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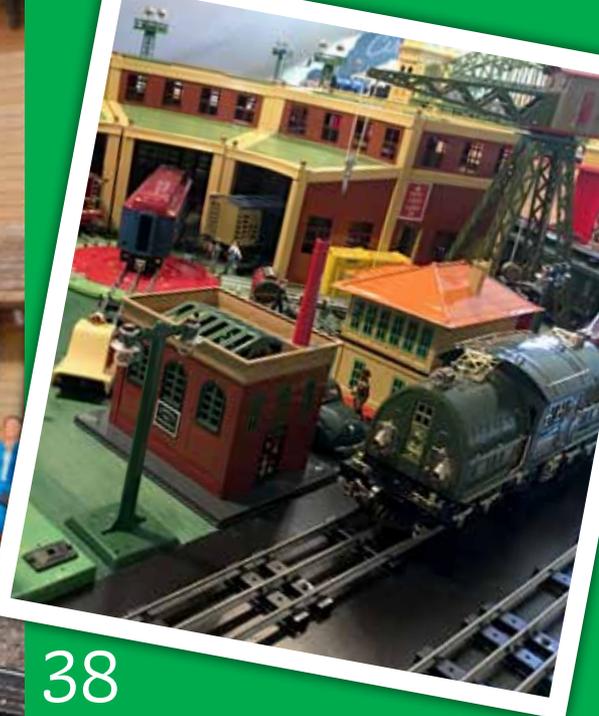
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Not always logical

The hobby doesn't have to be as long as we're having fun

■ **THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW TIMES** since I've been in hobbies that I've been gobsmacked by something I'd never considered.

The first was taking as an article of faith that if you were a model railroader of any sort you also had to be interested in prototype trains. I suspect the utter surprise registered on my face the first time someone told me they knew nothing about real railroads. Further, they had no desire to learn.

The lesson: Model trains are capable of existing as entities unto themselves.

The other thing that blew my mind was you could be into toy or scale trains and not want to have a layout.

Wait, what?

I recall a friend proudly opening up a closet filled top to bottom with his O gauge collection of locomotives, cars, and accessories. There were boxes of postwar, there was Lionel, there was Marx, there was modern.

He had a similar closet in a spare bedroom, although that one was only half full.

I thought to myself, "All this stuff is going to make a great layout." It was just he and his wife in the house; the kids were long since gone. Space wasn't an issue.

Nope. My friend had no desire to build a layout. Once in a while he'd set up some



Here are a couple of O gauge beauties certain to make the list; what are your choices?

track and run trains then he'd pack it all back in the boxes and put it away.

There are so many ways to enjoy the hobby. I hope you are finding your fun no matter how you "practice."

The people's choice

If you haven't heard already, the title for our next special-interest publication is *Great Toy Train Locomotives*. In it, we'll detail the top O, S, and Standard gauge locomotives of all time.

A lot of the decision-making for constructing the list falls on the CTT staff, but we'd like you to have a pick, too.

If you'd like to participate, send us a list of no more than five toy train locomotives

you think should be included. Here are the parameters:

Locomotives must be from the previously mentioned scales;

They must be regular-production models and not "made to order";

They must be models and not road names. All we need is Lionel postwar F3, not Santa Fe F3 or New York Central F3.

Email your list with "Locomotives" in the subject to editor@classictoytrains.com.

Hal Miller, Editor

YOUR MAGAZINE TEAM



Editor
Hal Miller
hmiller@
Kalmbach.com



Senior Editor
Roger Carp
rcarp@
ClassicToyTrains.com



Senior Production Editor
Rene Schweitzer
rschweitzer@
Kalmbach.com



Copy Editor
Steven Otte
sotte@
Kalmbach.com



Group Technical Editor
Cody Grivno
cgrivno@
ModelRailroader.com



Contributing Editor
Bob Keller
editor@
ClassicToyTrains.com

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CLASSIC TOY TRAINS

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Monica Freitag Editorial Assistant
 Lisa M. Schroeder Assistant Design Director
 Kellie Jaeger Illustrator
 Sue Hollinger-Klahn Production Specialist
 Martha Stanczak Ad Sales Representative

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A. David Popp Executive Producer
 Kent Johnson Producer

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■ EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING

To contact our editorial staff, call us at 262-796-8776, fax us at 262-796-1142, or send an email to editor@ClassicToyTrains.com.
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Flyer Royal Blue just couldn't smoke

■ SOME DETAILS ABOUT the

American Flyer No. 350 Royal Blue engine and tender were left out of "S gauge now & then" in the March-April 2023 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. They help explain why neither the Blue Comet nor the version of the S gauge 4-6-2 Pacific in the Circus Train (No. 353) came with a smoke unit.

Both locomotives had the reverse unit in the boiler, so a smoke unit would have to be installed in the tender. But the streamlined tender body was too narrow for that version of the smoke unit, as were the tin tenders used with Atlantics.

In addition, the smokestack in the shell used for the Royal Blue was too far back from the main drive wheels for the standard Smoke-In-Boiler (SIB) unit's smokestack. The front of the shell was "shorter" than that on any other Pacifics, so the front four-wheel truck was also shorter (and used only on this engine).

Gilbert retooled the die-cast metal shell at least twice: first, to



There was much to admire about the American Flyer No. 350 Royal Blue engine. Unfortunately its design made it impossible to add a smoke mechanism.

add cast-on handrails; second, to eliminate the cast-in Baltimore & Ohio herald on the pilot to allow other variations, such as the Circus Train engine, to be made. When the shell was retooled for plastic injection, the reverse-lever slot was filled in and the reverse unit was placed in the tender. In addition, the skyline casing was extended into the nose area, allowing the smokestack hole to line up with the SIB unit. Thus, the Silver Bullet versions of the 4-6-2 Pacific (Nos. 354 and 356) could be equipped with smoke and "choo-choo" sound. – *David Dewey, Oroville, Calif.*

Avoid temptation

Members of the hobby who collect Lionel O gauge trains from the postwar era and run some of the excellent steam engines on their three-rail layouts at home may be tempted to save a few bucks by using smoke fluid, mineral or baby oil, or even WD-40 instead of

original Lionel smoke pellets in locomotives that were designed for pellets. Four words of advice: Do Not Do It! – *Joseph Kubacka, North Huntingdon, Pa.*

Crawling past 70

I enjoyed Lou Palumbo's "Views from the underground"

in the March/April 2023 issue about trying to get under your layout once you have passed the age of 70. I'm a year older than that and feel (and share) your pain! Here are two humble tips from a guy who has done a lot of work updating an old O-27 layout in recent years. First, get yourself one of those crawlers that auto mechanics use to work underneath cars. I have two – a flat one and a stool – and both roll very nicely.

Second, pick up some of the new buildings and accessories from Menards and Woodland Scenics made with easy plug-in systems. No need for lockons or more transformer power. Good luck! – *Phil Angelo, Kankakee, Ill.*

More ideas for crawling

I read "Seventy is not so good" by Lou Palumbo, in which he wrote about not being able to crawl under or on top of the layout anymore. I recently hit 72 and have no problem working under my railroad. I converted a small stool by adding casters on all four legs. I can roll it around under the table to do wiring.

I have a Lionel No. 726RR 2-8-4 Berkshire steam engine from the early 1950s that used to slow down on the far side of my layout. I soldered heavy feeder wires to the spots where it was losing power (it's also about 70 years old), and that cured the problem. I say, you're only as young as you feel! – *Kim Powell, Ovid, Mich.*

Also loves accessories

I have just read the article, "An O gauge layout for any era," in the March/April 2023 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*. I must say that author Sean Morgan's method and thinking are close to my own. I also enjoy the many accessories made during the postwar and modern eras of Lionel production. Searching for new animated accessories and finding a place for them on my own layout are among the most enjoyable parts of building a home layout. – *Dan Padova, Fort Washington, Pa.*



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18301	Southern FM w/horn	195.00
18302	Great Northern EP-5 w/6 Cars (FF#3)	395.00
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18552	Duluth Missible SD-18 w/case	175.00
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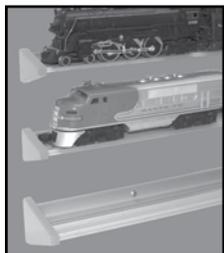
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WITH BOB KELLER

Along those same lines

A few more thoughts on track selection



Bob and Kent Johnson sort through track components before starting on the building phase of a project layout. There's definitely a plan to follow here, but not everyone does it that way.

■ **MY COLUMN ON TRACK** in the March/April 2023 issue generated a bit of feedback. Really, that's putting it mildly.

I sure didn't intend to exclude certain track types. Let's be honest, though: you *could* build a layout with T-Rail, original Marx, or Super-O track, but you probably won't be finding it in quantity at your local hobby shop. It will take a lot of time and dedication to find enough of any of them to get that job done.

So, unless you have a vision of creating a specific time in toy train history, this is a case where it's OK to press the "easy" button and go with what is available at hand and in large quantity.

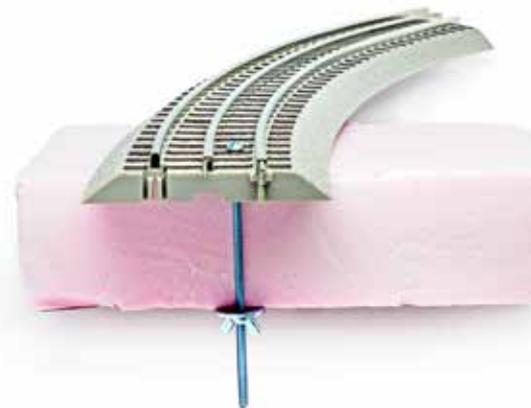
Not picking sides

Several readers asked me to cite a "best" track brand. No can do.

Each type has pluses and minuses, and has to be viewed through a filter of what you want your layout to look like and how you want it to operate. Nobody from the Layout Police is going to visit your home and give you a report card on your track, so you are encouraged to follow the "Sinatra plan" of doing it your way.

Points to consider when starting to build a layout from zero:

1. If you are a stickler for prototypical detailing in a three-rail world, Atlas O 21st Century Track, GarGraves, or MTH's ScaleTrax may be your prime choice. But if they lack the right fitter sections, you need to cut them yourself. Be aware tubular track (GarGraves, K-Line, Lionel, or Menards) is



One of the first things to consider when laying track is sound abatement. Screwing it directly to plywood results in lots of noise. A layer of extruded foam can quiet things.

fairly easy to cut with a motor tool or even a hacksaw.

