley National Park were the inspiration behind the layout.

George Lazar embarks on a new column entitled, Whistle Stop Reviews. He told us that he will specialize in older equipment and promptly begins by looking at two new Lionel Legacy Ten Wheelers, which includes the Reading and Northern and Santa Fe Black Bonnet. He includes plenty of photos with his review.

David Smith reviews his layout in his article entitled Cedar Rails. This is an interesting read as he describes the challenges and satisfaction of having a growing layout. Of course, the way that Dave did it is a bit unusual and the train rooms have been a fun journey that continues. This is a layout that we would like to visit.

John Henninges asks in his column, "Are You a Collector, or an Operator?" Looking at Mark Sarver's Plug & Play Modular Layout Adventures, makes one think about the warm days of summer. He speaks about his outdoor layout and love for nature.

If you are interested in techniques that will improve your layout, check out Charlie Stoia's article, Creating More Realistic Scenery, explaining how to use vintage accessories on your layout or Andy De La Rosa's Unique, Custom, and One-of-a-kind, Compliments of Andy O as his column continues its series with Perilous Passenger Projects-Part 2.

I won't divulge every topic, but we didn't forget OGF happenings. There is a special tribute to our OGF 2021 Model Car Contest. And we included Santa's historic Polar Express victory as best train of 2021.

Thank you to all of you who have made *Tractive Effort* a success. Surprisingly, demand for the last edition resulted in a limited number of print copies being distributed by request. O Gauge Forum has a group of very talented people and it has been a pleasure reading and editing their work. Again, thanks to our publisher Trey Conway and his staff... Thanks for all of your tremendous assistance.

Quarterly future editions are planned with a September, December, March, June, schedule. *Tractive Effort* and the staff welcome suggestions, photos, additional articles, and columns. Content is generally due by the first day of the month of publication and most contributors get it in early (thank you). You can contact me at [oldhokie70@charter.net](mailto:oldhokie70@charter.net).

Paula R. Webb  
Editor-in-Chief



## About Paula

Paula was born in Suffolk, Virginia and is a Latin teacher. She is married to Bill Webb and they have three children, four grandchildren, and Pepe', a Standard Poodle who can almost talk and who enjoys watching Emile's Epic Christmas Village videos. She has four brothers and a sister. One Christmas the boys received a Lionel train. Paula was five and can remember sitting on the floor and running it for hours. Hobbies include needlepoint, reading, travel, and occasionally fishing offshore with Bill.

# Publisher's Comments

By Trey Conway

Dear Reader,

The weather is heating up, and COVID (thankfully) seems to be fading as fast as snow in Southtown. *Tractive Effort* is also heating up this Summer with exclusive content that you just can't find anywhere else, thanks to our valuable member contributors. In fact, this issue is the biggest issue yet, and touches on many aspects of our hobby, along with an exclusive interview with Howard Hitchcock, Chief Executive Officer at Lionel, LLC. We at *Tractive Effort* thank Mr. Hitchcock for taking time to speak with us for well over an hour about the inner workings of Lionel and how they produce some of the world's most innovative, feature-rich trains.

Personally, I'm very proud of this issue because it's our largest issue to date. We have received contributions from around the globe to share with O gauge train enthusiasts just like you.

And even though many of you will turn your attention to outdoor activities, vacations, yard work, and family functions this time of year, make a little time for our hobby. Try a new technique, modify that building, or just polish those rails.

I usually take (read make) time to do maintenance on my engines and passenger cars. I can't exactly put my finger on WHY, but with the longer days comes more opportunities to actually spend a focused amount of time with each item. Now, this may be an illusion of my own making, but I always seem too busy in the Fall to give each item the attention it deserves. So take a little time this Summer to show your engines and rolling stock some love. Clean the wheels, oil the axles, grease the gears, and replace parts as needed. Take your time. Give each a little test lap or two around the layout. Oh, and make yourself a note and place it in the box detailing your work. That way the next time you use it, you can be assured all is well and ready to roll.

Fall will be here before you know it, and the big train shows will be back. And if you see us there, say hello and tell us about YOUR trains. We'd love to hear about them!

*Trey*

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## About Trey Conway

Trey is from Knoxville, TN where he owns a full service advertising and marketing firm. He has been an ASE Certified Master Tech since 1986, and is an avid scale aircraft and sci-fi modeler. Trey rediscovered his interest in model trains in 2007, and has built a large collection which runs on a unique layout built into his home. Trey has four children, four grandchildren, and is married to Jennifer, who is a professional educator and band director. According to legend, she is also the "Wifiest, wife that ever wifed".

# Crowning a Champion – 2021

By Paula R. Webb, Editor-in-Chief

As the Spring Issue of *Tractive Effort* was going to press, the annual contest to determine the Champion Train for the Greatest O-Gauge Locomotive on Rails was taking place. This magazine set a precedent by endorsing the eventual winner and, along with Santa, asked the members to, “Please cast your vote for the Polar Express and remember to BELIEVE.”

And then a question was asked. “Can you still hear the bell?”

HO!, HO!, HO! Did you ever answer that question.

Taking us back to February, Chairman Emile (the bigcrabcake) had gotten things started early with an enlarged format that split the country six ways and had appointed a Chairman for each area. Some were quiet, others, not at all. The prize has to go to Pacific Conference Chairman Brian (Traindiesel) who went to far as to prepare a “2021 OGF Train Tournament Pacific Conference Program and Yearbook that was released February 6, just in time to make friends and influence people.

Not everyone was sold however. Josef answered for the South. “So the South will sit back, quietly, and letting the other conferences duel it out with whatever they can come up with to win. But we all know, who the real winners are.”

Things quieted down a bit for a week and then, on February 12, the Lionel 700E NYC Hudson and the Lionel Polar Express Berkshire 1225 tied 12 – 12. Santa’s magic prevailed as the final count by the dice was 55 – 48 Polar Express in 9 overtimes.

The next day, February 13, the same ugly problem raised its head. The dreaded dice came into play again. Rocky Mountaineer tied with MTH Union

Pacific Big Boy 11-11. Dice said Rocky Mountaineer 22 – 14.

On February 14, the Lionel Vision Line New York Central Niagara wiped out the N&W Jawn Henry 16 to 8. The dreaded dice played no part, so it looked as if the Challenger was for real.

Again the dice came out as the PRR S01 Duplex led with 14 votes in regulation to the MTH Hiawatha Milwaukee Road 12. Dice said S-1 28, Hiawatha 22.

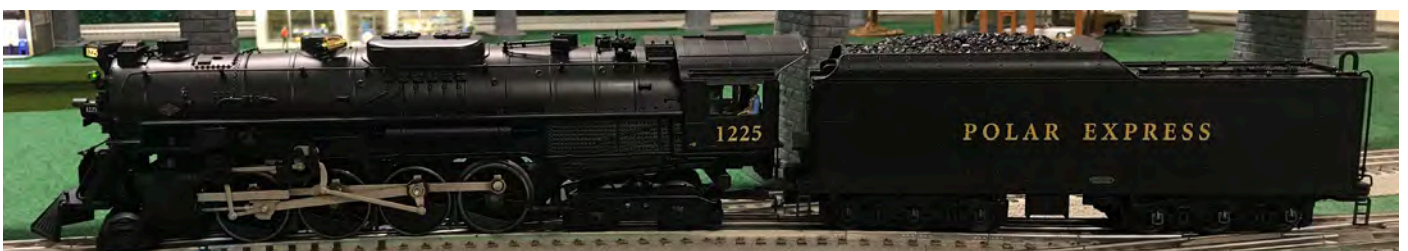


And so it continued, lots of close races, lots of questionable throws of the dice, mostly quiet by the chairman. But some were not quiet in their noise about Santa. They booed him almost as loudly as the crowd at the Philadelphia stadium season ticket holders. The train contest became more tense than anyone had ever imagined.

In the end, it was an all Lionel Berkshire final.

On March 21 the members voted: Polar Express 28, 765 Berkshire 11.

In the end, people sided with Santa. The Lionel Polar Express is one of America’s most beloved trains and has taken its rightful place as the 2021 Champion Train. All of you can look forward to a wonderful Christmas this year. That is, unless you voted for the 765... then you get to stoke coal. 🇺🇸





# Confessions of a Model Train Nerd

## "An Offer You Can't Refuse"

By Adam Rypinski

Hello friends. Today is your lucky day!

That's right, I have an offer that you simply cannot refuse! What if I told you that you could add almost any accessory (even some small buildings) to your layout for less than \$1? Yes, for less than a cup of coffee, you can add a new detail to spice up your miniature model train world.

But that's not all; you could have a kit, ready for your magic hands to assemble and decorate, all within minutes or hours! No, I am not talking about a shiny new rapid delivery service sending you the latest in high-tech balsa wood models.

By about now, I am sure you are thinking, "Adam, you're talking crazy!" much like my wife and kids do, but no, the truth is that I am absolutely nuts.

Need a tree? BAM! You have a tree.

Building missing a sign? Bing, Bang, Boom, less than an hour you have a sign.

Miniature grandma need a chair to sit on? No worries, make one appear almost out of thin air.

Replacing the bell on your childhood steamer? It's all good, problem solved with a few clicks.



Need a trash can for your trolley platform? Click, click, click and, presto, there you have it.

What is this black magic? SHHH! Don't tell anyone, but the secret sauce is 3-Dimensional (3D) Printing. If you are handy with a mouse (not the cheese loving kind), have some creative chops, are unafraid to learn how to use some basic Computer Aided Design (CAD)

Software (not as scary as it sounds), willing to get your hands dirty (we are model train people, of course we are), and able to invest about \$500 in a 3D Printer (far less than the latest premium O-Gauge engine), your options will become truly endless.



Gather around children, for it is story time. Once upon a time there was a layout. It was modest at only 8 feet by 4 feet in footprint. Yet, what it lacked in stature, this fledgling model train layout more than made up for in big dreams and aspirations. It wanted to be fun, exciting and attract all of the kids to come and play with its trains and neat accessories.

There was however, one major problem. The layout had a couple of loops of track, a few trains, but no accessories. The trains had nowhere to go, nowhere to come from, and no clear purpose.

At first, the kids came, but watching trains go round and round got boring fast. So, the layout decided to take a bold stand and adorn itself from head to toe with accessories.

But how to acquire such decorative details with its minimal budget?

# An Offer You Can't Refuse



The answer, he decided, was to purchase select items and combine that with 3D printing to add more.

As a self-proclaimed model train nerd, I (as does everyone) claim creative license to model the way I want and combine my love of technology with O-Gauge. From

a water tower, multiple buildings, people, stations, signs, trees, horses, and even some train cars, indeed about half of all my accessories are scratch made with a little bit of magic from CAD and a 3D Printer.

And the \$1 cost is not an exaggeration! A roll of filament (the roll of plastic line that 3D printers use) runs about \$25 and lasts through several prints large and small. Smaller items cost only pennies to print and do so in a few minutes.

I can't imagine what my layout (or my bank account)

would look like without this wonderful hobby within a hobby. The 3D Printing community is thriving and many of the designs can be used at no cost (you just need to give credit) under what is called Creative Commons License. I've even gotten better at designing my own accessories (more on that in a future column).

The only thing that stops me from printing something new every weekend is my own creativity, which rarely dries up. Yes, I am completely nuts, nuts about combining model trains and 3D Printing!

Want to learn more about 3D Printing? Check out the "3D Printing for Modelers" series (4 tutorials in total) on the O-Gauge Forum University at <https://o-gaugeforum.com/board/23/ogf-university>.

To all of my fellow Model Train Nerds on the O-Gauge Forum, Keep creating and show us what you made!

Check back quarterly for stories of how a nerd is using technology to enhance his model train fun. Over the coming issues I will cover various topics including 3D printing, software, do-it-yourself command control options and more. 🇺🇸



## About Adam Rypinski

When not hiding in the train room playing with his choochoos, Adam can either be found tinkering with other hobbies (guitars, 3D printing, electronics, reading, or napping) or in his office working for a high-tech company in the area of technical services. He loves helping people, is endlessly curious, and loves being creative. Adam has a beautiful wife of more than 23 years, two wonderful daughters, and two perpetual puppy pals.



# The Importance of Figures

An Article by Brian Vaill

When Department 56 introduced their Dickens Village in 1984, I started to become significantly involved in setting up Christmas displays. Along with the buildings, they also introduced figures, trees, and other accessories. This added greatly to completing more realistic scenes and I made great use of them.

Some ten years later, I again started to build train layouts and the accessories that were used for my Christmas displays became important additions for the train layouts. The D56 figure accessories are oversized compared to their buildings, but, despite that, they still look good. I have continued to use them including on our latest layout.

At my first York Train Meet, I discovered Artista and Metal Figures. Both offered a wide range of figurine accessories scaled to O-Gauge and I immediately saw the potential of these figures for the layout. I remember coming home with a big bag full of them. There were railroad workers, passengers and drivers for vehicles, construction workers, businesspeople, male & female figures, children, and so much more.

Upon my return home, it did not take long for me to get these new additions installed on the layout. What was surprising however was how quickly they were used up without making much of a dent in what was really needed to make the scenes more active in appearance. Triple the number that came home with me could have easily been used ... and probably more.

Twice a year I went back to the York Meet, and each time I would come home with more figures for the layout. Somehow, there were never enough. We still buy figures regularly as Elizabeth and I seem to find a new purpose for them all the time.

We are fortunate that we have two excellent sources for O-Gauge figures. The quality is good in both instances, but the Metal Figures.Net accessories appear to be over \$2 less per item on average. Because of the price difference, I now mostly use them.



Metal Figures

One of the biggest challenges we faced for figures was for our Polar Express/North Pole layout. Our goal was to replicate the scene from the Center of the North Pole and that meant elf figures, a lot of elf figures. You may not understand what “a lot” means.

A typical O-Gauge search for “elf figures” resulted in zippo/nada/nil; there were no hits. Since then, Lionel and another firm have introduced a very limited number of elf figures, but for our purposes, even if they were available when we needed them, they would not have worked.

Expanding my search outside of O-Gauge, I found an educational supplier who had an elf product that would work for us. It took some arm twisting as the supplier sold directly to a unique market, but their President finally agreed to sell us their product after seeing photos of how we would use their elf product and, in a way, it would be educational for all who saw our layout. It took some custom painting on Elizabeth's part as there are over 700 of these figures, but they certainly worked well for us.



North Pole Elves



# The Importance of Figures

The need for figures on our layout is never ending and that is a good thing. Every time I look at an improvement, it usually involves the need for more figures. We have two examples that I am currently working on. The first one is Santa in his beautiful new convertible dropping off elves at the Grand Central Terminal. I am using the Lionel 5-pack of elves for this scene.

The other project is a ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Woolworth Building. In this case, about fourteen figures will be used to create a crowd scene.

