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# CLASSIC TOY TRAINS



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O and S gauge for the operator and collector

February 2016

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**1946**

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LIONEL

CLOSEOUTS

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MTH

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## The year of the lion

IN 1946, LIONEL KICKED OFF THE POSTWAR TRAIN BOOM

For many years, Senior Editor Roger Carp and longtime contributor (since issue no. 2!) Joe Algozzini have teamed up to present a year-by-year overview of Lionel postwar production. I always look forward to these articles, but Joe and Roger's "Lionel sets for 1946" (starting on page 48) is something special.

In many ways, the modern toy train hobby was born in 1946, 70 years ago. After all, Lionel (along with A.C. Gilbert and Marx) had been exclusively engaged in wartime production starting in 1942. Government restrictions on wartime electric train production were lifted in 1945. Lionel's trade catalog that year was just four pages long!

In 1946, Lionel was back in the swing of electric train production with all the resources and people it needed to manufacture a wide-ranging line in substantial quantities.

As Joe and Roger note, "With that push came an aggressive marketing plan that

included issuing three catalogs and placing advertisements in newspapers, trade publications, and mass-circulation magazines. The boldest move might have been inserting a 16-page catalog in the November 23, 1946, issue of *Liberty*, a general-interest magazine.

In 1946, Lionel found itself confronted with an aggressive and innovative competitor with A.C. Gilbert's introduction of S gauge American Flyer electric trains.

In 1946, Lionel already had a half-century of train-making experience. On the other hand, Gilbert was promoting its S gauge products from scratch. Additionally, much of that company's efforts were devoted to building up its successful Erector Set line of products.

What would have happened if Lionel and Gilbert started the postwar era on an even footing? Would things have turned out differently if Gilbert had exclusively manufactured toy trains?

All this year we will be running articles marking 70 years of S gauge trains.

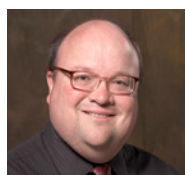


You can look for the first of these, focusing on the top cataloged Flyer sets from 1946, in the March issue.

Seventy years ago, the battle lines were drawn, three rails versus two. The pressure to constantly innovate, the drive to outdo the competition with better trains, more reliable mechanisms, and wonderful accessories made the O and S gauge electric train hobby what it is today.

Who won the battle of the postwar manufacturing titans? We all did!

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Before preparing an article, contact us to determine whether we're interested.

Guidelines for writing articles and taking photographs are available from our Web site.

Clear, sharp photographs are essential. Digital

images must be taken with a 3.3-megapixel or better camera. Articles are paid for on acceptance.

We encourage you to share opinions about stories in *Classic Toy Trains* and about our hobby in our Reader Correspondence column.

Questions about toy trains should be directed to our Q&A column.

Layout and other tips should be directed to our Tips, Tools, & Techniques column.

If you are a manufacturer or supplier and would like to see your products in our News or Reviews columns, please write, send an e-mail to [editor@classictoytrains.com](mailto:editor@classictoytrains.com), or call 262-796-8776 for information.

*Classic Toy Trains* assumes that letters, new product information, and other unsolicited materials are contributed gratis.

# CLASSIC TOY TRAINS

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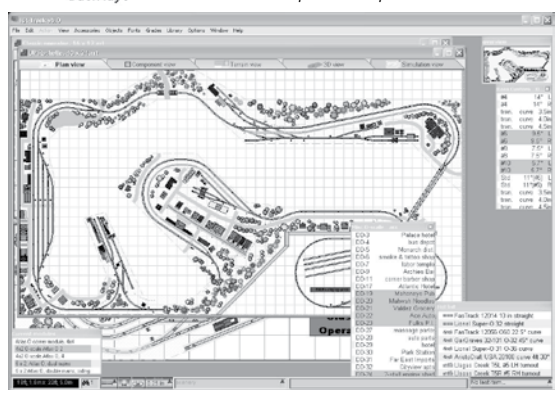


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## KUDOS FOR SPECIAL PUBLICATION, LOU PALUMBO

### “Lionel Trains” a hit

I just finished reading your special publication, *Lionel Trains: Best Layouts and Store Displays*. Roger Carp is to be complimented on this excellent contribution to the history of Lionel and toy trains.



It also invoked memories – I remember seeing the Lionel display layouts at “Joe, the Motorists’ Friend” stores in central Pennsylvania in the 1950s and ’60s. They were big on Lionel and had a large selection, including display layouts. My Dad and I would head for Joe’s stores right after Thanksgiving. We were hooked on trains then – and still are!

*Rod Henshaw  
Des Moines, Iowa*

### Holiday memories

I just received the December *Classic Toy Trains*. Lou Palumbo’s column was wonderful! I am of the same vintage as Lou. I grew up not far from him in the Pittsburgh area and had similar holiday experiences. I, too, would go Christmas shopping with my mother and grandmother in Pittsburgh in the 1950s. We would visit all of the department stores to view the holiday windows. They all had

trains in the displays, which made me dream of the wonders that would be in the Toylands on the upper floors.

My mother would take me to the train department in each store and leave me there while she shopped. I had instructions to meet her at the elevator at a certain time. I would ogle all of the factory train displays and dream of having at least one of everything on display.

Sadly, those simple and safe times are gone. In September, the last department store in downtown Pittsburgh (Macy’s, formerly Kaufmann’s) closed its doors.

Keep up the good work Lou.

*Richard Sheats  
Ligonier, Pa.*

I have just read Lou Palumbo’s “The Magic of the Circle” column in the December issue. What wonderful imagery has been captured and put into words! My American Flyer layout still circles its way through Plasticville. I am retired, but those trains evoke a boy’s imagination.

*Ken Baker  
Millersburg, Ohio*

### Corrections

The wiring for the Lionel no. 1656 switcher in the November issue on page 18 is in error. The wire on the right side is a ground not power. The light and the bell

operate from the roller pickup. The wiring suggested is for prewar engines only, such as a no. 1662 or 203, since many of the tenders did not have a roller pickup.

*Virgil Dobeck  
Gulfport, Fla.*



It was nice to see the product announcement for the American Models S gauge Alco RS-11 in the December 2015 issue. However, the impression is given in the copy that the models are available with one or two motors. American Models diesel locomotives have one horizontal motor driving both trucks. The RS-11s are available as a single powered locomotive or as a pair of powered locomotives, at the prices stated.

*Rich Gajnak  
Westchester, Ill.*

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LIONEL 'SUPER' SALE table listing various train sets and prices, including Vision PRR Centipede, Pennsylvania Sharknose, and NYC Sharknose.

LIONEL ITEMS - OPERATED table listing various Lionel EP-5 Electric, W&ARR 4-4-0 General, and other locomotives.

MTH RAILKING (new, unless noted) table listing various MTH locomotives like Lackawanna 0-8-0 w/Proto 2.0 and Union Army 4-4-0 General.

MTH 'PREMIER' (new, unless noted) table listing various MTH Premier locomotives like Northern Pacific F-3 Powered B and New Haven FA-2 ABA's.

LIONEL STANDARD GAUGE table listing various Lionel Standard Gauge locomotives like Milw. Road Hiawatha Passenger Set.

LIONEL TINPLATE 'O' table listing various Lionel Tinplate O-gauge locomotives like Milw. Road Hiawatha Passenger Set.

MTH TINPLATE TRADITIONS table listing various MTH Tinplate locomotives like MTH Electric Green and MTH Standard Gauge.

LARGE GROUP OF PREMIER CARS ON WEBSITE table listing various MTH Premier cars and sets.

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LIONEL DIESELS w/LEGACY table listing various Lionel Diesel locomotives like Canadian National GP-9 #4463 and Penna. Centipede #A.

LIONEL 2015 XMAS LINE table listing various Lionel Christmas-themed locomotives like Santa's Reserve Cocoa Tank Car and Candy Cane Flatcar.

LIONEL PREMIUM BOXED SETS table listing various Lionel Premium boxed sets like N&W J & Hoppers Weathered Set and PRR Canadian Pacific GP-9.

STEAM LOCO. - CONVENTIONAL table listing various Lionel Steam Locomotives like Norfolk & Western Class-J and Boston & Albany Hudson #784.

LIONEL PROMOTIONAL SETS table listing various Lionel Promotional sets like Mobil Oil Steam Freight Set and Quaker Oats Steam Freight Set.

LIONEL CHRISTMAS ITEMS table listing various Lionel Christmas items like 1986-1998 Christmas Boxcars and 1999 Christmas Boxcar.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVES w/LEGACY table listing various Lionel Steam Locomotives with Legacy sets like S.P. Cab-Forward AC-12 #4294 and B&O EM-1-2-8-2.

OPER/NON-OPER ACCESSORIES table listing various Lionel accessories like Animated Newsstand, Icing Station, and Refreshment Stand.

LIONEL SETS w/TUBULAR TRACK table listing various Lionel sets with tubular track like CSX SD-18 Freight Set and Amtrak RS-3 Work Train Set.

LIONEL BOXED SETS table listing various Lionel Boxed Sets like Chessie Royal Ltd. Diesel Frt. Set and Mid Atlantic Seaboard SD-9 Frt. Set.

K-LINE BY LIONEL STATE CARS table listing various K-Line locomotives by state like Kansas Quarter State Hopper Car and Oregon Quarter State Boxcar.

POSTWAR CLASSIC REMAKES table listing various Lionel Postwar Classic Remakes like P&C U.S. Navy Alco 'AB' Set and P&C Illinois Central F-3 'AB' Set.

DEALER EXCLUSIVE SETS table listing various Dealer Exclusive sets like B&M Paul Revere GP-9 Set and Boston & Maine GP-9 w/Railsounds.

ALUMINUM PASSENGER SETS table listing various Aluminum Passenger Sets like 93 Southern Pacific Daylight 15' 5-Cars and 98 NYC 15' 5-Car Set.

HEAVYWEIGHT PASSENGER CARS table listing various Heavyweight Passenger Cars like 19087 19010 Chesapeake & Ohio 6-Cars and 25655 Blue Comet 4-Car Set.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVES w/LEGACY table listing various Lionel Steam Locomotives with Legacy sets like S.P. Cab-Forward AC-12 #4294 and B&O EM-1-2-8-2.





**Lionel RTR Transformer Sets**

Table listing Lionel RTR Transformer Sets with item numbers and prices. Includes items like Lone Ranger Set, CN Maple Leaf Set, BNSF GP-20 Freight Set, etc.

**Lionchief Remote Set**

Table listing Lionelchief Remote Sets with item numbers and prices. Includes items like SF Scout Steam Set, Alien Diesel Set, SF Diesel Scout Set, etc.

**Thomas the Tank**

Table listing Thomas the Tank items with item numbers and prices. Includes items like Percy w. Lionchief Remote, James w. Lionchief Remote, Diesel w. Lionchief Remote, etc.

**Polar Express**

Table listing Polar Express items with item numbers and prices. Includes items like Santa Add On Figures, Original Figure Pack, Caribou Figures, etc.

**Christmas**

Table listing Christmas items with item numbers and prices. Includes items like Polar RR Legacy K-4, Polar RR Conv. K-4, Christmas People, etc.

**Lionel Gift Items**

Table listing Lionel Gift Items with item numbers and prices. Includes items like Lionel Hat, Lionel Logo/Locomotive Ornament, 1942 Catalog Ornament, etc.

**MLB Items**

Table listing MLB Items with item numbers and prices. Includes items like Oakland Athletics Boxcar, Boston Red Sox Boxcar, Los Angeles Angels Boxcar, etc.

**Lionel Accessories**

Table listing Lionel Accessories with item numbers and prices. Includes items like #154 RR Crossing Flasher, #70 Yard Lights 3 Pcs, Old Style Clock, etc.

**Lionel Rolling Stock**

Table listing Lionel Rolling Stock items with item numbers and prices. Includes items like AT&SF Map & Slogan Reefer, PRR GLA 50 Ton Hopper 3p, CB&Q GLA 50 Ton Hopper 3p, etc.

# PHOTO ALBUM

YOUR PICTURES



## ▲ CHARLIE JONES' O GAUGE LAYOUT

Outside the building in Jonestown, Pa., where Charlie Jones operates his 28 x 28-foot O gauge tribute to the state of Pennsylvania, you read the latest news about Philadelphia sports teams and the current candidates for the state legislature. Stroll inside, however, you're pulled back 75 years to the time when the Pennsylvania RR ruled the rails of the Keystone State. Charlie, whose layout will soon be in *Classic Toy Trains*, sent a 2-8-2 Mikado from Lionel (no. 38616) past a Walthers switch tower and a Lionel reissue of its postwar no. 462 derrick platform (no. 24173) for photographer Paul Dolkos to shoot.



**SEND US YOUR BEST PICTURES** of toy trains to CTT Photo Album, 21027 Crossroads

Circle, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612. Include your name, address, and telephone number; a description of each image, including the gauge and make of the train; and the name of the photographer or layout owner if he or she is someone other than you. Digital photos must be taken with the camera set at the largest-possible file size. Digital photos can be submitted on a disk or CD emailed to [photoalbum@ClassicToyTrains.com](mailto:photoalbum@ClassicToyTrains.com). If you send us a photo and it is published, we will pay you \$50 as long as we have not previously bought it.



### ▲ BERGEN COUNTY MODEL RAILROAD CLUB'S STANDARD GAUGE DISPLAY

There is always something special about watching Standard gauge trains driving through realistic settings. It doesn't matter whether they're prewar originals or contemporary reissues, including this handsome passenger set from MTH. Little wonder the annual exhibit created by members of the Bergen County Model Railroad Club earns high praise from viewers, regardless of whether they're members of the toy train hobby or families looking for fun. Club member John McHugh, who lives in Ho-Ho-Kus, N.J., made sure the picture he snapped of the display in Pearl River, N.Y., reached us at *Classic Toy Trains*. Then he pointed out with pride how the club built the layout in only three weeks.

## PHOTO ALBUM



### ▲ MANNY RONDINONE'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Tired of driving through snowstorms and walking into blustery winds? Sick of waking up with a hacking cough only to see a gloomy sky? Manny Rondinone has just the answer for winter doldrums. Let him run trains on the O gauge railroad he built in the backyard of his home in Whiting, N.J.! Amid the colorful flowering perennials and hardy conifers, Manny has created a three-rail network for his MTH road diesels to pull freight cars. A garden railway may not be what we usually show in *Classic Toy Trains*, but it definitely looks like fun!



### ◀ ROBERT CONE'S O GAUGE MODEL RAILROAD

Sharon and Robert Cone really hoped winter was over for the people living on their O gauge layout in Mulberry, Fla. Yet when one lazy shopkeeper forgot to take down the Christmas decorations as February dawned, well, they should have known frigid days and snowy nights might return. That is exactly what happened a week ago, as you can tell from the picture Robert shot of the model railroad showcased in the December 2014 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. The heat emanating from the blazing firebox inside the prewar American Flyer 4-8-4 Union Pacific steam locomotive keeps the engineer and fireman warm on this morning.



## PHOTO ALBUM



### ▲ JOHN DAVIS'S GAUGE LAYOUT

No big screen TVs fill John Davis' train room. Visitors won't find sports memorabilia on display. So John doubts anyone will consider this a "man cave." Still, for lovers of American Flyer S gauge trains from the post-World War II period, John's room is heaven. When his friend Cal Sumner stopped by the Davis residence in Noblesville, Ind., he made sure to photograph the trains and accessories cataloged by the A.C. Gilbert Co. Favorites of both men include the colorful tank cars riding behind a no. 372 Union Pacific GP7 road diesel.

### ► RICHARD KUNZ'S O GAUGE MODEL RAILROAD

Are you ready to travel back in time to the first decade of the postwar era? Great! You see, Richard Kunz believes he can do just that whenever he operates trains over his 16 x 24-foot O gauge model railroad. The Cloverleaf & Coon Valley RR, as he has named his layout, occupies a finished section of the Kunz residence in Clintonville, Wis. Thanks to this picture shot by Harley Dubeck, we are admiring an MTH Chicago, Burlington & Quincy *Zephyr* as it powers past the Wisconsin Wireworks (constructed from scratch by Richard) on the upper level. Below, a Union Pacific freight train disappears into a long tunnel.



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# PRODUCT NEWS

WITH BOB KELLER

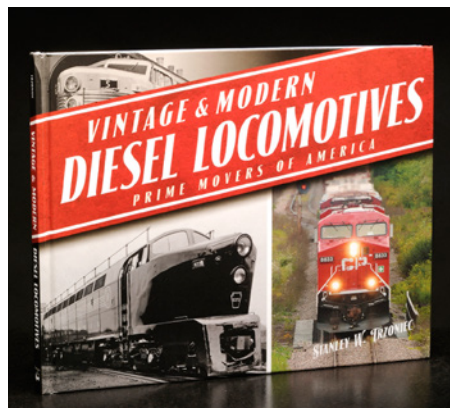


## ◀ TWO PANELS ARE BETTER THAN ONE:

Panel vans get a luxury ride with the no. 279-3053 Santa Fe flatcar with two panel trucks from Menards. The vehicles are die-cast metal, and the O gauge flatcar has die-cast metal trucks and couplers. The model sells for \$24.99 plus shipping (free shipping to your local Menards) and is available at [www.menards.com](http://www.menards.com).



▶ **PLAIN LOCO:** Popular classic and current locomotives are profiled in *Vintage & Modern Diesel Locomotives: Prime Movers of America*, the latest book from *Classic Toy Trains* contributor Stan Trzoniec. The 160-page volume covers locomotives built by Alco, Baldwin, Electro-Motive Division of General Motors, Fairbanks-Morse, and General Electric as seen in 220 full-color and black-and-white photos. The book, published by Voyageur Press, costs \$35 and is available through book retailers or through the publisher at [www.quartoknows.com](http://www.quartoknows.com).



▲ **EMPRESS OF THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR:** Lionel has added its first non-steam locomotive to the O gauge Vision line. The venerable GG1, workhorse of the Pennsylvania RR's electrified lines, and later serving Conrail and Amtrak, will be offered as a welded (smooth shell) and a slightly less streamlined version commemorating the first GG1, the riveted steel hull no. 4800. The model features automatically raising and lowering pantographs, dual can-style motors, smoke unit (for steam heat generation), coil couplers, a catenary arc lighting effect, and Lionel's Legacy command and sound systems. At press time the price is yet to be determined. For more information go to [www.visionline.lionel.com](http://www.visionline.lionel.com).





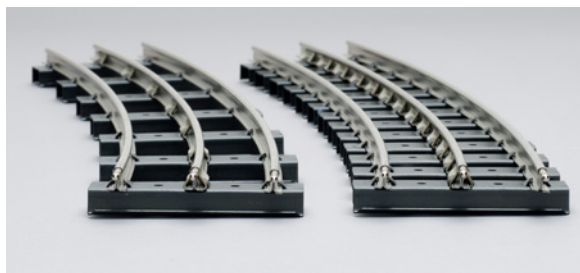
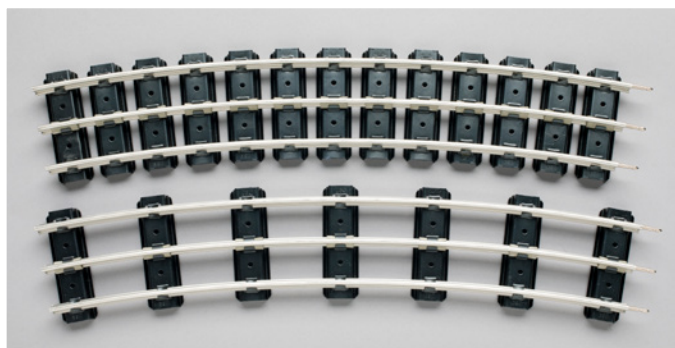
◀ **FROM OUT OF THE SKIES:** The New England Division of the Train Collectors Association is offering a custom-run MTH 8,000-gallon tank car festively decorated for Red Baron Aviation Fuels. The O gauge car is a limited edition of 300, and is a fundraiser to support the 2018 TCA national convention in Warwick, R.I. You need not belong to the TCA to order this car. The tanker costs \$55 plus \$6 shipping. Make your check out to NETCA Convention 2018 and mail it to Dennis Ingalls, 220 Dean St., Norton, MA 02766.



▲ **BE A POWER KING:** The latest structure from Menards is the no. 279-3051 Menards Power & Light building. The O gauge compatible building has two illuminated signs ("Menards Power & Light" and "Harvey Hotwatts"), interior decoration, Jack the German Shepherd, and LED illumination. The structure comes fully assembled and decorated and costs \$99.99 plus shipping (free shipping to your local Menards). Go to [www.menards.com](http://www.menards.com) to check availability or to order.

▶ **A NEW STANDARD FOR STANDARD GAUGE OPERATORS:**

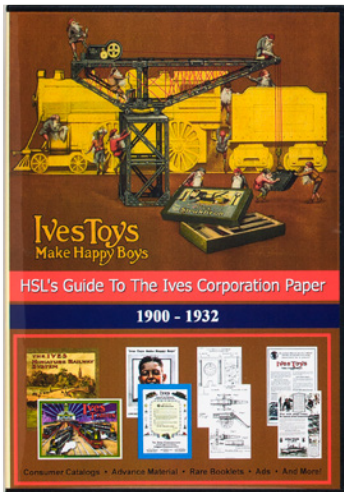
USA Track LLC has resumed production of track formerly made by EBR Products. The Standard gauge track features tinplated steel rails, heavy gauge steel ties, nickel-plated steel track pins, and robust fiber insulators. Track offered includes full and half-straight and curves and a variety of options for the number of ties on your track. Half-straight (2, 3 or 5 ties), full straight (4, 6, or 11 ties), 36-inch straight (7, 13, or 25 ties). Half-curves with 42-inch-diameter (3 or 5 ties), full curves with 42-inch-diameter (5, 9, or 13 ties), full curves with 57-inch-diameter (5 or 9 ties), full curves with 72-inch-diameter (6 or 11 ties), full curves with 84-inch-diameter (7 or 13 ties), and full curves with 87-inch-diameter (7 or 13 ties). For pricing and additional information, go to [www.standardgauge-track.com](http://www.standardgauge-track.com) or email [standardgauge-track@gmail.com](mailto:standardgauge-track@gmail.com).



## PRODUCT NEWS

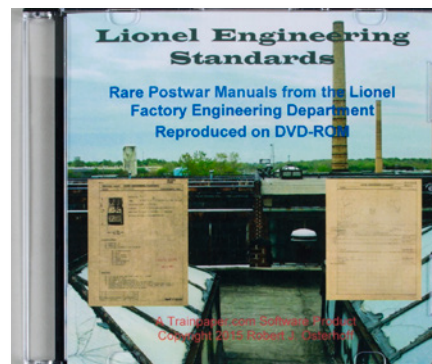


▼ **SEHR GUTE:** Add a sour but tasty product to your O gauge industrial park! The no. 279-3073 Herman's Sauerkraut factory from Menards is a fully assembled, decorated, and weathered structure sure to bring a smile to many a hotdog fan. The building has an illuminated and animated "Herman's Sauerkraut" sign, two yard lights, a blinking red light on the silo, figures, and sauerkraut vats. The structure costs \$89.99 plus shipping (free shipping to your local Menards) and is available at [www.menards.com](http://www.menards.com).



▲ **RAIDERS OF THE IVES ARCHIVES:** Prewar historians will love the latest DVD from Hybrid Systems Inc.: *HSL's Guide to the Ives Corporation Paper 1900-1932*. The disc contains consumer catalogs from 1901 to 1932, consumer and retailer pricing information, and other documents that total 57 catalogs, folders, and flyers. Additional content includes *How Six Boys Built a Railroad* (1912) and *The Railroad That Six Boys Built* (1915), 90 magazine ads, and 70 Ives patents. The DVD costs \$50 plus \$5 shipping. Order online at [www.hslinc.com](http://www.hslinc.com).

► **A HOBBY LIFESTYLE CAPTURED ON CANVAS:** For many years Angela Trotta Thomas has used her artistic skills to capture the warmth, fun, and nostalgia of the toy train world. She has now gathered more than 100 of her classic paintings in a single volume, *Painting an American Icon: The Lionel Train Art of Angela Trotta Thomas*. The premium quality book is available in five purchasing options, starting at \$72 (\$65 for the book and \$7 shipping) and climbing to \$718 (\$695 plus \$23 shipping for an artist's proof book with an original study painting of the cover as well as a 16 x 20-inch Giclee canvas print of the cover art). Learn more about this collection of iconic art by going to [www.angelatrottathomas.com](http://www.angelatrottathomas.com) to select the ordering option of your choice.



◀ **THE STANDARDS OF THE STANDARD BEARER:** The latest dive into the documentation of the Lionel Corp. by Robert Osterhoff digs into the Engineering Department with *Lionel Engineering Standards*. The DVD ROM contains postwar manuals from the engineers at the Hillside N.J., factory and includes more than 675 pages of detailed blueprint information. It even includes a page on the secret formula of Lionel SP smoke pellets. The DVD costs \$40 plus \$2.50 shipping, and is available from Robert Osterhoff, 1622 Garden Valley Dr., Wildwood, MO 63038. Call 636-458-3659 or order online at [www.trainpaper.com](http://www.trainpaper.com).