2. Track with a plastic base can be cut (or so I've heard), but the electrical connections are under the track and may be challenging to reconstruct.
3. Noise *will* be a factor. Regardless of brand, if you bolt the track directly to the tabletop, you get noise and vibration. Using cork or rubber roadbed will mitigate some of the noise, but it will still rumble.
4. Back in 1999, *Classic Toy Trains* built a two-level O gauge layout. One level had cork and ballast attached to the tabletop; the second used carpet padding that significantly deadened the sound. I suspect RealTrax or FasTrack would still have an echo-chamber effect without some sort of mitigation, because both are hollow underneath.

Those are some of the nuts-and-bolts issues. The aesthetic, or visual angle, is up to you.

The O gauge world features some amazing layouts that can arguably be considered art. Most probably had a vision from the start. I suspect, though, most were created as the builders finished one stage and moved to the next.

The critical factor, then, is that the mountains and valleys and ups and downs may differ, but the track is still the track you started with.

Differing methods

CTT's founding editor, Dick Christian-son, basically built the foundation and mountains on his layout before he put the track down. On the other hand, I put the track down and have shoe-horned everything else into it. My layout will never be in *Classic Toy Trains*, but I'm perfectly happy with it.

So, if you are new to the hobby, or (like I was) a returning newcomer who probably knew more about care and feeding of O gauge trains when I was 10 than I did at 40, start slowly.

You may discover that the best track brand is the one that fits your mind's-eye view of your layout. Then be sure to factor in your skill level if you need to modify your track.

Don't overthink it – just do it and be sure to have fun! **CTT**



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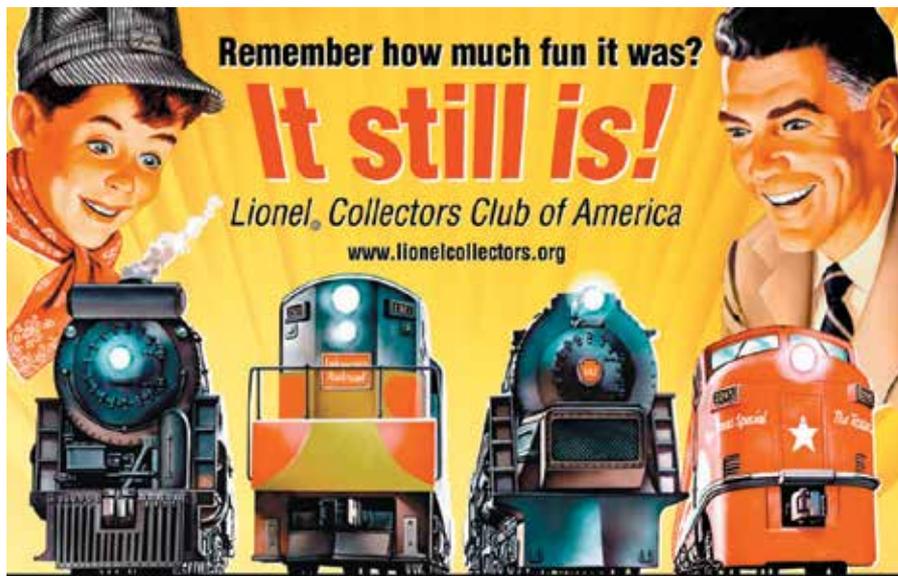
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PHOTO ALBUM

YOUR PICTURES



↑ RICK ELLIOTT'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Seventy square feet may seem like enough room for an O gauge layout, but Rick Elliott will tell you getting everything he wanted for his model railroad proved to be a challenge. Careful planning and excellent modeling enabled this resident of Plano, Texas, to find spots for an MTH No. 30-9034 McDonald's and a vintage Marx No. 413A lighted switch tower, plus a barrel loader, bubbling oil field, and pipe company from Lionel. The engine taking center stage in this photo taken by Kennon Grose is a Lionel No. 58526 NW2 diesel switcher specially decorated in a sweet *Texas Special* paint scheme for the Lionel Collectors Club of America. Readers who are intrigued by the possibilities offered by layouts covering less than 100 square feet should check out the O and S gauge railroads and track plans showcased in *Toy Train Layouts for Small Spaces*, a special-interest publication created by the editors of *Classic Toy Trains* and still available by going to KalmbachHobbyStore.com

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

Please send your best pictures to CTT Photo Album, 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612 or email them to photoalbum@ClassicToyTrains.com. Digital photos must be taken with the camera set at the largest possible file size. Include your name, address, and daytime 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. If your photograph is published, we will pay you \$50 as long as we have not previously bought the photo. For more on photo specs, please go to trains.com/ctt/magazine/contributor-guidelines/



→ **GEROLD SLOTKIN'S S GAUGE LAYOUT**

Photos of outstanding compact layouts in every gauge have flooded the *Classic Toy Trains* office ever since we finished our special-interest publication titled *Toy Train Layouts for Small Spaces*. The S gauge display built by Gerold Slotkin really tickles our fancy. He has filled the 6 x 9-foot two-level railroad in North Brunswick, N.J., with postwar trains and accessories from the American Flyer line by the A.C. Gilbert Co. Gerry photographed a pristine No. 372 Union Pacific GP7 road diesel pulling a string of colorful tank cars around a curve, passing by the Nos. 585 Tool Shed, 596 Operating Water Tower, and 768 Oil Supply Depot.



↑ **STEVEN TRIPP'S O GAUGE LAYOUT**

The problem faced by Steven Tripp about 10 years ago was a familiar one among model railroaders: How could he bring to life memories of coal mining in Pennsylvania and the railroads serving that industry during the steam-to-diesel transition era? Compounding the challenges was the fact that his home in Shenandoah, Texas, lacked a basement. Being a creative soul, Steve put a few ideas on paper before reaching out to Roger and Darcie Farkash at TW TrainWorx in Dallas. Together, they built a 50 x 110-inch O gauge display with two levels of action. Today, an MTH RailKing No. 30-2984-3 Alco RS1 road switcher creeps across a trestle, deafening the brakeman on a caboose below.



PHOTO ALBUM

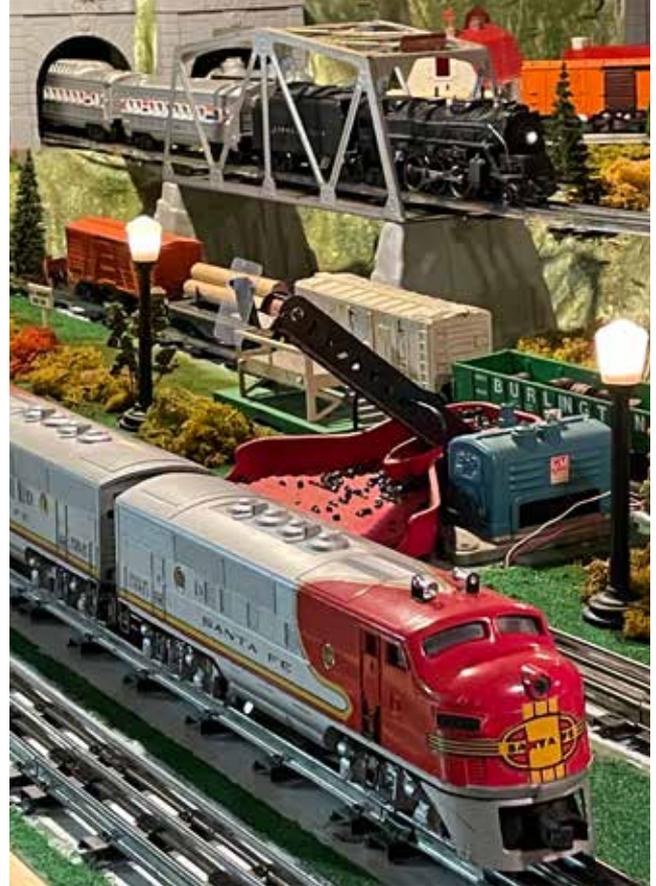
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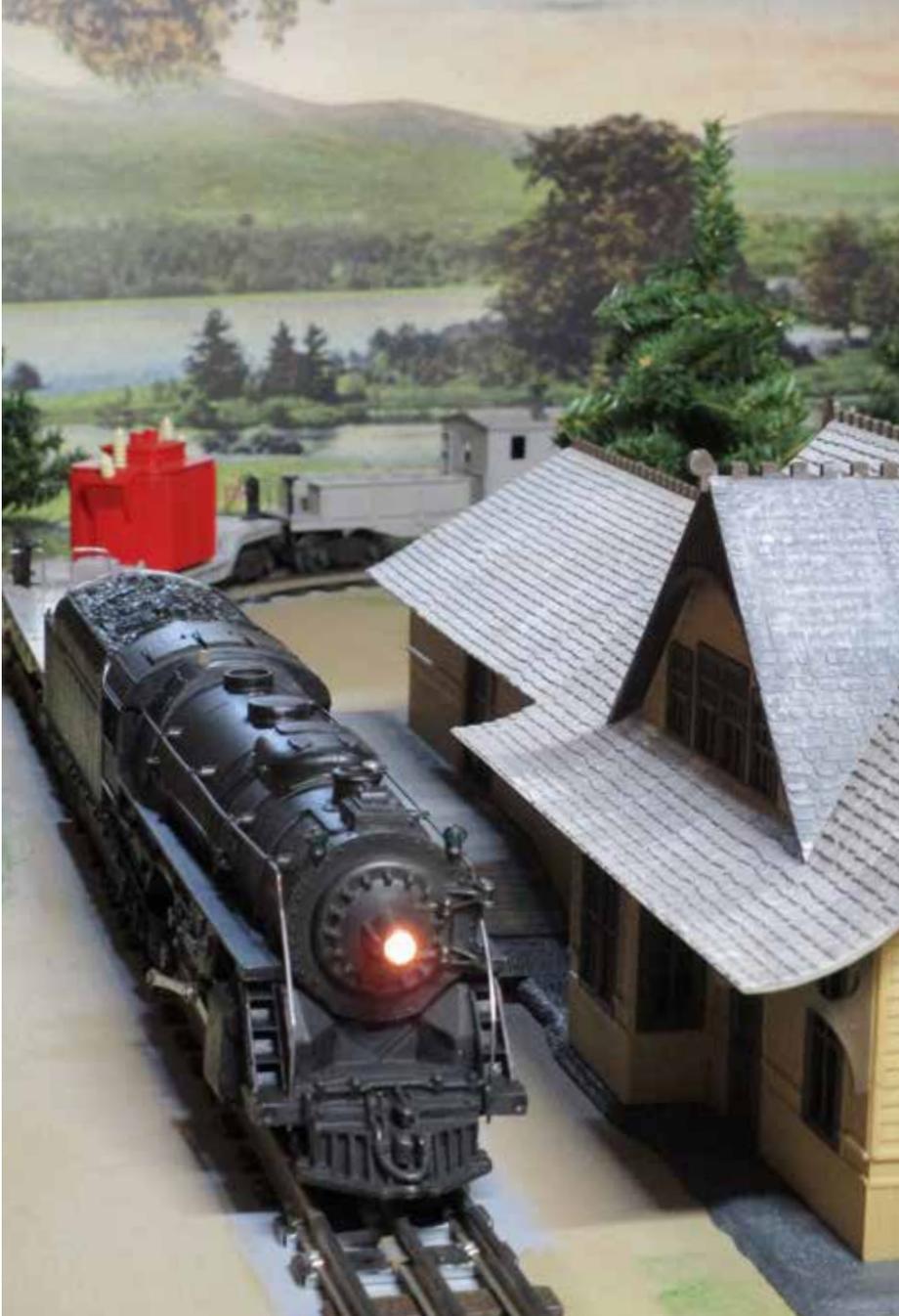
→ RAYMOND SMITH'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