Most of you probably already use figures to enhance your layouts, so hopefully this article will encourage you to find out if you can improve your scenes by adding more. 🇺🇸



Grand Central Terminal



People Make the Street Scene



Brooklin Models Are Beautiful



CGT Strike Up the Band



Brooklin Models Are Beautiful BUT  
Note How People Make the Scene



## About Brian Vaill

Brian is a retired Vice President of Sales for an international consulting firm. He has been an active member of the O-Gauge community since he was 8 years old. His layouts have been featured in several national magazines and a featured video. He and his wife Elizabeth continue to be very active participants in our hobby.



# The Brooklin Corner

## "My Love For Woodies"

A Guest Column by Brian Vaill

My love of Woodies goes back to the time that I was a young man with a family and the station wagon was the best choice of vehicle for our needs. In the 70's, I had three Chrysler Town and Country Station Wagons, and all had the Woodie effect on the side panels.

Then, in 1966, when building a new layout, there was a need for 1:43 scale vehicles. I was drawn to Woody models. Something about them was special for me. As the years passed with new layouts and new vehicles to fill the city streets, I subconsciously continued to add more Woodies.

Fast forward to last year when we made a concerted effort to fill our Christmas in the City streets with a better grade of quality models. I had collected a few Brooklin models over the years and, looking at them more closely, it was obvious that their white metal construction and details were far superior to die cast models.

Woodies, of course, remained an area of concentration. It was amazing to see just how many Woody Models Brooklin had made over the years. Maybe I won't go so far as to call my interest an obsession, but I was "strongly" drawn to add more Woody models to our layout.

First on my list was a 1947 Chrysler Town and Country Woody that I strongly believe is one of the best if not the best model ever done in 1:43 scale. The wood roof rack goes beyond anything else produced in a Woody model. After a search of a few weeks, I was able to finally get this model for our layout. Seeing it in person certainly enforced my rating for it.



1947 Chrysler Town and Country

Next up was a 1949 DeSoto Topley Taxicab. It is a limited-edition model done for the Canadian Toy Collectors Association. This model is a beautiful Woody with a roof rack filled with luggage. But this was just the beginning of my quest for more Woodies. I added a 1947 Ford V8 next that was custom painted to my favorite color, yellow.



1948 Packard 4 Door Woody

Brooklin produced many more Woodies, a 1948 Buick Roadmaster, 1948 Chevrolet Fleetline Aero, several Packard versions, two versions of the 1946 Mercury Sportsman, and a gorgeous 1951 Buick Roadmaster.



1951 Buick Roadmaster Woody

To date, I have 14 Woody models on the layout and continually look for more. It is nice to have a niche part of the hobby within a hobby, so to speak. 🇺🇸



1948 Chevrolet Fleetline Aero Woody and  
1947 Wesley Slumber Coach



# Tales From the Track Side

## "Adding A Feature to An MTH Watchman Shanty"

by Bruce Urbanski

This is the story of a potential problem that turned out to be a nice additional feature.

Let's start with this. The MTH Watchman Shanty, often known as the Automatic Gateman. It is a very nice track side accessory that is scaled well and operates slowly. In other words, the watchman does not come jumping out of his shanty when activated. In fact, he walks forward and then turns sideways at the end of his travel. You might think that he had walked a mile instead of five inches.



The next step is wiring the accessory. Comprehensive instructions are available from MTH on a PDF

Well, everything looks simple enough but I didn't want to use the MTH control, instead I wanted it to operate in conjunction with my crossing gates. So let's look at the wiring:

- A. Powers the shanty light
- B. When powered, the man comes out
- C. When powered, the man returns
- D. Common

Gee, even I can do this.

Well, so much for that. I then realized that I only had 3 wires pulled to this area. A common wire "D" and a relay ( SPDT ) to toggle between B and C.

What to do? I guess I can live without the light.

But then again, maybe if I power the A terminal from the B terminal with a short jumper it might work. What do I have to lose?

Surprise, surprise! It not only worked but it was a nice feature. As the train approaches the gate, the



watchman is in the shanty with the lights out. "He's probably on his phone reading forum messages."

As the gates come down the watchman is

activated. The light comes on, then the watchman comes out of the shanty. It takes a second or two for the gears inside to get going, so it looks like he turns the light on and then comes out.

After the train passes, the gates raise, the light goes out, and the watchman returns to the forum. This adds a little light animation to the animation.

If you have one of these, try this quick little modification. I hope you'll enjoy it as much as I did. 🇺🇸



### About Bruce Urbanski

Bruce Urbanski is a long time train enthusiast who, like many, was given his first train by his Dad. He has been a HVAC technician for 42 years and he is due to retire July 1, 2021. He is proud to have two children, four grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

In December, Bruce helps to put on a train display known as Glancy's Trains at Greenfield Village, the outside portion of the Henry Ford Museum. An estimated 100,000 people visit the Village, 20,000 of whom visit the trains.

# Creating More Realistic Scenery

## "How to Give Vintage Accessories a New Life On Your Hi-Rail Layout"

by Charlie Stoia

Like many of us I started in the hobby with a postwar set handed down to me from my father. I have many memories of creating loops of track on the basement floor and running my Fathers Lionel 2056 baby Hudson.

Flash forward to adulthood and my pursuit in creation of a Hi-Rail layout to enjoy my collection of modern Lionel, MTH, and Atlas. With highest appreciation of the best ultra-realistic Hi-Rail and 3RS layouts, I've always found a persistent charm for certain vintage pieces.

Much of my appreciation for Lionel, Marx, and Flyer, come from many years of roaming the halls at train shows including York. Somewhere in those travels, it occurred to me that some of the very well-built vintage accessories could, given some attention, look quite convincing on a Hi-Rail layout.



Left-Marx 436 Searchlight Tower Right-Marx 416 Floodlight Tower

One of my favorite vintage pieces is the Marx 416 Floodlight Tower. This stout light tower is well constructed and has a very attractive steel girder design that lends itself nicely to any layout. Other Marx accessories like the #436 share this same round girder design.

To give these old gems the needed attention to blend into my Hi-Rail layout, I started with removal of the binding posts on the base of the accessory.

Next, it's off to the spray booth to unify and tone down the shine on the accessory. I opted to paint the entire tower flat black except for the inside of the bulb shrouds.

Once the paint dried, I turned my attention to wiring. In order to give the most realistic appearance, I did not plan to replace the binding posts and opted for wiring the tower beneath the base. In order to do that, you need to run a hot wire that ties the two wires from the tower together and a common to the steel base of the accessory. I soldered and insulated the hot wire with shrink tubing. The common is soldered directly to the underside of the steel base.



Binding posts removed from tower base.



Shrouds taped off with blue painters' tape in preparation of flat black paint.



You can see the common wire is the green wire soldered to the underside of the base. Scuff off the paint to allow the solder to adhere.



# Creating More Realistic Scenery

With wiring complete, it was time to “plant” the tower on my layout. By hiding the base completely, the tower has the appearance of something you might actually find in a railyard or anywhere such a tower was used. I used cork as an underlayment for my roundhouse whisker tracks. Removing some cork to obscure the tower base was easy enough.



Base recessed into cork underlayment.

With the tower placed and wires run through my table, it was time to finish the scenery. I used a mixture of Scenic Express #16 dark grey ballast in the roundhouse/engine service area on my layout. You can see how realistic the tower appears once the base is integrated into the scenery.

Knowing that I was able to so convincingly integrate these vintage pieces into my layout has been rewarding. I’ve even had a couple of people ask me when they came from watching the layout if they were something available on the market that you could buy today.



Jim pictured with a Marx 416

The idea to try this came to me many years ago walking the halls at York and learning about vintage trains and accessories with my friend Jim. Jim helped me gather several Marx 416 towers over a period of years for my project. In a very real sense, he is just as much part of this project as I am. 🇺🇸



Tower placed and surrounding area ballasted.

## About Charlie Stoia



Charlie Stoia is a long time train enthusiast and Hi-Rail modeler. A history buff at heart, much of the inspiration for his modeling comes from travels in his home state of Michigan. With a specific interest in the railroads of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the modeling focus is the iron ore and copper mining tradition of the area. As a founding member of the Detroit 3 Railers, Charlie enjoys sharing the hobby with his fellow club members and anyone with his shared passion for railroads.

## Writer At Large "Ghost Town"

by Don McCuaig

My wife Vicky and I moved to Maui, Hawaii a little over nine years ago. Luckily we bought a house with a four car garage. That equals a house with plenty of room for a good sized layout. Living on a island in the middle of the ocean and having no hobby shops can be a challenge. Thank goodness for folks like Nicholas Smith Trains.

A little history of my layouts first. Like most of you I started building layouts with post war Lionel trains. I didn't model any one railroad but, anything that was available, I ran. Three layouts ago, I started moving to scale high rail when I decided that the Milwaukee Road would be my railroad.

The push was powered by Mike's Train House scale engines and cars. I loved working overhead live wire and big electrics. It was a slow change over to scale at first but there was no going back when MTH brought out the Milwaukee Bi-polers, GE box cabs, and Little Joes. I made my own poles and arms; for wire I used Marklin HO gauge overhead wire. More about that in another article.



Milwaukee Road GE Box Cabs

When I started the new layout, I wanted something different and something I hadn't seen on an O scale layout before...  
A ghost town!

What inspired me were two things. First was a visit to Rhyolite, Nevada about twelve years ago. Vicky and I were on a road trip to Death Valley

National Park when we decided to make a detour to an old ghost town we heard about called Rhyolite.

In 1907 it had a population of about seven thousand people and included three railroads, banks, newspapers, and electric lights. It's population now is zero. Rhyolite was a fascinating place to visit. The

large train station, bank, and a number of other buildings, are still there.

My other inspiration was a vintage Thomas Yorke hotel kit that I had just finished. They are hard to find and not cheap, but are some of the finest building kits around. It didn't look right in my 1950s town but it would look just right in a ghost town. I could weather it more to give it that run down look. But what would I do about the rest of the town?

Then I remembered my then new Greyhound Bus depot that I built from a Downtown Deco kit. While at my work bench, I accidentally knocked it off the table and it broke into a hundred pieces. Downtown Deco makes all their kits with Hydrocal. It's a strong type of plaster but shatters when dropped on a hard surface.

They must drop parts every so often or have parts with blemishes that they can't sell. I called Randy, the owner of the company, and asked my silly question. He said yes they do drop parts and they do shatter. He also told me they have some parts that are sub-standard and they have to dump them. Then I asked him if he would sell those parts. There was a long pause on the other end of the line.

Quickly I explained why I wanted them. Within two weeks, two big boxes arrived at my door. A gold mine of broken parts.

I already had the street and layout for my ghost town but only the one hotel so I decided that, as ratty as it was, it would still be open for the few tourists that visited. I installed a few lights inside and out to give it a lived in look.

Next I laid out the broken parts from Downtown Deco, added pipes and floor frames, weathered and rusted them, and even burned some parts.





Thomas Yorke Hotel kit is open for business.



Painted, detailed, and weathered. Notice sidewalk is cracked and angled. They are available from Downtown Deco. I mixed paint with watered down plaster for the walls. I think it gives a good old look.

I had an extra metal frame from a large Miller Engineering neon sign and added GRAND HOTEL letters, then bent it out of shape.

Old ghost towns have broken windows and torn screens. I can cut plastic windows to look broken and cracked but what about old screens? How do you do that? Real screen material is not to scale.

Vicky had the answer the second that I asked her. Why not pantyhose? Dark Pantyhose!

As the saying goes, easier said than done. This turned out to be the hardest part of the project. If you're a guy I bet you have never tried to buy pantyhose, especially in Hawaii. Gals don't wear them here. It's too hot and everyone has a tan.

Finally I found some at a drug store that caters to tourists. The woman at the counter looked me up and down. I could tell she thought, "here's another one of those crazy mainlanders, what's he want pantyhose

for? No, don't even think I was going to tell her I was making window screens out of them.



Pantyhose and Broken Glass

Finally things started coming together. A few old faded signs, period street lights, fire hydrants, cracked sidewalks, and a few cars and trucks. Remember the signs should be old style and even companies that are no longer in business.

Next I needed some people. I only use Artista figures. I think they are the best posed and hand painted "people" in O scale. Again thanks to Nicholas Smith Trains. They carry a full line of Artista people.



Don't know if I would stand on that rickety porch for a photo



# Ghost Town

I had some grave stones so why not have a graveyard? An old iron (plastic) fence looked good around the graves but it should be bent and rusted. So I painted it and afterwards used an old heat gun to warp it.

Then I rummaged through my junk and parts boxes for things to place in the town.



The graveyard

An old scratch built ancient style gas station from my last layout was in one box. A little more weathering and bending the roof down would make it fit right in. Dirt and weeds were spread all around the town. The weeds came from Scenic Express. They are easy to use and come in different colors and sizes. Of course I used dried looking tan ones. Scenic Express even had some tumble weeds.

Then real dirt came from a real dusty old Hawaiian road was added.



The old gas station

An electric short line railroad exists that services the mines farther down the valley so I built a small station for weekend tourists that ride the one car passenger train.



Passenger stop.

This was a fun project and something you don't see on most layouts. I hope that you get some good ideas for your layout. 🇺🇸



A wide angle view from both directions



## About Don McCuaig

Don was born in Palms California in 1944. He received his first Lionel train in 1948, a 2026 freight set. His love for trains never stopped. He spent three years in the Army from 1965 to 68. His real job started in 1970 working in television. Don worked for the same company for 36 years and he traveled all over the world filming and producing TV specials. His wife Vicky comes from a railroad family. Her Pop was a welder in Oakland for the Southern Pacific shops. Don retired and they moved to Maui, Hawaii almost ten years ago. His hobbies are trains, diving, and filming.



# O Gauge Layout in a Small Space

## "What Can I Fit In My Small Space?"

by Mark Boyce

Let us pick up where we left off in the Spring, 2021 Issue. Every modeler who has a small space must be thinking, "What can I fit in my small space?" The next paragraph and bullet list are what I hoped to fit in my 11' x 11' room back in January 2017 when I started planning.

I envision this layout depicting the Appalachians as I have observed them in my home state of Pennsylvania and the states of Virginia and West Virginia where I have lived in the past. It seems that I like railroads, vehicles, and buildings, as they were before I was born in 1956, so the steam to diesel transition era works. I am not sticking to a year or decade. If there is a car or engine I like that is a bit newer, it will be on the layout.

Here are some things I want to include:

- A small town
- Some mountains
- A look of the trains going somewhere, but viewers may have to rely on their imagination in a room measuring about 11' x 11'
- Coal trains and operating accessories
- Logging trains and operating accessories
- Mixed freight
- Passenger trains
- An area of operating accessories for future grandchildren which could be at a lower level than the rest of the track.

Well, that was quite a list.