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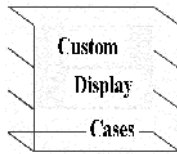
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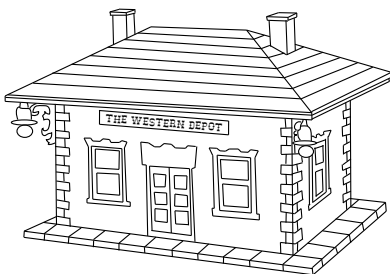
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Monorail sets include 1 powered car with interior lighting, two non-powered cars with interior lighting, 16 die-cast hangar bases, 16 metal hangers, 8 curved rail sections, and 8 straight rail sections with the assembled oval measuring 42.5" by 118".



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## QUESTIONS • ANSWERS

WITH JOSEPH L. MANIA AND THE CTT STAFF



## Die-cast metal failures of the prewar era

THE "ZINC PEST" LIVES ON IN OUR OLD DIE-CAST METAL TRAINS

**Q** I have an American Flyer O gauge no. 565 4-4-2 Atlantic steam engine and tender. The problem is that the chassis and boiler won't separate. I've removed every screw I can find, but the prewar model won't come apart. What am I missing? – David Liggins, El Centro, Calif.

**A** A problem that has plagued die-cast metal trains of that period is known as "zinc pest." It is the deterioration of the metal and is caused by different factors. The metal has a tendency to warp, become brittle and crack, swell, or disintegrate. Your problem might be due to two mating parts (or just one) having swollen or shrunk and so made more or less a press fit to the other part. If this is the case, pulling them apart will likely break one of the parts. But even if it doesn't, it will be difficult to reassemble them.

### LIONEL DIESEL GETS TOO HOT

**Q** I have a Lionel no. 8480 Union Pacific F3 diesel (cataloged in 1984). It comes with two Pullmor motors and a drum reverse unit. When I put it on my layout it runs fine and goes forward and backward but it is drawing 4.5 amps. All the wires inside and the E-unit get very warm, and I am afraid I am going to burn up the drum or contact fingers on the reverse or fry some wires. Is there anything I can do to lower these amps? I have taken the motors apart, cleaned, and greased them and oiled and greased the power trucks. I have even taken the motor brushes out and cleaned them. What do you recommend? – Leo Ruble, West Covina, Calif.

**A** If you're certain the motors are operating properly, I would turn my attention to the E-unit. Make sure the fingers are clean and properly tensioned and the drum is also clean. Remember that the cur-

rent going to the motors passes through the fingers and drum of the reverse unit first. Best of luck with your project, Leo!

### CONVENTIONAL OR COMMAND?

**Q** I recently visited a train shop for the first time in 30 or 40 years. I wanted to get an O gauge train for around the tree and maybe set something up in the basement. But I was blown away by the variety of trains and command systems. I just want to run a train around the tree. It seems to me like you could spend a lot of money up front and still not get what you need.

Could you explain the difference between running your train with a power pack versus running it in the command mode? I tried asking in the shop and was bombarded with enough facts about proprietary systems I think I knew less when I left, than when I walked in. – George Eberle, New York, N.Y.

## REPLACING BULBS IN LIONEL HEAVYWEIGHT CARS

**Q** How do I replace the bulbs in Lionel no. 2600-series heavy-weight passenger cars from the late prewar and early postwar eras? How do I get inside the cars without damaging them? – Jay Snell, Austin, Texas

**A** Flip the car over. The sockets holding the bulbs need to be removed from beneath the car.

**A** For locomotive control it is pretty basic. Without getting into some intricacies of some of the electronic reverse units it comes down to this:

Conventional control regulates the speed of the locomotive by raising and lowering the track voltage. Directional change occurs by interrupting the track voltage (dropping it down to, or very near) zero volts. The reverse sequences forward, neutral, reverse, neutral, forward for three-position units and toggles back and forth between forward and reverse in two-position ones.

If more than one locomotive is placed on the track at one time, all will speed up and slow down with changes in track voltage and react directionally to voltage interruptions.

Command control is a bit different. Although there are several different variants among the manufacturers, the basic premise is the same. The track voltage is constant (for O gauge typically 18 volts AC).

The locomotive has a digital receiver that is addressed by a digital controller. The controller sends commands to the receiver, which interprets and executes them. Speed and directional control are handled internally. This way several locomotives can be controlled independently on the same track at the same time with the remote controller.

Minor changes in track voltage usually make no difference in operation (unless the voltage drops below the operational threshold of the locomotive(s)). Interruptions in the voltage will have no effect on the direction. Of course a total interruption in track voltage will stop the locomotive. Let us know what you decide to do. **CTT**

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## AMERICAN FLYER'S NO. 789 STATION

During the postwar era, designers at the A.C. Gilbert Co. knew how to take items that seemed to have lost their freshness and modify them to invigorate sales. They did so with the Alco diesels and deluxe rolling stock in the S gauge American Flyer brand.

As impressive were the operating accessories spun off from other ones. A prime example of Gilbert's ingenuity was the no. 789 station and baggage smasher.

### The limits of stations

Models of stations have been essential components of about every major toy train manufacturer's group of products since the late 19th century. European firms led the way. Then their rivals in the U.S. caught up and, according to some collectors, outpaced them.

Catalogs released by the American Flyer Mfg. Co., Ives Manufacturing Corp., and Lionel in the 1920s and '30s, reveal



Model courtesy Mark Speichert



### FEATURES:

- 1 Unpainted gray plastic base measures 7¼ inches wide and 10 inches long
- 2 Unpainted white plastic structure with black train schedule board
- 3 Unpainted green plastic roof with red plastic chimney
- 4 Plastic figure with handcart and baggage
- 5 Green and silver paper stickers for the doors and windows

a broad array of stations. The only problem with those classics was the absence of any operating features except for illumination. Any child receiving a station needed to have an active imagination: How else to see people strolling up stairs or boarding a train?

### Then it breaks baggage

Gilbert had long fabricated its stations out of sections of stamped steel that, once cut to size, were painted in shades of white, red, and green. But injection-molded plastics began transforming toy manufacturing after the war.

In 1956, the line included a terminal made of unpainted plastic. The no. 788 suburban station (priced at \$4.95) featured a white plastic structure with simulated wood decking. A green roof with a red chimney covered the open depot. Green and silver paper stickers served as the doors and windows. No interior or exterior lights were added.

Designers adapted the station by inserting a horizontal slot across the front of its 10-inch-long base where a male figure pushing a handcart with suitcases could be activated to move from the left side to the right and return.

Thus in 1956 did Flyer fans make the acquaintance of Billy the Baggage Smasher, as Gilbert's advertising staff nicknamed the 789 station (priced at \$9.95). Simple as the animation was, it sufficed to amuse

### Flyer breaks the pattern

Gilbert broke through the bounds of inaction when it installed a tiny phonograph on one of its standard models of a depot before the close of the prewar era and heralded the first of its "talking" stations. Modelers could listen to a stationmaster announce the destinations of a departing express.

Sales executives revived the white-painted building with red trim and a green-painted roof after World War II. First they offered a basic model (no. 589); not long after, they added a version that talked (no. 755).

In 1952, an accessory consisting of a specially designed passenger car and a metal platform with a vibrating mechanism generated more excitement. The no. 766/K766 animated station continued to thrill S gauge enthusiasts through 1955.

onlookers and give the firm another accessory to promote in its consumer catalog through 1957. Then, renumbered as the 23789, the same station boosted sales in 1958 and '59. – Roger Carp

*The A.C. Gilbert Co. cataloged the no. 789 station and baggage smasher from 1956 through '57. The 2015 edition of Greenberg's Pocket Price Guide to American Flyer values it at \$93 in good condition and \$168 in excellent.*

### BUYER'S CHECKLIST:

- ✓ Broken or cracked plastic base and station?
- ✓ Torn or missing paper stickers?
- ✓ Damaged or replacement figure?
- ✓ Functioning mechanism?

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Total Retail Value: \$499.95

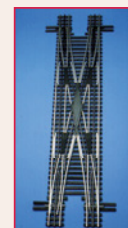
This Lionel Lines version of the 269E set recreates the glory days of tinplate with the advancements of modern electronics. Thanks to Proto-Sound 3.0, this 269E steamer delivers smoother operation than any original tinplate locomotive.



### RossReady Hi Rail Switches with DZ1000

Total Retail Value: \$449.95

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**Morrison Door Factory - 0 Scale**  
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**6TH PRIZE**  
5 Awarded

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4 Awarded

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# CLASSIC TOY TRAINS

## • 2016 SWEEPSTAKES •

### Official Rules

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**1. Eligibility.** The *Classic Toy Trains* 2016 Sweepstakes (the "Sweepstakes") is open to residents of the United States and Canada (except Quebec) only, who are age 18 years or older and have reached the age of majority in their state/province of residency at the time of entry. Employees (and their dependents and immediate household members) of Kalmbach Publishing Co., ("Sponsor"), and of MTH Electric Trains, Ross Custom Switches, Bachmann Trains, Mianne Benchworks, Woodland Scenics, Charles Ro, and Nicholas Smith Trains, their advertising and promotional agencies and sponsoring companies are not eligible to participate. Void in Quebec and where prohibited by law. Sweepstakes is subject to all applicable federal, state and local laws.

**2. Sweepstakes Period.** The Sweepstakes begins on October 16, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. CT., and all entries must be transmitted online no later than March 11, 2016 at 11:59:59 p.m. CT.

**3. How to Enter.** To enter, complete the Sweepstakes Official Entry Form online at [ClassicToyTrains.com/Sweeps](http://ClassicToyTrains.com/Sweeps) with your name, address, city, state or province, and ZIP or postal code, and then click on the SUBMIT MY ENTRY button. You may submit only one entry through the Sweepstakes Online Entry Form during the Sweepstakes Period. Entries from any person submitting more than the stated number will be disqualified.

**4. Prizes/Approximate Retail Value ("ARV") in U.S. Dollars.** One (1) Grand Prize consisting of \$1,000 gift certificate hobby store shopping spree (winner will select hobby shop retailer that is listed in at least one yellow page directory under "Leading Model Retailers" inside *Classic Toy Trains* magazine.) ARV of Grand Prize: \$1,000. One (1) First Prize consisting of No. 269E Distant Control Freight Set: ARV: \$499.95. One (1) Second Prize consisting of Ross Ready Hi Rail Switches with DZ1000 (ARV: \$449.95), One (1) Third Prize consisting of Chuggington Locomotives: choice of Brewster or Wilson model (ARV: \$349.95), One (1) Fourth Prize consisting of 4X8 Wood Starter Set (ARV: \$349.00), One (1) Fifth Prize consisting of 0 Scale Built & Ready building (ARV: \$169.99), Five (5) Sixth Prize consisting of \$50 Charles Ro gift certificates (ARV: \$50.00 per unit), Four (4) Seventh Prize consisting of \$50 Nicholas Smith Trains gift certificates (ARV: \$50.00 per unit), Ten (10) Eighth Prize consisting of 1 year subscription to *Classic Toy Trains* magazine (ARV: \$39.95 per unit). TOTAL ARV of First Prize: \$1,000.00. TOTAL ARV of all prizes is \$3,668.34.

**5. Drawing/Odds/Notification.** A random drawing for the Grand Prize, First Prize, Second Prize, Third Prize, Fourth Prize, Fifth Prize, Sixth Prize, Seventh Prize and Eighth Prize will be held on or around June 9, 2016. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. Limit one prize per person. The average total circulation for *Classic Toy Trains* magazine is 36,693. Winners will be notified by email on or before July 31, 2016.

**6. Prize Restrictions.** No cash equivalent or prize substitution permitted. All prizes subject to the guarantees/warranties of the manufacturer. Any applicable federal, state, and/or local taxes are the responsibility of the winner. For prizes of \$600 or more in value, winner's Taxpayer I.D. will be required to issue a Form 1099-MISC showing prize ARV as income.

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**8. Winners List.** For a list of winners, see the *Classic Toy Trains* website ([ClassicToyTrains.com](http://ClassicToyTrains.com)) after August 31, 2016 or send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: *Classic Toy Trains* 2016 Sweepstakes Winners List, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612. (Residents of FL, VT, and WA may send a self-addressed envelope without the stamp.) Requests for Winners List must be received by March 31, 2016.

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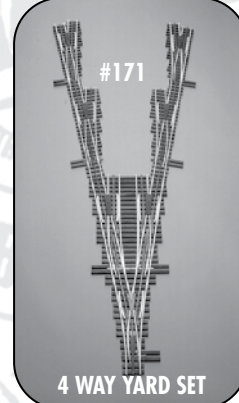
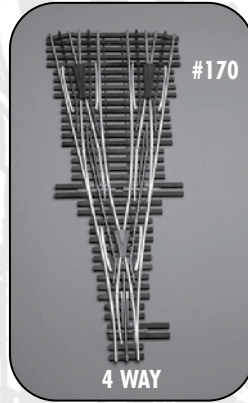
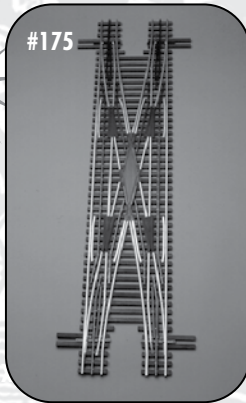
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Jan. 30-31 • Costa Mesa, CA Orange County Fairgrounds
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## A lesson to be learned

PART TWO: EVERYTHING ENDED WITH THE HEARING

In the January issue of *Classic Toy Trains*, I wrote about how I had once bought a group of Lionel trains at my store I subsequently learned might have been stolen. In this column, I will finish telling the story and add what I learned and how it might help all of you.

We can resume with my being contacted by one of the police officers who had confiscated the toy trains from my store that were alleged to have been stolen. He called to inform me that the two suspected thieves had been apprehended.

The officer said a hearing had been scheduled at which I would be expected to testify. It was going to be held at the office of the district magistrate, with a judge in attendance to preside over the hearing.

Naturally, I appeared on the selected day to testify regarding what I knew about the facts behind the case.

When I arrived I saw the couple that had come to my store and identified the trains. I also noticed the officer who had confiscated the trains, all of them placed on a table in the front of the courtroom.

Finally, I spied the two fellows who had sold me the trains. One of them, accompanied by another officer, was dressed in an orange prisoner jumpsuit.

The hearing began with my testimony reflecting the events surrounding my purchase of the trains. The judge asked me if I could state with certainty those were the trains taken from the complainants.

I answered that, unless the trains had specific identifying marks, there was no way to state with assurance they were the ones supposedly taken from their father's home. All I could say with certainty was the confiscated trains were the very same ones I had purchased from the suspects.

Meanwhile, the suspects had changed their story about how they had acquired the toy trains. They now claimed they had found them in a dumpster. They said they

had told me the story of finding them while cleaning their grandfather's attic for fear I would not buy trains that were found in a dumpster.

The judge dismissed the case against the suspects because the police could not prove the two had taken the trains from the home. Also, without specific marks on the trains, they couldn't prove they were the trains allegedly stolen.

Needless to say, the couple disagreed with the ruling. They wanted to take the trains even though no charges had been placed against the two suspects.

But the judge awarded the trains to me because I had shown proof of purchase. I offered them to the people for what I had paid. They refused.

What can all of us learn from this experience? Simple – mark every toy train in your collection in some way in order to show proof of ownership.

An easy method is to put address stickers on the inside of the shells of engines and different pieces of rolling stock.

Another good idea is to stamp your name on the bottom of your trains using invisible ink seen only with a black light. This inexpensive method works well and doesn't compromise the value of trains.

Taking photo of all your toy trains does not provide adequate proof of ownership because many collectible trains look alike.

Buy sufficient insurance to replace trains in the event of theft, flood, or fire.

I have followed these recommendations because of what took place in my store and at the district magistrate's office years ago. I hope my story gives you something to consider doing to protect your trains.

Keep searchin' **CTT**



**LOU PALUMBO** is the owner of the Underground Railroad Shoppe in New Castle, Pa. He can be reached at [trainplum@yahoo.com](mailto:trainplum@yahoo.com)

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# ADD A COMPACT TOWN

Story and photos by Neal A. Schorr

Long-time readers of *Classic Toy Trains* may remember my 38 x 45-foot O gauge layout, which depicts the Middle Division of the Pennsylvania RR. That stretch of the Pennsy traverses the countryside of central Pennsylvania, and much of my layout depicts rural scenes. Building the town of Duncannon gave me an opportunity to finally model an urban scene. In the following pages I'll show how I built this compact, realistic town.

The real Duncannon is on the west bank of the Susquehanna River, 15 miles north of Harrisburg. There, the Pennsy turned west from the Susquehanna River to follow the Juniata River Valley toward Altoona.

The notable features of Duncannon are its town square with a turreted brick building and a classic 1920s bank built of sandstone and featuring four columns on its facade. Of course, there is the requisite Pennsylvania RR station. I wanted to capture those features as they appeared in the 1940s, when passenger service again surged owing to World War II.

## Simplifying access is key

My layout is an around-the-walls linear shelf-type railroad. This means the areas with the greatest depth tend to be the corners. Though my layout shelf is generally 30 inches wide, a corner gave me almost twice that depth in which to build Duncannon. It was good to have more space for structures, but lacking 6-foot-long arms I couldn't work on a scene more than 30 inches in width!

I solved that issue by building my scenery on a piece of two-inch-thick extruded-foam insulation board set on a pair of sawhorses, as shown in **Photo 1**. An old swiveling office

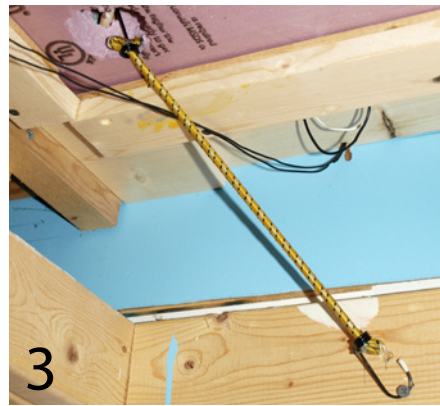
TURN AN  
UNUSED  
CORNER  
OF YOUR  
LAYOUT  
INTO A  
GREAT  
URBAN  
SCENE





Author Neal Schorr turned an unused corner of his into a compact and appealing model of the Pennsylvania town of Duncannon as it appeared in the 1940s.

# CREATING ACCESS



## PHOTO 1

Neal's Duncannon town scene is built on one- and two-inch-thick slabs of foam insulation board. For easy access, most of the work was done away from the layout, with sawhorses supporting the city board.

## PHOTO 2

The town occupies a narrow, oddly shaped corner of Neal's layout. Benchwork meets at differing elevations here, dictating the use of varying thicknesses of insulation board for the town's base.

## PHOTO 3

The module is secured by bungee cords, which prevent warping while permitting easy removal of the board in the future.

chair on wheels allowed me to roll around the module while I created the scenery. When I was done, all I needed to do was set the completed scene in place.

Accurately measuring the size of the hole where the foam base would ultimately sit was my first order of business. **Photo 2** shows Duncannon's crescent-shaped area between the back edge of the curved four-track main, a railroad siding (the real siding is actually the route of the original PRR through Duncannon before it was relocated to the west shore of the Susquehanna), and the backdrop.

My task was made more complicated by the fact that this part of Duncannon is below track level, and some of the pieces of benchwork that meet here are at different elevations. This required me to make the foam module base from both one-inch

as the city streets, along with pieces of ¼-inch-thick plywood to serve as a foundation for some of the structures.

Warping can be a problem when foam insulation board and hardboard are combined. Prior to setting the hardboard roadways in place, I used a hole cutter to drill 2-inch-diameter holes in the foam layer. I then cut a transverse slot one-inch deep into the foam extending beyond the holes and set a 6-inch length of wood dowel in the slot, securing it with glue.

After setting my finished module in place, I ducked under the layout and stretched bungee cords from screws in the benchwork, through the previously cut holes, and hook them to the dowel rod (**Photo 3**). This is a simple way of firmly holding down a module. It prevents warping, and the section is easily removable.

At the same time I was making my insulation-board base, hardboard streets, and plywood building foundations, I was assembling structures.

It all has to be done at the same time because the structures dictate how the town is laid out. Having the structures also ensures the streets and foundations are accurately located.

Detail work on the structures can – and should – wait until later. Of course, thanks

to Woodland Scenics, Menards, and others, many structures arrive fully assembled, painted, and weathered. These can be temporarily set in place as construction progresses to check for fit onto foundations and between streets and sidewalks.

## Modeling roads

The main road through Duncannon is US Routes 11/15. I modeled this as a concrete road constructed sometime in the 1930s. Since this part of my layout depicts the 1940s, one would expect to see some wear in the form of cracked slabs, asphalt patches, and signs of utility work such as those shown in **Photo 4**.

Urban highways of that era typically had traffic lanes 10 feet in width with 8-foot-wide parking lanes. I made the road by cutting a large board of ½-inch hardboard to a suitable width using a table saw. For sidewalks, I overlaid a strip of ¾-inch-thick hardboard on the roadway board. Curbs are typically about 8 inches in height and while a ¾-inch thickness is actually 9 scale inches, I find this height looks realistic.

The ¾-inch hardboard is sometimes available as an in-stock item at your local home improvement store, but may require special ordering. I make curbs from ¾-inch-square strip wood, yielding the same 9-inch scale height as the sidewalks.

## I APPLIED HEAVY WEATHERING DOWN THE CENTER OF TRAFFIC LANES REPRESENTING GREASE AND OIL BUILDUP.

and two-inch-thick extruded foam insulation board. I spliced the varying thicknesses together using foam board-friendly adhesive. To add structural strength, I added an overlapping piece of ½-inch-thick hardboard, which would also serve



# MODELING ROADWAYS

I assembled the road surface, sidewalks, and curbing using carpenter's glue. A cut-away view is shown in **Photo 5**.

Painting may be done either before or after assembly. I applied a coat of khaki-colored paint, readily available in spray cans, on all concrete surfaces. Traditionally, modelers have turned to gray paint to simulate concrete. A quick look at prototype concrete structures will reveal, unless brand new, they are in fact khaki in color owing to weathering revealing the granules of sand contained in the concrete.

To simulate joint lines and cracks, I use a well-sharpened pencil and – in the case of the joints – a straightedge. Next, I age my concrete using black weathering chalks. I apply extra weathering down the center of traffic lanes to represent grease and oil buildup on the pavement.

I use colored pencils to make traffic markings on the pavement. This provides a slightly irregular edge to the lines, which is more realistic than the sharp edge of a decal or a masked and painted line. Areas of wear from passing tires are also easy to simulate. The final step is to overspray the roads with Testors Dullcote to remove unrealistic shine from the weathering chalks and penciled on joints and cracks.

For an adjacent brick street I used Noch no. 57730 Red Brick Wall embossed material (**Photo 6**), which is a close match to the orange-tinted brick typically used in Pennsylvania during this era. I cut the paper brick material to shape and then glued it to the underlying hardboard material using 3M spray adhesive. I suggest placing weights on the brick surface overnight to avoid lifting or bubbling.

## Signature structures

With the roads fairly complete, I resumed work on my buildings. Two of Duncannon's most recognizable structures (**Photo 7**) were easy to represent. I selected Woodland Scenics no. BR5847 Davenport Department Store, which bears a striking resemblance to a turreted building on the real Duncannon's town square. Being fully painted, weathered, and detailed, the structure was ready to go right out of the box.

To its left, an MTH no. 30-90349 Greenville Bank & Trust Bank Building portrayed the Duncannon National Bank, which is quite similar to the prototype bank. I did need to do some additional work, including repainting into a sandstone color, weathering, roof detailing, and



## PHOTO 4

Neal modeled this concrete road using khaki-colored paint and black weathering powders. He included suitable patches and wear on this busy highway. He used pencil to draw cracks and expansion joints.

## PHOTO 5

Neal used foam insulation board for a base, hardboard for roadways and sidewalks, and lengths of square wood to represent curbs.

## PHOTO 6

Brick streets were modeled from embossed brick material, which is simple to use and a close match for bricks used in Pennsylvania.



## SELECTING STRUCTURES

revision of the building signage to the proper Duncannon National Bank.

There is a single industrial structure in the town, which is served by the siding leading into Duncannon. I made this structure, shown in **Photo 8**, along with the remaining commercial structures by reworking pieces from various Ameri-Towne kits and other structural components. All required assembly and painting.

The train station (**Photo 9**) required a bit more work. The prototype is a typical Pennsy station of orange brick with beige and brown wood trim. An Atlas O scale no. 6901 Suburban Passenger Station makes a reasonable stand-in, owing to its similar roofline and the presence of dormer windows. I used the kit version, which required assembly, painting, and weathering. I made the passenger platform from Noch brick material. Additional touches included a classic PRR pipe railing around the edges of the platform, Pennsy signage, and Walthers no. 933-1090 HO Bishop's Crook Street Lamps raised on short lengths of Plastruct tubing to give them the height necessary for O scale.