Lionel trains rumbling over circular main lines erected at different heights and surrounded by operating accessories, including this No. 397 Diesel-Type Coal Loader, combine to bring Raymond Smith back to his youth in the 1950s. Long ago, this O gauger modeler residing in Bradford, R.I. recalls, life didn't move quite as quickly as today, and kids enjoyed sharing their Lionel locomotives and rolling stock. Ray liked to join in the fun, although he was careful not to let his beloved No. 2353 Santa Fe F3 A-A combination roam too far from home. The levels of activity and simple yet effective scenery remind our host of the excellent three-rail operating display Lionel opened to the public in its New York showroom in 1949.

↓ WAYNE COLABAUGH'S O GAUGE LAYOUT

One glance at the picture Joe Phillips has shared of his good friend Wayne Colabaugh's O gauge layout, and you know they both like plenty of activity. Why, they couldn't even wait for the MTH Premier line No. 22-20636-2 Norfolk Southern AC4400CW to slow down before snapping this terrific shot. Nearby on Wayne's railroad in Stroudsburg, Pa., a train carrying military vehicles on flatcars moves steadily ahead. Freights consisting of as many as 40 Lionel and MTH pieces of rolling stock were common sights.





← **ROBERT MADISON'S O GAUGE MODEL RAILROAD**

Every postwar enthusiast will admit to having a favorite kind of freight car. Pin down Robert Madison, and this resident of Westerly, R.I., will confess to a love of Lionel's short and long transformer cars. He will occasionally put together a train consisting of half a dozen of the memorable cars, with a work caboose at the rear. For our benefit, Bob fired up a No. 2056 small Hudson steamer with a No. 2020W whistle tender and then coupled the duo to a nicely restored No. 2461 transformer car. The beautiful backdrop showing Onota Lake, Mass., is an enlarged postcard. A station and trees complete this scene on his Cwm Llwyd layout. Bob took the name of his 50 x 60-inch O gauge layout from the Welsh words for "gray valley."

↓ **RICK BORLAND'S O GAUGE MODEL RAILROAD**

The three generations of farmers hard at work on Rick Borland's O gauge layout are reminiscent of the three generations in his family who have been enjoying Lionel trains since the mid-1950s. Rick received his first outfit as a youngster, and it included the No. 2338 Milwaukee Road GP7 road diesel shown cruising along the main line in Carrollton, Ohio. Rick introduced his kids to the hobby three decades later, and now his grandsons and granddaughter can be found operating the postwar trains on this 52 x 96-inch display whenever they visit.



WITH THE CTT STAFF



MODERN POWER. General Electric ES44AC and ES44DC diesel locomotives have been added to the Atlas O Premier Line. Road names for the ES44AC include Canadian Pacific (Hapag-Lloyd and Every Child Matters schemes), BNSF Ry. (Heritage II and Heritage II with post-2005 lettering), Canadian National (100th anniversary), Kansas City Southern (Safety Starts Here scheme), and Union Pacific (2022 scheme with and without American flag). The ES44DC is decorated for CSX (Western Maryland herald on cab side and "Spirit of Cincinnati"). The six-axle road units feature an ABS body; die-cast metal truck sides, pilot, and fuel tank; and ProtoSound 3.0 featuring Freight Yard Proto-Effects. The O gauge models are priced at **\$679.95** (price is subject to change based on electronic board availability and cost). To order, visit shop.atlasrr.com or stop by your favorite Atlas O retailer.



RIDE THE SLIDE. General American Transportation Corp. produced more than 5,000 of its 4,180-cubic-foot Airslide covered hoppers between 1963 and 1980 to handle bulk commodities. MTH's latest run of these O gauge RailKing cars (**\$69.95**) feature detailed ABS bodies, metal wheels and axles, die-cast 4-wheel trucks, operating metal couplers, and separate details including brake wheels and grab irons. Cars operate on O-31 curves. Road names include Southern, Chessie System, Conrail, and Union Pacific. To order, visit mthtrains.com or see your local retailer.



CARRYING THE MARKERS. The Northeast caboose is another new addition to the Atlas O Premier Line. The model (**\$89.95**) is decorated for Central RR of New Jersey (red and white), Conrail (blue and black), Lehigh Valley (green and white), Maine Central (orange and green), Norfolk & Western (blue and yellow), Reading Co. (green and yellow), and Union Pacific (Maintenance-of-Way Green with Chicago & North Western reporting marks and Operation Lifesaver logo in one road number). Each road name is offered in two numbers unless noted. The caboose has 1:48 scale dimensions and is designed for O-31 curves. Look for this model at your local Atlas O dealer in the second quarter of 2023.



REEFER BLOCK. New paint schemes and road numbers are being offered on the 40-foot steel refrigerator car from Atlas O. New schemes on the Master Line model include Western Fruit Express (with Northern Pacific and Northern Pacific Railway heralds in two numbers each), Burlington Northern (Maintenance-of-Way Brown in four numbers), and Central RR Co. of New Jersey (Ballantine Heritage: Bock, India Pale Ale, Export Dark, and XXX Ale in one number each). New numbers (four each) are offered on cars decorated for Bangor & Aroostook (orange and black) and Merchants Despatch Transport (New York Central, orange and brown). Features on the O gauge reefer (**\$92.95**) include die-cast metal ladders, stirrup steps, and grab irons; 50-ton solid-bearing trucks; and 33" wheels. The model, scheduled for release in quarter two of 2023, has a minimum diameter curve of O-36.

KEEP ON PUSHING. The latest O gauge model being offered by the New Jersey Hi-Railers is an MTH Premier Line gondola with NYNJ reporting marks for New York New Jersey Rail. It models prototype idler cars used to load rolling stock onto car floats running between Bush Terminal in Brooklyn and Greenville Yard in New Jersey. Single cars are **\$90**; sets of two are **\$170**, with delivery expected by this summer. To order, contact the club at njhiraillers.com/shop



THINGS THAT GO BOOM. Menards salutes the armed forces with the Military Boxcar with Shells. Each 10" model features opening side doors with four pallets of munitions inside. The O gauge boxcar features metal wheels and chassis, realistic wheel shocks, and operating couplers, and it can navigate O-27 curves. Available individually (No. 2797848; **\$24.99**) or in a 4-pack (No. 2793405; **\$84.96**). Visit your local Menards or menards.com/trains



HIGH-WIDE HAULER. Road names on this Atlas O Premier Line 75-foot depressed-center flatcar include Penn Central; Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe; Conrail; Kasgro Rail Lines; Pittsburgh & Lake Erie; TTX (modern logo with QTTX reporting marks); and Western Pacific. Each road name is offered in two numbers. The O gauge flatcar has an ABS body, die-cast metal trucks, and a transformer load. The model, priced at **\$89.95**, is scheduled for release in the second quarter of 2023. To order, visit shop.atlasrr.com or head to your local hobby shop.



BIG BOXES. A new run of Atlas O Master Line 53-foot intermodal containers is scheduled to arrive in hobby shops in the fourth quarter of 2023. The Jindo container will be offered in new paint schemes (Swift and EMP [ex-HUB and ex-Pacer]) and numbers (CSX ["How Tomorrow Moves" slogan]). The CIMC container will also be offered in a new scheme (Canadian Pacific) and numbers (HUB Group – Norfolk Southern). Each paint scheme is offered in six numbers; two different six-pack assortments will also be offered. Single containers will sell for **\$34.95**, and the six-packs will be priced at **\$209.70**.



QUICK AND EASY DETAILS. Ipswich Hobbies has released 3-D printed smokejacks based on Boston & Maine standard plans. The O scale parts are ideal for crossing shanties, yard offices, and section houses. A three-pack is priced at **\$5**. To order, visit ipswichhobbies.com or call **919-721-8757**.



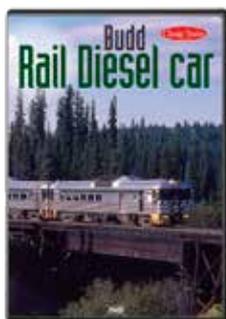
MOVING THE BLACK DIAMONDS. This Atlas O Premier Line four-bay hopper is decorated for Burlington Northern, Alaska RR, Chicago & Eastern Illinois, Conrail, Denver & Rio Grande Western, and Southern Pacific. A limited-edition three-pack decorated in fictional schemes for Central RR of New Jersey, Lehigh Valley, and Reading Co. is also available. The O gauge hopper has an ABS body; separate, factory-applied metal handrails; and a coal load. Single cars sell for **\$84.95**, and the three-pack is priced at **\$254.85**. The four-bay models are scheduled to arrive at brick-and-mortar and online Atlas O retailers in the second quarter of 2023.

WANT TO SUBMIT A PRODUCT? Send complete ordering information and a large, hi-res photo file to hmillar@kalmbach.com or on a CD by mail to Hal Miller, Classic Toy Trains magazine, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612.