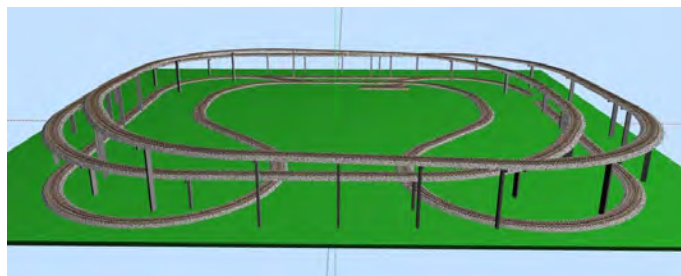
I have been able to plan for most of it, with plans for a lot of shuffling trains on and off the layout by hand. The operating accessories are all in their boxes, with no plans to use them on this layout. If I was more interested in the operating accessories being a must, then I could have sacrificed the trains going somewhere through a mountainous scene.

Many of you are aware that noted layout designer, John Armstrong, called this his "Givens and Druthers" list. In other words, what must I include in this layout, and what can I give up if it will not fit?

Two options were to plan and build a solid top 11' x 8' table with either pop up access holes or provision to climb up on it on my hands and knees. But both options would be foolish for a fellow already in his 60s and having knee and back problems.

Planning a walk-in layout with lift up bridges and shelves not exceeding 30" in depth proved to be a smarter move than I could have imagined 4 years ago. I will not belabor why that is so. I will leave that for the reader's imagination.

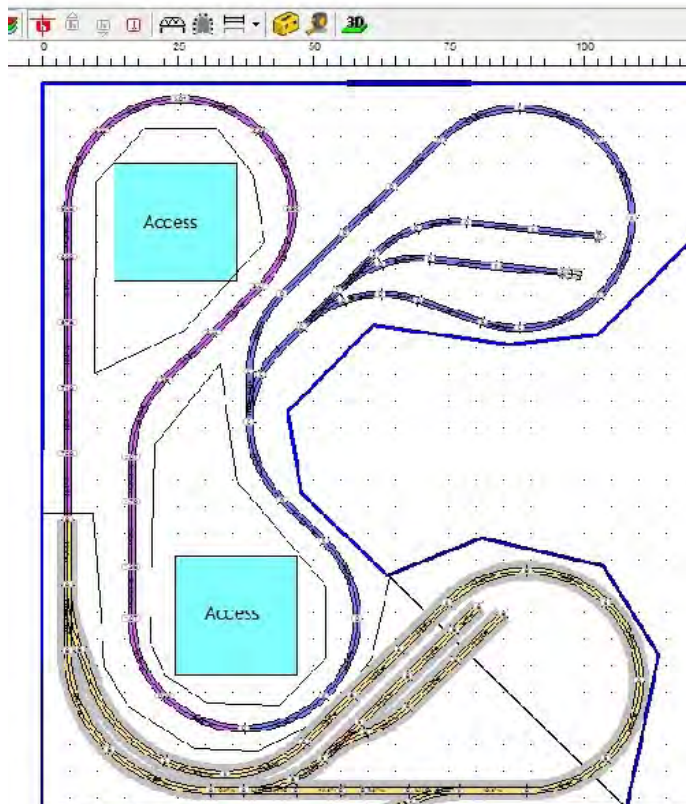
Here is a SCARM 3D view of an early design that was an attempt to do it all. I realized before I even put in sidings for the operating accessories that I probably would not do anything justice, at least in my way of thinking. Instead, I would plan to focus on either the lower level with added sidings for operating accessories or bring the upper level back down to the tabletop.



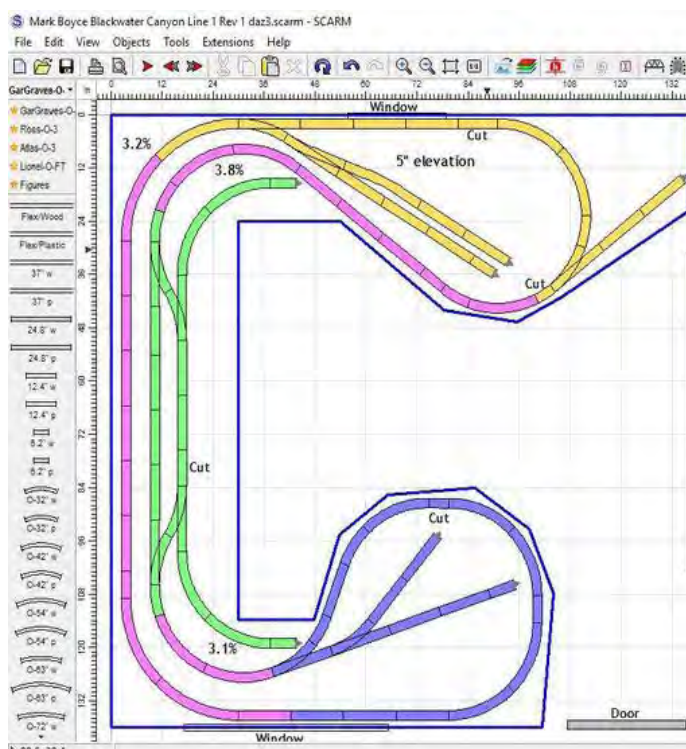
Next, I presented the list and preliminary plan on another forum to gain insight and more ideas. The value of doing this cannot be over emphasized. I was thinking of going with the twice around over and under plan as a starting point when someone mentioned that he got tired of trains going round and round.

He built a layout in a point-to-point arrangement where trains would only travel through the whole layout one time, much like a prototype railroad. Engines could be turned with turntables at either end, and trains would be made up again at either end. While he was able to accomplish this in his huge basement, he evidently lost touch with the fact my room is 11' x 11'.

So I decided to put the idea to the test. We came up with this plan that snaked up the mountain from the lower town to the upper town. Since a turntable would take up almost the same room as an 042 loop, we opted for the loops to take a train up and down for a longer run.



I could have easily fit a switching layout into the room with lots of industrial action. However, my mind's view of a coal drag slowly plying up the mountain greatly influenced me.



Finally, I decided to go with a dog-bone track plan utilizing 042 curves and started to build this layout.

The layout featured a lower-level town at the bottom of the drawing and a higher-level town at the upper right of the drawing. Each town would be mostly inside each loop.

To keep the reach to 30" or less, I proposed building rollout sections that would latch in place to the main layout. A 30" deep section along the wall with no windows would be built on steel brackets fastened to the studs with lag bolts. This would allow me to get behind those two sections of the layout easily.

This is a small layout room with no workshop. The basic shelf along the wall was sturdy using 18" steel brackets with 1x3 joists. Since I only have a hand circular saw, I opted to use the brackets to save cutting a lot of wood. It was winter and I was taking too much wood out into the snow to cut as it was.

I built one roll out section, and even though it was not pretty, it worked. Then I built the benchwork and laid track for about half of the layout in 2018.





# What Can I Fit In My Small Space?



My MTH Premier Western Maryland H9 ran fine on 042 curves on this layout, but did not think it looked particularly good. I have three Premier H9s and a Premier WM Russian Decapod and was hoping they would look better on the curves.

I hope this article has given you, the reader, some insight into some of the thoughts I had planning a layout to get the most out of a small room. Of course, everyone has different goals, likes, and dislikes.

If you didn't know, you may have guessed this is not the layout that I ended up with. I will save that discussion for the next issue.

One issue that I did not address was that this planning is for someone who plans to stay in the same house for the foreseeable future. That fact creates an opportunity for an entire future article. 🇺🇸



## About Mark Boyce

Mark grew up and lives in rural Western Pennsylvania. Like many boys, he wanted a train set for Christmas. His dad taught him to save for an HO set, which he purchased when he was about 12. After deciding that both HO and N scales were 'getting too small', he bought his first O gauge set in 2012. His older daughter gave him his first Christmas gift train set on his 58th Christmas in 2013. He is retired, and his wife will soon retire. They have two married daughters who live nearby.

# Cedar Rails

by David Smith

When I was approached by a good friend of mine, Charlie Stoia, to see if I would be interested in submitting an article for Tractive Effort magazine I thought, "Wow, this is a very exciting opportunity and it has always been a dream and goal to have my layout featured in an article."

As I contemplated (with some fear) as to what I was going to write, I wondered, "How will I summarize all the experiences and tribulations that have occurred on my never ending journey in this formidable hobby that we all enjoy so much."

After some thinking, pondering and discussion with friends, I have decided to approach this article from a slightly different angle. Instead of giving background on my childhood and how I got started in this hobby, I will only briefly touch on that and then will concentrate on the friendships, challenges, learning, and immense satisfaction designing and building, that a layout can offer.

As most parents, we were excited to purchase a model train for our son to play with at Christmas. A new friend of mine at the time had a model train set for sale so we decided to purchase it.



He really enjoyed playing with the train set but, as he grew up, other interests took over in place of the train. My interest though continued with the trains. Never would I imagine that this purchase for my son would reignite a passion in me for the hobby again and also develop a life-long friendship with this new found friend, Chuck, from whom we had actually purchased that train set.

Chuck was kind enough to give me a tour of his layout and demonstrate all the new features the engines offered like command control, smoke, crew talk, and sounds. I was amazed at the capability of these new engines. With this reignited passion, I decided to dive in head first and get started on a layout.

Chuck offered his help and, during the early stages of my layout, we constructed a small 4 X 8 table in a spare room down in the basement. I tend to always drive for more than what is acceptable, so this size layout did not suffice for long. Soon I had the bug to expand.



The spare playroom downstairs was just not large enough for this 4 X 8 sized table. I was off to look for bigger and more applicable real estate. With Chuck's help, the large work room in the basement was chosen as the new area for the bigger layout.

Excited to get started on my new adventure, I removed the shelves that were in the room, (somehow I quickly found a place to put everything that was on those shelves), and then tables were constructed. Foam was placed on the boards for a more silent surface and the track was laid.

Constructing a new layout creates tremendous excitement and personal drive to get the track in place and trains running. The main layout consisted of two outer loops of track with 072 being my largest curves. This loop is connected to multiple rooms. The inner loop on the main layout consists of 054 curves.



My thoughts were filled with, “What do I want to model and how would I lay everything out in regards to buildings, streets, and associated scenery.” Being an engineer by education, I was taught that to complete a design, you lay out everything on paper and calculate to the last thousandth of a decimal point.

In this case, I did just the opposite and planned very little. I went with a general vision which included a town, subdivision, and industrial area.

And so it began, with placing buildings, creating scenery, going to many train shows with friends while searching to find unique thing, and anticipating the fun of trying out different placements for the buildings, and then constructing the scenery.



I watched lots of videos to learn how to construct scenery and teach myself the tricks and techniques. I was like a sponge absorbing everything that I could either read or view for modeling. As one idea would come to mind, others followed, and it continued to build from there.

While these activities were happening I always liked to take the approach of, “What will be next for the layout”? My thoughts were that it would be great to expand the layout to other rooms and not just limit myself to the work room.



So, with help from Chuck and friends, the layout expanded again to include going thru walls and connecting to the room where the first 4 X 8 layout started it all. I made sure that the platform on which the track was laid connecting the two rooms modeled the existing shelving for aesthetic reasons. That way my connecting track route looked exactly like the custom installed shelves that were displaying my engines. Visitors to the layout are surprised when they realize that a track actually travels from one room to another while they expect to see display shelves.



With the remote room now connected to the main layout, I decided to create a small hobo area in the original room that would lead to a large amusement park. How fun I thought, to model an amusement park and create the experience as a young boy with the local fair in town through lights, sounds, and animated rides. It seemed like the perfect area to create these great memories.

One of the main features in the park is the coaster ride. Visitors love to watch the ride and action.





This piece, along with the many animated amusement park buildings, completes the experience and is always a big attraction. A small harbor town adjacent to the park highlights the small town feel and the excitement when a fair is in town!!!

Once this was completed I decided to take a break and just enjoy the layout for a while. As I traveled to shows with my friends and viewed fellow club member layouts, the idea of expanding was once again on my mind.



This time a turntable and round house were what I wanted to add next. The problem was how to integrate such a large turntable into my existing layout or would I need to add on to it? My main goal with the integration of the table was to not compromise the viewing area which allowed visitors to be able to walk and experience all the scenes.

After trying multiple arrangements and experimentation, I was able to integrate a Millhouse River Studio 34 inch turntable including a round house by adding a small section to the existing layout so that my guests could still see all the action. It's fun to transport engines into and out of the round house for maintenance and service.

With this addition my thought was, "I am now complete and my layout is done"!!!

This brought both a sense of completion, accomplishment, and surprisingly, sadness because a big part of this hobby is building and using those creative juices to challenge yourself and feel great pride in what you have accomplished. I think the reality is really that layouts are never finished. There are always things to create and improve on.

And so, the never ending fun and journey is continuing and my current quest has been installing and integrating a Ross Custom Switches 34 inch transfer table to the layout. Trying new things and adding functional action systems to the layout is both challenging and very rewarding.



It's been fun to once again work on creating another area to the layout with the help of Chuck and friends. With each addition I have learned so much about how to create scenery, different techniques of modeling, and railroad history.

I have learned that input and support from family, friends, and The Detroit Three Railers organization, that I belong to, has played a significant part of creating this imaginary world.





# Cedar Rails

When I started this O Scale model railroad journey, I never imagined the terrific life-long friendships that have been made and the places traveled with close friends from the club while experiencing and viewing railroad history. I am excited to continue my O Scale train ride and look forward to the future creating more incredible memories. 🇺🇸



Chuck (left) and me with the main layout in the background



## About David Smith

David Smith is a Senior Manager for Stellantis automotive manufacture and has been with the company for over 30 years. He is currently leading the Advanced Vehicle Innovation & Validation organization. David holds a Bachelors in Electrical Engineering from Lawrence Tech University and a Masters Degree in Science in Management from Walsh College. He currently lives in the metro Detroit area and has a 22 year old son. His model train passion began at age 6. Dave belongs to the Detroit Three Railers organization and enjoys repairing electronics on all model O scale engines. Other interests include boating, camping, skiing, and of course working on his model railroad.



# Whistle Stop Reviews

## "Lionel Legacy Ten Wheelers"

by George Lazar (laz57)

Welcome to Whistle Stop Reviews. I will give my honest opinion on engines, freight cars, passenger cars, accessories, etc. This is just my opinion and you might agree or disagree. I will call em as I see em. As an old baseball coach once told me "You win some, you lose some, and some get rained out, but ya gotta dress for them all."

This is my first column in *Tractive Effort* and it is about my latest acquisitions, the Lionel Legacy Ten Wheelers. That's right two ten wheelers. My favorite RR, the Reading and Northern 225, along with a fantasy, a Patrick's Trains Exclusive Santa Fe Ten Wheeler in Black Bonnet livery.



Lionel Reading and Northern



Lionel Santa Fe Black Bonnet

These two Ten Wheelers are superb. Lionel even got the colors pretty darn close to perfect. I would have liked the R&N to be just a shade darker, but it is pretty darn close. The next time I drive past the R&N, I will stop to check the color. After all, it's only about 50 miles from my residence.