Two residential structures represent the three-dimensional part of my town's residential section. (I painted other homes on the backdrop.) Only a tiny footprint was available for the home closest to the commercial section of the town. Fortunately, I found a diminutive structure, the Model Power no. 6352 Mr. Rodgers House, which filled the bill. Adjacent to it is a well-worn residence, two-thirds of which started out as a Weaver no. G1960 Company Row House. Lacking sufficient space to include the entire structure, I cut away part of the house to fit into an odd-shaped corner of the module.

I had enough space for one additional structure, but it was adjacent to the right side of the Davenport Department Store building, which sported a nicely weath-

### FINALLY, I ADDED DETAILING IN THE FORM OF FIRE HYDRANTS, MAILBOXES, PARKING METERS AND ASSORTED TELEPHONE POLES.

ered billboard. Not wanting to cover it up, I chose to model an empty lot. All that required was some ground cover including weeds, a "Lot for Sale" sign, and a beat-up fence at the back of the lot.

Finally, I added detailing in the form of



fire hydrants, mailboxes, and parking meters from Woodland Scenics no. A2764 Street Accessories and a set of no. 37939 assorted telephone poles from Lionel.

While the poles are a bit undersized and lack the typical insulator configuration used on railroad line poles, they are perfect for city utility poles for any era through the 1950s. The assorted version comes with several different types of poles, including some with transformers.

Finally, I mounted Walthers no. 933-1098 HO Ornate Wall Mounted Lamps to the poles, running the wires up the back of the poles where they were out of view. These fixtures are typical of those used in the early 20th century. While I generally

install wires between my utility poles, given the sheer number of utility drops needed to each structure, plus the need to gingerly move the module from the workshop to the layout, I decided to omit them.

One final detail remained to be installed – the citizens of Duncannon. I cannot overemphasize the importance of installing plenty of miniature people. The figures beyond reach from the layout aisle were glued in place while the module was still on the workbench. Those closer to the front were installed later.

### Wiring for lighting

The last bit of work consisted of installing and wiring the module lighting. All wires were gathered together under the module and connected to a single length of stranded wire. I installed a standard



### PHOTO 7

Two very distinctive buildings – a bank and a department store – mark Duncannon's commercial district. Neal was fortunate in finding O scale structures that closely matched the prototypes.

### PHOTO 8

Duncannon's lone industrial building started as an AmeriTowne kit, which Neal kitbashed into a trackside warehouse that fits in a narrow space.

### PHOTO 9

Neal's train station is a reworked Atlas O Suburban Station kit with a brick platform and a considerable amount of added detail, including lights, people, and signs.

**PHOTO 10.** A typical Pennsylvania highway underpass adds interest to the scene. Note the period-correct sign welcoming visitors to Duncannon.



audio plug at the end of the wire, which plugs into a benchwork-mounted jack supplying 12 volts of AC power.

At this point, I very carefully moved the module from the workshop to the layout room and delicately lowered it into place. Then I inserted the audio plug into the AC power supply jack and firmly anchored the module to the benchwork with four bungee cords. I also added period vehicles to the city streets.

The remainder of my work now centered on finishing the scenery in front of the tracks. Unlike the Duncannon module behind the tracks, this scenery was permanently attached to the benchwork and had to be built in place. This work consisted primarily of building the slope from trackside down to the riverbank, constructing a sliver of the adjacent river, and blending it

all together seamlessly using trackside cinders, weeds, and other vegetation.

I added local flavor by modeling an underpass for Routes 11/15 at the north end of Duncannon (**Photo 10**). During trips to the town, I took many photographs of the underpass, and aside from it being built on tangent rather than an angle, my model closely resembles the prototype. I built the abutments and wing walls from a Scenic Express no. FL6150 PRR Stone Wall and made the concrete trackside walkways from coved wood molding topped with more Pennsy pipe railing. A low clearance sign, using 1940s-type block lettering, provides an additional touch of realism.

Two other details worth mentioning in the vicinity of the underpass are the Duncannon welcome sign, made from a Blair

Line no. 2528 Welcome to Your Town Billboard laser kit, and a scratchbuilt portion of the concrete arch bridge carrying Routes 11/15 over the Juniata River just above the point where it spills into the Susquehanna.

### Concluding thoughts

I originally anticipated construction of Duncannon would require 9 to 12 months. Thanks to help provided by my son Steven, we actually completed the work in just over 6 months.

If you've read my articles in the past, you'll recall I've made frequent mention of my children's help with the layout over the years. Unlike most teenagers, Steven's interest in the model railroading has dramatically increased rather than waned, and he regularly helps with the layout.

There are still a few things to be completed in Duncannon. These include weathering, and the addition of drivers and passengers to vehicles, construction of the westbound platform, and the painting of additional details on the backdrop.

Steven and I are discussing what our next project will be. Whatever it is, you can be sure that we will report it to the readers of CTT! **CTT**



**MARK RELAXES** by operating the best three-rail locomotives from postwar days. He depends on a quartet of Lionel's classic ZW transformers to handle all the trains.



# SUPER O LAYOUT

## built with modern techniques

POSTWAR LIONEL TRACK AND CONTEMPORARY MATERIALS  
CREATED A SPECTACULAR RAILROAD

By Roger Carp • Photos by Mark Wisniewski

**T**he model railroader who dares to anchor a layout with Lionel's Super O track faces a dilemma. Realistic three-rail sections all but beg for top-notch scenery and structures to present an environment of authenticity. But what happens when the track used dates from 60 years ago? Does it demand postwar landscaping and toy-like buildings?

The number of O gauge enthusiasts searching for a solution is minimal. The majority of folks developing layouts they strive to make realistic install contemporary brands of track rather than Super O. The latter's price and availability if not their modeling philosophy lead them away



**1. A LIONEL NO. 2345 Western Pacific F3 A-A duo gracefully passes through a truss bridge on Mark Wisniewski's Super O layout. His love of postwar trains as well as Lionel's finest track system from the era influenced his home 12 x 20-foot railroad.**

from using the realistic track introduced by Lionel after years of effort in 1957.

So we can consider Mark Wisniewski to be one intrepid hobbyist. He proceeded by laying scale miles of Super O track while fashioning scenes around it relying on vintage structures and vehicles while capitalizing on the latest scenery methods.

### **Coveting Super O**

If you think kids with O gauge sets had to listen to taunts about how unrealistic their three-rail track was, just think about how often executives and sales representatives at Lionel encountered questions and doubts about their product. No wonder it became a priority at the firm to develop

straights and curves in which the electrically essential middle rail was hidden.

A series of experiments culminated in the big news of 1957. Lionel's chief decision makers announced to the domestic toy trade and hobby field their line would feature three-rail sections, switches, and more with improved outer rails and a thin blade in the center. Underneath each piece would be lots of wood ties.

What Lionel boldly named Super O took the industry by storm. For the next several years, the system of track grew, becoming a stalwart part of the line, along

with the train sets packed with Super O sections.

Among the thousands of children who received Super O outfits was Mark Wisniewski. Barely in elementary school as Christmas approached in 1961, he had been playing with

electric trains since being handed a Marx passenger set three years before. That tough little express was perfect for him.

As Mark recalls with a hint of innocence, "I couldn't understand why the train kept derauling at full throttle and hitting the floor off the dining room table."

In spite of Mark's insisting on running



**2. WHAT A STUNNING SYMPHONY in bright red! Gleaming paint on the shiny nos. 2245 Texas Special F3 A-B combination (below) and 2383 Santa Fe F3 A-A duo above leave us smiling wide.**

his train at top speed, his parents thought he was ready for something better – they trusted he would treat his no. 2570 Santa Fe diesel switcher five-car work train with more care and respect.

And Mark sure did. In fact, the no. 616 NW2 locomotive and its freight cars remained constant companions for years. Eventually, Mark felt motivated to construct a 5 x 9-foot layout. Only trouble was the Super O track he desired was no longer manufactured. Not a single piece was left at Mark's local hobby shop.

**The attachment survives**

Funny how childhood attachments – and disappointments – leave their mark. It didn't matter how long Mark stayed away from the hobby and what other activities consumed him. He never quit thinking about Super O track and how great a layout using it would look.

The moment for achieving a lifelong dream burst forth in the early 1980s. Mark, now out of school and carving out a career, rediscovered Lionel trains. He retrieved the beloved Super O work train from his youth and began haunting train shows, hunting for more of the treasures he had once seen in catalogs. High on his list of items to find and purchase were the assorted items in the Super O catalog.

Thirty-five years ago, however, digging up a cache of Lionel's finest track from the postwar era proved a challenge. Mark plugged away at the task but refused to let his quest delay his plans for building a layout. Compromise was necessary, he realized. That meant using tubular sections of O gauge track.

Consider the sizable three-rail layout Mark finished before the end of the 1980s as his "training wheels." He learned so much about benchwork and scenery from developing it, lessons applied to this new layout.

"I loved that layout," Mark reminisces, "but it was a monster. The base below the eight 4 x 8-foot sheets of plywood consisted of concrete cinder blocks. I was lucky the floor of my attic didn't cave in and destroy the rooms below!"

**Ready for the best**

While laboring on and enjoying that 500-square-foot "monster," Mark was picking up more Super O sections. He amassed plenty of straights and curves, along with the specialized pieces necessary for the elaborate model railroad he believed was in his future. Eventually, he told himself, that beauty would arise.

Maybe 20 years ago, Mark looked at his collection of Lionel engines and cars from the postwar decades. Then he checked his inventory of Super O track.

Yep, the moment had arrived! Down went the old layout, and work on what Mark had been envisioning since he was in high school soon commenced.

The room designated as home for the spiritual descendant of the Super O layout that once filled the Lionel showroom in New York City invited Mark to design a large L-shaped railroad. The maximum dimensions, according to him, would be 12 feet in width and 20 feet in length (see the accompanying track plan).

Mark decided, based on his height, that the main level was going to be 36 inches off the floor. The elevated lines would rise a few inches higher.

The foundation wasn't going to look anything like chunks of concrete. Mark bought 1 x 4 pieces of select-grade pine for the tabletop framework. Over everything he

**3. FOLKS VISITING Mark's train room always leave talking about the how great Super O track looks. They congratulate him on using ballast to enhance its appearance.**



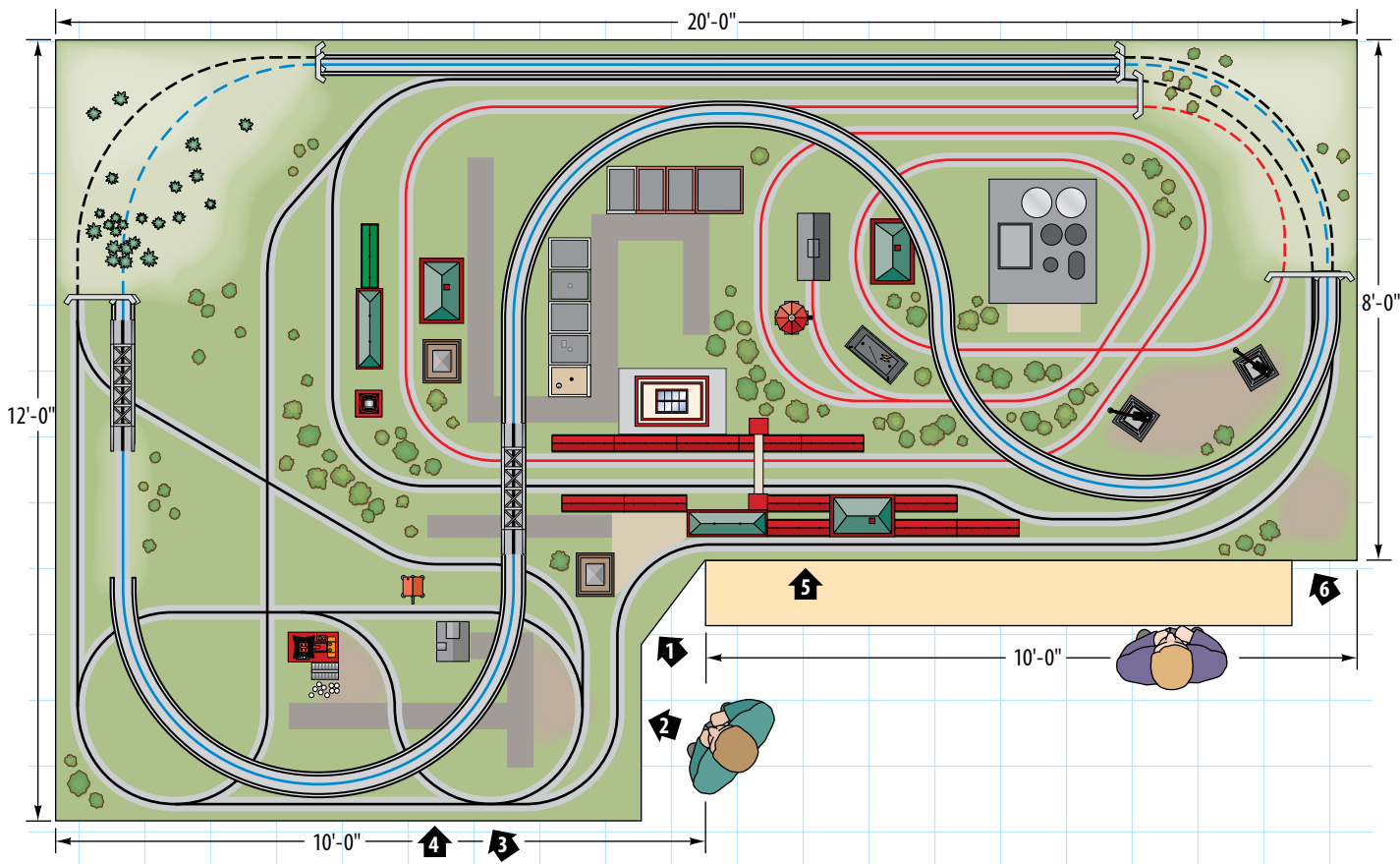


Illustration by Kellie Jaeger

secured sheets of 3/4-inch-thick plywood. No worries about the floor collapsing.

Next came roadbed to cushion the Super O track Mark had purchased. He used 1/4-inch strips of Vinylbed, a product formerly sold by Hobby Innovations.

(That business replaced Vinylbed with a product it calls Flexxbed. Go to [www.hobbyinnovations.com](http://www.hobbyinnovations.com) to learn more.)

### Working with Super O

Lightweight yet sturdy benchwork made using contemporary materials, tools, and techniques – that embrace of what’s current made good sense to Mark.

So also did choosing the latest brand of roadbed to reduce the loud sounds produced by toy trains while advancing an appearance of realism on the layout.

But Mark’s goal demanded rejecting the array of track now on the market in favor of an older one. He insisted on a Lionel product from the days of President Eisenhower, Ford Edsels, and Chuck Berry and Elvis singing from transistor radios.

With as much care and patience as a surgeon might demonstrate when removing an appendix, Mark laid his network of Super O sections and switches. The minimum radius Lionel offered was 36 inches. Where Mark wished for something much

### LAYOUT AT A GLANCE

**Name:** Mark Wisniewski’s Super O layout

**Dimensions:** 12 x 20 feet L-shaped

**Track and switches:** Lionel Super O

**Motive power:** Lionel (postwar)

**Rolling stock:** Lionel (postwar)

**Controls:** Lionel ZW transformers (4)

**Accessories:** Lionel (prewar, postwar)

**Structures:** Lionel, Plasticville, scratchbuilt

**Vehicles:** Dinky Toys, Manoil, Midgetoy, Tootsietoys

**Figures:** Arttista, Lionel, Scenic Express, Woodland Scenics

wider, he turned to Gene Becker, who fabricated 72-inch-wide curves that matched the Super O antiques in appearance.

The rationale for Mark’s choice is simple. “Super O track is the best Lionel ever made,” he declares. “Not only does it look fantastic but after you put down ballast the thin copper center rail is barely visible. Performance is excellent, thanks in large part to the outer rails having a flat top.”

Did Mark remain consistent when picking out the right- and left-hand turnouts? Of course he did! A stack of no. 112 Super O remote-controlled switches went down next, held in place by 3/4-inch track screws from GarGraves.

“Super O switches can be temperamental,” Mark admits, “So, after installing Lionel switch machines to operate them, I used fixed voltage to make them snap positively. I also make sure to keep the switches extremely clean.”

### Great postwar electronics

The subject of power sources and the related topic of wiring typically fills this portion of the layout articles in CTT. No reason to deviate from that tradition with Mark. But rather than tell you what kind of transformer he decided was essential for his Super O display, we’ll let you guess.

Okay, if you need more than 5 seconds to realize what he went with, well, you need to study your Lionel catalogs from postwar days more thoroughly.

The obvious answer for Mark – and anyone making a stab at solving this easy question – was the type-ZW 275-watt stalwart at the peak of Lionel’s roster of transformers. Truth be told, he had four of them, and he put each to work.

Heavy 18-gauge wire satisfied him for the connections spinning off from the control panel. The same size of wire also met his expectations for feeders. Mark soldered them to the main lines every 10 feet or so. Thinner types (20 and 22 gauge) carried juice from the transformers to the lights and accessories.

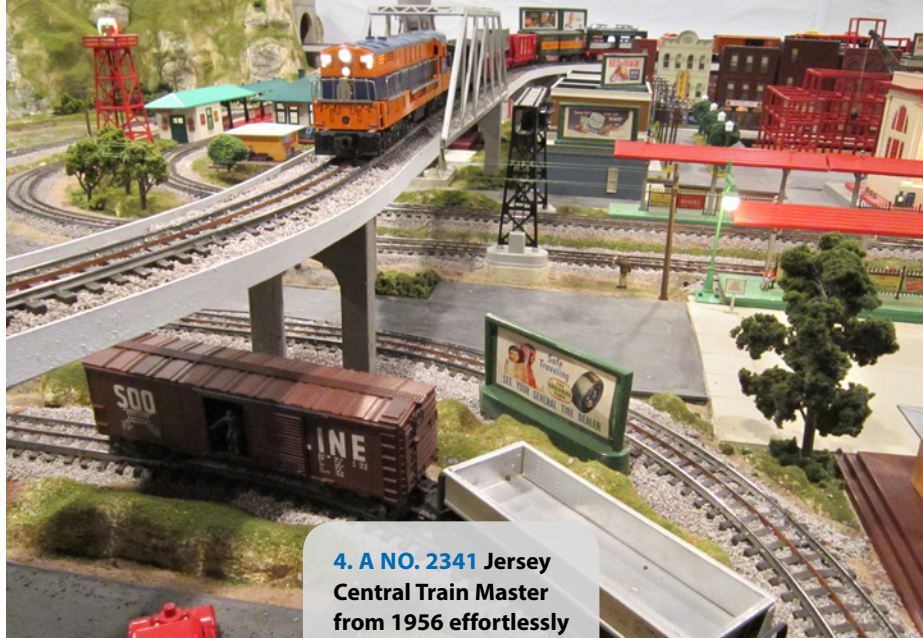
### Decisions about scenery

During the days and evenings when Mark was laying Super O track and then wiring the transformers, he felt the subject of scenery dominating his thoughts. He concluded that the type of landscapes he made, along with the brands of structures he chose, would determine the success of his dream layout. The pressure was on, but Mark felt confident he would make the right decisions.

Two avenues stretched out in front of Mark, and he saw virtues in both.

Taking one course meant sticking with the postwar theme of the layout. Mark would, therefore, fashion mountains and lakes to look like what a modeler might have done when Super O track was originally hot. He should also go with structures from the 1950s and '60s, all in the name of obtaining a consistent look.

The second path dictated making realism paramount. If the overriding characteristic of Super O track was being true to nature, then Mark ought to make scenery that complemented what Lionel had aimed for. He would, then, adopt the latest materials and techniques. Similarly, he



**4. A NO. 2341 Jersey Central Train Master from 1956 effortlessly pulls a long string of near-scale freight cars on the upper line. Nearby you'll see a few of Mark's many no. 156 station platforms. They may be his favorite Lionel accessories.**

should pick out the best structures available these days and consider making a number of buildings from scratch.

Both ways appealed to Mark. He didn't see how either one might hurt the credibility and beauty of his layout. Still, he couldn't stand pat. After lots of internal discussions, he opted for the second path. Realism would be his goal.

### Sharing his secrets

Mark began at an interesting "square one" when he recalled for us how he developed the scenery. He pinpointed two classic hobby books as key to his understanding of how to plan and build a variety of landforms and waterways.

"Naturally," Mark told us, "I have read

and reread *Model Railroading*, the paperback guide Lionel put out with Bantam Books in the 1950s. In addition, I have learned so much from Bill McClanahan's book, *Scenery for Model Railroads*."

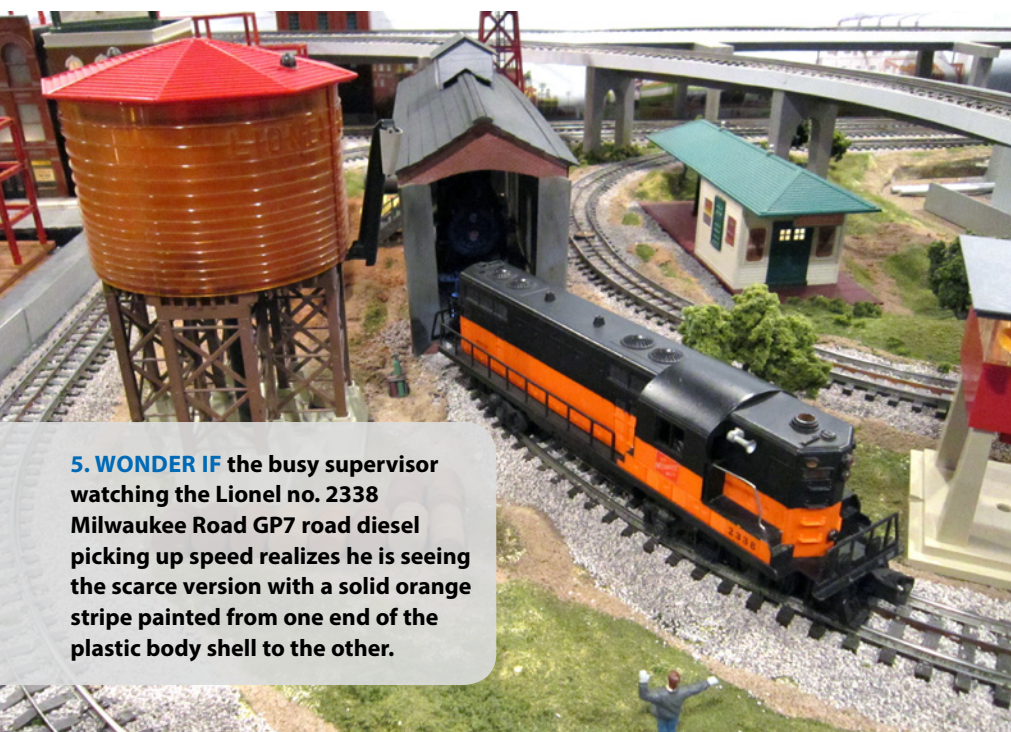
From those perennially popular and respected volumes Mark gleaned a number of tips. They taught him how to make a foundation for his hills and elevations out of wadded newspaper taped in place. Next came Plaster Cloth and Hydrocal for the outer layer. Transforming it from a bare, white shell demanded water-based paints from Woodland Scenics. Mark referred specifically to Tamiya and Testor products.

Vegetation on the layout included bushes and trees as well as weeds and flowers. Whether looking for items easily planted right out of the bag or box or for materials used to create parks and forests, Mark expressed satisfaction with what he found in the catalogs put out by Scenic Express and Woodland Scenics.

What served Mark best? How about different textures and colors of turf, clump foliage, ground foam, and burnt grass? Can't overlook miniature rocks and talus, not to mention beach sand and red-tinted earth found when traveling.

Mark nudged us to pay close attention to the trees he had made using wire armatures and clusters of commercial foliage. He also bought MiniNatur items.

The impressive lake wouldn't have been possible without E-Z Water, a resin product available from Woodland Scenics. "It set up in just a few hours," Mark said, "and the surface was as hard as a rock by the very next morning."



**5. WONDER IF the busy supervisor watching the Lionel no. 2338 Milwaukee Road GP7 road diesel picking up speed realizes he is seeing the scarce version with a solid orange stripe painted from one end of the plastic body shell to the other.**





**6. DIESELS MAY dominate Mark's motive power fleet, but he recognizes the glories of the postwar steam roster. He proudly operates his no. 773 4-6-4 Hudson and tender with like-new versions of heavyweight passenger cars cataloged in 1950.**

### Final steps

Definitely in the groove as he hit the backstretch, Mark pushed ahead with enthusiasm. Whatever seemed like a big challenge ended up as nothing but fun.