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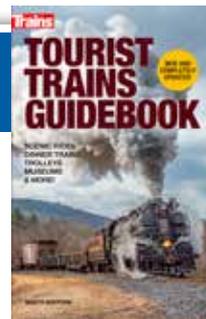
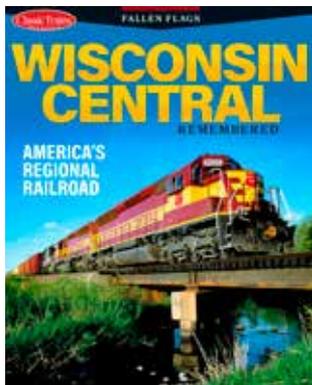
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A MIDWEST CLASSIC. *Fallen Flags: Wisconsin Central Remembered* is the latest special issue from our sister magazine *Classic Trains*. The 100-page publication features five maps, including a system diagram, and four decades of stories about the WC from leading railroad journalists. The magazine also includes stories on the Fox River Valley and the Green Bay & Western (purchased by the WC in 1993), the Algoma Central (acquired in 1996), and the Canadian National, which purchased the WC in 2001. Print and digital editions are **\$12.99 each**, or you can get **both for \$18.99**. The digital edition is powered by Zinio and is compatible with PC, Macintosh, Android via Google Play app, iOS via AppStore, and Win8 devices.

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WITH ROGER CARP

Lionel's No. 150 Telegraph Pole Set

Get to know this overlooked trackside item from the 1940s

■ ONE GREAT BENEFIT

of researching and writing *Lionel Trains of the 1940s*, the latest special-interest publication from *Classic Toy Trains*, was discovering for the first time or coming across again a few less-publicized trackside accessories. All but hidden at the back of the consumer catalogs were some notable items.

Paging through the catalogs Lionel issued in the late 1940s, I ran across the Nos. 70 Yard Light, 0209 Set of Barrels, and 919 Bag of Grass. I'd almost forgotten how interesting they looked and what they could do to make an O gauge railroad look better and seem more realistic.

Another overlooked accessory that caught my eyes was the No. 150 Telegraph Pole Set. Cataloged from 1947 through 1950, it seemed worth studying and, as I explained in an article for *Trains.com*, adding to my collection.

Basic information

There wasn't a great deal to the 150.

Designers at Lionel wanted to provide anyone building a layout with miniature poles so they could model what was perhaps the archetypal railroad scene: the parade of telegraph poles erected alongside main lines everywhere in the country. Travelers and hobos, movie goers and singers easily envisioned the silvery wires strung from pole to pole to transmit messages of every sort.

The flat orange printed box came with six brown plastic poles. Placed with them were the metal base clips owners could attach to the track ties, thereby securing the 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ " poles in their upright position.

Instead of a printed instruction sheet tucked inside the rectangular box, Lionel printed on the underside of the lid an illustration of how to fit the clips to the round base of the poles (the company's circle-L logo was molded on them).

Alan Stewart, the author of the sixth volume of *Greenberg's Guide to Lionel Trains*, 1945-

1969, described the artwork as printed in black or brown on a yellow background. He stated that two box sizes have been reported. "The smaller box, probably the later version, has

Long tradition

There isn't much more to say about the 150 set, which was priced at \$3 (\$37.82 today). Lionel dropped it from the line after the company's golden



» Go on a buying journey with Roger Carp as he focuses on Lionel's No. 150 Telegraph Pole Set on [Trains.com/CTT](https://www.Trains.com/CTT). Learn how he researches and buys vintage toy train items.

the clip trough in the center with the poles spanning it. The larger box [of the 150] has the trough located along the bottom, below the poles."

anniversary year of 1950 and never revived it.

What should be remembered about the 150 is that it carried on a notable tradition at Lionel. Since the firm introduced the No. 60 Telegraph Post in 1920, it had made individual poles and sets of six standard entries in its list of products.

Standard and O gauge modelers wanted to arrange painted metal poles by their main lines. They knew such means of communication were basic to transmitting information.

By the middle of the 20th century, the telegraph was virtually

obsolete in America, superseded by the telephone. The tall wood poles standing by main lines and sidings now made possible home phones and party lines. No need for youngsters to stick telegraph poles on their layouts. If they wanted modern effects, they would get the lightweight injection-molded telephone poles sold in the millions by Plasticville U.S.A. **CTT**



Lionel offered the No. 150 Telegraph Pole Set between 1947 and 1950. The 2023 edition of *Greenberg's Pocket Price Guide to Lionel Trains* values this trackside accessory at \$20 in good condition and \$41 in excellent.

Set courtesy Rick Dunn

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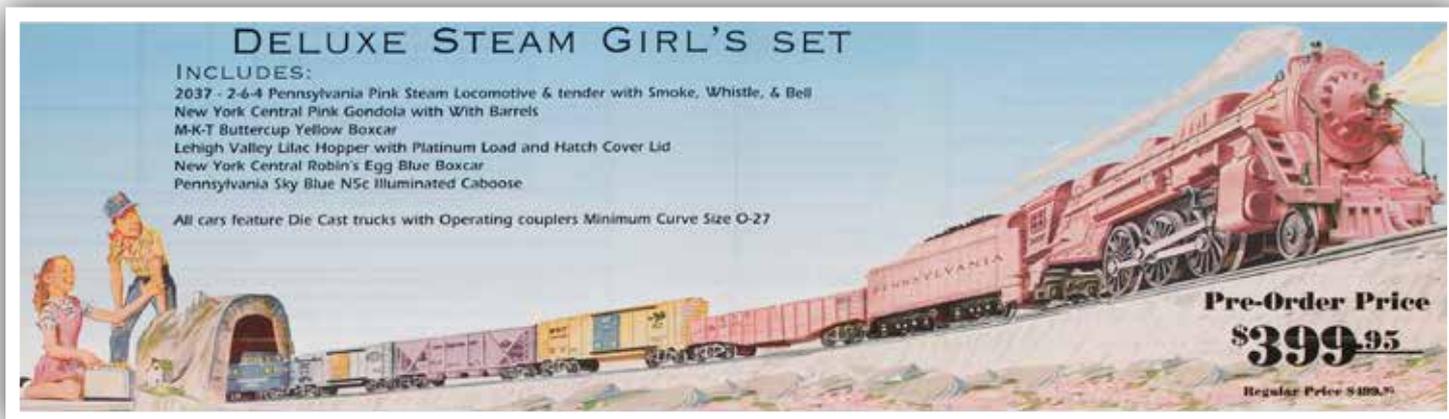
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Not whistling while she works

One family's Williams Girl's Train is too quiet



Q My grandparents kindly allow me to run their Williams reproduction of the Lady Lionel (Girl's Set) from the 1950s. Unfortunately, the whistle in the tender doesn't work well on certain pieces of the new tubular track installed on their O gauge home layout. Whenever I press the button to activate it, the sound either cuts off halfway, or it doesn't sound at all. We try to keep the track clean, too. —*Aaron Hanson, Conneaut, Ohio*

A Look first at the power going to the whistle tender. If the wheels or other pickups are dirty or corroded, the power will cut in and out to the whistle circuit. Then focus on the transformer, because it can affect how the whistle works. If the transformer whistle circuit is in proper working order, it should activate all the

Williams Electric Trains was one of a few toy train firms to market a reproduction of the Lady Lionel set, better known as the Girl's Train. The whistle in the tender should work.

prewar and postwar whistles and horns (as long as they're also in working order).

Things get a little more complicated with electronic whistles and horns. Their circuits are designed to ignore some errant fluctuations in the offset voltage and respond to others. Lionel transformers made during the postwar period put out a "dirty" offset voltage, but the postwar relays react to it by design.

To have a whistle not work on only certain sections of track seems odd. Try swapping out the sections of track where the whistle doesn't work. If the problem persists, it may be a problem with how the entire layout has been wired.

Controlling accessories

Q I feel like I've seen answers to this question in the past, but do you know of a rheostat or another device that can slow down Lionel's operating accessories so they don't dump coal or other kinds of freight too fast or too hard? Thanks in advance for your time and assistance. —*Tom James, Ballwin, Mo.*

A Not a problem to address this common question again. While you can use resistors, they will dissipate the excess current as heat. That can be dangerous if the resistor isn't protected properly.

Frankly, I think it will be much easier and more practical to use another small transformer for those accessories. It can be adjusted for each individual car as needed.

Magnetism on whistle tender

Q The solenoid on my Lionel No. 6466W whistle tender has taken on a permanent magnetic charge. As a result, the activation plate won't drop even if there's no current going to the tracks. However, when I do power the tracks, the whistle sounds. How can I kill the magnetism in the solenoid? —*Wayne Antoniazzi, Henrico, Va.*

A While the core of the whistle relay can become slightly magnetized, it's a somewhat rare occurrence. I suggest you take off the body shell and manually drop

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Between 1950 and '53, Lionel paired the No. 6466W early coal tender equipped with a whistle with a few low-end steam engines, including this No. 2035 from 1951.

the movable plate on the bottom of the relay so it's in the lower position.

Next, you should put your tender on the track and power it up. If the relay closes, you have a wiring issue. If not, blow the whistle and see if it sticks. If it does, see how much force it takes to make the plate drop. It should drop easily if it is from magnetism. There may be a mechanical bind from a bent or distorted part or a misrouted wire. Check to see and then you'll know what the problem is.

If you determine that it is magnetized, find someone with a demagnetizer. People who work on recording equipment use them to demagnetize recording heads in tape machines. Some computer repair shops use them to erase drives.

Postwar and modern-era Lionel transformers

Q I've read in CTT about transformer safety and proper phasing. Therefore, I would like to know whether it's safe to couple a Lionel postwar Type-ZW transformer with a modern ZW using separate bricks? I don't want to cause any damage in the circuit board in the newer ZW.

– Dick Slazak, West Seneca, N.Y.

A It seems best to me not to mix technologies. The postwar ZW uses a true sinusoidal wave, whereas the ZW-C uses phase firing to control voltage levels. Add the fact that some of the early "bricks" were wired in a reverse polarity, and there is a possibility of damage to electronic boards under certain circumstances. **CTT**



More operators want to use a Lionel type-ZW transformer from the postwar era with its contemporary peer. Problems arise when you try to wire them in tandem.

HAVE A QUESTION?

Write to "Questions & Answers" at Classic Toy Trains, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612, or email us at qsandas@ClassicToyTrains.com and put the words "questions & answers" in the subject line.