Very Nice Colors

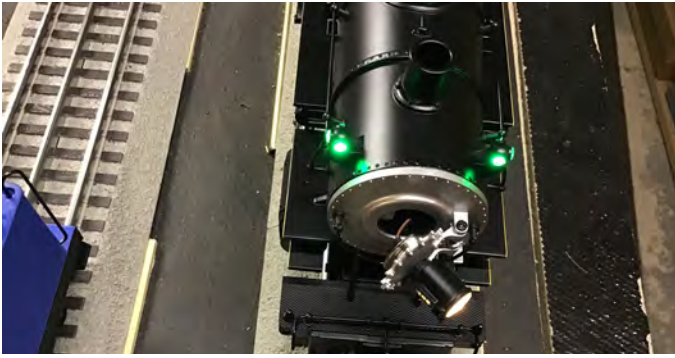
I especially like the color combination of the Black Bonnet Santa Fe. It looks great. Both are crisp engines, with no runs, and, unlike some of the other Ten Wheelers, neither have gray silver smoke boxes. The Santa Fe does have a silver face on the smoke box, but it really sets it off and gives it a little extra pizzazz. I like it.



Note the Santa Fe Smoke Box w/Silver Front

The details are nice with LED head and marker lights. The marker lights give you the option of either having green or white LEDs. The option is controlled when using the Legacy 1.6 Cab 2 by pressing and holding the AUX2 button for a few seconds. The light menu will show up and pressing the marker light on the button will change the color. This is a very cool option however, I feel that the green is a bit too bright.





LEDs Really Show Up

Both engines have lots of cast in details with pop off valves, whistle, sand domes, air canisters, piping, hatches, etc. These look pretty good but I am not a fan of cast in batches.



Overhead Photo

Inside the cab there are crew figures with lots of dials, a double door flickering fire box. The fire box has a great fire flicker that I really liked.



Wow, the Fire Box Looks Real

The distance between the tender and cab is about a half inch or 2 feet in O scale. Not bad. The control switches for PROG/RUN, Bluetooth ON OFF, smoke ON OFF, are located underneath the cab. The tender has nice grab irons on it along with a real coal load.

Very nice logos are on the side. For R&N “Road of the Anthracite” and the Santa Fe “The War Bonnet.”

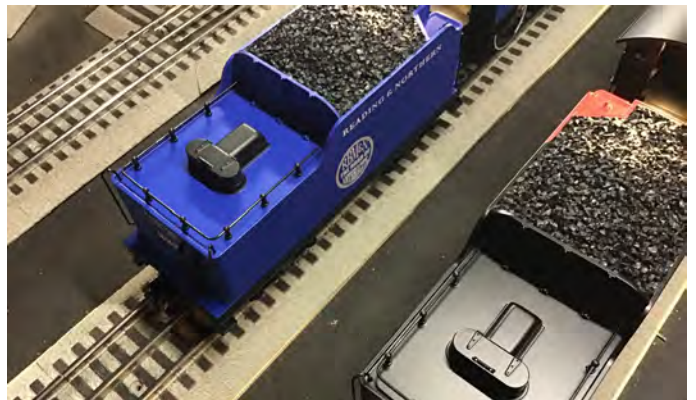


The War Bonnet



LEDs Really Show Up

There are non-opening hatches.



Rear Tender Hatches

A back-up light and warning lights are the main things that I miss on these engines. But that would probably have added another \$200.00 to the price.

The whistle and bell on these ten wheelers are great! The operator has the option of 5 different whistles going from low to high pitch. These are activated using the Legacy Cab . Press the AUX1 and then press up on the bell button. For the operator who enjoys a changing bell, you have that option.



# Lionel Legacy Ten Wheelers

The smoke unit along with whistle steam is the most AWESOME element of these engines. They both work off the stack. Starting out, add about 20 drops of your favorite smoke scent. It seems like the whistle smoke has the same volume of smoke as the stacks. I only set these at medium on the CAB2 and had copious amounts of smoke filling the train room. Cough Cough “smoke em if ya got em.”



Note the Whistle Steam



Medium Smoke is Plenty

When operating these engines, I have had NO problems at all about speed control and sounds. Both creep nicely at step 1 all around the layout. I ran the engines at 95 on CAB2 with very smooth operation and no problems. There are four chuffs per-revolution, a nice metal on-metal sound of creaks and groans of the metal which is a nice addition by Lionel.



Turn To High, Call the Fire Department

The crew talk and tower com are very audible. When you press down on the tower com after the engine has been sitting, you will hear the crew talk on the engine. This is a new feature from Lionel. There is a nice shut down sequence. The one thing I don't like is the start up. After listening to the yard office crew, there is about a 5 second delay before the engine comes to life. I don't know if this is prototypical but it just seems pause too long. My crew was ready to depart. At first, I thought something went wrong with the engine but all was good.

Overall, I am very happy with these two engines and they are very affordable. If you pre-ordered them, you could have gotten a great deal. I did, and snagged the R&N for \$600. But after seeing OGF Rocky Mountaineer David's Santa Fe from Patrick's Trains, I just had to have it. I will use my grass cutting money on this purchase of \$700.

Warning. Check the colors on any of the other ten wheelers before you purchase them. There are lots of unhappy train folks with some of these liveries, along with silver and gray colored smoke boxes.

We hope that you enjoyed this review and keep on training. From Whistle Stop Reviews “OUT”!!! 🇺🇸



## About George Lazar

Born and raised in the Anthracite Region of Pennsylvania. Graduated from Mansfield State College, Pa. Degree in Criminal Justice and played 4 years of Football as a defensive tackle. Worked construction for 5 years as a cement finisher. Went back to school and earned a degree in Industrial Arts from Millersville University in Pa., taught 7-12 grade wood shop for 28 years. Retired in 2012 from teaching, now a full time house husband and dog walker. Likes are trains, hunting, fishing, gardening, bike riding, hiking, shooting.



# The Hand on the Throttle:

## "An Interview with Howard Hitchcock of Lionel Trains."

*Tractive Effort* was granted an exclusive interview with Howard Hitchcock, Chief Executive Officer of Lionel on June 10th, 2021. We had many more questions than he had time to answer, but we thank Mr. Hitchcock for taking time out of his busy day to speak with us and give us a rare glimpse “under the hood” at Lionel, LLC. 🇺🇸



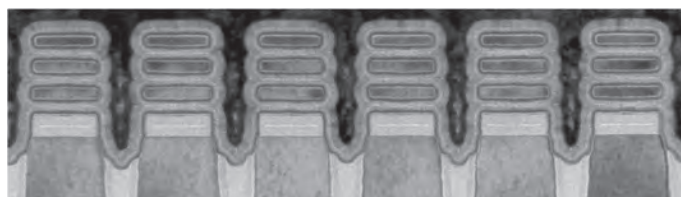
TE: First of all, thank you Howard for granting us the time to ask you some questions for *Tractive Effort*.

HH: No problem at all. We always try to make time for everyone in the hobby.

TE: Our first question is this: IBM just announced a breakthrough ultra dense computer chip that utilizes 2nm wide components, dramatically increasing the efficiency and decreasing power consumption. How do you envision these new chips being used in Lionel Trains? Are we headed to an AI enabled train that anticipates power and speed required on a

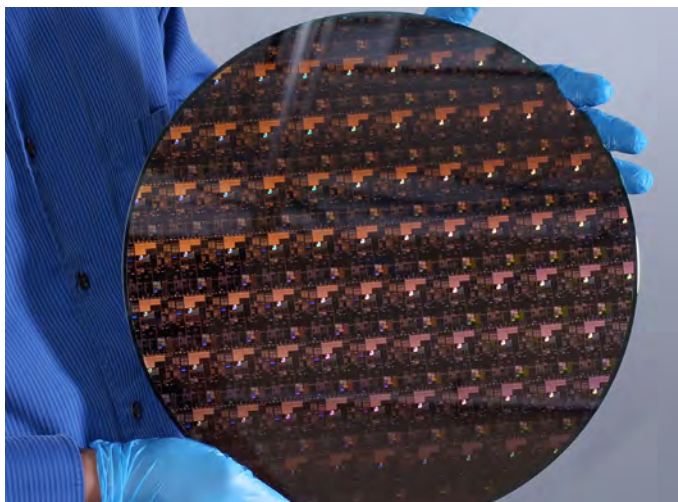
layout? Accessory interaction perhaps?

HH: The advancement of technology is always a good thing. But it also brings with it challenges. The model train market is a smaller consumer of electronics. You're at the tip of the tail of the dog. So you have to adapt to what technology is out there and available.



2 nm technology as seen using transmission electron microscopy. 2 nm is smaller than the width of a single strand of human DNA. Courtesy of IBM.

One of my core objectives since 2012 has been to enhance the product through technology.



A 2 nm wafer fabricated at IBM Research's Albany facility. The wafer contains hundreds of individual chips. Courtesy of IBM

We've made a lot of major innovations. To directly answer your question, we really haven't kind of contemplated this particular chip. Although when you look at what we do with technology... we've been rolling out Bluetooth 5.0, which has been a huge success for us, and has really opened a lot of doors. And when you roll back a little further, going back and referencing my 2012 timeline, we've done a lot of things that we consider to be quite innovative in a few short years.

Lionel added the LionChief remote control system in 2013, moving away from the static transformer with continuous power to the track.

We think that's increased and expanded play value and functionality. Its opened up features that you didn't have as part of the transformer. Plus, we've added the Plug-Expand-Play technology, which helps to make things a little easier for the users in terms of quick adaptability off track power. The innovation to our accessories with additional smoke effects, and LED light effects such as the Haunted house has been has been really cool.

Lionel also introduced LED Christmas

FasTrack this past year, which has been one of my personal favorites. But also, on the visual end, there's been a lot of work we've done: the depleting coal load, the force coupler, the added smoke effects, blow down, etc. have all been key innovations.

We do a better job of adapting accepted technologies and employing them into our space. But anything that can help with power and ultimately miniaturization will be certainly stuff that we're looking for.

TE: It does add play value, for sure. In your tenure we have seen exponential growth of not only control systems, but feature-rich products that had never even been thought of before. We see a lot of excitement and buzz when we attend shows and online.

HH: As market leaders, it's our job to drive the industry forward. And that really has been a key focus for me and for my team. I describe it as a funnel system.

**We really do our very best to incorporate all trains from past systems to be able to be accessed through current systems.**

I believe that you have to pour a whole lot of people into the funnel to ultimately get people down to the higher end users. And at the end of the day, we're never going to get connected devices out of people's hands. Right?

So the best thing we could do is put the train control into the connected device. Logically, that's the path forward.

TE: The way we run trains seems to grow every few years now. Depending upon the engine, we can run Legacy, Bluetooth via the Lionel LionChief App, Lionchief, Lionchief+, LionChief 2.0, or even conventionally. How does Lionel choose what operating system(s) are best for a particular train? Are older systems likely to be phased out or superseded? What's the big plan?





It has the least number of features, but it has a control system. Then as it slides down in the funnel you move up in your range of model trim, ultimately giving you more functions. But for the first time, we have one point of control across all of our systems: O, S, and HO. They all come back to Bluetooth.

So the introduction of Bluetooth and our Bluetooth app means we can control any train we make from the same device. But as you move up into the more advanced systems, like Legacy, those unlock a rich feature set that you can't get right now through the apps. However, it IS a common platform that everything can connect to at a very basic level.

HH: It's complicated... Like a game of chess vs. checkers.

Over the past several years we have been thinking about where do we ultimately want to go? And the cool part about it is technology keeps advancing, so our end goal keeps moving. But at the end of the day, we have had a policy about no train left behind. We really do our very best to incorporate all trains from past systems to be able to be accessed through current systems. Will there come a day where that changes? It might have to, to be honest with you. As technology pushes further ahead, it is getting harder to keep that sort of mantra. But we really do try.

We've done an awesome job over the last several years bringing a lot of new control systems online, and all work together. And in the latest catalog, page 223, we get a really cool comparison of our different control systems. That was driven out of a big initiative that I put to the team to create a clearer path for expansion to the consumer. I said, "Do you remember the old car brochures you would get, and it had all the different levels of the trim levels and features? "That's how we need to think about our control systems."

And now we're back to the funnel. At the very top of the funnel, it's sort of your base models

You can control the basic sounds and functions through this common platform. And that's really the first time that has ever happened. We feel like that's a building block and foundation for the future, because that is going to be a platform where we're going to be able to continue to enhance and build off of. There's a lot of work the engineers do to make sure that Bluetooth connectivity remains with the more advanced control systems as well. And obviously, a set that runs on Bluetooth

## **We have buried some Easter Eggs in the code on some of our licensed products.**

primarily, that's pretty straightforward and easier for them to do. But the cool part is, even if I may not have an advanced control system, if I buy a legacy engine now, I can put it on a track, and so long as that track has power, I can control it out of the box with my phone.

TE: The Bluetooth app is really neat. It's highly intuitive. It's got big buttons for small hands, and it's got big buttons for big hands (LOL).

We can all figure it out. But our question is, where is it going to go? What's the next evolution of it? What features are we going to continue to add? Are we going to take away some features? Is there a limit to what can be done?

HH: Honestly, it's a very timely question. And I think one of the coolest parts about our app is that it is so intuitive. When we were building it, that was the one thing I really was stressing is I wanted it to be intuitive. I'm pretty involved in our product development because that's my background. I'm a product guy. That's what I love. That's my passion.

Any big initiative like that, I'm definitely part of the conversation. And intuitiveness was key to making this work because you wanted anybody to be able to walk in, pick it up, not really understanding trains, and operate them. It's always about, how do you keep it simple? How do you make it great for anybody?

We've just done two upgrades to the app. First, we've added voice control. Folks are quite familiar with Siri and Alexa voice control commands. Well, now we've got that for our trains. And the coolest part is, we have buried some Easter Eggs in the code on some of our licensed products.

TE: Easter Eggs? Like hidden things you find within the program by using it?

HH: Yes. Think about words that would have been used in Star Trek, and those will actually do things in the voice control mode. So that's a cool thing that we've created for several of our licensed products.

TE: Has that been publicized at all?

HH: I don't really think it has, to be honest with you. I think it's one of those things that you have to discover.

Another cool thing about voice control is we were able to take that and backward engineer it. So literally from our very first Bluetooth controlled train all the way

through the products coming out Bluetooth 5.0 will all be able to leverage voice command. So that's a really awesome thing.

TE: That's big news for all Bluetooth users!

**You're going to be able to project your own announcements across the train or directly to the train from your connected device.**

HH: It's essentially a free upgrade people who have bought in the past.

TE: What is the second big upgrade to the app?