Some modelers all but ignore the highways linking the towns and the boulevards uniting neighborhoods on their railroad. Not Mark. He enjoyed using Smooth-It from Woodland Scenics to simulate asphalt streets and parking lots. He relied on lightweight basswood and plywood for concrete plazas and sidewalks. Hobby paints colored the surfaces easily, smoothly, and realistically.

Studying the assorted scenes on this Super O extravaganza reveals how Mark has grown as a model railroader. On the one hand, knowledgeable viewers quickly eyeball the Plasticville U.S.A. kits and other commonplace commercial items. They will also discern more recent entries from the Lionel product line.

But then visitors start to see the unique structures Mark has built using his imagination, research, and skills. From Plastruct he buys parts and assemblies and then

forms one-of-a-kind industrial and railroad facilities, plus residences. Add in the superb job he does painting, detailing, and lightly weathering each of them.

Nice as the structures are, what grabs every child and adult introduced to this Super O masterpiece is the incredible assortment of prewar and postwar accessories from Lionel. The list Mark submitted to us specifies almost 50 cool items.

Highlights from Mark's collection include the nos. 38 pumping water tower, 115 city station, 182 triple-action magnet crane, 193 industrial water tower, 356 operating freight station, 455 oil derrick and pumper, and 494 rotary beacon.

Virtually every signal Lionel offered between the 1940s and the 1960s has a home on the layout. Examples range from no. 148 dwarf signals to a no. 450 signal bridge. Crossing gates and highway flashers stand guard at grade crossings.

A last touch delighting folks is the gallery of no. 156 station platforms. Mark has arranged a whopping dozen of them.

### Still smitten

These days, with his Super O railroad finished in just about every sense, Mark derives his pleasure from running the finest locomotives and rolling stock from Lionel's postwar catalogs. He owns a sizable stable of F3 and Train Master diesels, including the nos. 2368 Baltimore & Ohio A and B units. Can't forget the top-of-the-line 2-8-6 Berkshire and 4-6-4 Hudson steam engines and tenders.

Yet Mark can't stop thinking about what else he might accomplish on his outstanding layout. Refusing to undermine its 1950s and '60s character, he still is busy exploring the advantages of installing Lionel's Legacy command-control system to operate his pristine trains. Further, Mark remains on the lookout for structures to build. This is one layout that continues to get better and better.

And isn't that appropriate? Lionel introduced Super O to inspire modelers to push themselves to plan layouts that looked more authentic, thereby balancing realism with fancy. What Lionel's leaders hoped would happen has burst forth in Mark Wisniewski's home, and he hopes it will lead others to try the same. **CTT**



COVER  
STORY

# DON'T MESS



## THIS O GAUGE LAYOUT SHOWCASES THE RUGGED LANDSCAPE OF THE LONE STAR STATE

By Roger Carp

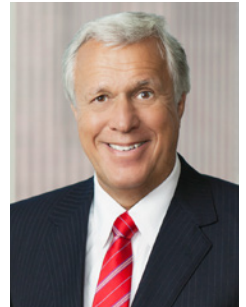
Photos by Paul Hester and TW TrainWorx

**R**emember the Frank Sinatra hit song from 1959, “High Hopes”? Old Blue Eyes marveled at the ant so confident in its strength it tried to push around a rubber tree plant. Then he extolled the silly old ram determined to “punch a hole in a dam.”

Longtime O gauge enthusiast Glen Rosenbaum ignores rubber trees and would never give a thought to “buttin’ that dam,” but he has finished a project about as daring as anything Sinatra mentioned. He wanted to fit the best of his life into the train room at his new home.

Glen dreamed of building an O gauge railroad that conveyed what it was like to grow up in Houston during the postwar era. He dreamed of introducing visitors to the Texas coastal plains surrounding Houston and the majestic, rugged landscape of west Texas while highlighting the railroad history of that time.

“It can’t be done unless you build a layout the size of the old Astrodome or the stadium where the Dallas Cowboys play” – that’s what you’re saying. Sorry, but with the help of Roger and Dorcie Farkash and the crew at TW TrainWorx, Glen has accomplished a feat conceivable only in the Lone Star State.



### MEET GLEN

Our host has no difficulty sharing the credit for his great 14 x 30-foot home model railroad with Roger and Dorcie Farkash and other artists employed at TW TrainWorx in Dallas.

**1.** Our photographer had to climb almost to the top of a radio tower to snap this incredible picture of the main yard on the HW&P. The finest behemoths from Lionel’s steam and diesel rosters rest comfortably, eager to be dispatched on their next journeys through the scenery crafted by TW TrainWorx.

  
**WITH TEXAS**



**2. The depot in Wharton, Texas, (a model built from scratch) hosts an absolutely stunning O gauge replica of the *Texas Special* passenger train. That Lionel streamliner assumes a starring role on Glen Rosenbaum's awe-inspiring layout, which beautifully conveys his memories and abiding love of the Lone Star State.**

### Scenic high points

Glen knew scenery was going to be vitally important if he wanted to replicate the stark and barren landscape of west Texas. He had driven through it, gazed at the forbidding canyons and rugged hills and felt the heat of summer.

Along with the mountains with their baked brown surfaces and red and gray rocks, Glen admired the sparkling Pecos River that snakes through the steep walls of the canyon. He felt awe when studying the bridge erected over it by the Southern Pacific. A replica in O gauge of that marvel would be a centerpiece.

Glen also found his brain crowded with images influenced by what he recollected from his youth about the stations and yards in Houston and small towns dotting the plains and deserts of Texas stretching out to El Paso and into New Mexico. Those images, with the Pecos River High Bridge, share a theme – their place along the Southern Pacific Transcontinental Line, completed in 1883.

No question that Glen's layout would need to capture those memories with models and scenes representative of life then. But this ambitious and thoughtful modeler also wanted his O gauge display to breathe life into his memories of the two places his family had called home

since 1949 – the newer home was recently remodeled to house the layout covered here. Finally, he expected to be able as well to express on the layout his support and love of opera in Houston.

Is your head starting to spin? Could a residential O gauge model railroad covering 14 x 30 feet encompass the landscape of Texas and a healthy slice of its railroad history, all the while reflecting the life and interests of the gentleman planning and doing much to construct it? As stated, Glen had high hopes on a scale of Sinatra's ant and ram.

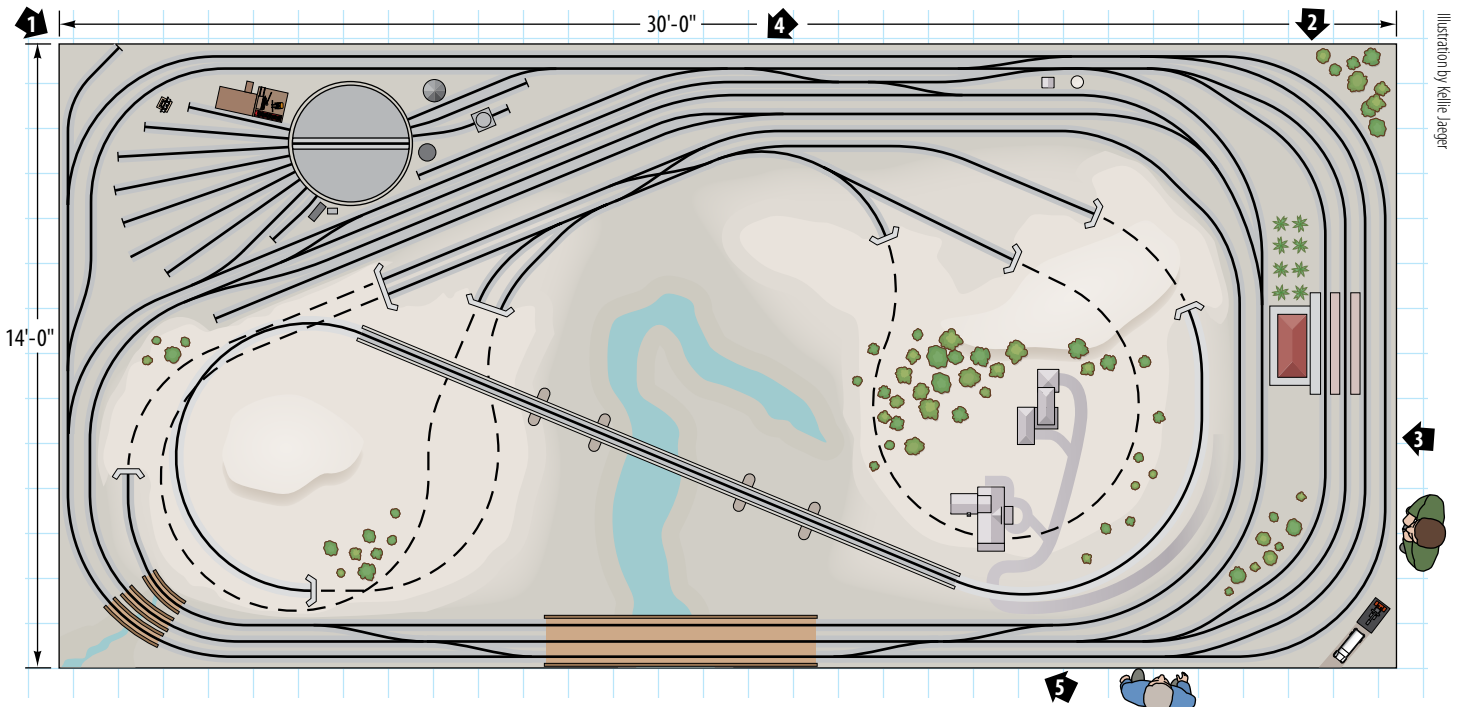
### Always going bigger

The attitude encapsulated by the term “bigger and better” has long driven Glen. Nowhere does that become more obvious than when he begins talking about toy trains and how he has approached them ever since he received his first set of electric models as a toddler in the early 1950s.

“I was three or four,” Glen says, “when I received a Marx train from my parents. Pretty soon we had a ‘layout’ – I guess you could call it that – with one simple loop of three-rail track. I ran it so much I burned out the transformer!”



**3. A Southern Pacific passenger train in the Daylight paint scheme passes models of the two homes where Glen and his family lived during his childhood in Houston.**



Layouts Glen built as a boy and then for his nephew and great-nephew years later served as preparation for the hi-rail masterpiece realized by TW TrainWorx. The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photographs.

But even at the ripe age of five Glen imagined bigger and better trains. Maybe that was the reason on the afternoon he blew out six candles on his birthday cake he was also tearing off the wrapping taped to a box holding a Lionel no. 2179WS out-fit. Originally cataloged in 1952, that four-car freight set featured a no. 671 steam turbine equipped with a smoke mechanism pulling a no. 2046WX whistling tender. Little wonder young Glen was mesmerized by all it could do.

Once again, a three-rail layout followed soon after the boy started putting his realistic locomotive through its paces. A basic oval of tubular track evolved into a complex network after Glen was given a pair of remote-controlled switches and a 90-degree crossover. Better yet, the flat railroad on a carpet rose to dazzling heights after a Lionel no. 110 trestle set and more sections of track became his.

Bigger meant better for Glen. He acquired more straights and curves until he had enough track to build an O gauge empire filling a room that was 16 x 16 feet.

### Bigger still meaning better

Even after leaving toy trains behind once he entered high school, Glen preserved warm memories of those carpet layouts in his brain. The pleasures of the hobby lived on, so much so that almost two decades later he felt driven to unpack

his Lionels and build an O gauge display for his nephew, Sean.

Years passed, and Glen purchased and set up a new Lionel set for Sean's son, Morgan. As long as Morgan showed an interest in what began as a 5 x 10-foot layout, Glen justified investing time and real estate in it. Of course, that project nurtured his desire to create the layout filling his own dreams.

Consequently, Glen's prevailing attitude of bigger and better led to biggest and best a couple of years ago when after much planning and discussion visions in his mind burst forth in the incredible Houston, Wharton & Pecos RR shown here.

### Finally ready to build

In June 2011, the moment of reckoning arrived. An architectural firm was beginning the construction drawings for the remodeling of Glen's family home, a project that would include a second-floor addition with a 22 x 38-foot train room.

Glen had sketched a track plan that included the principal scenes to be added and the structures needed to transform dreams into actual vignettes. Coincidentally, like Frank Sinatra's old O gauge railroad, Glen's track plan was derived in part from the layout opened at the Lionel showroom in 1949.

Glen decided to engage the services of

## LAYOUT AT A GLANCE

**Name:** Glen Rosenbaum's Houston, Wharton & Pecos RR

**Gauge:** O

**Dimensions:** 14 x 30 feet

**Track and switches:** Ross Custom Switches (diameters range from 72 to 104 inches)

**Motive power:** Lionel

**Rolling stock:** Atlas O, K-Line, Lionel, MTH

**Controls:** Lionel CW-80 (3), 180-watt PowerHouse Power Supply (6), TPC 400 Track Power Controller (3) with Legacy Cab-2 command control

**Accessories:** Lionel (postwar), Millhouse River Studios, Z-Stuff for Trains

**Structures:** Lionel, MTH, scratchbuilt

**Vehicles:** Corgi, Ertl, Maisto, Matchbox, Road Champs, Solido, Yat Ming

**Figures:** Arttista, Preiser, Woodland Scenics



**4. Did anybody mention that Glen has a special place in his heart for the Union Pacific? He admires the gigantic steam engines that railroad once operated.**

TW TrainWorx in Dallas – professionals whose creativity and great work have been leaving folks impressed for years. They would understand what he hoped to achieve while having better materials, equipment, and artistic skills.

Conversations with Roger Farkash, at the helm of TW TrainWorx, had erased any doubts in Glen's mind. Roger and his team began by refining the track plan and designing the layout table. The teak hardwood used for mill work in Glen's home would serve for the cabinets installed in the train table base to display favorite models, the Lionel trains from his youth.

TrainWorx used top-grade 1 x 3 pieces of finger-jointed white pine for the supports and framing. It used ½-inch-thick sheets of cabinet-grade plywood for the tabletop. Next came 1-inch sections of Styrofoam insulation board. TrainWorx saw no purpose in skimping on the foundation of this 36-inch-high layout.

Personal experience and articles about other layouts in *Classic Toy Trains* had taught Glen the importance of adding roadbed under the track. TrainWorx recommended foam rubber whose thickness ranged from ⅛ to ¼ inches.

Decisions about the brand of track to buy cannot be underestimated. "For what I hoped to do on the HW&P," Glen said, "the track and turnouts from Ross Custom Switches were about perfect. I liked their realistic appearance and their reputation for quality."

The width of the sections screwed to

the smooth and level tabletop was far from uniform. The tightest curves on the layout measured 72 inches in diameter. At the opposite end of the spectrum were pieces with a diameter of 104 inches.

**Adventures with electronics**

Before turning attention to the task of developing scenery, Glen and Roger had to weigh options regarding electronics. Experience, knowledge and Roger's guidance again informed Glen at every step. Little wonder he's satisfied with the paths adopted when wiring the HW&P. "It operates all but flawlessly."

Let's quiz Roger about the kinds of wire and the types of power sources selected. The feeds to the bus lines around the layout are 14-gauge stranded copper wire. The primary bus connection is 14-gauge tinned copper wire. Feeder lines soldered to every 8 feet of track are 16-gauge stranded copper. Wires for the two Lionel accessories from postwar days (nos. 264 forklift platform and 362 barrel loader) are thinner: 18 or 22 gauge.

Did you think Glen's preference for postwar accessories means he went for a traditional system of control? He's going to shock you, then, because he insisted on command mode, installing Legacy Cab-2

from Lionel. "The superior features and outstanding performance guaranteed by Legacy are great," he says.

Generating the power for the network of track and switches, along with the accessories, is a bank of transformers. Glen directs attention to half a dozen of Lionel's 180-watt PowerHouses and three of its CW-80 models. Also standing guard on his panel you notice three of Lionel's TPC-400 track power controllers.

"The layout consists of 16 isolated blocks controlled at the central panel by 5-amp toggle switches," Glen told us. "It may sound complicated, but visitors, even those who have never used command control before, quickly get to know it."

**Mountains and vegetation**

The benchwork couldn't be stronger or more level. The track looked fabulous and provided Glen's fleet with a smooth and even network to travel. The electronics worked as consistently as desired. The ghosts of executives who had served the fallen flags represented on the HW&P would have deemed it worthy.

Except that scenery and structures awaited. These elements required the highest levels of creativity and skill to realize the HW&P's vast scope.

Roger's team began by assembling a plywood core for each mountain on the layout and then adding blocked urethane foam to finish the outer surface.

They carved realistic features, sealing them with an acrylic coating to create a hard shell surface, ready for painting. Next came a host of colors, which they glazed with transparent acrylic paints or added flat and clear enamels.

The artisans proceeded to sprinkle assorted colors and textures of commercial ground cover. As reported, they used products put out by Brennan's Model Railroading, Noch, Scenic Express, Silflor, and Woodland Scenics.

The arid, moon-like landscape of Glen's version of west Texas required nothing more than sparse vegetation. The handful of bushes and trees planted included items marketed by Creative Accents, Grand Central Gems, and JTT.

Turning to the Pecos River meandering through the canyon spanned by the model



**You can visit the Houston, Wharton & Pecos RR at the Train Collectors Association's National Convention this summer.**



**5.** Every visitor to the Houston, Wharton & Pecos RR feels the grandeur of west Texas. The stark and rugged landscape has been captured in breathtaking detail. Three levels of track offer Glen impressive runs for his unusually long freight trains.

of the Southern Pacific’s monumental bridge, Roger states that first the bottom and banks were carefully painted. Then artists detailed the water with waves and rapids formed with clear gel medium. Roger carved the rock formations, being guided by photos of the actual canyon walls near the Southern Pacific Bridge.

### Artisans at work

Good as the landscaping on the HW&P RR is, Glen hardly hesitates before telling visitors that TrainWorx really distinguished itself with the realistic designed models of structures its staff of expert craftsmen finished. They proved to be masters with the latest AutoCAD software when it came time to develop the eye-catching bridges, railroad facilities, businesses, and residences.

According to Roger, the modelers on his payroll developed and fabricated the structures following instructions from Glen. The chief architect of the HW&P explained that he wanted realistic models of two houses his family had dwelled in during the postwar era. Glen provided

TrainWorx the blueprints for both homes.

Also essential for Glen were replicas of towers dominating the Englewood Yard as he remembered it. The Southern Pacific had maintained that sprawling facility situated a few miles northeast of downtown Houston during his youth – the yard now is an important component of the Union Pacific system.

Then Glen requested something else. He wanted a highly detailed model of the passenger depot the SP had built in Wharton, Texas, a century ago. Donors had banded together to subsidize the restoration of that beautiful station in 2007.

### Nothing to change

More than accomplishing the goals Glen considered essential to getting the layout of his dreams and capturing his life, the team from TrainWorx linked the structures with roads and highways noted for their realism and variety. Craftsmen there sculpted them out of Styrofoam and Sculptamold and then sealed the different surfaces with flat paints from the FlexCoat line produced by Rosco.

When you approach a project with very high hopes, as Glen did with the Houston, Wharton & Pecos, disappointment and frustration would seem inevitable. Yet he insisted he wouldn’t change anything: “I am extremely pleased and satisfied with all aspects of the layout.”

Plainly, the O gauge layout has done exactly what Glen had desired: It shows friends and acquaintances what it was like to come of age in Houston half a century ago. The terrain, roads, and buildings, not to mention the railroads that mean so much to Glen, come to life again. **CTT**

*To learn about TW TrainWorx, along with the layouts it has built and the model railroading products it sells, contact Roger or Dorcie Farkash at 2808 McGowan St., Dallas TX 75203; 877-881-4997. Or go to [www.twtrainworx.com](http://www.twtrainworx.com)*

### CTT ONLINE

**TO WATCH A VIDEO** of Glen Rosenbaum’s O gauge model railroad, please go to [www.ClassicToyTrains.com/LayoutVisits](http://www.ClassicToyTrains.com/LayoutVisits)



Focus on classics

# LIONEL SETS FOR 1946

THE POSTWAR  
ERA OPENED  
WITH PROMISE  
& INNOVATION

By Joe Algozzini and Roger Carp • Photos by William Zuback and Jim Forbes

America was filled with great excitement and promise as 1946 dawned. World War II had ended less than a year before, and some service personnel remained overseas. Those soldiers, pilots, sailors, and others in the armed forces who had returned to the U.S. were getting ready to adjust to and take advantage of a brand-new life.

For many of the veterans, life included spouses and young children – the first baby boomers. The country’s population was increasing rapidly: 1.5 to 2 million annually. Such a demographic shift combined with pent-up consumer demand to

expand the domestic market for about everything, including toy trains.

Not until 1946 was Lionel adequately prepared in terms of its production resources and personnel to manufacture and sell significant quantities of its trains. With that push came an aggressive marketing plan that included issuing three catalogs and placing advertisements in newspapers, trade publications, and mass-circulation magazines. The boldest move might have been inserting a 16-page catalog in the November 23, 1946, issue of *Liberty* a general-interest magazine.

Executives at Lionel, led by Joshua and Lawrence Cowen, sensed the demand for

toy trains would be greater than ever before. They sought to satisfy consumers as well as stockholders while building a strong future for their business.

**A catalog for the spring**

Lionel jump-started production and sales in 1946 by using stamps and tooling developed before the war. Also critical to its being able to manufacture ample supplies of electric trains, track, transformers, and other items early in the year was the inventory of leftover parts kept at its plant in northern New Jersey.

Evidence of how quickly corporate executives and factory supervisors could





Lionel's cataloged line of O-27 sets for 1946 showcased a couple of impressive four-car freight trains led by the brand-new no. 2020 Pennsylvania RR steam turbine with smoke and a whistle tender and including an operating accessory. Set no. 1419WS included four outstanding models and a no. 97 coal elevator in its massive box.

act appeared in the spring, when Lionel released its first Spring Catalog.

By doing so, Lionel continued with the prewar practice of manufacturing and packaging certain train sets with or without a whistle tender. Decision makers assumed they would entice buyers to choose between one set over the other.

Carrying out that marketing plan proved easy, mainly because the two steam locomotives packaged with 11 sets in the Spring Catalog were prewar 2-6-2 Prairie models slightly modified for the new line. The seven O-27 sets used a no. 1666; the four O gauge sets used a no. 224. [To learn more about those steamers, see the July 2015 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. – Editor]

### Seven O-27 outfits for the spring

The Spring Catalog introduced seven O-27 and four O gauge outfits. All but one of the sets – the top-of-the-line O-27 train – represented two versions of trains with the same cars, one with a whistle tender and the other without. Those seven sets remained part of the 1946 cataloged line.

Set no. 1402W came with a no. 2466W whistle tender and retailed for \$29. Its twin (no. 1402) had a no. 2466T non-whistle tender and retailed for \$25. Both were passenger trains with two no. 2440 Pullmans and a no. 2441 observation.

Lionel probably packaged those two sets first. After all, they usually have a scarce 1666: with either the Type-II body or an X rubber-stamped above the firebox. As further proof, the three green-painted cars, along with the 1666 and 2466W or 2466T tender, were manufactured using tooling already existing.

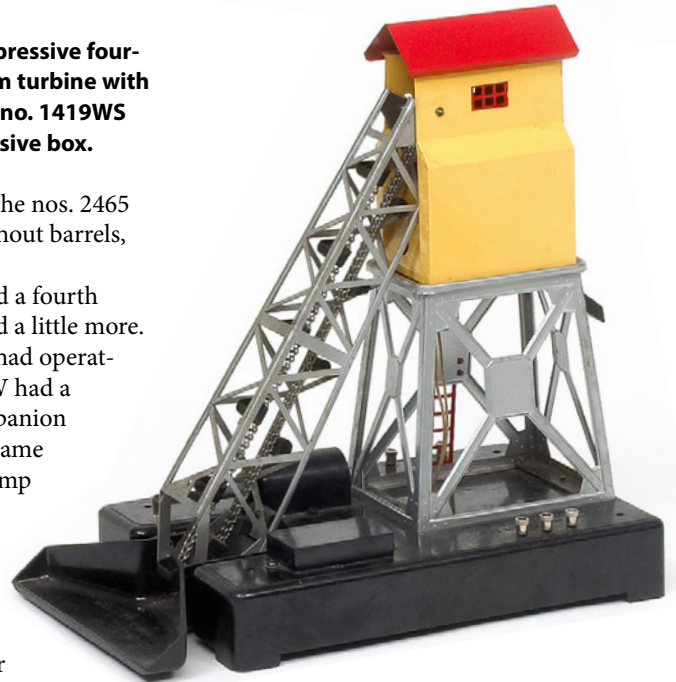
The next four outfits were freight trains with a whistle or a non-whistle tender. Set no. 1405W retailed for \$27.75; its twin

sold for \$23.75. Both had the nos. 2465 oil car, 2452X gondola without barrels, and 2472 caboose.

Consumers who wanted a fourth freight car needed to spend a little more. Better yet, two of the cars had operating features. Set no. 1409W had a retail price of \$39; its companion went for \$35. Both trains came with the nos. 3559 coal dump car, 2465 oil car, 3454 operating merchandise car, and 2472 caboose.