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Adding TMCC

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■ **I WATCH MANY AMERICAN FLYER AND S GAUGE GROUPS** on Facebook for interesting posts and ideas. Recently, I found a guy selling an American Models Chicago & North Western SD60 diesel that had been converted to run on TrainMaster Command Control. I decided to buy it and sell the same engine I had without the installed Lionel system.

I already had 15 locomotives equipped with TMCC or Legacy and really like the features they provide. American Models products are readily converted to Digital Command Control, but I don't want to add another system to my home layout.

I was very pleased with the engine and talked with the former owner about how

he had converted it to TMCC. What I learned was that Ed Goldin had done the work. His business is called Goldinhands (goldinhands.com). It's also an authorized Lionel Repair Station.

I had often thought of buying an AM Fairbanks-Morse Train Master road diesel, but I had held back because it didn't have a modern operating system. Now I had a way to break through my reluctance.

I called Ed and asked him to do the work. Then I had AM ship a Wabash Train Master to him for conversion.

Doing the work

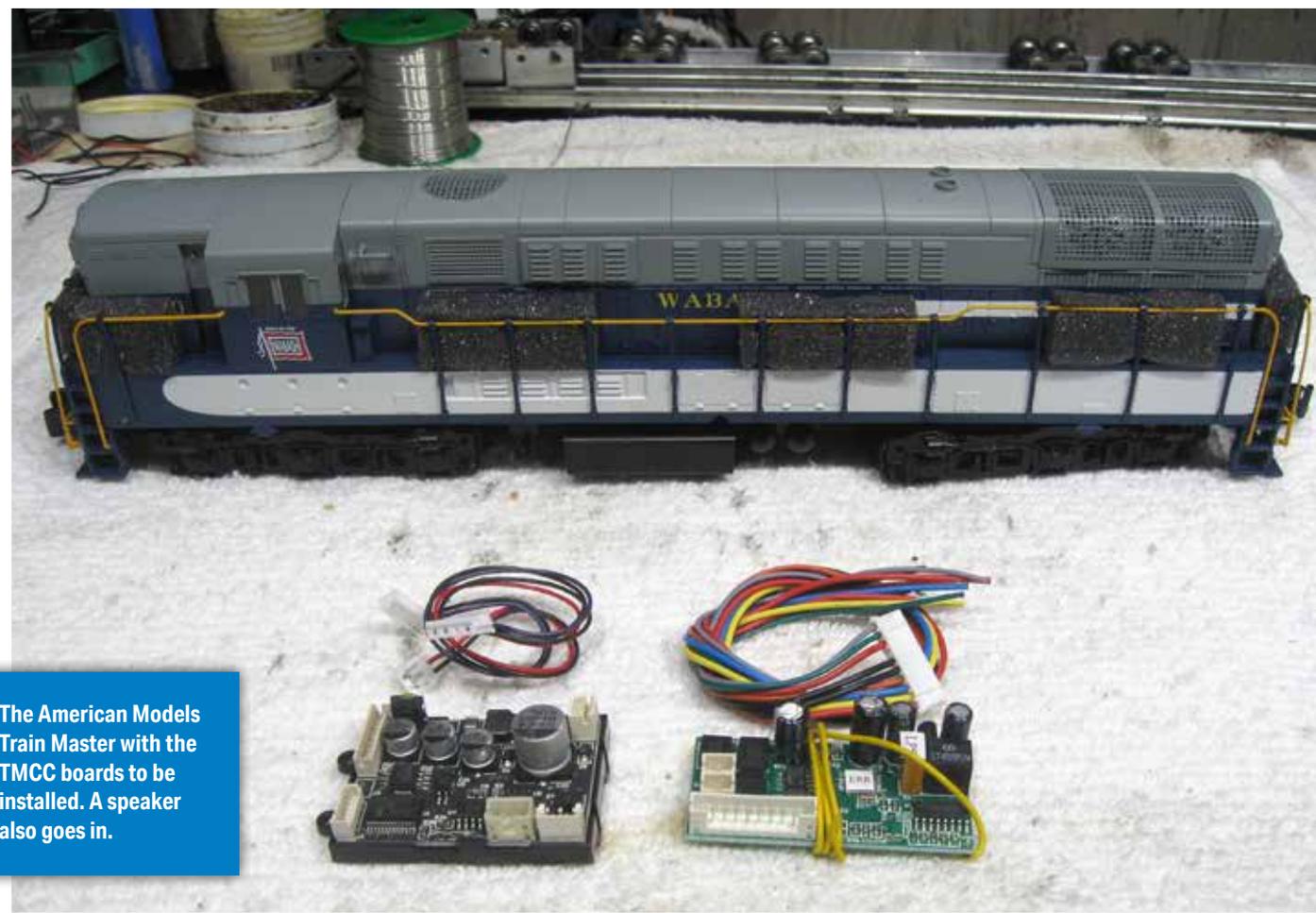
Ed gets the electronics for the conversions from 3rd Rail/Sunset Models Inc. in San

Ramon, Calif. (3rdrail.com/err-3rdrail/index.html). The firm is licensed by Lionel to sell TMCC electronics, as Lionel no longer operates the Electric RR Company.

For my conversion Ed needed to install a Mini Commander II TMCC Board, a RailSounds Commander Sound Board, plus a speaker. The speaker is a very thin model because of the limited space; it's a Railmaster (railmasterhobbies.com) DS1240-BOX.

In addition, Ed had to install mounting brackets for the boards and mill down the motor mount to make room for the different boards.

The engine ordered was a DC Hi-Rail unit with no extras. Of course, this can be



The American Models Train Master with the TMCC boards to be installed. A speaker also goes in.

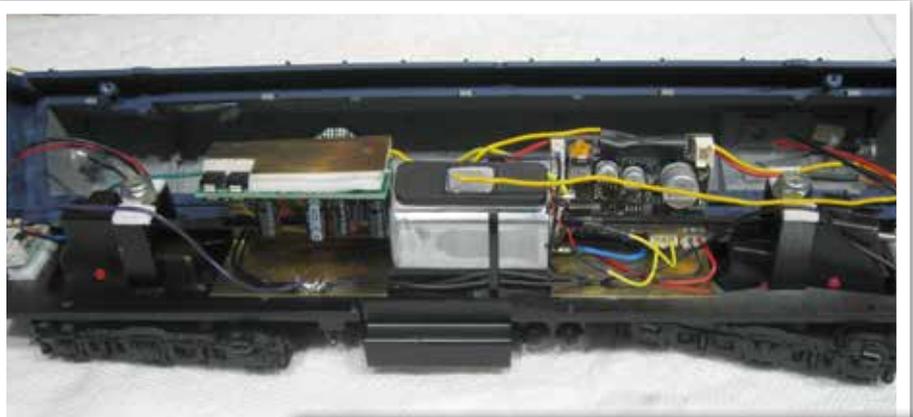
done with an AM locomotive currently in someone's fleet, too.

Much improved

The features of the revised engine are bi-directional headlights, diesel sounds that increase with engine revolutions, crew and tower talk, and engine start-up and shut-down. It does not have many of the features a Legacy board would have, and, unfortunately for me, Lionel doesn't sell those boards or license them.

Many of you reading this will be able to accomplish this conversion yourself. All the necessary components are available through 3rd Rail, along with the manuals from Electric RR Company products. I'm good with the American Flyer of the 1950s, but today's toy train technology is beyond what I will attempt.

I've also been considering having a postwar A.C. Gilbert steam engine converted to TMCC. Ed can do that, too. It includes a steam sound board and DC motor as well as TMCC. I would choose a Pennsylvania RR K5 Pacific or a New York Central Hudson for the conversion, as Lionel has never made new tooling for them.



The completed installation is tidy and involves adding some sheet-metal "shelves" to hold the components.

The way to keep our toy train hobby alive is through utilizing new technology with items that have been available for a while – maybe even for decades. I hope this column has at least stirred the thoughts of doing so.

If you have suggestions about subjects you'd like to see in the column, please write to billstrains@aol.com and they can

be considered. It would be great to know what topics are on your mind. **CTT**



Bill Clark is a life-long S gauge operator and collector. In addition to his work for CTT, he has written reviews for S Gaugian magazine about American Flyer.



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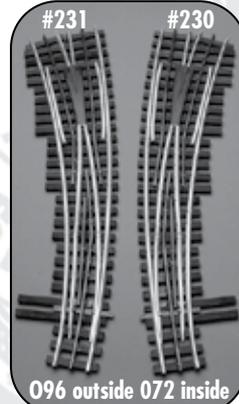
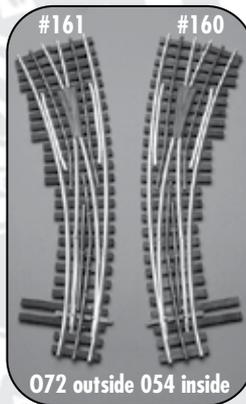
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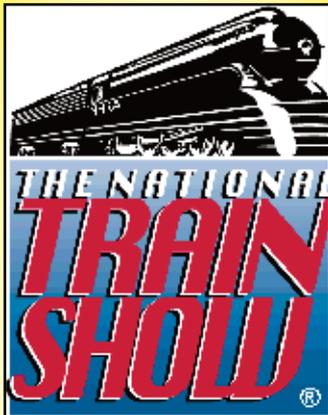


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The new wave

Toy train hobby never stops evolving

■ I OPENED THE DOORS TO THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Shoppe back in September of 1985. Things have changed quite a bit in those 38 years, as our favorite hobby has continued to develop positively.

Looking back almost four decades, I recall the shelves in my store being filled with prewar and postwar Lionel trains, along with postwar American Flyer S gauge and Marx O gauge. Maybe 10% of the trains I had for sale were current-production Lionel items.

What I was selling in my store reflected the interests of my customers. Most of them were looking for postwar Lionel and American Flyer trains and accessories still in their original boxes. Folks walked in, looked around, and then bought them off the shelf. It was like I had a train show going on every time I opened the front door to my new and growing business.

Of course, things in our hobby never change. Lionel Trains Inc. was just getting started under the direction of the late Richard Kughn. His firm was making more and more great trains and promoting them in brand-new catalogs arriving two or three times per year.

People paid close attention to what was coming in. They started to buy the new stuff. Meanwhile, the quantity of postwar trains in like-new condition was starting to shrink.