HH: In addition to that, we have also integrated voice streaming and recording. Bluetooth 5.0 is faster and able to carry more information over that connection. This has opened up the ability for us to add additional feature sets. This is NOT backward compatible, but with Bluetooth 5.0, going forward, you're going to be able to do voice streaming and recording. What that essentially means is you're going to be able to project your own announcements across the train or directly to the train from your connected device. Let's just hypothetically say I'm tired of hearing Tom Hanks say all aboard for Polar Express. I can now put my own voice into that, save it as a recording, and play it whenever I want as a recorded sound.

It's cool in that it continues to add play value and interactivity to the train and build that sense that you're in control of your world. You can now become the engineer. So it's your view. You're in control of the train. You can have the unique conversation you desire.

**From our very first Bluetooth controlled train all the way through the products coming out, Bluetooth 5.0 will all be able to leverage voice control.**



TE: Speaking of user sounds, is there any way in the future that Legacy users would be able to change the sound sets in their locomotives? Is there anything that's backwards compatible for that?

HH: At present, no. We did explore some of those things. And I think as technology continues to evolve and we continue to look at where the platform goes in the future, we're always looking at how could we do that.

TE: Is it because users could run the risk of scrambling their chip?

HH: No. You know, the platforms themselves are pretty stable. And anything we would do and release out there would certainly only be incremental in terms of adding value. We've talked about everything from having sound sets available, to unlocking different sound sets through a purchase type thing. There's all sorts of things we're exploring. But I really do think the Bluetooth platform is a fundamental building block in where this all goes, because you have this common language that you can speak to. So it'll be interesting. We'll see where it goes.

TE: Let's talk about the pandemic for a minute. It's the elephant in the room. Has it changed the way you do business?

HH: It's changed everybody really.

We have an "all hands" meeting at the beginning of the year, kind of a kickoff to the year and it's held in February... I remember getting up in front of the room in 2020, being very positive about the year, talking about where we were going to go. Oh, and by the way, there's this thing going on over in Asia that we have our eye on because, obviously, it affects our factories. There have been other illnesses like bird flu and SARS and different things, but they've remained relatively isolated. This is probably another scenario that's similar to that.

They were heading into Chinese New Year, and then all of a sudden, everything sort of exploded. So, within a week, we went from a

company that is 100% in office, to the majority of our people working remotely. Obviously, there is a few jobs that you just simply couldn't.

The ability to interface with consumers had changed, so we used social media, and new software platforms. Our product people participated in remote shows. It forced us to look at new ways of doing what we do, and we were able to come out of this stronger than when we went into it, and we retained all of our staff.

Of course everyone had to deal with the challenges. The supply chain is massively disrupted at this point. Between ships and ports and COVID outbreaks, terminals unloading and reloading. We're seeing very, very long lead times. We're seeing containers roll from ship to ship because there's not enough space. There are shortages of workers. There are pressures on the raw materials. So there's hardships that have come from this that we continue to manage through. But I feel really good about where we are.

## **In a connected world where life had gotten extraordinarily fast-paced, people went back to what they loved.**

TE: In your opinion, what is the "state" of the hobby today?

HH: I actually think it's good. I think it's bright. From our perspective, we've seen a lot of interest. We've had a big focus on battery-operated train sets and licenses. And we think that's very important to connect different affinity bases that don't start out as train enthusiasts to the train industry, to the hobby.

I actually think the pandemic has had a very positive impact on hobbies in general.

TE: Really? How's that?

HH: People being trapped home were looking for things to do. And so, in a connected world where life had gotten extraordinarily fast-paced, people went back to what they loved. It made them feel good, and it gave them comfort. And they had the time.

In that newfound time, people broke out their old sets and locomotives. They started to work on that layout that they've always wanted but never had time to build.

Consumption for track and control and power is WAY up. That means people are putting it on layouts and using it... and that's a great thing. I think that's been very good for us and good for the hobby in general.

TE: We have noticed that Lionel has partnered with manufacturing facilities in Vietnam, as well as China. It's very common for companies to use overseas manufacturing today, but what specific challenges has Lionel faced in trying to manage the process from the other side of the globe? Judging by your impressive catalog, it must be a massive production operation.

HH: First, thanks for the compliments on the catalog. It is big and there's some really cool stuff in them. But, there is no manufacturing scenario that is easy. Amazon has taught us instant gratification... I can push a button and it's here tomorrow. But in any manufacturing situation, there are challenges. I mentioned some earlier. Supply chain is a huge issue right now. Cost of materials is a huge issue right now.

Electronics availability. The pandemic has changed consumption rates, which are abnormally different. I think, globally, I think the world was expecting more of a slowdown.

## **Even in China, components come from different suppliers.**

So a lot of manufacturing took their foot off the gas and reduced capacity. And what happened was there was a moment of reduction, and then there was an instant surge in consumption. And so everybody was caught a little bit flat-footed on that. And that's not just overseas... that's manufacturing here too. And because it's a global economy, if you make something or assemble it in the U.S. a lot of those parts come from elsewhere. There is no "made in a single location" anymore. Even in China, components come from different suppliers. Chip sets might come from Japan or Taiwan. So even there, you've got a multinational sort of situation.

I think for us, the biggest challenge has been our U.S. manufacturing guy who's there and leads our China-based team, has not been able to be back. So we've had to adapt to working through these types of conversations, Zoom Meetings, enhanced calls, and different things like that.

Further, the way the Chinese are set in up in particular and our Vietnam factory, is that their leadership and engineering are in one country or one province, and their operation, the manufacturing side of it, is in a different country or a different province.

And so even they have had a hard time keeping the oversight or the direction as close as they would feel comfortable with. So of course that leads to challenges.

There are, at times, missteps. You know, quality things that you don't want to get through, do. But at the same time, we've worked really hard and really diligently to try to minimize that. And I think we proactively





address it when it does happen. After all, no company's perfect but we obviously strive for perfection.

We don't achieve it all the time. I think that's having the oversight, having the hands-on involvement is probably the biggest challenge that really has come out of the situation. Everybody's dealing with shipping containers, transit times and suppliers of raw materials. Outside of that, I think it's really just having those hands on.

TE: What are your biggest challenges in the next five years? What's your biggest hurdle?

## **Production continues to be a challenge. I think we're going to see this globally for several years to come.**

HH: I think it has been and continues to be, getting new people into the hobby. You're fighting things like innovation and technology. But continuing to get more people into the hobby, advancing them up to the higher levels of operation. It's certainly an ongoing and continuous challenge. And we address that through innovation, creativity, and, licensing. Also, people's shopping behaviors are changing. And so therefore you want to be where the consumer is.

Production continues to be a challenge. I think we're going to see this globally for several years to come. I think the consumer is going to be faced with a little bit of a new reality.

I think things that are more labor-intensive will have more impact than things that are less labor intensive. I think that that's a real challenge for us. We're going to have to continue to innovate and deliver value.

TE: You know, your catalogs keep getting bigger and bigger. It's amazing how much product you fit in those catalogs. Given how much

product is in that catalog, how do you manage all that production? Who tracks and schedules it all? You must have an army over there!

HH: (laughing) We don't have an army, actually. There are a few very dedicated people. We have product managers who are broken up by category.

One of the things I really focused on is, we can't have everybody doing everything. You've got to focus and look at categories of products, and then have experts within those categories of products.

We go through what we call product development cycles. And we have the discipline of going through and creating data sheets, sort of pre-production sheets, or project sheets. Those are pitched to a group, including myself. We look at it from a financial perspective, from a product fit perspective, and from a sales perspective. It's very traditional product category development.

We're typically working 12-18 months out, where we're usually working on three cycles at a time. So it's the product that is delivering, the product that we showed in the catalog in manufacturing, and it's the product that's about to go into the next catalog. You're always shuffling these three cycles.

You are always working on these introduction cycles. That's how we do all of what we do. And we've got category experts in each space who are managing that and they're responsible for it.

We've got our creative team who helps with all the packaging and all the product art. But, you would be surprised how much these guys can do... It's a very collaborative effort, internally. I'm involved in some things more than others, but we come together several times throughout the year meet as a group.

TE: Let's consider creating a new high end locomotive. From start to finish, what is your time table? Are you looking at 24 months?

36 months?

HH: So if you're a full ground-up loco, that's going to be your longest lead time. We would have to cut tooling for a new body shell, new gearing and all new chassis and everything else. That is going to be every bit of 24 months, even a little bit longer. If you're looking at adding a new effect to something that you've run in the past, that probably is more in the 12 to 18 months, depending on how much you have to do.

## **The warehouse sale will be September 25th, one day only, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.**

But here's the thing with product development: you can always bend the rules and make one thing happen fast. The problem is, is you can't do that with everything.

There are ways to fast track... to sort of jump steps and do different things. But you can't have your entire line fast tracked or skipping steps. So in a traditional pre COVID environment, I would say the average is probably closer to 18 months, 12-18 months.

TE: Is the warehouse sale going happen in November?

HH: Well, funny you should ask. We've been meeting and talking about this. We are planning on doing a warehouse sale, but it is not going to be November. The warehouse sale was getting so big that it became really disruptive in the fourth quarter for warehouse operations. We lost too much ground... you are down about five days to pull it off. It added a lot of pressure at the wrong time of the year.

So it was a one-day thing the first year we tried it, and we're going back to that. The warehouse sale will be September 25th, one day only, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

TE: Are you surprised the warehouse sale had become so popular?

HH: We were really surprised. I remember distinctly being told that there's no one in North Carolina that buys trains. (chuckling)

TE: Isn't it about time for the new catalog to be released?

HH: We're getting close. We're not quite there yet, but we're getting close.

TE: Can you share with us any nuggets that we can pass on to our readers? We will probably publish right in the last week of June. Is there any nugget that you can provide us?

HH: (laughing) Yeah. Unfortunately, no. There are some really cool and exciting things coming. I will tell you that. I'd love to, but I impress upon these guys that we hold it back...

TE: You can't break your own rules.

HH: I can't break my own rules.

Yeah. It's a surprise and delight. Twice a year, you get to see what we all have been working on. We just try to put out the greatest train product out there.

TE: Did MTH's "breakup", or "sell off" as it were affect Lionel?

HH: You know, honestly, it really didn't tremendously. We're focused on being the best and being the leader. And we're not naïve to think there's no competition out there. We know there's competition. There always is... but I think that we've always framed ourselves as: we're going to innovative, we're going to lead, we're going to do what we believe is best. We're going to drive the market forward.



TE: What is your favorite Lionel train that's ever been produced, and why?

HH: You know, that's a really hard question because I am such a product guy, and I love every product that we do. I love just making beautiful stuff... I always have in all of my past careers. And I've got lots of those things scattered around my home. My home office looks a little bit like a museum! I love products that sell well.

TE: (laughing) So... you're a Polar Express fan.

HH: I'm a HUGE Polar Express fan. Yes, I am... Gosh, it's hard. I can't really choose one!

TE: Well, okay. Lets put it this way: Which one are you most proud of?

HH: I think, honestly, the Big Boy with the depleting coal load. That was one of my favorites that I was going to mention. For one, it's just a magnificent engine. And it was my first launch for a VisionLine product. We pulled out all the stops, then made a huge splash at York with it. We did what we said we were going to do, and we delivered what we said we were going to deliver. I think to date it's still the most expensive engine we've sold, and it sold like gangbusters!

The Big Boy really checked all the boxes. One, it performed as expected. Two, it delivered revenue for the company. Three, it made a big splash on PR. So it's everything that you want a VisionLine product to be.

I think for those reasons, that engine has a standout place in my heart.

Personal favorites? Probably a little less impressive, but still in my mind, cool: We did the Mickey Mouse 90th set. I'm a huge Walt Disney fan. I take a lot of inspiration from Walt Disney and that company. My dream long-term, and from the beginning, has always been to work for them one day.

I like to give a nod back to a couple things in my childhood. Star Trek, Scooby-Doo and Polar Express have all been fun.

TE: What else?

HH: Well, we've done a lot of cool stuff with creativity and innovations, like our anniversary products. Yes, the 115th was fun, even that nanoplate thing that my manufacturing guy STILL hates me for to this day. (laughing)

But I think the one that I could probably comment on the most is probably that VisionLine Big Boy with the depleting coal load.

TE Boy, that is an impressive engine. Across the board, it still sets the standard.

HH: I think it does too. We've had a couple things come a little close to it, but I don't think we've put something out that's surpassed that yet.



# The Hand on the Throttle

TE: If we had to pick a runner up, it would probably be the VisionLine Niagara. That engine was feature-rich as well.

HH: That probably would be the next one down, for sure.

TE: Well, Howard, that's all the questions we've got for you this time. Thank you for being so generous with your time today.

HH Any time! We got a lot of exciting stuff coming... we always do. And as you know, we're always happy to share. 🇺🇸

## Join the Fun on OGF!



Lionel Big Boy  
(Image Courtesy of Lionel LLC)





# Plug and Play Modular Layout Adventures

by Mark Sarver (Spike)

As far back as I can remember, I have loved to design and build things. My parents quickly picked up on that, and as a child, I had some of the coolest toys like bricks, Tinker Toys, Erector Sets, slot car race sets and toy trains. My older Brother and Dad had combined their passion of slot car racing with a Lionel Texas Special F unit set back in the mid 60's. Like my Father, he too loved to create and build things. He had modified the slot car track and the Lionel tubular track, to create railroad crossings within the race set. Both of them were gear heads, and I was a train geek, and all of us were having a great time!



Over the years, I have become enamored with Standard Gauge trains. For me, running Standard Gauge trains outdoors is the perfect union of two passions close to my heart; trains and nature. Something about the size of the trains, the bright colors, the sound of the train running along the track or the greatly enhanced sounds and smoke, courtesy of Lionel and MTH, completely surrounded by nature, makes me feel like a kid again.

One of the many things I love to design and build are train layouts, especially the more challenging modular train layouts. Although, building a permanent layout outside did not seem like a viable idea, a modular layout would work out very nicely.



That said, one of the fun challenges in building a modular layout is building it sturdy enough to handle some tough love. Other challenges are bouncing over the roads (if you live in Michigan, you will have a greater appreciation of what I mean), environmental conditions, ease of assembly and pack up. These were just the beginning of the nuances that would have to be worked out as the layout came together.



When I built the Glancy Trains Modular O-gauge layout for the Detroit Historical Museum, I had tried some new ideas that worked out very well. A 3/16" floor underlay and 1x2, 1x3, and 1x4 materials made for a very lightweight module, that could be handled by one person.



Although a single module standing by itself may seem a little wobbly; when you connect all the modules together, you have a very solid layout.

Using those same concepts, I built a test module to see how it would work in Standard gauge. Testing MTH 384E and Lionel10E locomotives, the 3/16" underlay worked great. The Lionel 381E looked like a porpoising dolphin traversing the 8' stretch of track, as it crossed over the stringers spanning from side to side of the module.