By the way, the \$4 difference between an outfit with a whistle tender and one without was equivalent to \$49 today. And, according to the *Lionel Price List* dated May 1, 1946, the company decided to increase the price of each outfit by at least \$5.00.

Examples of the 1409 and 1409W have been reported with the rare version of the 3454 that had red heat-stamped letters instead of the normal blue.



Examples of the 1405 and 1405W may have the scarce version of the 2465 Sunoco double-dome tank car with its decal in the center rather than at the ends.

The seventh O-27 set was no. 1411W. Its 1666 and 2466W duo pulled the 2465 oil car, 2452X gondola without barrels, 2454 boxcar, and 2472 caboose.



So eager were Lionel's executives to break ahead in the toy market they issued a special catalog early in 1946 to announce seven O-27 and four O gauge outfits.



Even though various catalogs depicted the 2454 with Baby Ruth graphics, the actual car was decorated for the Pennsylvania RR. A brown-door version was the norm, but this set was also packaged with the rare orange-door variation.

### O gauge sets for spring

The Spring Catalog listed four O gauge sets, each led by a 224 steam engine with a 2466W whistle tender or its 2466T non-whistle twin. A price differential of \$4.00 existed between the outfits.

Set no. 2100W retailed for \$29. Like its comrade, it had three illuminated passenger cars painted brown: two no. 2442 Pullmans and a no. 2443 observation.

Freight sets no. 2101W and 2101 sold for \$30.50 and \$26.50, respectively. Each came with three cars: the nos. 2555 Sunoco single-dome oil car, 2452 gondola with three unstained wood barrels, and 2457 illuminated caboose.

The *Lionel Price List* dated May 1, 1946, indicated an increase in the price of the O gauge sets. More than the O-27 sets, they now cost \$10 or more.

### Low-end O-27 sets added in 1946

Lionel issued two other catalogs in 1946. Known as the advance catalog and

the consumer catalog, they depicted the same seven outfits shown in the Spring Catalog as well as 12 more O-27 sets and 10 more O gauge sets.

The additional O-27 outfits begin with the pair of passenger trains packed with three cars painted blue with silver roofs (a pair of no. 2430 Pullmans and a no. 2431 observation). Both sets used the no. 221, a brand-new 2-6-4 steam engine proclaimed the Empire State Locomotive.

Set no. 1400W boasted a no. 221W whistle tender and had a retail price tag of \$35.95. The no. 1400, which had a no. 221T non-whistle tender, sold for \$30.

Lionel typically assembled the 221 steamers with black drivers. Scarce versions had aluminum drivers. Some 221s also came with aluminum front or rear trucks.

Sets 1401W and 1401 were priced at \$30.95 and \$24.95, respectively. A no. 1654 steamer provided the pulling

power. The 2-4-2 came with a no. 1654W whistle tender or a no. 1654T non-whistle tender. Both outfits included the 2465 oil car, 2452 gondola without barrels and brake wheels, and 2472 caboose.

Although the consumer catalog depicted the 2465 with a full complement

of Sunoco decals, the illustration in the advance catalog showed the car with only a center decal. Original 1401 and 1401W outfits did include that scarce example.

The 221 also led two three-car freight outfits: nos. 1403 and 1403W. Each had a no. 2411 flatcar with three metal pipes, a no. 2465 oil car, and a no. 2472 caboose.

Next appeared three-car freight outfit no. 1407B, which had a suggested retail price of \$37.50. It depended on the first postwar steam switcher: the no. 1665. That 0-4-0 came with a no. 2403B bell-ringing tender. They led the 2452X gondola without barrels and brake wheels, 2560 crane car, and 2419 wrecking car.

The 2560 represented a slightly modified postwar version of the no. 2660 crane car cataloged between 1938 and '42. No wonder Lionel assembled it with a green-painted Bakelite boom as it had before the war. However, the final sets assembled could easily have a crane car with a black or a scarcer brown boom.

### High-end O-27 sets had smoke

Just the mention of the word, "Smoke," in 1946 was enough to fire up any model railroader's imagination. Lionel had the nerve to mention in the November 1945 issue of *Model Builder*, the magazine it published to promote the hobby.

**In 1946, Lionel made its magnificent replica of the Pennsylvania RR's 20-wheel steam turbine the first toy locomotive to puff clean, white smoke.**



**The beautiful no. 1402 passenger outfit distinguished the lower end of the O-27 line for 1946. The no. 1666 Prairie steamer and its no. 2466T non-whistle tender pulled a pair of green-and-yellow no. 2440 Pullman coaches and a matching no. 2441 observation.**



**The best of the seven O-27 sets introduced in the Spring Catalog was the no. 1411W. The no. 1666 Prairie and no. 2466W whistle tender came with nos. 2465 Sunoco double-dome oil car, 2452X gondola without barrels, 2454 Pennsylvania RR boxcar, and 2472 caboose. Note the desirable 2454 with orange-painted doors.**

“I Know a Top Secret!” declared the boy pictured in an advertisement there. But the youngster added that the news was “Too amazing and thrilling to be released now!” In 1946, he vowed, Lionel would share its secret with the world.

So in 1946, Lionel made its magnificent replica of the Pennsylvania RR’s 20-wheel steam turbine the first toy locomotive to puff clean, white smoke. The O-27 version was the motive power for five high-end sets.

The first turbine set was no. 1413WS. A no. 2020 steamer came with a no. 2466WX whistle tender to lead the four-car train that retailed for \$55. The freight outfit included the nos. 2454 Baby Ruth boxcar, 2465 oil car, 2452X gondola without barrels and brake wheels, and 2472 caboose.

The smoke pills for the 2020 came in a no. 196 pillbox. That container was usually molded out of clear plastic, but rare green examples are known.

Set no. 1417WS was also a four-car freight led by a 2020 and 2466WX duo. While it had a higher retail price of \$60, the outfit offered more play value to delight youngsters. Joining a 2465 oil car

were three great action-packed models: the nos. 3451 operating log car with silver rubber-stamped lettering, 2560 crane car, and 2419 wrecking caboose.

As with the 2560 crane car packed in outfit 1407B, the model in set 1417WS generally had a green boom. Nevertheless, a black or even a brown one could easily have been included as part of later assembling and packaging.

The third O-27 set with a 2020 turbine and a 2466WX whistle tender was the no. 1415WS.

Priced at \$67.50, it promised the most play value, thanks to the new operating cars (nos. 3459 aluminum dump car and 3454 merchandise car) packaged with the 2465 Sunoco oil car and 2472 caboose.

Early examples of the 3459 had a sheet-metal tray, instead of the typical plastic no. 160 bins that followed.

### O-27 sets at the top

At the peak of the list of O-27 outfits cataloged in 1946 stood a pair that have earned praise and nurtured envy in every collector of Lionel postwar trains.

Both set no. 1419WS and no. 1421WS showcased the brand-new 2020 turbine with smoke and a whistle tender. Each had an operating accessory packed in its large box: the nos. 97 coal elevator and 164 log loader, respectively.

Little wonder, therefore, Lionel listed them at the stunning retail level of \$85. That figure calculates to almost \$1,040 today when taking inflation into account. According to the best estimates, fewer than 250 examples of each set probably were packaged.

The few original examples of the 1419WS and 1421WS researched over the past 40 or so years revealed that Lionel packaged them in prewar set boxes. After all, the firm had cataloged similar outfits in 1941, putting the



**To reach more customers, Lionel paid Liberty magazine to have inserted into the November 23, 1946, issue a 16-page section of its color consumer catalog.**



same large accessories in the nos. 1195W and 1199W, respectively. For the 1946 line, factory personnel attached a new label over the old box to identify the outfits.

Turning to the 1419WS, we find a 2020 turbine pulling four freight cars: the 3459 dump car, 2560 crane car, 2452X gondola, and 2419 wrecking caboose.

The 1421WS offered a different four-car train. The 3451 operating lumber car, 3454 operating merchandise car, and 2465 oil car went with a 2472 caboose.

### O gauge sets look great

Lionel relied on the 224 steamer with a 2466W whistle tender to pull a grand total of five sets at the low end of its O gauge roster for 1946. Besides the four outfits listed in the Spring Catalog, there was the no. 2103W. That freight set retailed for \$45 and came packaged with the nos. 2458 Pennsylvania RR automobile boxcar, 2555 Sunoco single-dome oil car, 3559 dump car, and 2457 illuminated caboose.

Next consumers discovered a trio of fantastic trains led by the no. 671, which was the O gauge version of the new steam turbine. That 6-8-6 locomotive, paired with a 2466W whistle tender, heralded the innovative smoke mechanism.

Set no. 2105WS retailed for \$50 and pulled three basic freight cars: the 2454 Baby Ruth boxcar, 2555 Sunoco oil car, and 2457 illuminated caboose.



If you do own original boxes for the set or the cars, please let us know!

Priced at \$60 was the no. 2111WS. That four-car freight included the nos. 3459 dump car, 2411 "Big Inch" flatcar with three metal pipes, 2460 crane car, and 2420 wrecking caboose with a powerful searchlight. Be aware that the 2460 generally found in the 2111WS was the desirable model with a glossy gray cab.

The 671 turbine was also illustrated as part of set no. 2110WS that retailed for \$75 and included three no. 2625 *Irvington* heavyweight passenger cars.

However, it's unlikely Lionel produced this set. Why? First, we've never examined or known of anyone owning an original set box for a 2110WS. Second, we've never researched or known of anyone having original 1946 component boxes.

### All hail the Berkshire!

Lionel's engineers never quit innovating. In addition to the turbine, they brought out another top-of-the-line model of a mighty steam locomotive in 1946. The no. 726 Berkshire and its no. 2426W whistle tender left O gauge modelers breathless with excitement and fun. Equipped with smoke, the 2-8-4 was shown in the advance and consumer catalogs leading two freight sets and one passenger set.

Outfit no. 2113WS was priced at \$67.50 and included three superb freight cars: the nos. 3854 operating merchandise car, 2855 Sunoco single-dome oil car, and 2457 illuminated Pennsy caboose (oddly, a prewar no. 2857 illuminated caboose was shown).





**Set no. 2115WS stood near the top of the cataloged line offered by Lionel in 1946. The brand-new no. 726 Berkshire steam engine and its whistle tender led four desirable freight cars: the nos. 2458 Pennsylvania RR automobile boxcar, 3451 operating lumber dump car, 2460 crane car, and 2420 wrecking caboose with searchlight.**

The version of the desirable 3854 with black doors was the norm, but the scarcer car with brown doors did appear. The 2855 tank car was illustrated in catalogs as silver, but actual outfits typically included a black-painted model.

Set no. 2115WS carried an \$87.50 price tag. Packed with the Berkshire were four freight cars, notably the 2458 automobile boxcar, 3451 operating lumber dump car, 2460 crane car, and 2420 wrecking caboose with searchlight.

The 726 was also illustrated as part of set no. 2114WS, which retailed for \$77.50 and had three 2625 *Irvington* heavyweight passenger cars. At first glance, that set appeared to be a better buy than the 2110WS because it had a Berkshire.

Nonetheless, as was true with the 2110WS, Lionel probably never put together a 2114WS. We reach that conclusion for the same reasons regarding a set box and component boxes from 1946 as we did for the 2110WS. Again, evidence of genuine original packaging would cause a reconsideration of that statement.

### Two jewels never to be made

The advance and consumer catalogs for 1946 also depicted and described two other O gauge outfits that, unfortunately, Lionel elected not to market. The nos. 2116WS and 2117WS, as shown, were to be led by an updated version of the O scale 4-6-4 Hudson steam locomotive and tender brought out before the war.

The no. 703 engine and its no. 2703W whistle tender would pull four of the 2625 *Irvington* heavyweight passenger cars in the 2116WS. The same great combination

**Lionel brought out new rolling stock as set components and separate-sale items. Clockwise from lower left: nos. 3459 dump car, 2454 boxcar, 2560 crane car, 2457 caboose, 3454 merchandise car, and 2411 "Big Inch" flatcar with metal pipes.**

was shown with four great freight cars in the 2117WS. They were the nos. 2856 Baltimore & Ohio hopper, 3854 operating merchandise car, 2855 single-dome oil car, and 2857 New York Central caboose.

According to the *Lionel Price List* dated May 1, 1946, the 2116WS was going to sell for \$115 and the 2117WS for \$97.50.

Shortly thereafter, Lionel issued a price list with a puzzling announcement. For reasons never ascertained both sets were "not to be manufactured in 1946." One of the biggest mysteries for postwar fans!

### The revolutionary Electronic Set

Lionel then heralded its final O gauge set for 1946: "First time in the world and exclusive with Lionel." It was the no. 4109WS Selective Electronic Control.

The revolutionary outfit, which depended on radio frequency waves and the special receivers on each car so it could respond anywhere on the track, was headed by a no. 671R Pennsylvania RR turbine with a no. 4424W whistle tender.

The duo pulled the nos. 5459 dump car, 4454 Baby Ruth boxcar, 4452 gondola with three wood barrels, and 4457 illuminated caboose. The Electronic Set had a ECU-1 Electronic Control Unit that allowed the train to perform certain functions by touching different color-coded buttons.

### A great year with two caveats

For 1946, Lionel cataloged 19 O-27 and 14 O gauge outfits, which was a tremendous amount of sets, considering World War II had just ended. Merely to have dared plan so large and varied a product line showed great enterprise there.

But Lionel noted in a price list issued late in the spring it would not be assembling two of those O gauge sets. A lack of original packaging suggested two others likely were never produced or marketed.

Another sign Lionel might have promised more than it could deliver appeared in ads placed in *Model Builder* by major mail-order retailers, specifically Madison Hardware Co. and Hobby-Land, both in New York City. Buried deep in their ads were announcements they had not received adequate supplies of sets for 1946 to be able to meet all the demands of customers.

This is important, because as we will show when seeing what Lionel released for 1947, the firm was soon back to business as usual. Outfits would be more readily available for mail-order sales through the end of the postwar era.

Moreover, Lionel had made enough trains in 1946 to accommodate its customers while recording a backlog of confirmed orders on hand amounting to approximately \$8,215,000, which

included products besides toy trains. President Lawrence Cowen pronounced it a successful year, with Lionel achieving a net profit of \$1,166,076 with net sales reaching the monumental level of \$10 million.

Lionel's marketing strategy for 1946 had met its goals. The first full year of postwar manufacturing had concluded with it selling out its production. The firm had opened the era impressively. **CTT**

**The no. 726 Berkshire and its no. 2426W whistle tender left O gauge modelers breathless with excitement and fun.**

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# IN SEARCH OF STEAM

## O GAUGE MODELS RECALL THE GLORY DAYS OF NORTH AMERICAN STEAM POWER

Story and photos by Ray Stuber

**B**ack in the mid-1950s, David P. Morgan, then editor of *Trains* magazine, and Philip R. Hastings, a psychiatrist by profession as well as a gifted photographer, made numerous trips throughout North America to document the twilight of steam power.

Morgan and Hastings recorded their travels in a memorable series of articles published in *Trains* – “In Search of Steam,” “Smoke Over the Prairies,” and “Steam in Indian Summer.” Each article contained beautiful black-and-white photographs of steam locomotives at work on U.S. and Canadian railroads.

The articles proved so popular Kalmbach Publishing Co. reprinted them in book format in 1975 under the title *The Mohawk that Refused to Abdicate and Other Tales*. In 2007, Kalmbach introduced the articles for a new generation of readers in a series of three special-interest publications from *Classic Trains* magazine, all titled *In Search of Steam*.

Seeing these beautiful black-and-white images of steam locomotives at work brought back memories. If you grew up in the 1940s or '50s as I did, black and white was the way you saw railroading depicted in *Trains*, *Model Railroader*, and *Model*

*Builder*. Color photography and printing were not yet commonplace.

Steam locomotives with their clouds of smoke and steam are by nature “shades of gray” creatures. Somehow they seem more natural when photographed in black and white.

Today we can see these magnificent locomotives only in museums or on an occasional fan trip. Thanks to Lionel, MTH Electric Trains, 3rd Rail, Weaver, and other manufacturers, we can still see them in action on our O gauge layouts.

In this article, I'll take you back in time to the mythical city of Windsor on the



Niagara Division of my New York Central-themed layout. You'll view some of the major classes of motive power operated by the Central on its famed Water Level Route between New York City and Chicago. You'll notice that the engines possess a certain family resemblance, including a straight boiler, headlights mounted on the center of the smokebox doors, and drop couplers on the front. Together they contribute to the classic thoroughbred lines of the locomotives.

While we can't smell the coal smoke or get cinders in our hair, we can re-live a few memorable scenes from the past in O gauge. Enjoy the ride!



▲ Hudsons, Mohawks, Niagaras, and even an 0-8-0 USRA-type switcher line up for a family portrait outside the Windsor roundhouse on the author's O gauge layout. The New York Central family resemblance is apparent in this photograph with the drop couplers, centered headlights, and long, sleek lines of the engines.



◀ Photographed in black and white, these Lionel heavyweight passenger trains look almost like the real things as they race past a no. 115 station on a diorama created for this photo featured in the 1946 advance catalog.

# Hudsons

THE NEW YORK CENTRAL 4-6-4 HUDSON IS ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS STEAM ENGINES, BOTH IN BOTH REAL LIFE AND O GAUGE FORM

The Hudson was developed in 1926 by Paul W. Kiefer, the Central's chief engineer of motive power and rolling stock, when it became apparent that the railroad's smaller 4-6-2 Pacifics could no longer handle the longer and heavier trains required to support the increasing passenger traffic of the 1920s. An experimental locomotive, number 5200, was delivered in 1927 and was named after the river that flowed past the Central's headquarters by Pat Crowley, then president of the railroad.

The Hudson, with its 79-inch drivers, four-wheel trailing truck to support the heavier firebox, straight boiler, and symmetrical appearance, was indeed a beautiful locomotive.

In total 275 Hudsons were built for the Central between 1927 and 1938, by the American Locomotive Co. in its shops at Schenectady, N.Y. Included were 205 class J-1s, 20 class J-2s, and 50 class J-3 Super Hudsons.

In the mid-1930s, major railroads began to apply streamlining to their locomotives to project a modern image for their passenger trains. In 1934, the Central added a streamlined metal shroud to Hudson 5344, which it named *Commodore Vanderbilt* and assigned to its flagship passenger train, the *20th Century Limited*.

Toy makers had a field day with this design, producing large numbers of models. In O gauge, it's likely the Louis Marx & Co. produced the most with its little four-wheel version. I know it well, as it was my first boyhood electric train, and I ran it many a mile pulling a train of little red passenger cars.

In 1938, the Central placed in service a new version of its *20th Century Limited* designed by Henry Dreyfuss. Ten J-3 Hudsons were streamlined to provide power for the new train. Today, models of this locomotive are referred to as Dreyfuss Hudsons. Both the prototypes and models are considered by many hobbyists as the finest examples of locomotive streamlining.

The final chapter in streamlined steam power on the Central occurred in 1941, when Dreyfuss designed two locomotives for the *Empire State Express*. As the cars for this train were stainless steel built by the Budd Co., the distinctive Budd-style fluting was added to the locomotive to match the cars, resulting in a truly beautiful train.

The Hudsons rolled on into the early 1950s, but were slowly pushed aside by diesels. Sadly, no Hudsons were preserved. Fortunately, we have our models, especially Lionel's no. 700E, to remind us of those great machines.



▲ Having just completed their runs, two Hudsons wait to be serviced in the engine terminal. The steamers will take on coal, water, and sand before being sent back on the road again with another member of the Great Steel Fleet.



▲ Almost blinded by the silver Scullen disk drivers shining in the late afternoon sun, the engineer carefully oils his beautifully streamlined J-3 Hudson prior to its run westbound with the Windsor section of the *20th Century Limited*.





▲ Hudson no. 5343 takes a ride on the turntable outside the Windsor roundhouse as a beautiful Baltimore & Ohio streamlined Pacific, which has just wandered up from Pittsburgh, looks on. The Mohawk Steel Works and Union Station can be seen in the background.



◀ The Windsor section of train no. 2, the *Pacemaker* from Chicago, headed by Hudson 5344, has a clear board as it blasts past a merchandise freight headed for Buffalo.



◀ As the engineer checks his steed, a pair of Hudsons wait patiently for their departure from the station. Hudson 5344 is on the point of the northern section of the *Lake Shore Limited*, while Hudson 5343 will soon follow with the *Southwestern Limited*. The two trains will meet up with their respective sections from New York in Buffalo before continuing west to Chicago and St. Louis.



# Mohawks

LOCOMOTIVES WITH A 4-8-2 WHEEL ARRANGEMENT FORMED THE BACKBONE OF HEAVY-DUTY STEAM POWER ON THE NEW YORK CENTRAL UNDER THE NAME "MOHAWK."

The 4-8-2 wheel arrangement stemmed from a United States Railway Administration design developed in the early 1900s and commonly called "Mountains" on most railroads. However, because the Central used the slogan "The Water Level Route," its leaders substituted "Mohawk" to honor the Mohawk River, which flows into the Hudson from upstate New York.

A total of 544 Mohawks were built for the Central from 1916 to 1943 in four major classes, L-1 through L-4. The

locomotives proved ideal for the railroad's essentially level main line and formed the backbone of steam power on the system. The original group of 129 class L-1s were built by the American Locomotive Co. and Lima Locomotive Works between 1916 and 1918 and served as freight engines.

The largest class of Mohawks, numerically, was the L-2, with 300 built between 1925 and 1930. As succeeding sub classes were built their appearance evolved. Steam domes were covered, piping concealed, and feedwater heat-

ers relocated. With the exception of the extra pair of drivers, the Mohawks began to resemble the Hudsons.

As passenger traffic grew, class L-2s rushed in to fill the power shortage but the locomotives were limited to 60 mph. Later, the railroad converted two Mohawks for 80-mph service. Those engines performed well in passenger service, and 65 class L-3s – 25 dual freight/passenger engines and 40 freight-only locomotives – were ordered in 1940. Class L-3a no. 3000 was later equipped with 72-inch drivers

and a 260-psi boiler.

That conversion led to the class L-4 design, the last generation of Mohawks. Those 50 locomotives, built by Lima in 1942 and 1943, were dual-service machines, equally adept at freight drags as they were powering sleek passenger trains. Mohawks were truly the workhorses of the Central, especially during World War II.

Two Mohawks exist today. One is at the Museum of Transportation in St. Louis and the other is located at the New York Central RR Museum in Elkhart, Ind.

◀ A pair of class L-3s have just been moved to the ready tracks after being serviced and receiving a full load of coal from the tower in the background. A USRA 0-8-0 switcher looks on as it takes a break from its duties.

▶ The front-mounted Elesco feedwater heater gives class L-2a Mohawk no. 2793 a massive, heavy-browed look as it is being readied for its next run on a freight drag. The footboard pilot didn't add much to the esthetics of the engine, but it was appreciated by brakemen doing switching in the yards.



▶ Equipped with smoke deflectors, class L-3 Mohawk no. 3005 waits to back into the Windsor passenger station and couple onto train no. 74, the *New York Limited*. She will soon be heading south to join the four-tracked main line at Utica for its run into New York City.



▶ A class L-2a Mohawk leads an eastbound freight past NK Tower as train no. 59, the *Iroquois* with an L-3 on the point, storms west toward Buffalo. The tower operator is getting a good show with the simultaneous arrival of the two trains.



# Niagaras

WHEN THE NEW YORK CENTRAL NEEDED A FLEXIBLE, POWERFUL DUAL-SERVICE LOCOMOTIVE, IT TURNED TO THE 4-8-4 NIAGARA

While the dual-service class L-3 and L-4 Mohawks were doing an excellent job, the need for additional motive power became apparent during the war years. This led to the development of the 4-8-4 Niagara design incorporating the best features of the Hudson and Mohawk locomotives. As World War II restrictions prohibited the development of an engine strictly for passenger service, the Niagara had to be a dual-purpose design. An order was placed with the American Locomotive Co., and no. 6000, the pilot locomotive, made its appearance in March 1945.

It was a beautiful steam engine with a long, sleek look, a fat boiler, and a low-profile smokestack and domes to keep within the clearance limitations of the main line. With 75-inch drivers, special tandem side rods to absorb the thrust of the main rods, and massive centipede tenders, the 4-8-4s exuded power. And powerful they were, developing 6,600 horsepower – the equivalent of four F3 diesel locomotives.

After extensive testing, the Central ordered 26 additional engines, this time with 79-inch drivers ideal for heavy-duty passenger service. With huge tenders for coal and track-pan scoops to take on water “on the fly,” the Niagaras could easily make the 900-mile run from Harmon, just north of New York City, to Chicago without an engine change.

The Niagaras were the pinnacle of steam power on the New York Central and performed admirably in service until the 1950s. Unfortunately, they couldn't fend off the diesels and the accountants. None were saved from the scrapper's torch. But thanks to the efforts of several manufacturers, we can run O gauge replicas on our layouts today. **CTI**



▲ Massive class S-1b Niagara no. 6024 has a full head of steam, and the engineer has just completed his air test as he prepares to depart the yard with a priority freight. Note the fortunate spotting of the PS-1 boxcar with the New York Central herald clearly visible next to the locomotive.