Today, however, everything is different. Younger hobbyists, who were first introduced to toy trains by their parents in the 1980s, got used to the new products. They loved the new electronics and knew how to operate them. They also appreciated all the big steam engines and the modern diesels being offered by Atlas O, Lionel, MTH, and Williams.

Members of this younger generation of hobbyists didn't seem to care much about the postwar trains or care much

about their vintage value. Instead, they're concentrating on brand-new trains, systems of command control, and the construction of better layouts.

Layouts being built now are the exact opposite of what the previous generation liked. While the "fathers" of today's modelers had 80% of their model railroads filled with scenery and structures and only 20% with track, their "sons" have reversed the proportion.

Younger hobbyists couple their model diesels to long trains passing through switches and operate via a variety of electronic commands. They like to run many trains at once and don't seem to be interested in taking up space with buildings and vehicles.

What a change from when I opened my business. Folks building O and S gauge layouts then liked to create towns and scenery that reminded them of their youth. They lived in a dream world that typically featured a perfect village surrounded by beautiful trains that wrapped the whole scene when you looked at their layout.

I feel the new wave of toy train enthusiasts has made its stand on what it likes in this hobby. Change is good, and it will save the hobby in the future and help it thrive for many years to come.

At the same time, younger collectors and operators still drop by my store to buy these new and expensive trains being produced each year. They visit with their parents and become avid collectors of modern-era trains, with more great ones made each year.

There's room for everyone in this hobby, and that's why it remains so great.

What's your game?

Keep searchin'. **CTD**

LOU PALUMBO, the owner of the Underground Railroad Shoppe in New Castle, Pa., writes this exclusive column for *Classic Toy Trains*. He can be reached at 1906 Wilmington Rd., New Castle, PA 16105 or by email at trainplum@yahoo.com





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Traveling on the
O gauge **Bellevue &**



1 Residents of Schenectady never tire of getting early glimpses of the latest motive power to emerge from the shops at Alco and GE. Folks who think they've seen everything are taken aback by the orange scheme on this PA unit. Silver lettering and trucks only add to the beauty of this postwar diesel.

Real has always been my deal!

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DON KLOSE

When layouts with a New York setting appear in *Classic Toy Trains*, they typically highlight passenger traffic moving in and out of Grand Central Terminal or freight trains delivering perishables to New York City. On those O gauge railroads, the Pennsylvania RR or the New Haven dominates, especially if the builder likes electric-profile locomotives, such as GG1s or EP5s.

But if you travel north along the Hudson River until you reach Albany, the railroad scene changes dramatically. The landscape looks different, and the cities to the west along the Mohawk River near the eastern terminus of the Erie Canal have an aura all their own. This is the part of the Empire State I model on a 20 x 32-foot three-rail layout named the Bellevue & Schenectady RR. Come along to explore its network and facilities, and learn why realism is of the utmost importance to me.

The masters

My story began in December of 1957, with two proud grandparents who wanted to give me, their first-born grandson, a special gift for his first Christmas. A display at the local J.C. Penney department store spurred my grandmother to get me a Marx train my family set up every Christmas.

When I turned 10, the railroad bug bit me hard, and I wanted more than an oval of track on the floor. My grandfather had retired from the Tobin Meat Packing Co. and saw an opportunity to spend time with his grandson. Together, we built a 3 x 8-foot layout along a wall in his

Schenectady RR



2 The deep commitment to realism guiding Don Klose is evident throughout his 20 x 32-foot Bellevue & Schenectady RR. However, the jade green scheme on the streamlined steam engine and tender from MTH reveal how Don will still take liberties on his freelanced O gauge layout.

3 Don never forgets to express gratitude to his grandparents for launching him on what has become a lifelong enjoyment of both toy and scale model trains.

basement. Over the next two years, the layout grew until it was 18 x 26 feet.

The two of us worked on it every weekend, and Grandpa worked on it during the week. He gave me progress reports on what he did, which left me more excited for Fridays to come so I could spend the weekend at my grandparents' home.

Around that time I started poring over

copies of *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman* magazines and became enamored with the fine HO scale railroads showcased there, notably John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid and Whit Towers' Alturas & Lone Pine. Those modeling masters were who I dreamed of becoming!

My father supported my growing interest in model railroading. When I wanted to go to a train show or an open house, he was always ready to take my grandfather (who never learned to drive) and me. My favorite among the layouts I visited was the O scale railroad built by the New York Society of Model Engineers. Wow!

After my grandfather sadly passed away in 1968, my grandmother downsized, and eventually the railroad was dismantled and everything put away. But my passion for the hobby never waned during high school and college. I became an armchair modeler, doing little more than setting up track on the floor. However, after I married my high school sweetheart, Debbie, and we

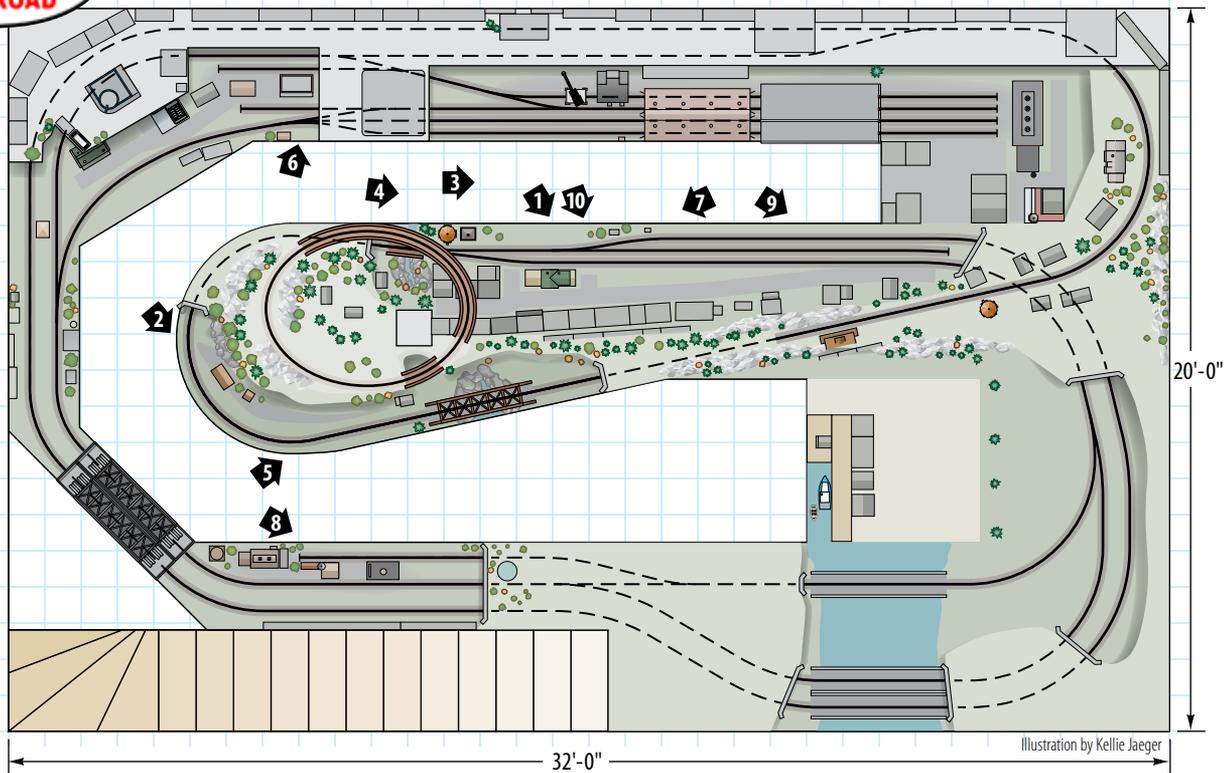
purchased our home, I knew my dream railroad would become a reality.

Family influences

And it truly has. The Bellevue & Schenectady RR, a fictitious division of the New York Central System, fills much of the basement. The B&S operates from Schenectady in upstate New York down to Wildwood Harbor (a representation of my family vacation home in Wildwood, N.J.).

The name of the railroad and its route reflect the history of my family and its connection with the New York Central. My great-grandfather, Jacob Klose, and many of his family came to America from Germany as boilermakers and steam fitters. They all found employment in the Central's shops in West Albany, rebuilding and maintaining steam locomotives until the late 1950s and the demise of steam.

The experience of my relatives and the great stories passed down have inspired everything I've done on the Bellevue &



The Bellevue & Schenectady RR, the O gauge layout designed by Don Klose, would not have come to life so thoroughly without the thoughtful suggestions and many hours of labor provided by several equally talented friends of his in the hobby. Don never hesitates to thank them. The numbered arrows correspond to the numbers in each of the captioned photographs he took for this exclusive article.



4 The basement housing the B&S features comfortable flooring, abundant lighting, and beautiful cabinetry. Don made sure the environment for his O gauge layout complemented his outstanding modeling to create a most inviting spot for his family and visiting friends.

AT A GLANCE

Don Klose's Bellevue & Schenectady RR

Gauge: O

Dimensions: 20 x 32 feet

Track: GarGraves

Switches: Ross Custom Switches

Motive power: K-Line, Lionel, MTH, 3rd Rail, Weaver, Williams

Rolling stock: K-Line, Lionel, MTH, 3rd Rail, Weaver

Controls: Lionel type-ZW and MTH No. Z-4000 (4) transformers, with MTH Digital Command System and Lionel Legacy

Structures: Ameri-Towne, Downtown Deco, MTH, scratchbuilt

Vehicles: Corgi, Diecast Direct, Ertl, Solido

Figures: Artista, Homies, Model Power, scratchbuilt



5 Executives at the B&S concede passenger traffic is dwindling now that the New York State Thruway has been expanded. Even so, they insist they will never quit running the *Electric City Express*. The elegant look of its observation leaves you hoping they stick to their guns.



6 Every O or S gauge enthusiast building a layout can learn a lot from Don's knack for assembling realistic scenes such as this one, notably his thoughtful placement of figures.

Schenectady RR. Locations and structures reflect our heritage.

Here are a few basics about the B&S: I constructed it at home using L-girder benchwork. For the track, I went with GarGraves sections and then installed

turnouts from Ross Custom Switches. The impressive transfer table in the main yard comes from Millhouse Studios.