"Hmph!" I thought. "No problem. 1/4" plywood will be sufficient." Standing in the big box building supply store, looking at 1/4" so called plywood that looked more like pretzel board was frustrating. Patience not always being my strong suit, I decided to go with 3/8" plywood that was at least halfway flat. In my frustrated bullish state of plywood purchasing, I did not notice how heavy a 4'x8' sheet was. This would come back and bite me further on down the road.



In the garage, smiling from ear to ear, I was beginning to see another one of my dreams/nightmares come to life. The idea was to have four 4'x8', and another four 2'x8' tables form a "L" shaped layout when assembled.

This table combination allows for a layout of 12' x 12', 12' x 16' or 16' x 16'. For this article, I have shown the 12' x 12' layout. Since I would be transporting, setting up, operating and taking it down by myself, I needed to make the layout setup very self contained.

The tables would be considerably larger than those built for Glancy and the Detroit 3 Railer's, so I needed to use a different style of folding leg. Folding banquet table legs did not have a wide enough footprint to support a 4' wide table. I found folding leg sets at [celinafoldingtablesandchairs.com](http://celinafoldingtablesandchairs.com) that were

normally used for 10' round tables. This leg set has a footprint of 3'6" giving a 4' wide table very nice support.



The weight rating for the leg sets far exceed what I would be placing on them. To accommodate uneven ground, I used 1" PVC caps, drilled and tapped for 5/16 x 2" carriage bolt.

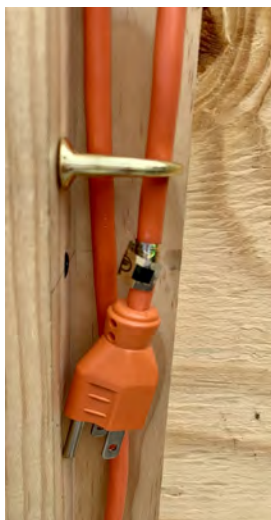
As for the 2'x8' tables, I used the standard banquet table leg sets available at most big box stores. These legs had to be made narrower to fit within the 2' side to side table framing. There are off the shelf folding table leg sets designed for 2' wide tables. However, the cost was far more than I was willing to pay. The modified banquet table leg set looks a bit crude currently, and I am looking to get them welded and painted for a more streamlined look in the very near future.

When it comes to powering and power distribution, color coding wires for the same function, and terminating wires the same way throughout is key to having a "plug & play" layout. Secure harnessing, strapping and clamping to avoid ripped out wires during handling and transporting is critical. It is only when the electrical starts being installed, the realization happens of how quickly the power control, wiring, connectors, terminal strips, plugs, tie straps and so on add up.





# Plug and Play Modular Layout



For wiring, I use 25', 16 gauge, 3 wire extension cords that can be purchased for \$5 or less at the big box stores. They come with a 3 prong male and female plug, and the wiring is encapsulated in a very nice covering that comes in numerous colors. Because the modules are only 8' in length, there is more than enough wire to do the job.

Using the black wire for the center rail, white wire for the ground rail and green for fixed accessory power, (currently not installed) has worked out well for me. Leaving a 10" pig tail at each end of the module makes for a very quick plug & play connection from module to module.

Since wood is a good insulator, I use #8 x 1/2" pan head screws placed 1/2" apart as my terminal strips. Since this wiring will be installed and pretty much forgotten about for the rest of time, I use the blue, solid ring, crimp wire terminals. Using the excess wire from cutting the extension cord, I solder drops onto the track 2' from each end of the module giving me 2 power feeds per 8' table.



For track, the layout is a combination of Lionel,

MTH and USA Track. USA Track makes curves in radius's for which Lionel and MTH do not. In my humble opinion, USA Track is by far the best built track when it comes to tubular rail. If you are reading this Kirk Lindvig, I would really like to see you build some switches and crossovers. Also, hi!



The modules were built, painted, tested, put together and they ran trains all day long. Then came time to put them away.. "Holy Cow! Whose dumb idea was it to use 3/8" plywood for modules! Honey! Dear! Can you come out and help me move these tables?" That story, along with how this entire layout became a one-man transportable roadshow will have to come at some future date. 🇺🇸



## About Mark Sarver (Spike)

Mark worked for the Norfolk & Western Railway and later for the Department of Defense, Michigan Air National Guard, retiring as Senior Master Sergeant. He retired as Vice President of Glancy Trains Modular Group at The Detroit Historical Museum. He is presently on the Board of Directors for the Festival of Trees, the largest benefit organization for the Children's Hospital of Michigan Foundation in supporting medical research of childhood diseases and treatments. Mark is also a member of the Detroit 3 Railers, "a fantastic group of guys sharing in the love of this great hobby". Mark has built a modular layout for the Detroit 3 Railers that is 24' x 32'.



# Unique, Custom and One-of-a-Kind: Compliments of Andy O

by Charlie Stoia

Often times, when we look at our layouts, there are items we'd like to incorporate that are not readily available. These days we've all gotten accustomed to being able to purchase ready-made buildings and scenic accents in the marketplace. There was a time not too long ago when even rolling stock was only available in kit form. Executing the assembly of these kits designated the true modelers in our hobby. While I don't consider myself to be a complete slouch in this department, my skills don't hold a candle to my friend Andy Ochla or Andy O. as everyone calls him.

Andy O. is old school. He knows his history and has an eye for putting together items for the layout that pay tribute to the times that have gone by. Andy is an accomplished military modeler, building hundreds of pieces of rolling stock, most often loaded flat cars that honor the ingenuity and might of our nation. When I say hundreds, I'm not kidding! Check out this video to see for yourself-

<https://youtu.be/rNB-DJssw2o>

While the military work is amazing, that's not what I'm going to focus on here. Ever since I moved to a new home several years ago, Andy has been at my side with ideas and assistance getting my layout detailed to reflect my dream of a layout that captures the essence of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. While other Michigan railroads are also home to my layout, the heavy hitters are the Milwaukee Road, Lake Superior & Ishpeming, Duluth South Shore & Atlantic, Copper Range, Soo Line... you get the idea!

I recall the day Andy was over and said, "Charlie, Why don't we make some of this stuff?" That we did! We being mostly Andy with some help from me along the way.

So much of what I want for the layout is obscure road names that are not

generally available. Besides the Milwaukee Road, which is the flagship on my layout, very little has been made for LS&I, DSS&A, or the Copper Range, for that matter. I was lucky enough several years ago to convince Walter Matuch of RMT to run some LS&I ore cars and I have many of them. Recently MTH ran a modern era ore car that I had mentioned to them several years ago. While there are some engines coming now as part of MTH special runs, very little else or rolling stock exists.

The west end of Michigan's Upper Peninsula is a rugged place of rocky bluffs, old growth forest, and wild rivers. In addition to the iron ore and copper mining tradition of the area, logging is also king. Without representation on the layout Andy went to work. Both cars below have been redecorated and given a real wood load.

Andy located a picture of some LS&I coal hoppers used to service the mines. So he delivered a string of four two bay hoppers.



LS&I flat with log load  
&  
DSS&A gondola with pulp load







LS&I Coal hopper

I have a personal fondness for Farmall tractors and had located a picture of Farmall Cubs loaded on a LS&I flat car. Andy worked to model the picture and did so with perfection recreating the entire scene including the IH stake truck.



LS&I Flat with Farmall Cubs loaded



DSS&A Chevy Trucks on DSS&A Flat



Michigan State Police Jeeps  
on Pere Marquette flat



IH Stake Truck with Farmall Cub

Andy constantly comes up with new ideas that I hadn't even thought of. Below are a couple of additions that will look great in any mixed freight on my layout!

There simply isn't an end to what can be done with an imagination and modeling skills. Andy has provided my railroad with endless rolling stock and detail. To my friend I can only say thank you for everything and being along for the ride on my layout journey. 🇺🇸



Andy Ochla is a long time Detroit 3 Railers member and retired technician.



### About Charlie Stoia

Charlie Stoia is a long time train enthusiast and Hi-Rail modeler. A history buff at heart, much of the inspiration for his modeling comes from travels in his home state of Michigan. With a specific interest in the railroads of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the modeling focus is the iron ore and copper mining tradition of the area. As a founding member of the Detroit 3 Railers, Charlie enjoys sharing the hobby with his fellow club members and anyone with his shared passion for railroads.



# Perilous Passenger Car Projects

## Perilous Passenger Projects – Part 2

by Andrew De La Rosa (harborbelt52)

It's a banner day when I finish any project, train-related or otherwise. And it's something of a miracle that this one was done by press time. This is the completion of a passenger car interior refit in Lionel's Lone Star UP business car. What follows is effectively a tour through its combo of diner/sleeper/observation compartments – practically everything that I find most appealing about passenger cars except a dome.

I guess that the two main things that came out of this were (1) the technology of O or “quarter” scale detailing parts seems to have improved by leaps and bounds in just a few recent years, and (2) “finishing touches” can in fact be a barrier to finishing at all. Of course, this is self-inflicted because my projects get more elaborate as they go.

In this project, my objective was to create a car truly fit for railroad barons doing their business; Big Shots and Captains of Industry as they were called in days of yore. Lionel's model of this car is full scale huge, which should make it easier to work on, right? Well, in fact... NO.

To start with, the stock interior assembly, which is two long rectangular one-piece moldings, is a fair representation of this car type, but it is also a let down due to the absence of any separately applied parts and the monotone color, as well as the

absence of any passenger figures. Originally, I did not intend to cut out and replace most of the stock interior features but that quickly yielded to baronial ideas. So, I ended up cutting away about 90% of the stock molding from the base.

The first photo shows where I started with the two staterooms at the rear of the car, what the second or forward half of the stock assembly looked like intact, and how far I ended up either discarding or modifying stock pieces. There's also a side view preview of the modified assembly test installed in the car.

Creating an accurate scale model of the prototype



Stock Assemblies

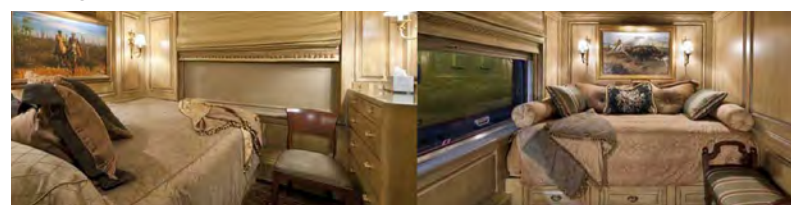
was not my intention, although I have seen it and

have a pretty good record of what it looked like after a major refit in about 2001. But it's been several years since I last saw this car and, in fact, I don't know whether it still has this interior scheme. No matter,

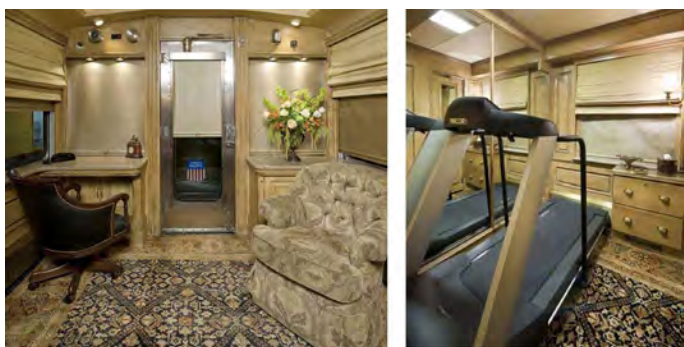


it was my idea of a rolling palace suitable for railroad barons. From the next sets of photos you can see that the car has extensive wood paneling, fairly ornate custom-built furniture and several other features, including a gym with a treadmill – presumably to help passengers work off lavish meals.

In the first collage of photos that follow, down the right side of the first collage I've arranged the views facing to the rear of the car.







Compartment views

I couldn't duplicate the very fine wood paneling with its all its recesses and moldings, and in the end, old reliable self-stick vinyl inkjet paper printed with woodgrain patterns yielded a decent facsimile of the walls. To this I added my own versions of wall art, also inkjet printed on specialty paper.

More will be said about that later but first a note on the 3D printed detail parts. One of the oddities of Lionel's stock interior is that there's a whole compartment, the bathroom between the staterooms, that, while fully detailed, is totally enclosed and invisible through the car windows. Go figure, except that in the real car that is also the case. Anyway, I opened it up so it could be seen from one side and decided to fit it out to basically the same lavish standard as the real thing.

The parts that I got for this, which in fact come from a lady who calls herself "Laser Shrink Ray," are incredibly fine.



Bathroom

Someone who really knows about 3D printing told me that these are, in fact, "resin" prints. This means that the substance is a liquid laid down at about a quarter of the thickness of standard 3D printing filament and cured by ultraviolet light. Apparently, there are home versions of these printers now and the available stock of ready-made resin

printed quarter scale interior parts is fairly substantial.

When I started scouring around for parts, I actually didn't know that so much was available, especially for the kitchen section of this car. I have always admired the Pullman-built diner kitchens of the classic streamliner era, and have built one example shown on a very early thread on the OGE. However, for this project I was looking for something different while echoing the vast stainless steel expanses of Pullman kitchens.

What I came up with was designed to be seen through two windows at the front end of the car.



Kitchen



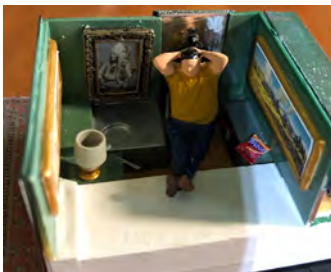
I know that this won't be to everybody's or maybe most O scale persons' tastes, but this is the section of the interior that I think is most accurate in proportion to the rest. Yes, the kitchen flooring is a little cutesy, but I could not resist. (Anyway, without casting aspersions, isn't anything to do with Polar Express cars just as whimsical as a tile with a spider on it?) The oven in the range is LED-illuminated and has a roast warming in it.

Note the reflective finish on this and other kitchen parts. It is a chrome ink called Molotow, which has been written about on train and other model forums. (It has a lot of potential uses where a reflective metal-like finish is required, is easier to spray through an airbrush than Alclad metal finishes, but will show any defects including fingerprints.)

As will be obvious from later photos, moving through the rest of the car towards the rear, the difference between my own hand molded parts and those that are computer assisted machine-made is glaringly obvious. Skipping out all the tedious intermediate steps in the build, to provide an idea of the whole, here's a couple of sidelong images. One shows the first "smoke test" to see if my Rube Goldberg wiring went up in it (it didn't).



Sidelong View



There's a total of 8 Evan Designs LEDs added to the interior as well as the stock overhead lighting.