▲ The fireman prepares to swing the waterspout over the open hatch to fill the huge PT-5 tender, which holds 18,000 gallons of water and 46 tons of coal. This enormous capacity enables the engine to make the 900-mile run from New York to Chicago with just one coaling stop.



► Norwood Tower is shaking as a Hudson and a Niagara both have green signals as they thunder past with their respective limiteds in tow. Do you suppose that's David P. Morgan's Ford sitting next to the tracks?

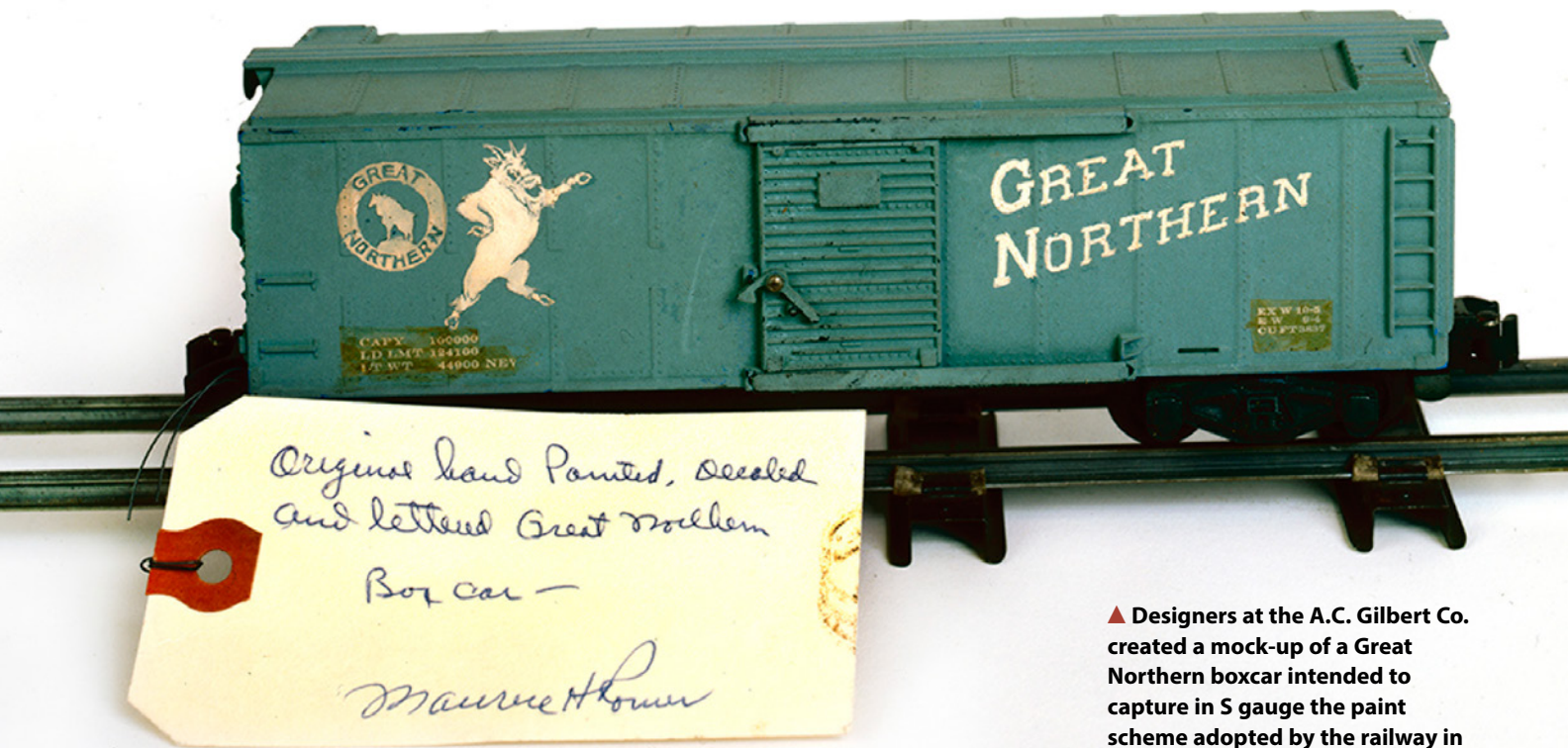


► The big Niagara shows off her straight, functional lines as she eases under the signal bridge and stops at Windsor Station with the *Lake Shore Limited* from Chicago.



► Niagara 6024 has just had its tender topped off at the coaling tower and is about to move up for water. An Alco RS-1 switcher, which has just arrived on the property, looks on as does an 0-8-0 switcher. The RS-1 is considered so ugly by the round-house crew they have made it an honorary steam engine.





▲ Designers at the A.C. Gilbert Co. created a mock-up of a Great Northern boxcar intended to capture in S gauge the paint scheme adopted by the railway in 1961. The no. 24422 would feature Rocky the goat standing by the herald. Model courtesy Dan Olson

### Focus on classics

# American Flyer loved Rocky

COLORFUL AND COLLECTIBLE S GAUGE GREAT NORTHERN BOXCARS

By Roger Carp • Photo by George Hall

**E**ver wracked your brain to remember animals associated with North American railroads? The Canadian Pacific once had a beaver on its herald, and the Missouri Pacific insignia featured an eagle to remind onlookers of its passenger trains christened with that name. Of course, the Chesapeake & Ohio used tabby cats in its famous “Sleep like a kitten” advertising campaign and eventually created a logo stylized to resemble a kitty’s profile.

To kids gazing at freight trains during

the decades before and after World War II, the most familiar animal might have been the silhouette of a mountain goat painted inside the circular herald of the Great Northern Ry. “Rocky,” as the railroad named its mascot, changed in appearance over the years while remaining an essential part of the decoration of GN boxcars, hoppers, cabooses, and more.

Toy train manufacturers sought to capitalize on the popularity of the Great Northern herald. Both Lionel and Marx cataloged two GN boxcars during the

postwar era. The A.C. Gilbert Co. went a step further, filling its American Flyer line of S gauge trains with three GN cars, each of which neatly showcased Rocky.

#### Starting small in 1953

The Gilbert Co. first offered homage to the stately Rocky Mountain goat in 1953. Designers and sales executives put their heads together and expanded the freight car roster with a pair of identically decorated boxcars sporting GN heralds.

The nos. 613 and 913 Great Northern



◀ The American Flyer line grew in 1953 with the identically decorated nos. 613 and 913 Great Northern boxcars. The railway's familiar herald showing the silhouette of a Rocky Mountain goat dominated the sides of the cars with different couplers.

► Before shifting to a more up-to-date look for its Great Northern boxcar with the red-painted no. 24047 cataloged in 1959, Gilbert offered a five-digit version of the 913. Only a handful of examples of the no. 24006 have ever been reported. Model courtesy J.J. Krempecke



models were among the pieces of S gauge rolling stock cars brought out in that key year with the names and emblems of railroads associated with different regions of the U.S. The decision makers at Gilbert evidently hoped to boost sales of their Flyer trains by adopting that tactic.

Interestingly, the same trend characterized the line cataloged by Lionel in 1953. Almost certainly for the same reason, leaders at Gilbert's main competitor tried a similar marketing strategy, believing it would help Lionel reach customers in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest. There must have been something appealing about the Great Northern and its goat because Lionel also introduced a boxcar.

The Flyer GN boxcars making their debut in 1953 differed primarily in their couplers. The no. 613 came with the toy-like link couplers Gilbert had relied on since breaking ground with an S gauge line in 1946. The no. 913 had the new knuckle type engineers had been working to develop to compete against Lionel.

### Thoughts about decoration

Let's take a few moments to analyze how designers at Gilbert decided to decorate the 613 and 913 GN boxcars. Both models featured plastic body shells painted a rich and realistic shade of Tuscan red. The plastic door on each side matched their color beautifully. By the way, the doors slid open and closed.

Emblazoned across the left side of every 613 and 913 boxcar in white was, of course, the name of the railroad. Beneath a white line were printed the initials of the Great Northern plus assorted car data, including the built date of "1-4-42." Over on the right appeared more information about the car to enhance its realism.

Best of all for many of the youngsters dreaming of a Great Northern car was the herald on the upper right side. It consisted of lettering on the perimeter ("SEE AMERICA FIRST / GLACIER NATIONAL PARK"). Enclosed by the

did continue to promote the 913 through 1958. In addition, after modifying the company's system of numbering its sets, locomotives, rolling stock, and more in 1957, the Great Northern model was identified as no. 24006 in 1957 and '58. So few examples were decorated with that five-digit number they are considered rare.

### A stunner for 1959

The next truly different Great Northern boxcar in the American Flyer line made its debut in 1959. Although Gilbert cataloged the no. 24047 for only a year, the S gauge

## IN 1961, THE GN BOLDLY REVAMPED THE PAINT SCHEME USED ON ITS THOUSANDS OF BOXCARS.

wording was the mountain goat, done in Tuscan against a white background.

According to the description of the 913 published in the first volume of *Greenberg's Guide to American Flyer S Gauge*, the goat was either rubber-stamped in place or was a sticker affixed there. In later years, it was a decal.

Gilbert quit cataloging the 613 Great Northern boxcar after 1953. However, it

model stood out for its realism and truly attractive paint scheme.

Don't worry – Rocky was still prominently featured!

The boxcar, which was painted red over a plastic body shell, lacked opening doors. But the white name of the railroad was bigger than before and stood out for being printed on a slant – just as the Great Northern preferred.

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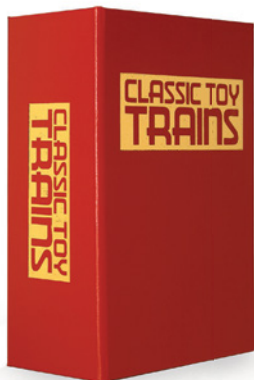
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▲ A worker finishes painting car data on the side of a Great Northern boxcar back in July 1961. The car had the newly added illustration of a standing and smiling Rocky.

The paper herald caught the attention of onlookers because designers had moved it from the right to the left side of the model. Rocky was outlined in white on a stark black background printed inside the round exterior with lettering that spelled out Great Northern Railway.

Gone was any mention of the national park in the outer border of the emblem. The omission wasn't terrible; it had never appeared on a full-size GN boxcar.

### One more great car

In 1961, the GN boldly revamped the paint scheme used on its thousands of boxcars. In place of the familiar Tuscan red or vermilion, the railroad began spraying its rolling stock a light, slightly gray shade of green. To attract further attention from bystanders, the lettering was now bright red.

Most striking was the novel appearance of Rocky outside his customary spot inside the herald. Not that the GN got rid of that bit of tradition. The old emblem survived, but something novel appeared alongside it. Artists created a big mountain goat perched on its hind legs and sporting a smile to emblazon on cars.

The new and improved Rocky might have been the star of his own series of cartoons on Saturday morning television, so whimsical and mischievous did he seem. Kids absolutely loved seeing their favorite goat with his own personality.

From the minds at Gilbert emerged an S gauge replica. The no. 24422 entered the line in 1963 as a member of the Pike Master group. The Great Northern car remained a part of the cataloged roster through 1965 and spent the next year as an uncataloged item in promotional sets.

Circumstances in the final years of the Gilbert Co.'s existence must have been confused because many variations of the 24422 have surfaced. The most important difference in terms of value relates to whether the plastic shell was painted. Unpainted cars are worth about 10 percent of what painted models go for.

In addition, versions of the 24422 have been reported with different kinds of doors. Gilbert made boxcars with single-block doors that do not open. It also manufactured refrigerator cars whose plug doors can easily be slid open or shut.

### A bold new goat

The decoration of the 24422 Great Northern reflected the novel scheme. Despite a refusal to change the white lettering to bright red the way the railway did, the Flyer freight car couldn't help eliciting grins from S gauge enthusiasts.

Next to the usual circular white herald stood the bold new Rocky. He invited every American Flyer operator to enjoy the latest addition to the product line while celebrating one of America's most famous and beloved railroads. **CTI**



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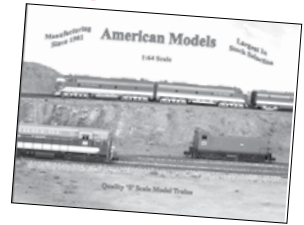
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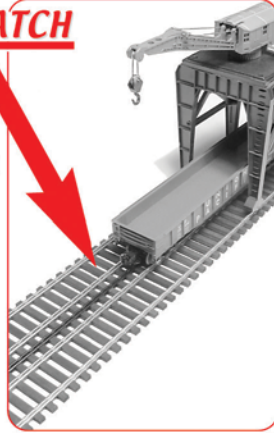
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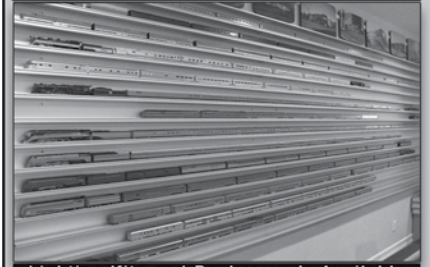
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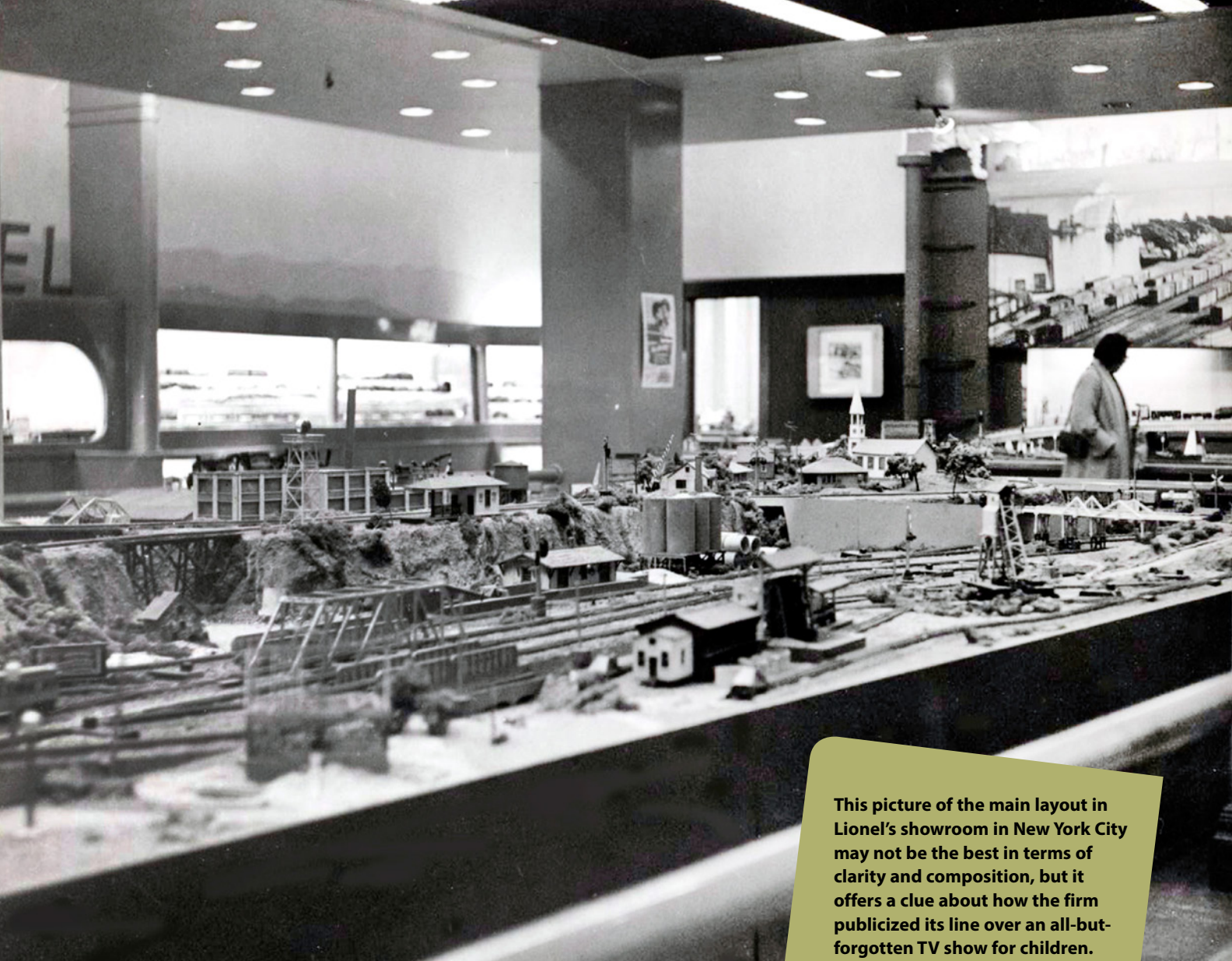
### LIONEL

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28312	B.N. SD60 #8301 w/Legacy	479.95
28340	W.P. GP-7 w/Legacy	429.95
28345	N&W Heritage SD70A w/Legacy	499.95
28354	CSX Genset w/Legacy	779.95
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28363	B.N. SD60 #8302 w/Legacy	479.95
28382	Army Genset w/Legacy	779.95
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38736	BNSF S.F. #1997 SD70ACe	499.95
38737	BNSF S.F. #1999 SD70ACe Dummy	259.95
38742	BNSF B.N. #1975 SD70Ace	499.95
38743	BNSF B.N. #1980 SD70Ace Dummy	259.95
38750	EMD Demo #2012 SD70ACe	499.95
38784	C.N. #4000 GP-35	479.95
82266	C.N. #1158 4-6-0 w/Legacy	799.95
82269	N.P. #1382 4-6-0 w/Legacy	799.95
82270	S.P. #2353 4-6-0 w/Legacy	799.95
82271	NYC #1258 4-6-0 w/Legacy	799.95

38855	G.N. GP-35 #2519	479.95
113355	Blue Comet 4-6-2 w/4 Mad.Cars	1,649.95
28374	S.P. #1865 Heritage SD70ACe	479.95
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28377	Rio Grande #1870 Heritage SD70ACe	479.95
29364	NYC Mohawk Frt Set	1,299.95
29365	N&W "J" Passenger Set	1,699.95
29366	S.P. Tank Train Oil Can Set	699.95
30145	Candian Maple Leaf Frt Set	499.95
31746	G.N. Mountain Mover Set w/TNT	299.95
31783	BNSF Ice Cold Express Set	895.00
31787	C.N. Coal Train Set w/Legacy	799.95
34625	N.P. F3 AA Frt Set Inquire "B" Units	679.95
34682	G.N. GP-9 (Multi Roads Avail)	459.95
34737	N.P. GP-9 (Multi Roads Avail)	449.95
34738	N.P. GP-9 #317 w/Legacy	449.95
38419	U.P. U30C #2918 w/Legacy	499.00
38420	U.P. U30C #2897 w/Legacy	499.00
38421	N.P. U33C #3305 w/Legacy	499.00
38422	N.P. U33C #3307 w/Legacy	499.00
38465	AK RS-11 w/Leg (Other Roads Avail)	459.95
38542	Milw #361 GP-35 w/Leg Dummy Avail	499.95
38707	W.P. F-3 AB Set w/Legacy	599.95
38741	BNSF B.N. #1970 Heritage SD70ACe	529.95
38794	G.N. GP #3018 GP-35 w/Leg Dmy Avail	499.95
38802	North Pole Trackmobile w/Legacy	255.00
38976	S.F. GP-35 w/Legacy	449.95
39562	B.N. GP-35 w/Legacy	479.95
39568	BCR Dash-9 w/Legacy	499.95
39572	BNSF Dash-9 w/Legacy	499.95
1146X	S.P. AC-12 Cab Forward (Multi #s Avail)	1,699.95
114XX	U.P. 4-8-8-4 Big Boy (Multi #s Avail)	2,395.00

38353	X-628 Promo Navy Set	549.00
35354	#1464 U.P. Anniv. Pass Alco Set	429.95
38305	#2338 Milw GP-7 Diesel	169.00
38308	#2146WS Berk Madison Set	459.95
38310	#2185W NYC F3 AA Freight Set	449.00
38311	#2276W Budd RDC Set	369.00
38312	#2343 SF F3 AA	399.99
38313	E&O Budd RDC P&D	289.00
38324	#2507W NH F-3 Freight w/5 Cars	429.00
38328	#1623W N.P. Frt Set w/Leg. Closeout	469.95
38329	#2261W Freight Set (646 w/5 Cars)	459.00
38338	#2129WS Berk Freight Set	549.95
38358	#2239 I.C. F-3 Freight Set	549.00

15741	B&O 4-4-0 General w/PS 3.0	369.95
16001	U.P. 4-8-4 w/PS 3 Blk/Coal	429.95
16071	G.N. 4-8-4 Northern w/PS 3	449.95
16211	S.P. 4-8-4 GS-4 w/PS 3	449.95
16471	Erie Triplex w/5 Cars	779.95
16481	S.P. 4-8-8-2 Cab Forward	679.95
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26431	U.P. Dash 8 Narrow Nose w/PS 2	399.00
27741	U.P. SD70 Heritage w/2 Frt Cars	479.00
28051	Alaska GP-38-2 w/PS 2.0	399.95
29021	G.N. GP-35 Diesel w/PS 2.0	429.00
29131	G.N. SD45 LH Diesel w/PS 2.0	429.00
29351	G.N. SD-45 LH Diesel w/PS 2.0	429.00
31681	UP 4-6-6-4 Challenger w/PS 2	1,395.00
34831	S.P. 4-8-4 GS-4 w/PS 3.0 #4449	1,049.95
34841	S.P. 4-8-4 GS-4 w/PS 3.0 #4449	1,049.95
34851	S.P. 4-8-4 GS-4 w/PS 3.0 #4444	1,049.95
34991	G.N. 4-8-4 w/PS 3.0 #2579	1,049.00
35001	G.N. 4-8-4 Pass Set w/4 Mad Cars	1,149.95
35011	G.N. 4-8-4 w/PS 3.0 #2584	1,049.00
200341	N.P. GP-9 Diesel w/PS 2.0	399.95
200343	N.P. GP-9 Dummy Unit	189.95
200351	Amtrak Turbo Train	829.95
200811	BNSF SD60M Diesel w/PS 2.0	429.95
201201	BNSF Dash-9 w/PS 2	429.95
201431	G.N. SD-70ACe Diesel	429.00
201471	Milw U25B Diesel w/PS 2.0	429.00
201641	U.P. Veranda Turbine w/Tender	869.95
202351	C.P. FM Trainmaster Diesel w/PS 3	429.95
202901	Milw GP-35 Diesel w/PS 3	399.95
202941	B.N. SD-45 Diesel w/PS 3.0	439.95
203391	G.N. DC-3 Rail Inspection Car w/PS 3	459.95
203881	N.P. F-7 ABA Diesel Set w/PS 3	749.95
203911	Alaska F-7 ABA Diesel Set w/PS 3	729.95
204021	G.N. F-3 ABA Diesel Set w/PS 3	779.95
204121	Milw SD40-2 Diesel w/PS 3	449.95
204171	BNSF Dash 8 Diesel w/PS 3	459.95
204211	BNSF Dash 8 Diesel Frt. Set w/PS 3	729.95
200241RK	N.P. RS-3 2.0	299.95
200243RK	N.P. RS-3 Dummy	149.95
200831RK	N.P. Alco RS-1 Diesel w/PS 3.0	299.95
201161RK	G.N. SD-45 w/PS 3	319.95
26021RK	Alaska GP-9 w/PS 2.0	299.00
26621RK	SF SD-45 w/PS 2.0	299.00
27341RK	Alaska RS-1 w/PS 2.0	299.95
28181RK	NP RS-11 Diesel w/PS 2.0	299.00



This picture of the main layout in Lionel's showroom in New York City may not be the best in terms of clarity and composition, but it offers a clue about how the firm publicized its line over an all-but-forgotten TV show for children.

Focus on classics

# Hidden in plain sight

A PHOTO OF THE LIONEL SHOWROOM REVEALS PLANS TO RETURN TO TELEVISION IN 1952

By Roger Carp

In 2011, we collected what we had learned about the showroom maintained by Lionel in New York City from the 1920s into the 1960s and assembled a special-interest publication: *Lionel's Showroom Layouts*.

Not every picture considered made the final cut. Which is one reason we're glad to publish this one, which concentrates on the western side of the big layout built over the winter of 1948-49. Besides offering another view of that O gauge exhibit as well as a glimpse of the display at the northern end, it reveals a secret about another promotional campaign at the company.

### A less-than-satisfying image

This black-and-white image intrigues. The odd angle at which it was taken, the blurry foreground, and the woman in the background suggest it likely never appeared in a corporate or mass-circulation publication.

Who was that woman and why was she standing between the 16 x 32-foot O gauge railroad and the smaller display layout under the familiar photograph of the railroad yard in Weehawken, N.J.? No clues have surfaced regarding her identity.