I control trains via command control, having installed the Digital Command System from MTH and Legacy from Lionel. Remotes from both systems work smoothly, and I like being able to operate them with their apps on my iPad. Technology is a wonderful thing! Guests can use their smartphones or iPads to join me if they have installed the apps.

I made scenery with carved Styrofoam finished with the assortment of products sold by Scenic Express. Real rock and natural foliage fit in beautifully to complete the landscaping. It's amazing what's available to modelers now that could only be imagined 25 or 30 years ago.

Capturing history

Real has always been my deal, meaning I have gone out of my way to ensure the urban and industrial scenes duplicate actual sites and structures from the history of Schenectady and Wildwood. The same

philosophy has influenced the landscaping and the weathering of rolling stock.

Schenectady, nicknamed the "Electric City," is famous for being the home of General Electric and Alco, the former American Locomotive Co. Its downtown, like that of so many cities in the Northeast, featured unique examples of architecture, some of which were preserved as the area was revived.

I wanted to replicate many of the architectural gems that made up downtown Schenectady during the 1950s and '60s. To do so, I enlisted the help of Maria and Mark Poklemba. We took dozens of photographs and searched for many others to capture the details of each building. Some of those structures we could build to scale; for others we had to use selective compression and focus on the eye-catching details of their facades.

In the Wildwood area, we tried to capture the unique nature of the seaside town, where my family has for four generations spent summer vacations. We built a boardwalk finished by Mark and Maria with



7 Few model railroad photographers have both the expertise and the equipment to create as effective and convincing a night shot as Don has done. You immediately imagine hearing the sounds and catching the sights of life in downtown Schenectady around 1965.

models of many of the places that made it famous along the Atlantic Coast. You'll find there a tramcar for guests and a pier with fun and games. Or you can stroll down to the pier and go whale watching aboard the *Spirit of Wildwood Harbor*. And yes, there's an amusement park with all your favorite rides.

Advertising in the form of scratchbuilt billboards and signage added to the sides of buildings reflects local interests while evoking nostalgia for a distant past. Adding to the sense of history are the sound boxes that emit urban and seaside sound effects. Viewers feel they have traveled back decades.

Unique roster

I wanted to develop special locomotives and rolling stock for the Bellevue & Schenectady. Designing unique paint schemes and logos was really enjoyable. I used the New York Central's "cigar band" logo and lightning stripe scheme, along with its distinctive Jade Green.

I even introduced a crack limited for passenger service known as the *Electric City Express* to serve our citizens. It's headed by an Alco E4 painted Jade Green.



8 When the weather in upstate New York turns chilly in early November, workers compelled to handle tasks outdoors find ways to stay warm. Often, they will build a fire inside an empty oil drum. So much is going on here, you can spend several minutes investigating everything.



9 Developing vignettes to suggest how people make a living in and around the railroad has long been a favorite activity for Don, and this picture reflects his skills at doing so.



10 Among the many industries in upstate New York served by the B&S are a number of regional breweries. Don made sure his fictitious railroad had solid reasons for existing.

Every passenger car except one was named after the cities served by the B&S, including Bellevue, Schenectady, Center City, and Wildwood Harbor. I named the streamlined observation after the vice president of the railroad, my wonderful wife, Deborah A. Klose.

Freight cars were also painted in the New York Central's jade green. Visitors notice rolling stock I decorated for the Central New York RR. That line, which interchanges with the B&S, is the name of

the outstanding O gauge model railroad built and operated by my good friend Jim Policastro. Cars custom-painted with unique names are seldom seen on O gauge layouts, but for Jim and me it's part of the fun of this great hobby.

Other freight cars bear the names of local industries, including General Electric, Schenectady Chemical Co., and Tobin Meat Packing, where my dad, grandfather, and uncle once worked. A few others are MTH models created by Larry Lillo of Holly Beach Depot in Wildwood to recall businesses in that coastal community and nearby Cape May, N.J.

To advance the sense of realism I make sure to weather my rolling stock. Another friend, Steve Phetterplace, shared his talent for making freight cars appear old, used, and somewhat abused.

Shared wisdom

A book by Mary Bennett McKinney called *Shared Wisdom* has influenced my life by observing that every person has talent and a piece of wisdom. Her philosophy has been important to me in all aspects of my life, especially my hobby.

Building my railroad has taken time and talent. To progress further with the B&S, I called upon the wisdom and talents of other people. Besides the individuals

whom I've mentioned, I gladly turned to Mike Lynch, Steve Phetterplace, Jack Smith, and Roger and Dorcie Farkash, plus the team at TW TrainWorx.

Everyone involved has made my layout special. I advise every modeler to enlist the help of others when planning and constructing a layout. The sharing of talent and the resulting camaraderie will make your life and the hobby a lot richer.

In fact, the B&S continues to do just that by helping me make new acquaintances while strengthening friendships. I remember the benefits of inviting to our home attendees of the national convention held by the Lionel Operating Train Society in 2006. Since then, I've hosted groups from the New York Central Historical Society and the National Model Railroad Association, along with local civic organizations, church groups, and historical societies. I invite all of you to learn more by going to my website: www.bellevueand-schenectadyrr.com.

Little did my grandparents know the seed they planted in my life at that very first Christmas 65 years ago would grow until I had developed this wonderful O gauge layout. Neither could they have imagine the friendships it has enabled me to build. If Grandpa could only see it now! I hope he's smiling down on me. **CTT**

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STORY BY GEORGE E. HOFFER

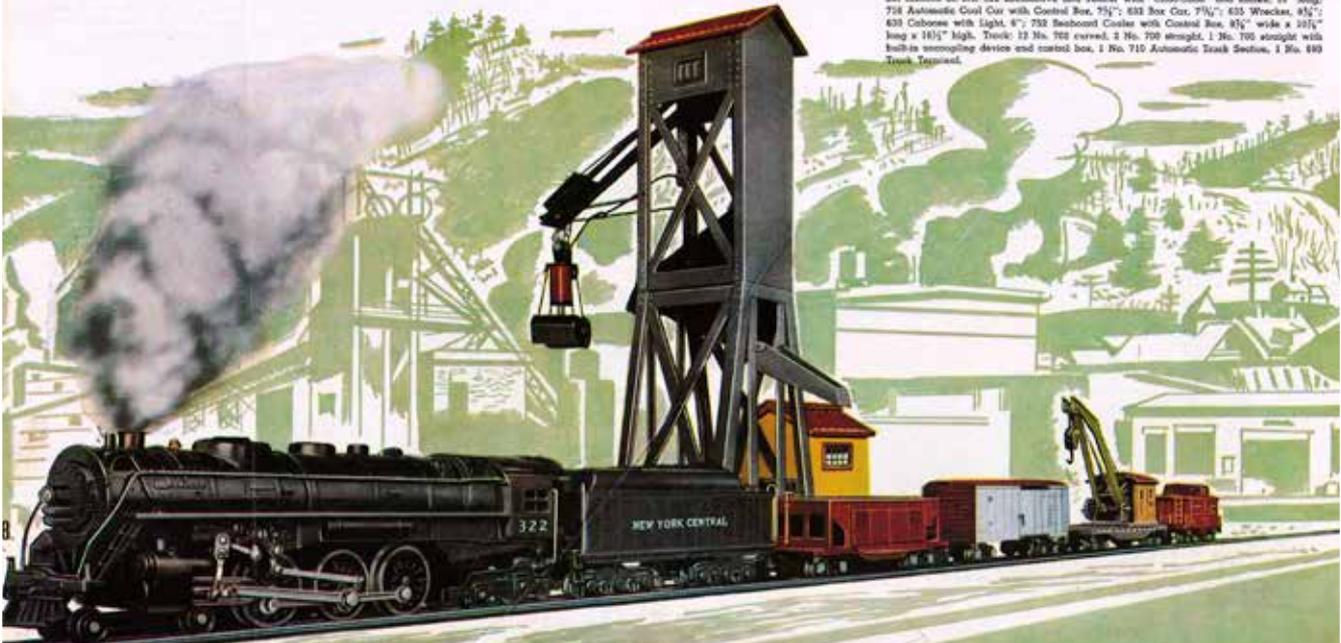
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 Set consists of: No. 322 Locomotive and Tender with "Choo-Choo" and smoke, 18" long; 718 Automatic Coal Car with Control Box, 7 1/2"; 633 Box Car, 7 1/2"; 635 Wrecker, 8 1/2"; 639 Caboose with Light, 8"; 732 Boarder Coalier with Control Box, 8 1/2" wide x 10 1/2" long x 1 1/2" high. Truck: 12 No. 702 curved, 2 No. 700 straight, 1 No. 705 straight with built-in unloading device and control box, 1 No. 710 Automatic Track Section, 1 No. 499 Truck. Tracked.

The A.C. Gilbert Co. introduced its S gauge lineup to the toy train industry as well as children and families across North America in 1946 with an impressive total of five steam engines. Those locomotives was shown in the full-color consumer catalog as the motive power for an array of steam and passenger sets. Among the prominent members were a 4-4-2 Atlantic and a 4-6-4 Hudson.

The A.C. Gilbert Co. used five different steam locomotive castings as the motive power of its S gauge train sets in 1946, including the Nos. 300 4-4-2 Atlantic and 322 4-6-4 Hudson. The latter was considered a more deluxe (and expensive) model than the Atlantic, yet current values on the American Flyer collector market for the Atlantic are not that far below those of the Hudson.

Developed at the GILBERT Hall of Science

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Set consists of: 1 No. 301 Locomotive and Tender with "Choo-Choo," 18" long; 1 No. 302 curved, 1 No. 303 straight, 1 No. 304 straight with built-in uncoupling device and control box, 1 No. 430 Truck Tender.

No. 4601 Atlantic Freight Train . . .

Same as above, but without "Choo-Choo," 75 Watt Transformer recommended.

No. 4604 ATLANTIC PASSENGER TRAIN WITH "CHOO-CHOO" 21 PIECES. 50 1/2" LONG . . .

Start this sleek passenger train on its exciting run with smooth precision — just as a real engineer would. There's no jerky "jack-rabbit" jumping here — thanks to its smooth-pulling worm-gear drive. The gleaming black locomotive has four mighty drive wheels with eccentric arm double action piston rods and Luctite electric headlight. Its shining eight-wheel tender is filled with imitation coal. The sonorous rhythm of its "choo-choos" increases in intensity as the train picks up speed — just as real highliners do. The two long, handsome coaches have electric lights, and are of lightweight plastic construction that is the lightest used in scale model railroading. Lightweight baggage car has sliding doors. Locomotive, all cars and two-rail track are engineered to 3/16" scale. Automatic coupling and uncoupling devices add to the fun of operating. Track makes 140" oval. 75 or 100 Watt Transformer recommended.