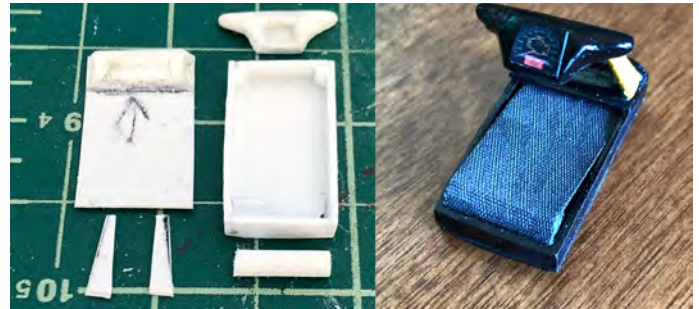


Crew Room

Moving on from the kitchen, the one compartment that is relatively intact from the stock assembly is the crew room. This has a 3D resin figure in it that is sold as "Big Jim" and he's putting his feet up and having a break.

The adjoining dining compartment got a major overhaul, one part of which I'll reserve explaining until the end of this article.

Next is the gym, where I ended up placing my own scratch-built parts. The interior photos show a treadmill that I decided to model. The way this turned out, it could only be for someone with a very short stride length.



Treadmill

That was fortuitous when I decided to put something else in this compartment. Rummaging through my interior parts, I found a quarter scale figure 8 toy train layout on a landscaped table. I have no idea when I got this, who from, or why. But I imagine that true railroad barons would demand a toy train layout in their business car and the excursion public would certainly find it interesting wouldn't they?



The only thing it lacked was a transformer, so I mocked up a ZW-L.



ZW-L Transformer

This was originally intended to be in the dining room within easy reach of the captain's or engineer's dining chair. But, even though I had to substantially scale down the ZW-L, the whole assembly ended up just too big to go there. It had to be placed elsewhere. The gratifying thing is that, by dumb luck, where it has been placed shows its best side to the main window.



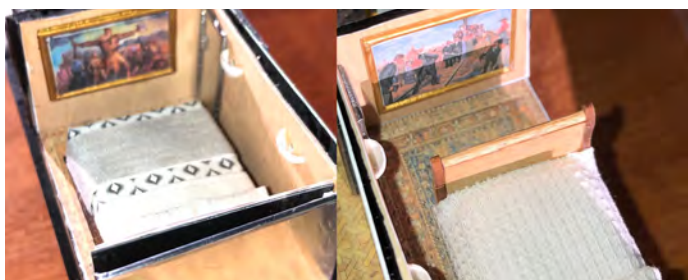


# Perilous Passenger Projects

The “Check Engine” graphic is on the mirrored wall (actually shiny metal tape) as well as the face of the treadmill panel, and, based on my own experience, is entirely suitable in a gym space.

Parts of the two staterooms are shown in previous photos. I haven’t fixed in place any furniture for them yet because I am not sure about using the full quarter scale pieces that I have as opposed to smaller and more prototypical daybeds as Lionel originally molded in. At an early stage I decided that instead of giving my stateroom occupants direct, convenient, and private access to their bathroom, it instead would be accessible via a sliding door in the stateroom passage.

Rather than ready bathroom access, they received inspiring wall art instead. “Tragic Prelude” featuring John Brown, a raging prairie fire, the Civil War, and a cyclone, might not be accounted a restful slumber-time subject. The other and bigger stateroom has an old painting of driving in the Golden Spike, which might be more appropriate.



Stateroom Wall Art

Finally we have arrived at what was my original inspiration for doing this car in the way that I have, the observation room at the end and the gigantic serpentine sofa that is shown in it. This is a really plush, as well as large piece, and, to reflect that, I wanted a fabric covering. But as far as I knew up until very recently, you simply could not get real fabric to adhere to complicated curves in this scale.

The result was that I resorted to what veteran model car builders from two or more generations back will remember as “flocking.” This involved having tiny cut fabric threads in a kind of plastic shaker which

were applied over a paint base. Talk about fuzzy dice, this too has come on in technical terms; now you can effectively get a felt surface by spraying a type of fabric dust over a special undercoat.

I wanted to give both the dining chairs and the sofa this treatment and, when I did, the pieces came out with a nice fuzzy texture.

The Sunset Gold fringe around the sofa base is my own tomfoolery. Over the sofa I added wall lights that were as close to the prototype as I could find ready-made. Wall sconces don’t seem to be a staple item in this scale.



Fuzzy Furniture

The picture on the wall is a nice rendition of a map of the Great Lakes. Not shown are a couple of armchairs I sourced that, to my amazement, do seem to have fabric coverings. I haven’t decided whether to use one of them or not. They are not small but neither are the originals.

Finally, critical readers who have gotten this far may note that currently there is only one occupant of this car.

Finding scale figures who are suitably dignified is not easy and the search continues. I also have some “novelty” pieces that I might put in just for amusement’s sake. When I do, I’ll post an update here or on the Forum. Meanwhile I have the satisfaction that this car actually fit back together properly despite all the things I crammed into it. I am not always so lucky but that’s another story. 🇺🇸

## About Andy De La Rosa (harborbelt52)

Andy has been an active scale modeler mostly during two periods; one when he was very young and the other now - when he most definitely is not (young). His original inspiration for 3rail O gauge trains was his Dad, who built a fairly large permanent layout in the old homestead. He has never been able to do likewise, and it was only long after his Dad passed that he understood exactly how devoted to the hobby he was. Passenger trains fit with his period/era of interest, and offer a substitute for the scenery and interior scenes he likes to think he would create for permanent display.

# Are You a Collector, or an Operator?

by John Henniges

“Toy train collector” and “toy train operator” seem to be the most-used words to describe people in our hobby. However, there are other terms of endearment for those of us who believe trains look better running on three rails instead of two.

My mother used to call my father a “junk-picker,” referring to his countless trips to garage sales, train meets, antique shops, and anywhere else he stood a chance of finding old toy trains for sale. Then there are the people who work on the real railroads, who refer to us as “foamers,” citing the notion that we “foam at the mouth” at the very sight of a train. Whatever the rest of the world calls us, the important thing is that we take it in stride and continue to enjoy the hobby and all the fun that goes along with it.

Back to the question at hand: Do you collect trains, or do you operate them?

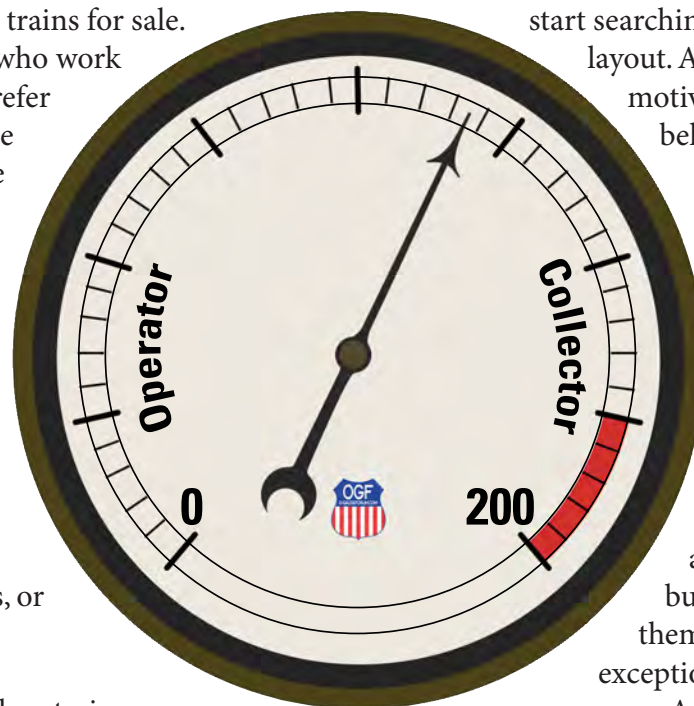
There are many of us who buy trains and never run them; we put them on shelves, sometimes even behind glass, and simply look at them. As I write this, I am reminded of the movie “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off,” in which Ferris, a high school senior, talks his friend Cameron into letting him take his father’s vintage Ferrari for a drive. Cameron tries to stop Ferris, explaining that his father never drives it, but instead just “rubs it with a diaper.”

Many of us who collect prewar tinsplate trains fit this mold. We spend many years - maybe even decades - searching high and low for that one special, elusive item; then, when we find it, we put it on a shelf and worship it.

Personally, I do not subscribe to this approach to the hobby. In my opinion, toy trains were made to

be run, and with proper care, even the most fragile trains can be run with minimal risk of damage. With very few exceptions, I operate every train in my collection. In fact, there are only two locomotives I do not operate. Both are in operating condition, but they require the solid steel “T-Rail” track that Lionel produced for just a few years before World War II. This track is extremely difficult to find, and although

I love the “thrill of the hunt,” I have no desire to start searching for enough of it to build a layout. As a result, these two locomotives will remain on display behind glass in my train room.



Then there are those of us who buy trains and never remove them from their sealed packaging. We buy them, brand-new, and stash them away. Maybe we buy them with intentions of building a layout but never get around to it; or perhaps we buy them in hopes of seeing them appreciate. With very few exceptions, that does not happen anymore. As someone once said to me,

“If you want to make a small fortune collecting toy trains, you have to start with a large fortune.”

The label that I believe applies to most of us is “operator.”

We buy our trains to run them. Many of us even modify them with state-of-the-art electronics and smoke units to enhance their performance. Stan Roy, a well-known O-gauge collector, once said, “I buy my trains to run them. If I wanted something to look at, I’d collect art.”

In my opinion, a toy train operator is also a collector. After all, how can we operate trains if we do not first accumulate or “collect” them? Some of us collect trains from only one railroad, or from railroads of a specific part of the U.S. Others collect only freight



trains or only passenger trains. Some collectors have homes large enough to house one of every item produced by a particular manufacturer. Some of us collect trains made only during a specific era, such as the years leading up to World War II.

For me, the reasons for adding a train to my collection are simple: if I like it and plan to run it, I will consider buying it, regardless of when it was made, and on which railroad its prototype ran. For example, visitors to my train room are sure to see the famous Jersey Central “Blue Comet” and Southern Pacific “Daylight” running side-by-side. While that

never really happened, I run the two trains together simply because I like them. What are your reasons for collecting trains? Do you buy them to run them, or do you simply like to admire them as they sit on a shelf in your home or office?

The ways to enjoy our hobby are nearly limitless, and there is no “right” or “wrong” way. While the rest of the world may not understand the love affair we have with our little trains, the important thing is that we enjoy them regardless of what anyone else thinks. Happy Collecting and Operating!! 🇺🇸



### About John Henninges

John was introduced to toy trains as an infant. He grew up watching his Dad build his tinplate collection and helped him build 3 layouts. John is a small-business owner. He is married to Sue and they have 2 cats, no kids. John is currently working on a layout in his new home. His other hobbies include: boating, sailing, fishing, water-skiing, and home improvement projects.

## NEW OGF Coffee Mugs!

Imagine beginning the day running trains with fresh cup of joe in your new OGF coffee mug. Your coffee will taste better and the caffeine will keep you on your toes for complex operations in the yard, and down the line. And as we all know, train layouts and friends naturally go together. So it would be prudent to have several OGF mugs on hand for entertaining around the layout as you show off your latest acquisition or creation. Get 'em while they're hot!



Just click here to order!  
<https://o-gaugeforum.com/page/shop>

# OGF 2021 Model Car Contest

by Paula Webb

April and May are the months when the annual OGF Model Car Contest is held. It is a fun contest with simple rules.

1. A member may enter one car or truck from his layout/collection.
2. The vehicle must be 1:43, 1:48, or 1:50 scale.
3. Once a vehicle has been chosen as champion, it is not eligible for future consideration.

The 2020 winner was a beautiful Brooklin Models 1935 Yellow Studebaker Commander Roadster that was entered by Emile and Jennifer.

Twenty members entered vehicles in this year's contest. As might have been expected, the majority were automobiles. There was a 75/25% split between autos and trucks. Many of our members have some very nice vehicles.

In 2021, we were honored to have three world-class highly experienced judges. The inclusion of three such august personalities was a benefit to all. The contest was a delightful and quality event. Many thanks to Brian for arranging for the judges.

Unfortunately, the member reception that was scheduled to be held at the offices of this magazine was cancelled due to covid. Ayala champagne, Ostrich Foie Gras, accompanied by Pule and Moose cheese were among the items on the menu.

On behalf of the contest committee, we want to thank all participants and supporters of this lovely event and we want to especially thank our winners whose selections were simply fabulous. 🇺🇸



First Place (Loganaustin04)

Logan, Austin, and Alice, with their winning vehicle

1935 Dodge Pickup "San Francisco Cable Car System" and trailer





Runner Up  
(Rattler 21)



Ford BB-157 Delivery Truck that serves  
the metal industry

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Third Place  
(Joeh)



1942 Packard Woody Wagon

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Second Place  
(fabforrest)



1938 Buick Series 80 Opera Brougham  
Fernandez & Darrin

Fourth Place  
(Railcat)



DIVCO (Detroit Industrial Vehicle Company)  
Milk Delivery Truck

---

Cooliest Car Award  
Mark Boyce



1949 Mercury by Ertl

# Sparky O's Workbench

## Repairing Missing Windows on a Lionel Legacy GP-35 Diesel

Today on the workbench, we have a Lionel Legacy GP35, Conrail #3630. This engine, like so many of it's recent brethren, arrived from across the pond with loose and/or missing windows. We have seen this with alarming frequency on several Lionel diesels that have full windowed cabs. The front windshield is almost never an issue, but the small front and rear windows, along with the larger double-pane side windows, seem to be coming loose the most.

If you take your brand new engine out of the box and discover missing windows, fear not! The windows are there, usually within the shell rattling around. This is a simple fix for most of these engines, although, if the thought of opening up your loco makes you as queasy as riding a bouncing boxcar, please leave it to the pros.



Engine Shot

### Step 1:

Do a thorough inspection of the windows themselves. Use a small toothpick to gently push on each window. If it moves, even slightly, it will need repair. You may even find that a window is half hanging out of the cab. Try to remove it completely with tweezers before repairing it.

### Step 2:

The first step in this repair is to remove the 8 tiny screws that affix the shell to the frame. These screws have gotten smaller over the past few years. Make sure you use the proper sized screwdriver to remove them and work on a highly padded surface or engine cradle to protect the shell.



8 Shell Screws

### Step 3:

Carefully lift the shell away from the chassis while being mindful that wires will still connect the shell to the PCBs on the frame. Do not stretch or pull these wires. There is no need to fully remove the shell. It will give you about 2"-2.5" clearance to repair the windows.



Shell Loose

### Step 4:

Retrieve any missing windows from inside the shell or chassis and observe how the remaining windows are cemented in place. Usually, there is a depression for the main "glass" that faces outward along with a "lip" that cements to the shell with small "U" shaped glue points. Small windows only have one U point.





U Channel on Window

#### Step 5:

Using tweezers or another suitable instrument, carefully place the window back in its place within the cab opening, bulging glass outward and seated into the frame.