The flaws and uncertainties characterizing this picture suggest it was not intended for widespread use. It lacks the sharpness and careful composition typical of the shots taken by Bill Vollheim, an employee at Diorama Studios, which worked with Lionel on advertising and promotional materials.

Possibly, a member of the sales staff based at the New York City showroom or another employee there took this picture. Maybe someone visiting on a quiet morning was responsible.

No trains are evident, which may indicate the photo was taken before crowds arrived and salesmen got down to work meeting with them.

### What the picture shows

Let's spend some time looking at the photo deeply. The person holding the camera stood on the western side of the layout and captured a fair amount of it, including the elevated section in the middle, plus the northern end of the room.

Taking center stage for the unknown photographer were the accessories and billboards on the western side. You can see a no. 164 log loader at the edge (a no. 156 station platform stands by it) and a no. 97 coal elevator to the right. A no. 364 conveyor-type log loader was wired by the far track bordering the narrow river.

The waterway painted in a meandering course beneath the wood trestle supporting the elevated rail line proved to be the perfect excuse to place Lionel bridges on



**LIONEL ON TV**—Starting Oct. 19, Lionel went on television over Channel 2 at 12:15 every Sunday noon for thirteen weeks. "Skeets" Minton and his little dummy, Jimmy Morton are the stars of the show and Lionel equipment is seen in action.

the main level. You should be able to pick out the nos. 314 girder bridges and a no. 317 trestle bridge. Don't miss the nos. 71 street-lights and a no. 310 billboard set.

More important were the structures seen there and on the elevated middle section. Several of the industrial sites represented the handiwork of Bob Sherman and Arthur Zirul, also associated with Diorama Studios, which handled the design and construction of the layout.

Out of focus in the foreground was Northern Lumber Co. Other facilities were a freight station and a factory shown rising in the distance. Commercial items – wood kits made by Yank Model Research and a cardboard church from Skyline Model Products – filled the village on the upper level.

### Something else indeed

Hey, all of you eagle-eyed observers studying the photo with a magnifying glass! How many of you caught sight of the poster taped to the column in the center?

It reveals a secret about how Lionel was trying to promote its train line. As important, it nailed down when this photo was taken.

We need at this moment to turn our attention to *All Aboard at Lionel*, an in-house publication distributed to officers and employees of the firm. The November 1952 issue announced Lionel "went on television." Specifically, "Lionel equipment [would be] seen in action" for 13 weeks, starting on October 19, on a 15-minute program airing over a local channel every Sunday afternoon.

For the first time since *Lionel Clubhouse* with Joe DiMaggio had gone off the air late in 1950, Lionel trains would be featured in a regularly broadcast TV series. The shows starred a ventriloquist named "Skeets" Minton and his childlike dummy, Jimmy Morton.

Left vague was the role of the firm. Was Lionel paying to sponsor the programs? Or was it merely providing trains for Minton to use as props, either to hold or to operate over layouts Lionel was going to build?

Regardless, the announcement was a real surprise because

we thought Lionel did nothing on TV between 1950 and 1955. The latter year saw the debut of a program hosted by a better-known ventriloquist, Paul Winchell.

### "Skeets" and Jimmy

Studying the publicity shot of "Skeets" Minton and Jimmy with a Lionel Santa Fe

**The November 1952 issue of *All Aboard at Lionel* informed employees that the company was involved, perhaps as a sponsor, of a TV series starring a popular ventriloquist. Sadly, we know next to nothing these days about "Skeets" Minton.**

# This LIONEL advertising campaign is moving the merchandise for 1955!

**A Coast-to-Coast  
Television Program  
on the NBC Network**

**Featuring Paul Winchell,  
Jerry Mahoney and Knucklehead  
— a Sure-Fire Train-Selling Crew**



**PLUS – A high powered advertising program in 15 leading national magazines and in the comic sections of 66 Sunday newspapers throughout the country!**

Lionel did nothing to downplay its association with another ventriloquist in the middle 1950s. The December 1955 issue of *All Aboard at Lionel* went all out to let employees and dealers know about the firm advertising on a new TV series.

makes it possible to date the photograph and pinpoint changes made to the layout.

The programs and the role of Lionel with their production remain mysteries. Not one of the former employees at Lionel or Diorama Studios I interviewed mentioned *All Aboard* or “Skeets” Minton among the many television shows and personalities they remembered.

Did Lionel create special displays and operating layouts for the short-lived series? Just what did “Lionel went on television” mean? We await answers. **CTT**

**Lionel informed its authorized dealers about the new TV program in 1952.**

F3 diesel was enough to identify the poster shown in the New York showroom. It advertised the television series, which research indicated was called *All Aboard*.

Besides the ventriloquist and his wood sidekick, *All Aboard* featured a popular adolescent singer, Junie Keegan. What they did with the electric trains remains a mystery – maybe a reader of *Classic Toy Trains* will remember the show.

Minton is also a puzzle. Articles originally published in the 1950s in newspapers and entertainment periodicals and now reprinted on Internet websites shed only a little light on him and the *All Aboard* series.

Born around 1920, Minton had broken into show business as an opening act. He later appeared in clubs across the Northeast and Midwest before settling down in southern California. His last TV performance was on *Bewitched* in 1965.

Minton died under questionable circumstances in Las Vegas in the late 1960s.

The picture of “Skeets” Minton and his dummy in *All Aboard at Lionel* enables us to identify the poster in the photo of the layout in the firm’s showroom. In addition, learning the 13-week series was broadcast in the autumn and early winter of 1952

## CTT ONLINE

SEE A NEWSREEL of the Lionel showroom by visiting the Collector Videos section under the Videos tab at [www.ClassicToyTrains.com](http://www.ClassicToyTrains.com)



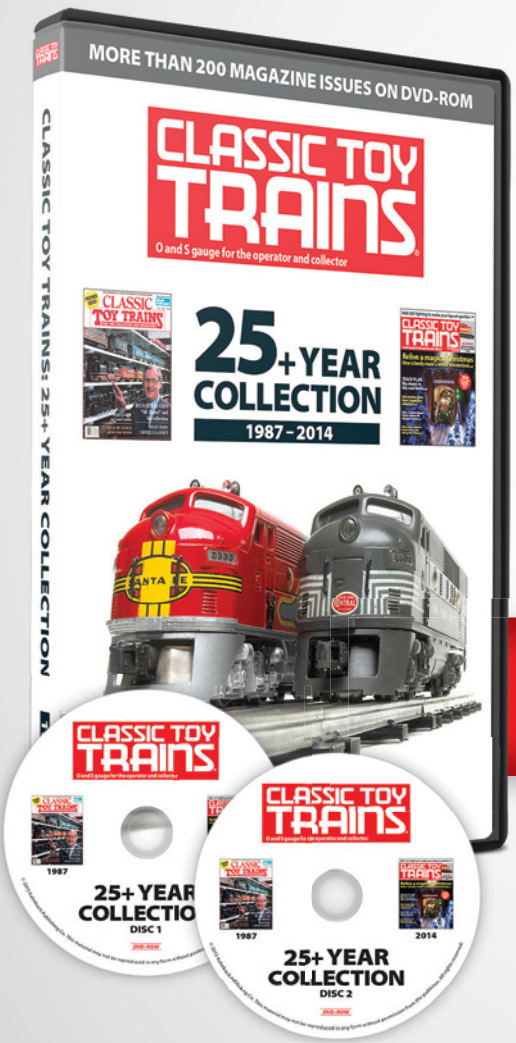
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 \*Includes shipping and handling to U.S. addresses only. Residents of CO, IL, MN, PA, TN, WI and Canada add applicable sales tax.

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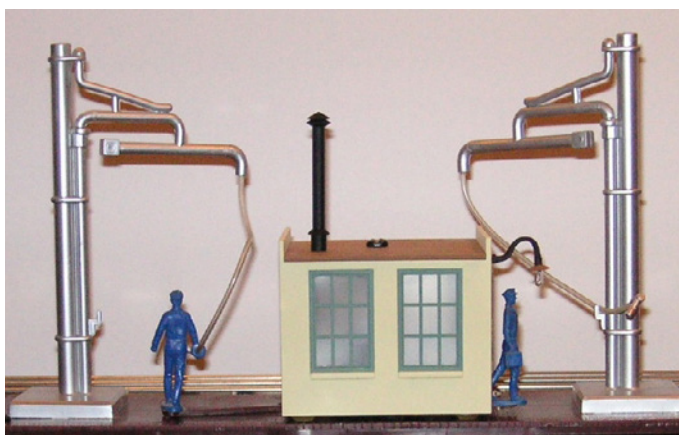


PHOTO 1: The inactive fuel station.



PHOTO 2: Side view of the station office.



PHOTO 3: The diesel triggers the sensor and the office light.



PHOTO 4: The refueling manager springs out.

## Gas and go with a smart detector

**D**iesel engines and steam engines share a common need—they require fuel. Refueling a diesel engine is similar to refueling an automobile and can be accomplished by a trackside fueling station.

K-Line offered an O gauge refueling station that included one-step animation using an electromagnet. With the addition of a proximity sensor placed at the end of the fueling spur, this trackside accessory can be upgraded to a more realistic three-step animation cycle based on the exact location of an approaching diesel engine on the spur line.

At the heart of this approach to accessory animation is the proximity sensor positioned at the end of the refueling spur

line. The proximity sensor is a new more complex version of the reflective style of infrared detector that we've been using in our layouts for years.

This new sensor functions by measuring the angle of the reflected I.R. beam as the object which is reflecting the beam move closer to the sensor. This measured change in the beam angle results in a steadily increasing analog DC output voltage (0 to 2.8V), which is converted to a series of successive relay closures by the

### CTT ONLINE

TO WATCH A VIDEO of the fueling station, please go to [www.ClassicToyTrains.com/videos](http://www.ClassicToyTrains.com/videos)

circuit board pictured in **Photo 8**.

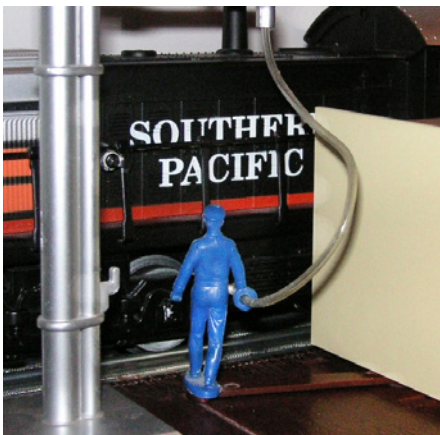
The first relay NO contact turns on the office light.

The second relay causes its associated servo driver to signal its servo to rotate the attached arm 90 degrees which moves the refueling manager (attached to the servo arm) out towards the diesel engine.

Then the third relay causes its associated servo driver to signal its servo to rotate the attached arm 90 degrees.

The servo arm is linked to the L-shaped platform on which the refueling attendant is mounted. This arrangement results in the attendant approaching the engine as the servo arm moves.

**PHOTO 1** is a side view of the fueling station with the originally mounted small



**PHOTO 5: Fueling begins.**

shack and electromagnet removed and replaced with a Lionel no. 37914 3 x 4-inch workhouse station in order to make room for the animation servos and the light for illumination. The sensor at the left hand of the spur line can be seen.

The proximity-sensor-controlled three-step animation cycle takes place as a diesel engine approaches and moves down the spur line into position to be refueled as follows:

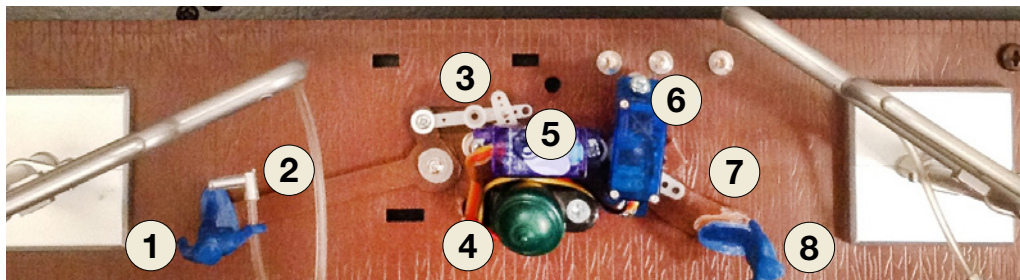
**PHOTO 2** Station waiting for next refuel assignment.

**PHOTO 3** Refueling office light comes on as diesel approaches.

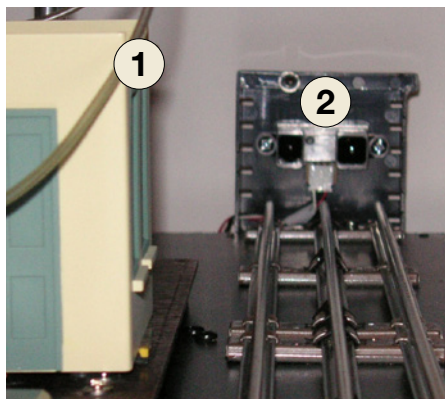
**PHOTO 4** Refueling manager approaches diesel for checkout.

**PHOTO 5** Refueling attendant with hose approaches diesel to begin fueling.

When the refueling is complete, the diesel backs out of the spur line, the two figures return to their original positions and the office light goes out.



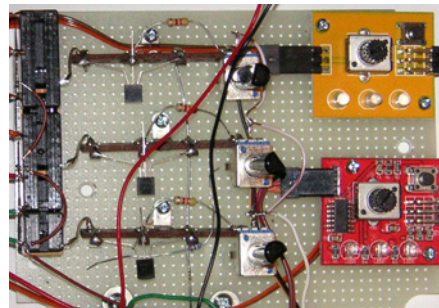
**PHOTO 6: Fueling attendant with hose (1) Attendant swivel link (2) Attendant servo control arm (3) Fueling office light (4) Servo 2 (5) Servo 1 (6) Manager servo control arm (7) Fueling manager (8).**



**PHOTO 7: Fueling office (1) Proximity sensor at the of fuel station spur (2).**

**PHOTO 6** is a top view of the fueling station with the office removed so that the two servos, their mechanical connections to the figures and the office light can be seen. The fueling manager and attendant were original figures included with the station and were remounted. The servos provide smooth realistic movement of the fuel stop figures.

A close-up of the proximity sensor mounted at the end of the layout's spur



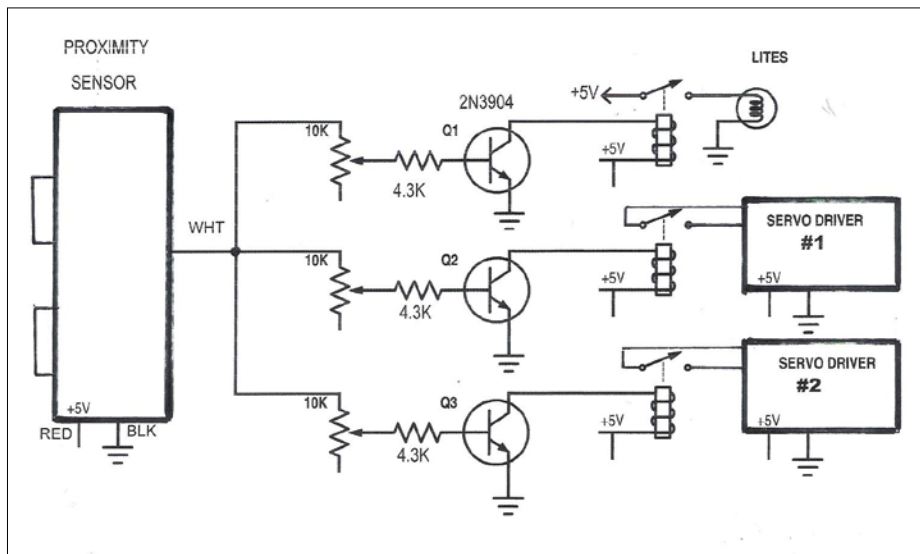
**PHOTO 8: The complete circuit board.**

line is shown in **PHOTO 7**.

The circuit board (**FIG. 1 AND PHOTO 8**) was placed under the layout. It is the same design I previously described for animating an elevated station platform and works in the same way by measuring distance to the oncoming diesel engine.

When the refueling is complete, the diesel backs out of the spur line, the two figures return to their original positions, and the office light goes out.

The use of this motion/action activation is unlimited for any operational concept benefiting from sequential event triggers on your railroad. **CTD**

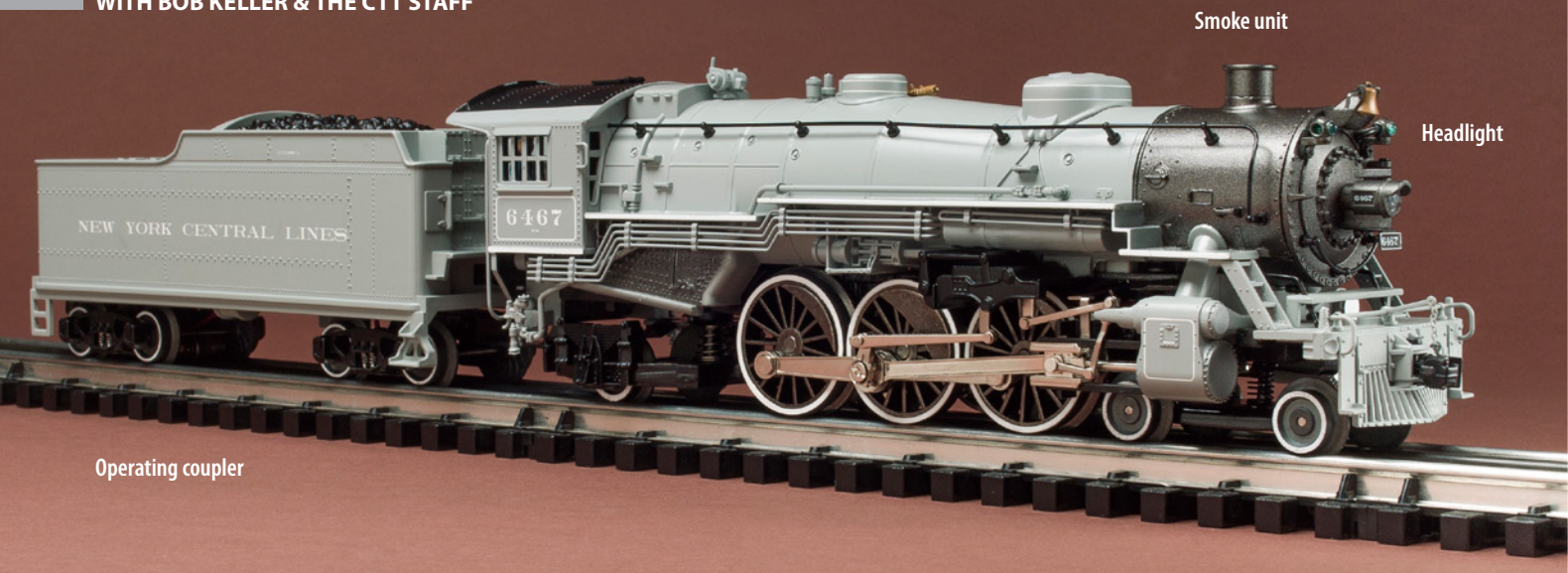


**Fig. 1**

## BILL OF MATERIALS

Numbers are All Electronics (www.allelectronics.com) catalog numbers

QTY	ITEM
1	Sharp GP2Y0A21YK proximity sensor, no. OSU-80
2	Hobbyking HKSESC-TST servo testers, no. STR-110
3	AB Type 3 10K potentiometers, no. TRP-10K
3	4.3K ¼-watt resistors
3	2N3904 NPN transistors
3	KEST K52E-M-DC3 3VDC relays, no. RLY-623
2	SV80 servo mechanisms no. DCS-111



**LENGTH ► FRAME:** 17¾ inches **COUPLER-TO-COUPLER:** 19½ inches

## Midnight express

O GAUGE 4-6-2 PACIFIC FROM WILLIAMS BY BACHMANN

As much as I like 4-6-4 Hudsons, 4-8-2 Mountains, and 4-8-4 Northerns, I imagine that more 20th century passenger trains were pulled by high-stepping 4-6-2 Pacifics than by any other type. Those steam locomotives were lighter and undoubtedly less expensive to build or operate than their larger cousins, and they were probably the perfect fit for any passenger train running from Knoxville to Birmingham or Des Moines to Kansas City.

Pacifics were not just passenger haulers, however. Railroads used them as needed, so freight, passenger, or even work trains would be suitable consists.

The latest O gauge locomotive fielded from Williams by Bachmann has a familiar look to it, because it is based on K-Line's 4-6-2 light Pacific. The model is a good likeness of a U.S. Railroad Administration light Pacific or a post-World War I derivative of the design. It is a nicely detailed little gem, looking right at home on a traditional layout. Yet it is smart enough to fit into a less toy-like setting.

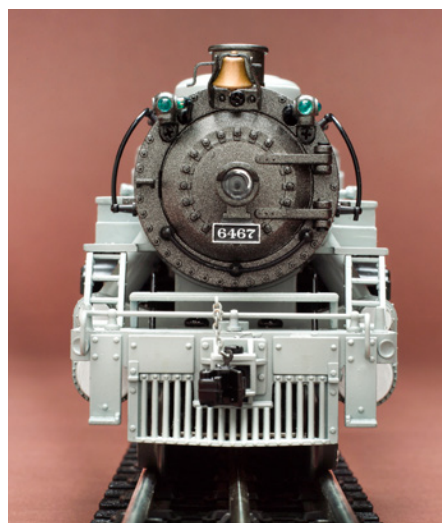
### Opening the box

Our test sample is the New York Central gray version. This is a plus, not because it is a New York Central loco-

tive, but because all the detailing on the locomotive is easier to view on gray paint.

The slats in the pilot are clearly defined, as are the cast-in rivets "attaching" the pilot and brakeman's steps to the frame. The uncoupler arm runs across the front bar of the pilot and is attached to the scale non-operating coupler on the front with a chain.

There is a deck below the smokebox,



**No bull would want to see this coupler and the slotted pilot charging straight toward it!**

and steps rise up to the sideboards running along the boiler. The face of the smokebox has rivet, seam, and latch detail. There is a grab iron arcing beneath the smokebox door. A handrail starts mid-boiler and then runs up and along the sides of the boiler.

The headlight is centered, and a number board is just below the light. Up top, the bell is just ahead of the smokestack, and the classification lights are at the 11 and 12 o'clock spots.

Also visible from the front are the steam chests, which are accented with white paint on gray.

The boiler has rivet, seam, and boiler band detail cast into it. Cast-in sand feed lines drop down from the sand dome. There is a brass-colored whistle by the sand dome and an add-on turbine near the cab. On both sides there are cast-in steps rising upward, just ahead of the cab.

Just below the sideboards is a nice collection of detail points. On the fireman's side you'll see an air compressor, a compressor reservoir, and air lines. A water drain line snakes from the boiler down to the rear of the cab. Below the cab you'll also see rivets in the sides of the firebox.

On the engineer's side are another air-compressor tank and a group of four



brake-line pipes running from just behind the smokebox (feeding air to the pilot brake line) to below the end of the cab.

The cab is well done, with grab irons on the front and the end of the cab, side windows with “panes,” and crew figures inside. You’ll also find a decorated backhead with an open firebox for the firebox glow effect.

The locomotive and tender are connected with both a drawbar and a wire tether. Both trucks have two axles.

Paired with the die-cast metal locomotive is a plastic tender boasting a good level of rivet detail and steps at all the corners. The coal load is plastic and painted black. It is nicely cut into the tooling, and you get the sense there are lots of chunks of coal on board.

The tender deck has a cast-in water hatch and rivet detailing, while the rear of the model has a single backup light. The gray paint is perfectly applied. White accents on the drive wheels and the wheels on the pilot and tender trucks are well done and look spiffy. The locomotive is lettered New York Central Lines, a designation used

for the Central west of Buffalo prior to the adoption of New York Central System.

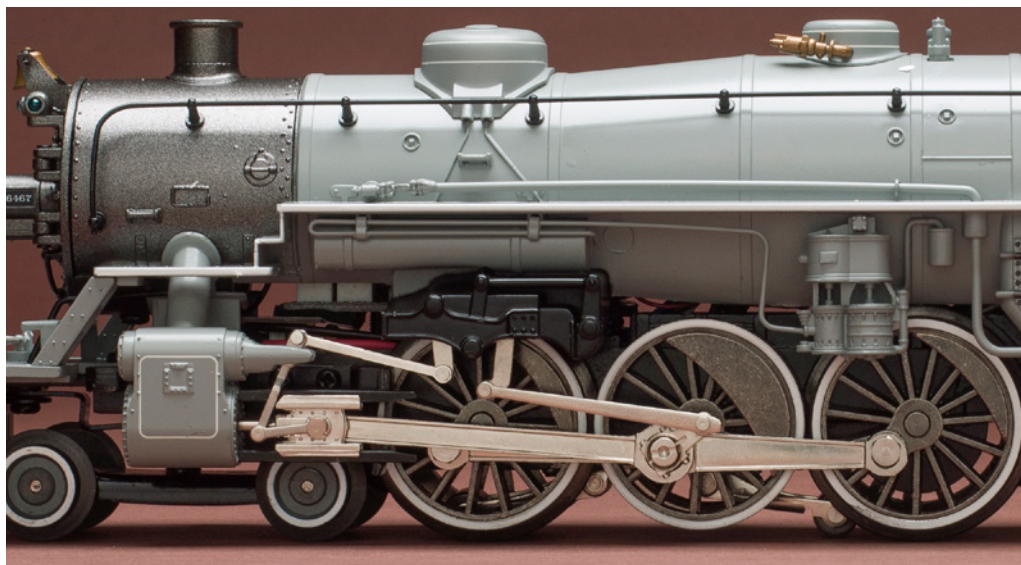
Lettering of the text and engine numbers is clear and crisp.

### On the test track

After a brief post-lubrication warm-up, the Williams by Bachmann Pacific ran like a champ. This is a conventional-only locomotive with a standard forward-neutral-reverse sequence. After stopping for seven seconds or so, the locomotive will start in the forward direction. You can lock the locomotive’s direction through the directional lock switch beneath the tender.

The smoke unit on/off switch is located beneath the locomotive cab.

The motor function was quiet, and the running gear was squeak-free! The speed range was good (see the box), and the locomotive was able to handle with ease



With steam power, the excitement is always in watching the syncopation of the wheels and running gear.



The cab features both a firebox light and a compartment light on the backhead.

Smoke output was a bit on the light side, which I presume was due to track voltage (the higher the power applied to the tracks, the more smoke is produced). Our test track lacks a long straightaway for high-speed (and high-voltage) running.

As an aside, I think Williams offers the best product information sheet in the industry. You get three line drawing views of the locomotive and two views of the tender, and every part is identified with its name and number. You get to see the position of the workings inside and out without needing to pop off the shell. Very cool!

The Williams by Bachmann O gauge Pacific has nice heft to it and is solidly constructed. It is a well-made product that will look right at home on a traditional three-rail layout or hustling commuters on a more elaborate pike. Check your Williams by Bachmann retailer for price and availability and you just may go home with one! – *Bob Keller*

the eight to ten freight cars we could tack behind it.

The headlight is brilliantly bright. Check the locomotive box and you’ll find a bottle of smoke fluid and replacement light blubs. The steam chuffs of the sound package are good, and the whistle and bell are attention-getters.

## NEW YORK CENTRAL 4-6-2 PACIFIC FROM WILLIAMS BY BACHMANN

**Price:** \$599.95 (no. 40801) **Min Curve:** O-31 **Cmd Low:** N/A **Cnv Low:** 12.4 smph, **Cnv High:** 72 smph, **Drawbar Pull:** 1 lb., 7 oz.

**Features:** Can-style motors, headlight and backup light, directional lockout. True Blast Plus sound system with whistle, bell, chuff, and idle steam sounds. **Current production road names:** New York Central, Santa Fe, Southern Ry., and Wabash

279-2637 Baltimore & Ohio boxcar



279-2301 BNSF flatcar with BNSF pickup truck load



279-2632 Baltimore & Ohio Sentinel boxcar



279-2668 Burlington Northern Santa Fe flatcar with BNSF tractor load



279-3057 Chicago & North Western long flatcar



279-3053 Santa Fe flatcar with panel truck load.

## New kid on the block

### AN OVERVIEW OF MENARDS ROLLING STOCK

Perhaps the most unexpected and interesting recent development in the O gauge market has been the arrival of the Menards home-improvement chain in the ranks of train manufacturers. While Menards has a track record of including O gauge trains and track as part of its seasonal offerings, selling them is one thing, while importing them is another.

Menards first appeared in *Classic Toy Trains* in 2011 with some custom-run structures by Woodland Scenics. Next were resin structures of a Menards store and a lumberyard/garden center

These were followed by an amazing line of custom-built,

assembled, and detailed wood structures. It became clear that O gauge was on the minds of the folks at Menards H.Q., and it was more of a thrill than a surprise when the first Menards freight cars came our way.

In a very compressed window of time, the firm began offering rolling stock, listened to customer feedback, and immediately improved the line.

Improvements were made to couplers. Couplers and truck frames became metal, and they operated more smoothly. The decoration of the cars (lettering and signage) – while good, became better – to the point that the new large (scale-sized) flatcars have stamped car numbers.

#### Who is the target?

To paraphrase a line from an old Six Flags amusement park ad campaign, “More trains, more fun!” I think Menards is targeting the audience that wants to run trains – and have as great a variety of rolling stock and road names as possible.

Whether the layout is a simple loop around a tree, an elaborate floor layout, or a three-rail octopus filling a basement, we all want our yards and sidings to reveal we have a prosperous railroad. The key to that appearance is freight cars, freight cars, and more freight cars. Freight cars equal traffic, which equals O scale payments to the 1:48

scale stockholders!

But freight cars can add up quickly and be unfriendly to our hobby budgets. I mean, how many people can load up their roster of freight cars at \$100 a pop?

Menards offers a solution with a variety of good-looking, and smooth-running basic and familiar O gauge freight cars (at this writing, only boxcars and flatcars) at low prices.

#### Features

**The boxcars:** The shell is just a bit more than 10 inches long (40 feet in O scale) and the coupler-to-coupler length is 11¼ inches long.

The boxcars have a good level of detail with cast rivets

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## PRODUCT REVIEWS



Paint, graphics, and text are carefully applied to each car for a clean, crisp appearance.

and seams and cast-in ladders on the ends. The roofwalk is cast in, but has some nice metal frame texture. The doors open, and the boxcar continues to be a winner in the “play value” category, because it could have just about anything inside.

The metal frame has two support beams (folded-over shaped metal) and an add-on air reservoir.

You can buy the boxcars individually for about \$20, in eight-car sets, or as a 14-car pack with 14 different road names. Menards also offers several cars weathered at a slightly higher price.

**The short flatcar:** This car’s frame measures just less than 9½ inches long (38 feet in O scale) and the coupler-to-coupler length is 10½ inches. The resin car has cast-in planking on the deck, and the sides have rivet and seam detailing as well as cast-in grab irons and steps on the corners. A raised support reveals an add-on brake wheel. The beds have slots for stakes to hold cargo in place.

The flatcars are available singly (as low as \$7.99 without packaging) or in multi-packs with four to 24 models. Some flatcars come without loads; others have cargo ranging from military loads to vans and earthmoving equipment.

**The long flatcar:** This car wowed me for two reasons: its

size relative to the short flatcars and its real wood deck with planks cut into the surface. Where the short flatcars are solid and require no support, the frame of the long flatcar has a grid that supports the wood deck. This struck me as being better than gluing a wood strip on a flat plastic surface. The car comes with stakes to secure a cargo load.

This car is available singly or in multi-packs, and is available with a variety of loads such as U.S. Army and U.S. or Canadian Coast Guard helicopters, a space rocket, and construction equipment.

Menards designed the long flatcars to negotiate O-27 curves (O-27 switches may be another thing). You can buy the long flatcars without loads individually or in four packs, and the cars with cargo loads are available singly.

**Special cars:** Two special “operating” cars are available: a short flatcar with a U.S. Army tank load and a short flatcar with a Chicago Fire Department ambulance load. Both

vehicles draw power from the track via a power pickup roller.

The tank gun “flashes,” while the emergency lights on the ambulance alternates red or blue. The ambulance is available separately, and the lights operate with battery power (batteries are included). These are clever product ideas.

### Painting and decoration

Considering all the Menards rolling stock I’ve seen, I have yet to detect any bad paint anywhere – no overspray onto other colors, no details washed out by paint, and no thin spots. The railroad logos on the boxcars are striking, and if you ever saw them “back-in-the-day,” each will look like a familiar face.

The printing of the assorted reporting marks is all clear and crisp. In case you didn’t notice it in the photos, each car is marked, “Built by Menards 2015” with boxcars also having a small Menards corporate logo. The flatcars, with a smaller canvas upon which to print, just use text.

### FREIGHT CARS FROM MENARDS

**Price:** \$7.99 to \$39.99 **Min Curve:** O-27 **Features:**

Sturdy construction, operating couplers, die-cast metal trucks and couplers on many models, flatcars available with or without cargo loads. **Current production road names:** At least 14 railroads

Speaking of printing, a bonus is that Menards touts the fact that cars have different reporting numbers. Having bought multiples of the same road name, I can confirm this is true. The car numbers are applied to the car like a decal. This must save significant money in the production process yet can still create a unique car.

The number is on a clear film you can see if the light reflects just so from one angle; otherwise it is invisible.

Let me mention the color of the boxcars. The colors of the pieces of rolling stock are satisfactory, but if you’re a stickler, you may find some of the cars have a lighter or darker hue than you remember on the real freight cars.

For example, the New York Central boxcars are a darker green than the traditional jade green; however, that didn’t stop me from buying four of them. For me, the desire for the car, the road name, the cigar-band graphics, and the low price outweighed a variance in the color. I recently bought a New York Central boxcar for \$70, and I expected close to perfection on it. But I will happily run the Menards cars with the big bucks cars and be pleased with all of them.

The variety of the new Menards line of freight cars is impressive, as is its strategy of announcing new products steadily throughout the year – no wonder I look forward to the weekly email from Menards. The product line has improved over its short lifespan, and I have been pleased with all the Menards rolling stock I have.

The models are well made, have nice graphics, and permit an O gauger to build a railroad empire on a brakeman’s budget. – Bob **CTT**

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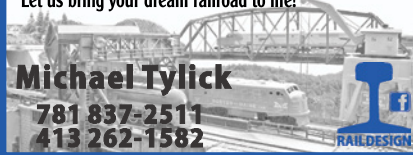
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**CLOSING DATES:** Jan 2016 closes Oct 7, Feb. closes Nov. 4, March closes Dec. 4, May closes Feb. 11, July closes Apr. 13, Sept. closes June 8, Oct. closes July 13, Nov. closes Aug. 10, Dec. closes Sept. 8.

## Events

**AL, FOLEY:** Annual Train Show. Sponsored by Caboose Club (Foley RR Museum) and SWARM. Foley Civic Center, 407 E. Loral Ave. March 12-13, 2016. Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm and Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. Admission \$4.00, under 10, military, fire, police, FREE. Layouts, train dealers. Free parking. Bob Adams, [santafebob95@msn.com](mailto:santafebob95@msn.com) or Charlie Boyer, 251-914-0893, [charlieboye6@att.net](mailto:charlieboye6@att.net)

**CT, WALLINGFORD:** Classic Shows, LLC will hold a Train and Toy Show on Sunday, February 7, 2016 from 9:00am-2:00pm at Zandri's Stillwood Inn, 1074 South Colony Road, (U.S. Route 5), exit 13 on Interstate 91. Admission is \$6.00, children 12 and under are free with adult. For information 203-926-1327 or [www.ClassicShowsLLC.com](http://www.ClassicShowsLLC.com)

**FL, JACKSONVILLE:** 38th Jacksonville Model Train & Railroadiana Show. Prime Osborn Convention Center, 1000 Water Street. Saturday, February 13, 2016, 9:00am-5:00pm. Admission \$8.00, under 12 free. Info: Alan Altman, PO Box 985, Land O' Lakes, FL 34639. 813-949-7197. E-mail: [rsshows@aol.com](mailto:rsshows@aol.com) or [www.gserr.com](http://www.gserr.com)

**FL, LARGO:** TCA Train Show. MinnReg Building, 6340 126th Ave. Saturday, January 23, 2016. 10:00am-3:00pm. Adults: \$5.00, children under 12 free. Displays, layouts, door prizes. Contact for more information or directions: Charles Anyan, 727-345-0288, [canyan1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:canyan1@tampabay.rr.com)

**FL, PALM BEACH GARDENS:** TCA Train Show. St. Marks Church, 10635 Gardens East Dr. Saturday, February 13, 2016, 10:00am-3:00pm. Directions: Easy access from I-95 and Turnpike. Off Burns Road. Adults: \$5.00, under 12 free. Displays, layouts, scavenger hunt, drag races. Contact: Al Galli, 772-219-7653.

**FL, PORT RICHEY:** Toy Train & Hobby Show, 5850 K of C Drive. Saturday, February 13, 2016, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$5.00 adults, 12 and under free. Vendors, operating layout, Lunch items for sale. Contact Joe, 727-244-1341, visit: [www.regalrailways.com](http://www.regalrailways.com) for more information.

**IL, LOMBARD:** Chicago O Scale Meet (2-Rail), Western Lombard Yorktown Center, 70 Yorktown Center. We've moved into April for 2016! April 1-3, 2016. Friday dealer set-up, show open to public Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm, Sunday 9:00am-2:00pm. Largest dedicated O Scale show out there. \$20.00 entire weekend. Info: Melissa 630-745-7600 or [www.marchmeet.net](http://www.marchmeet.net)

**IN, KOKOMO:** Antique Toy & Train Show. Ivy Tech Event & Conference Center, U.S. 31 By-Pass North. Saturday, February 6, 2016, 11:00am-4:00pm. Adults \$5.00, 13-18 \$1.00, 12/under free. 200+ tables, all gauges, brass, kits, free parking, working models, good food & drink, antique car museum. Contact: David Moree, 4402 East 100 South, Kokomo, IN 46902, 765-457-1044.

**IN, MIDDLEBURY:** Essenhaus Train Show. On the Das Dutchman Essenhaus campus, 240 US 20. Saturday, February 20, 2016, 9:00am-2:30pm. Admission \$3.00/person or \$6.00/family. (Children under 7 FREE w/adult). All gauge, operating layouts, repairs, parts dealers, selling and trading. Display tables \$15.00 each. Essenhaus.com or call 800-455-9471 (x443).

**MD, ANNAPOLIS:** WB&A Chapter Toy Train Show. NEW LOCATION: Annapolis Elks Lodge, 2517 Solomon's Island Road, Edgewater, MD. SUNDAY, March 20, 2016, 10:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$5.00, children under 12, scouts in uniform free. All scales, 50+ tables, operating layout, Train Doctor, free appraisals. Free parking. Info: [www.wba-tca-eastern.org](http://www.wba-tca-eastern.org), [dbeadie@verizon.net](mailto:dbeadie@verizon.net)

**ME, AUGUSTA:** Whitefield Lions Club 30th Annual Model Railroad & Miniature Dollhouse Show, National Guard Armory, Western Avenue. February 20, 2016, 10:00am-3:30pm. Adults \$5.00, under 12 free, family \$10.00. Operating layouts, miniature displays. Contact: Steven P. Landrie, 50 Fairview Ave., Randolph, ME 04346. Telephone: 207-582-1410, E-mail: [slandrie@roadrunner.com](mailto:slandrie@roadrunner.com)

**NC, ASHEVILLE:** Asheville Train Show. Western North Carolina Agricultural Center. March 4-5, 2016, Friday 12:00pm-7:00pm and Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm. Admission \$5.00, under 10 free. All scales, all gauges, collectibles, artifacts. Operating layouts, Thomas The Tank Engine, hundreds of vendor tables. More: [www.Asheville-Trainshow.com](http://www.Asheville-Trainshow.com)

**NC, GREENSBORO:** 8th Annual 'Greatest Little Train Show'. Downtown at the AMTRAK Depot, West Concourse, 300 E. Washington St. Saturday, March 19, 2016, 10:00am-3:00pm. Admission: \$5.00 adults, under 12 free. Greensboro's only train show. CMR layouts open. Downtown meter parking free. Walt Sabin, 336-312-4198. [carolinamodelrr@aol.com](mailto:carolinamodelrr@aol.com) or CMR, PO Box 13642, Greensboro, NC 27415.

**NJ, TOMS RIVER:** National Collector's Club Show. Elks Lodge, 600 Washington St. Sunday, February 7, 2016, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$5.00; under 10 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to [www.eastcoasttrainparts.com](http://www.eastcoasttrainparts.com) and click on Toms River Show.

**NJ, WAYNE:** National Collector's Club Show, P.A.L. Hall, 1 Pal Drive. Wayne, NJ 07470. Sunday, February 21, 2016, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$6.00; under 10 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to [www.eastcoasttrainparts.com](http://www.eastcoasttrainparts.com) and click on The Wayne Show.

**NY, ROCHESTER:** TCA Upstate NY Chapter & Edgerton Model RR Club's Train Show. Edgerton Community Center, 41 Backus Street. Zip: 14608. Saturday, February 27, 2016, TCA Members: 9:00am-10:00am. Public: 10:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$5.00, children under 17 free w/paid adult. Call: Chuck 716-390-8216 or Lee 585-544-0916. E-mail: [tca.usnyc@yahoo.com](mailto:tca.usnyc@yahoo.com) or [www.upstate-ny-tca.com](http://www.upstate-ny-tca.com)

**OH, HAMILTON/CINCINNATI:** Ross H.S.- Larry Keller Memorial Train Show Fundraiser, 3371 Hamilton Cleves Road. Saturday, March 5, 2016. Public welcome 9:00am-2:00pm. Adults \$5.00, under 12 free. Tables \$20.00, additional tables \$15.00, 88 available. Operating Layouts, Door Prizes. Music Performances. Sells out each year. GREAT EVENT WORTH THE DRIVE. Kent Acree, 513-235-3086

**OH, KIRTLAND:** Railfest 2016. Lakeland Community College (AFC), 7700 Clocktower Dr., Zipcode: 44094. NMRA MCR Div. 5. March 19-20, 2016, Saturday and Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. All Gauge Train Show with over 400 tables. 440-357-8890, [www.railfest.org](http://www.railfest.org)

**OH, TOLEDO:** Greater Toledo Train & Toy Show. Owens Community College (SHAC), 30335 Oregon Rd., Perrysburg, OH 43051. Sunday, March 13, 2016, 11:00am-3:00pm. Early Birds: 9:00am-3:00pm. Adults \$6.00/Early Birds \$10.00, 12/under FREE w/adult. Contact: Randy Ramsey, 1566 South Ave., Toledo, OH 43609, 419-215-4181, [toymasters.org](http://toymasters.org) or [trainmasters@bex.net](mailto:trainmasters@bex.net)

**PA, LEESPORT:** RCT&HS Scale Model and Toy Train Show, Leesport Farmer's Market banquet hall, 312 Germant's Church Road. April 3, 2016, 9:00am-1:00pm. For information, contact Tom Brown, 717-279-6783 (8:00am-8:00pm) or e-mail [mjtsbrown@comcast.net](mailto:mjtsbrown@comcast.net)

**TX, PLANO:** NTC offers the 31st Annual Dallas Model Train Show. Plano Centre at 2000 E. Spring Creek Parkway. January 16-17, 2016. Saturday 10:00am-5:00pm and Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. Adults \$8.00, children 12 and under are free. 12 operating layouts, gauges N-G. Information: [dfwtrainshows.com](http://dfwtrainshows.com) or 469-955-5405

**WI, LA CROSSE:** The 25th Annual Great Tri-State Rail Sale. La Crosse Center, 2nd & Pearl Streets. January 30, 2016, 9:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$5.00, under 12 free. 280 Tables; All Scales; Model, Toy & Antique Trains & Memorabilia. Information: 4000 Foundation, PO Box 3411, La Crosse, WI 54602, 608-781-9383.

**CANADA: ONTARIO, ESSEX:** Model Train Show. Essex Public School, 71 Brian Ave. E., Presented by Heritage Essex Historic Train Station. February 27 and 28, 2016, 9:30am-3:30pm daily. Admission: Adults \$5, Seniors and teens \$4, under 12 \$2. Contact Essex Train Station at 1-519-776-9800.

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# CLASSIC TOY TRAINS MAGAZINE



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# Wiring for double crossovers

Whenever crossings and switches are used in combination, as in a double crossover like the one shown in Fig. 1, it is important to ensure that all sections of track are both powered and grounded. Several factors can interfere with these connections.

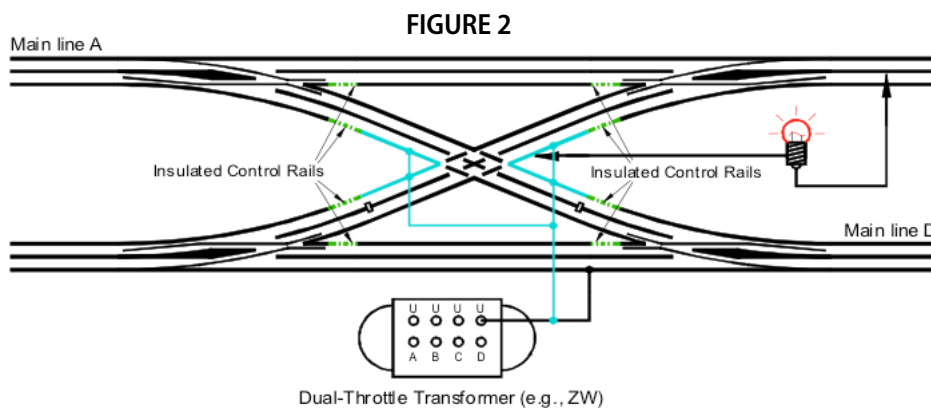
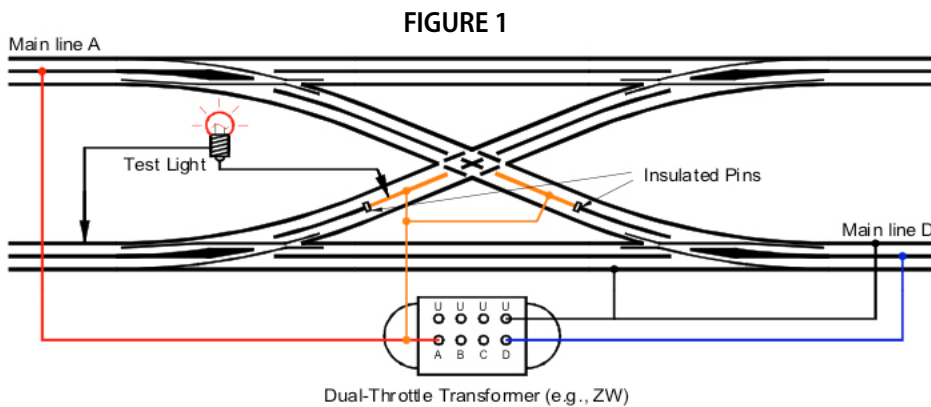
Depending upon the manufacturer, the middle rails of the switches or crossing may or may not be wired together. Switches with a non-derailing feature (Lionel nos. 1122, 022 or 072, for example) will have short insulated control rails that may interfere with a continuous ground connection. And locomotives equipped with rubber traction tires, especially those with short wheelbases, may not always achieve a good ground connection if the only grounded outside rail is on the same side as the traction tires. The following suggestions should help to identify and correct these problems.

**ONE-THROTTLE OPERATION OR COMMAND CONTROL:** This is the simplest possible scenario, requiring only a power connection (post A on a ZW transformer, for example) to the middle rail (the red wire in Fig. 1), and a ground connection (post U) to the outside rails (black). In this case there should be no insulated pins in the middle rails.

If you are using Ross, GarGraves, Atlas, or MTH track, on which the two outside rails are not wired together at the factory, attach a ground wire to both sides.

**TWO-THROTTLE OPERATION:** If you have two main lines and wish to control them separately, isolate one of them by placing two insulated pins in the middle rails on one side of the crossing as shown in Fig. 1. Connect throttle A to the middle rail of one main line (red) and throttle D to the middle rail of the other main line (blue).

Depending upon how the crossing is wired by the manufacturer or has been otherwise modified, the middle rails adjacent to the insulating pins (orange) may not be receiving electrical current. This



will cause a locomotive to stall when passing over the crossing.

To determine if a section of track is “dead” (not receiving current), make a test light from a miniature 18-volt bulb (Fig. 1). With the throttle advanced, touch one wire from the bulb to a ground rail and the other wire to the middle rail where the locomotive stalled.

If the bulb fails to light up, add jumper wires from the transformer to the dead middle rail or rails, as shown in orange. But if the test light indicates that all the middle rails are receiving power and the locomotive still stalls, the problem is a ground fault (Fig. 2).

**GROUND FAULT:** This condition may be caused by rubber traction tires on a locomotive when the wheels on the opposite side are sitting on a dead rail. It may also

be caused by the insulated control rails of the non-derailing switches (shown as green dotted lines), or by outside rails of the crossing that are not wired together.

Touch one wire from the test light to a live middle rail, and the other wire to each of the outside rails in the double crossover. If you find any outside rails that are dead (that do not cause the bulb to light), attach extra ground wires to those rails, as shown in light blue. – Peter H. Riddle

Peter Riddle is author of *Wiring Your Toy Train Layout*. See your hobby retailer or order at [www.kalmbachbobbystore.com](http://www.kalmbachbobbystore.com).

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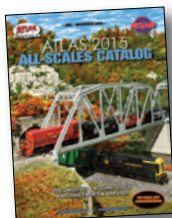
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