Loose Windows

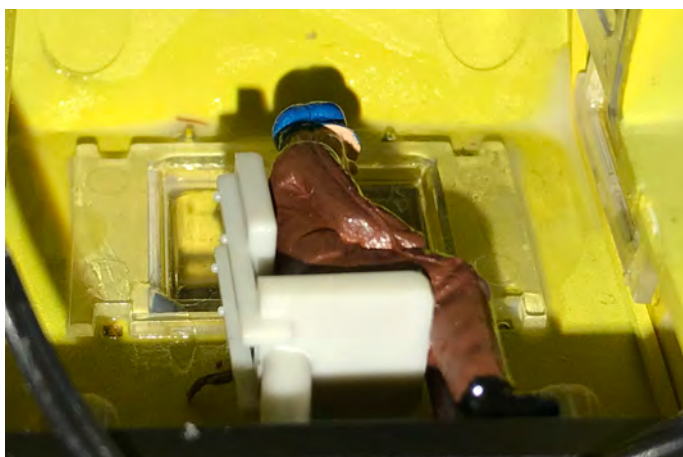
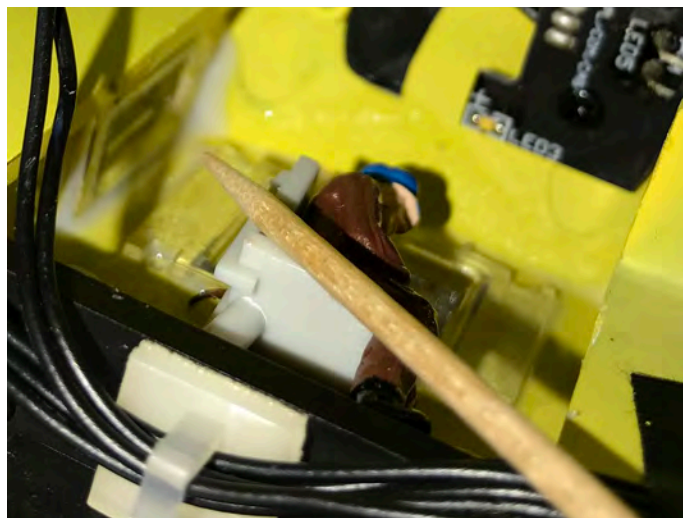
#### Step 6:

Cement the window back in place. DO NOT use super glue. Super glue will craze (or mist) up the window(s). It will look awful... unless you are going for that "frosted" window look. The cement that I use is Testors Window Maker. It comes out as a milky gel, but dries clear and strong, much like the old aircraft canopy cements. A bottle goes a LONG way. I think I've had mine for over seven years.



Window Glue

Carefully place a drop in the U notch. Watch the glue as the capillary action draws it around the frame for an even stronger repair. This window cement will take about 2 hours to gently handle and overnight to fully cure. So you may want to do one side of the cab per evening.



Glued Windows

The final step is to reposition the shell on the frame taking great care not to pinch or bind any wires that should neatly tuck into the body. Now put on your glasses and install the eight screws along the shell perimeter.

Don't forget to give the engine a test run with a frosty beverage in hand. You've earned it! 🇺🇸

# Foolproof Boxcar Flooring

by Walt Wehlauch

One of the easiest ways to improve the appearance of your boxcar fleet, especially with sliding doors open, is to paint and weather the molded floorboards. If your boxcars have only the metal black painted plain flooring, I will also show you how to make new flooring.

Step 1: Remove the wheel sets, usually just a screw on each. If not, then these can easily be masked off with painters tape along with newspaper. Tape the sides of the floor boards as evenly as possible with the top. Then tape paper over the wheels to completely cover the bottom.



Upside down car with no trucks

Step 2: Instead of washing the floor to remove any oil, grease, or molding release, I've always been successful just spraying lightly with electronic cleaner which can be found easily at Wal-Mart in the automotive section.

Step 3: Spray the flooring with Rust-Oleum Khaki Camouflage spray paint (also from Wal-Mart).

Step 4: After drying, give the flooring a wash of acrylic burnt sienna and brown oxide. I give random areas a bit thicker wash. Real boxcar floors are not a uniform color.



Upside down shell with partially completed floor

Step 5: After curing, brush on some black chalk powder in areas of your choice.

Step 6: When you achieve the look you prefer, give it a matte clear coat spray and, when dry, reassemble.



Completed Car

If your boxcar has no molded floor, just painted black metal, you can fabricate your own.

Step 1: Take a piece of 8-1/2 x 11 inch sheet of white paper, and use a ruler to draw lines 1/8" apart with a fine black pen.





Paper with lines drawn

Step 2: Using your ink jet printer, load either flat or semi-gloss photo paper (its thicker), print out a sheet and let the ink dry.

Step 3: Lightly wash the sheet with FolkArt's Coffee Latte Acrylic Paint (available at Hobby Lobby) and let it dry overnight. If you prefer, rather than wash with acrylic, use a soft brush with just a smudge of the above colors and go over the sheet. Remember you want to see the board lines, so use a gentle soft stroke over the sheet. I also use black chalk powder as well as browns.



Floor with lines drawn, sprayed floor with paint can

Step 4: When satisfied, give the sheet a Clear Matte coating spray.

Step 5: For gluing down the sheet, use Elmers Board Mate, a clear tube glue or Super Glue, spread evenly across the back.

One other thing that I do since the wheel set is off is spray it with electronics cleaner to remove oils and grease. Then spray with a flat black paint lightly followed by Airbrushing the wheelset with a rusty rail brown color.

Now when you run your boxcars with the doors open, they will look more realistic. 🇺🇸

## Get Your Official OGF Cap!

Show off your OGF Membership and promote our forum at all your train related events with these high quality baseball caps. These stylish caps come in three colors– camo, gold with a black bill or black. Quantities are very limited, so order yours today!



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### About Walt Wehlauch

Walt Wehlauch was born in Rechlin, Germany in 1945 and currently lives in Jacksonville, FL. When able, Walt joined the US Army. In fact, he was a US Army Ranger for the 82nd and 173rd, and served two tours of duty in Vietnam. As an adult, Walt spent 27 years as a Chemical Engineer for Amoco Chemical. Model railroading has always been in his blood from his first Marx wind-up train, but Walt has also enjoyed HO, N, and finally O Gauge. His second passion is flying, and has flown many WW2 fighters and bombers for airshows.

# Sponsor Feature

## JT's Mega-Steam Smoke Fluid

Jeb and Nancy Kriigel own a company which most of us recognize immediately and many of us have met one or both of them at train shows. They provide a totally American-Made (Virginia-made to be exact) product that we have a need for... Smoke Fluid.



Mega-Steam Product

About 18 years ago, Jeb had a large O-gauge layout and happened to meet a gentleman from New Jersey who had a hobby-business, JT's Mega-Steam Smoke Fluid. Jeb needed smoke fluid, tried some out, and found that it was quite a product, fifteen scents, perfect for steam engines.

Jeb and the owner got to know each other and eventually Jeb proposed that he take the product to train shows and do some direct marketing to people like him who were searching for a good smoke fluid. Many wanted something other than the expensive and generic stuff that was offered by the train manufacturers.



Mega-Steam in use

After about two years, the business was successful, very successful. In fact, it was more than the owner wanted to handle. So he and Jeb sat down and reached an agreement for Jeb and Nancy to acquire the company. They moved it to Palmyra, Virginia, near Charlottesville where it continues today.



Mega-Steam Eliminator

They continued to attend shows and to listen to what their prospective and existing customers said they wanted. Fifteen scents grew to fifty different scents and formulas. Among other things, Jeb knew one thing was definitely true, "If she is not happy, you are not happy."



And so the company has always tried to produce a product that does not offend others who live in the same house. No, you can't please everyone, but with fifty scents, one of which is unscented, you can come pretty close.



Mega-Steam fine-point dispensers

Quality control is something that Jeb discussed. It is vitally important to he and Nancy that their product be formulated properly every time. They remain hobbyists, run mostly steam O-gauge, and understand the desire of their customers for something that works and remains the same. If it isn't broke, please, please, do not fix it. So their product is made in Virginia, close by, where questions can be answered and any problems solved quickly.

*"We are passionate about the model railroad hobby and very passionate about producing Mega-Steam Smoke Fluid."* - Jeb Kriigel

Railroading has been passed down to the next generation in the Kriigel household. Their son is an engineer for CSX and his route is Richmond to Suffolk— a very busy container route, which is known for very long, slow speed trains that sometimes have to be divided to prevent delays.



Mega-Steam in action

Please take a look at the information on the company's website:  
<http://megasteam.com/index.html>

And the next time that you are at a train show where Mega-Steam is present, be sure to stop by and chat with Jeb. 🇺🇸



Jeb and Nancy

# Member Photo Gallery

Thanks to so many of you for the great photos. Obviously a great deal has been going on and our talented members have made good use of their time.

Want to submit a photo to the magazine? Send it to the editor by e-mail and she will handle it. 🇺🇸

## Photos By Mark Boyce

Mark continues to make excellent progress on his Blackwater Canyon Line. He borrowed a technique from someone and motorized his bridge which now lifts out of the way. Recently he achieved a personal milestone when he was able to run the coal drag that he has envisioned for many years. He posted a video of 10 2-bay hoppers pulled by PS3 #734 and PS2 #830 and pushed by PS2 #844, followed by a premier caboose. His comment, "I consider this a major success!"



Lift Bridge



Western Maryland leads the consist



Crossing the Bridge





Coal Drag looks great



Headed up hill



Pushing the end



## Photos By Don McCuaig

Don McCuaig is new to the Forum but not to many of our members. He authors a column, Editor At Large; be sure to visit it in this issue. Don lives in Lahina on the island of Maui and enjoys diving, fishing, and model railroading. He also has some strange pets. 🇺🇸



It took four policemen to remove this visitor

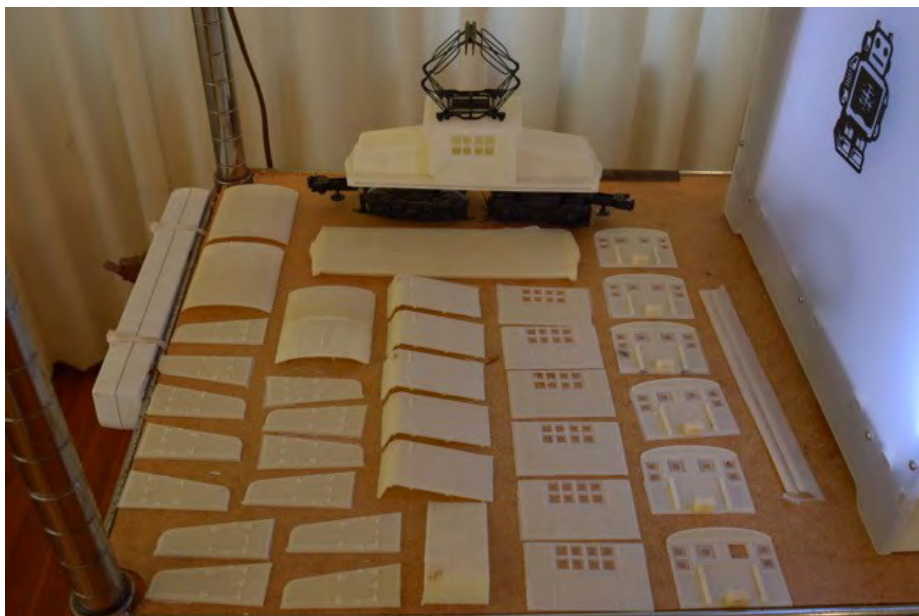


You find these a half mile or so away



Roundhouse at Night. Korber roundhouse and MTH fan driven smoke unit





Laser cut Steeple Cab Project



Significant Progress



Completed Steeple Cab



## Photos By George Lazar (Laz57)

George Lazar submitted his first of many columns this month. What better topic could he have had than a new engine review on the new Lionel Legacy 10 Wheelers. The narrative praised the engines smoke output, both stack and whistle steam. Except the stack photos showed no smoke or a tiny stream, hardly anything to brag about. So we e-mailed George.

Soon we received a return. He obviously had been holding back. 🇺🇸



Now, this is smoke!



Killing Every Mosquito in the State

Other photos of the locomotives were just as good; remember these are \$6-700 engines. And we get to see a lot of George's layout. Very nice!



Good Detail





Busy Layout



The OGF Hopper Car



Nice Cab



## Photos By Bill Webb

Bill and Paula recently completed a Dennis Brennan 7 stall roundhouse that even Covid could not prevent. Dennis did a beautiful job on this kit, the only plaster roundhouse that has been available. His kit instructions were incredibly good.

Expect to see more in an upcoming article. 🇺🇸



Plaster Walls



Apply paint and JB Weld



Assemble the wall sections

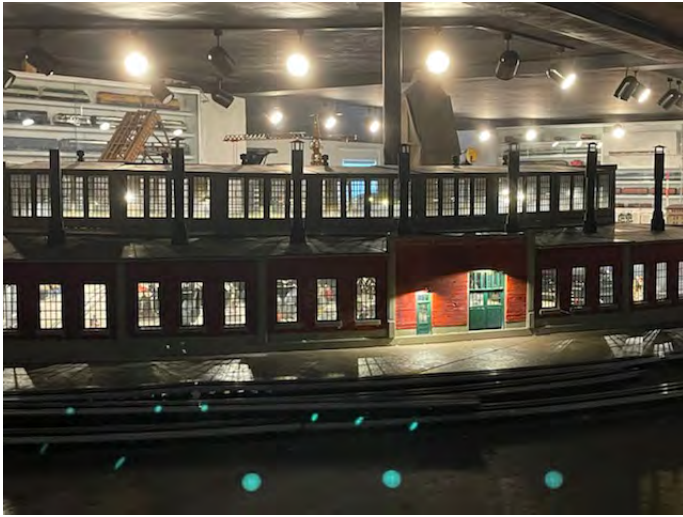


Add the clerestory



100 LEDs, add interior stuff & 50 people





35 Individually cut roof sections



Bill and Paula Webb sent in these photos of their niece Caroline examining the new roundhouse on the layout.

She spent about 10 minutes inspecting their hard work through every window!



**Back cover photo by:  
Sean Dalton**

## **How to Submit an Article to Tractive Effort**

- 1)** Pick a topic that you are passionate about.
- 2)** Write about your topic in your own words. NOTE: We cannot accept text cut and pasted from the internet or another published source. This includes Wikipedia, ebooks or websites.
- 3)** Take some photos of your project or topic to add interest. NOTE: We cannot accept photos from other sources without explicit WRITTEN permission by the owner of the photo who will be credited. You will be asked to provide the proper permission documentation. Just because an image may be all over the internet, does not give you the right to use someone else's work without permission.
- 4)** Submit all text in Word or email text format.
- 5)** Submit all images in .jpg format with enough resolution for good reproduction. (1-3mb each)
- 6)** Don't be afraid to ask questions! We are here to help.
- 7)** Submit your materials to the Editor at: [oldhokie70@charter.net](mailto:oldhokie70@charter.net)