Set consists of: 1 No. 301 Locomotive and Tender with "Choo-Choo," 18" long; 1 No. 302 straight, 1 No. 303 straight with built-in uncoupling device and control box, 1 No. 430 Truck Tender.

No. 4603 Atlantic Passenger Train . . .

Same as above, but without "Choo-Choo," 75 Watt Transformer recommended.



The No. 300 S gauge American Flyer Lines 4-4-2 Atlantic (mistakenly shown in the Gilbert catalog for 1946 with the number "301" on its cab) led a freight set and a passenger set.

A price paradox since the infancy of interest by train collectors in S gauge trains has been why the entry-level die-cast metal Atlantics of the 1946-47 period have held a higher percentage of market value than the more impressive and highly promoted Hudsons of the same time. These values are without question market generated, but what's the reason?

Values from three years

To quantify these price disparities, we have relied on the values compiled for the 2023 edition of *Greenberg's Pocket Price Guide to American Flyer and Other S Gauge Trains* (available from KalmbachHobbyStore.com). As shown in the accompanying table, the No. 322 Hudson from 1946 (in excellent condition with no original box or wrapping) has a value only 2.7 times greater than that of the No. 300 Atlantic from the same time also in excellent condition without an original box.

To learn more about this disparity, let's analyze values for comparable locomotives cataloged later. First, we should focus on

American Flyer steam engines from 1952. Besides being one of the peak years for toy train sales, 1952 turned out to be the last year that both the Atlantic (early-production No. 302AC model) and the Hudson (No. K325) had die-cast metal boilers.

The current value ratio for the 1952 Hudson steam engine compared to the Atlantic engine is 5.4. In other words, the Flyer Hudson from 1952 has a value 5.4 times greater than that of the Atlantic from the same year. By comparison, as



Relative Values of Selected American Flyer S Gauge Atlantic and Hudson Engines

Year	Atlantic		Hudson		Comparative Value
1946	No. 300 (A)	\$52	No. 322 (A)	\$140	2.69x
1947	No. 300 (B)	\$43	No. 322 (B)	\$134	3.12x
1952	No. 302AC (B)	\$34	No. K325 (B)	\$185	5.44x
1955	No. 303	\$43	No. 326 (B)	\$246	5.72x

Letters in parentheses refer to variations documented in the 2023 edition of *Greenberg's Pocket Price Guide to American Flyer and Other S Gauge Trains*.

already noted, the 1946 Hudson has only a 2.7 premium.

Finally, let's look next at steam engines cataloged and sold in 1955: The Nos. 303 Atlantic with a plastic boiler and 326 Hudson with a large motor. The Hudson is worth 5.7 times that of the Atlantic.

Drawing conclusions

I believe the genesis of the 1946-47 model value disparity is the A.C. Gilbert Co.'s rational decision to change its production mix to higher margin units. This is the same choice that automobile manufacturers have made in recent years in light of the microchip shortages.

Microchips have become the focal point of modern automotive architectures, much as electromechanical reverse units and miniature electric motors were for the A.C. Gilbert Co. and the Lionel Corp. right after World War II. Given the limited supply of a critical input that is common to the entire line, it makes good economic sense to change the product mix.

To protect revenues and profits back in 2021, executives at the Chrysler Corp. cut

The difference between values for the American Flyer No. 326 New York Central 4-6-4 Hudson from 1955 (beautifully illustrated in the consumer catalog issued for that year) and the No. 303 Atlantic from the same year is much greater than observed for engines from the 1946-47 period.

production of the low-margined Jeep Compass by 92 percent from the previous year. However, they increased senior Jeep and RAM truck production by 44 percent when compared with 2020. The firm's financial results from the first half of 2021 vindicated the production mix change.

Seventy-five years ago, executives at the Gilbert Co. faced a similar dilemma: Use the supply-short components in lower-margined Atlantics or in higher-margined Hudsons? Be aware that American Flyer catalogs from 1946 through 1948 didn't show locomotives being offered as separate-sale items. Decision makers plainly were anticipating production constraints.

To demonstrate the positive revenue impact of a richer Gilbert production mix, let's next compare the lowest priced freight sets cataloged in 1947 relying on the 300 Atlantic and 322 Hudson, respectively (Nos. 4601 and 4611). Using suggested retail prices established by the Gilbert Co., we discover that a 4611 Hudson-powered set generated 2.7 times the revenue of the Atlantic-powered set.

A richer production mix naturally entails increased production costs. However, Gilbert internal production cost estimates from 1963 suggest those incremental costs were minimal.

For example, the "total factory cost" of producing the No. 21920 Missouri Pacific Alco PA diesel was \$6.16. The same document showed the "total factory cost" of the No. 24222 Domino Sugar covered hopper was 71 cents; a piece of S gauge straight track was 6.4 cents.

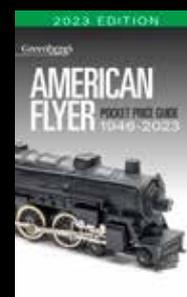
Therefore, incremental cost increases would have been minimal for the Gilbert Co., especially given that Atlantics came with four-piece boilers, wire handrails, and complex side rods. The answer for the firm's decision makers was obvious: In a tight market, they would be wise to manufacture more American Flyer Hudson steamers and fewer Atlantics.

Because the Gilbert Co. produced relatively fewer Atlantics right after World War II as compared with Hudsons from the same years (and therefore, fewer Atlantics have survived), the price differential is not as great between the two as it is when focusing on later models (1952 and 1955). Don't be surprised if at the next train show you attend you end up paying more than you expect for an early Atlantic steam engine in excellent condition with its original box. **CTT**

KALMBACH
HOBBYSTORE

American Flyer Pocket Price Guide 1946-2023

■ This essential pocket-sized guide features current and updated product listings for American Flyer and other S scale trains. The 33rd edition of this easy-to-read book is a valuable and reliable source of pricing presented in a handy size for use at your computer or carried to shows.



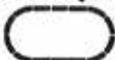
KalmbachHobbyStore.com

MILWAUKEE SPECIAL

By popular demand . . . a new Lionel passenger train! Here are totally new passenger cars, detailed to perfection and built to last a lifetime! And they are pulled by a rugged 4-4-2 die cast engine and long tender. Set includes two beautifully colored, authentic lighted Pullman cars and a lighted observation car. 8 curved and 6 straight tracks make up into a long extended oval layout. Another bonus! The die cast engine has smoke, headlight and the Electronic Mighty Sound of Steam and Whistle. It's total railroad realism. Transformer is 50-watt and controls forward and reverse.

No. 6-1387

Layout space:
27" x 54"



BREAKING NEW GROUND LIONEL'S MILWAUKEE SPECIAL

This heavyweight passenger outfit from 1973 was a landmark

STORY BY MARK SUEK

When it's usually first encountered, Lionel's No. 1387 Milwaukee Special from 1973 seems to be just one more outfit from the early modern era. It's just a small steam engine and tender with a few cars.

But further investigation reveals the set to be far from commonplace. This passenger set cataloged for just a year lays claim to several "firsts" in the long and glorious history of Lionel.

■ Eye-catching train

Before explaining why the Milwaukee Special stands out, let's review what came with the outfit. The box contained the steam engine and tender, three heavyweight passenger cars, track (eight curves and six straights), and a transformer. Everything needed for fun was packed inside.

On the point was a No. 8305 4-4-2 Atlantic with smoke and "Electronic Mighty Sound of Steam." Nice as the die-cast metal locomotive was, it paled in comparison to the 4-6-4 Hudson originally planned as the motive power. Top brass at Model Products Corp., the division of General Mills then manufacturing and marketing Lionel trains, bowed to pressure to cut costs and opted for the smaller engine. A prototype for the Hudson existed in the Lionel Archives.

The tender used with the Atlantic was a streamlined type with a water scoop underneath. It came decorated with a maroon stripe, gold trim, and gold "The Milwaukee Road" lettering.

The powerful combination led a trio of matching heavyweight passenger cars. Remember that Lionel operators had been without a new heavyweight passenger car set to enjoy since 1950. Streamliners had been the rule ever since, and the original dies for the heavyweight cars might have been scrapped.

The 13½-inch-long cars included two Pullmans (Nos. 9500 *City of Milwaukee* and 9503 *City of Chicago*) and a No. 9502 *President Washington* observation. They had molded underbody detail, non-operating plastic couplers (packed in separate envelopes with a Phillips-head screw used to attach the couplers to the bottom of each car), frosted windows, vestibule gates, and a metal pickup assembly for the two internal light bulbs on one truck.

All cars came painted flat orange with a flat maroon clerestory. "The Milwaukee Road" lettering was stamped above the windows in gold with maroon shadowing. The car names were maroon, and gold car numbers appeared on the far left and far right ends of the body sides.

■ Breaking ground

Why did the Milwaukee Special stand out? It was the first passenger set produced and marketed during the modern era, which commenced in 1970. That was the first year Model Products Corp. was making Lionel electric trains. Released three years later, the Milwaukee Special was the first Lionel passenger outfit cataloged since the Nos. 11590 and 12780 in 1966.



The 1387 wasn't the last passenger set MPC put out. A year later came the No. 1487 Pennsylvania RR Broadway Limited. It stayed in the line for another year, being joined in 1975 by the No. 1587 Baltimore & Ohio Capital Limited. The latter, a beautiful heavyweight passenger train, was cataloged in 1975 only.

What else? The 1387 was the first heavyweight passenger car offering under the Lionel banner with a real road name on its flanks. It was also the first set to include the small heavyweight cars from then-new tooling, now known as "Baby Madisons."

Postwar aficionados will be quick to point out there were prior passenger car sets for the Canadian Pacific, Pennsylvania RR, and Santa Fe, plus the Rail Diesel Car set with components lettered for the Baltimore & Ohio. However, all of those sets used streamlined passenger car models.

Lionel sets did come with near-scale heavyweight passenger cars in the early postwar era. But the road name above the windows on those cars was "Lionel Lines."

■ Additional cars

One more factor distinguished the Milwaukee Special. Top men at MPC weren't content to provide just the two Pullmans and observation in the outfit. Between 1973 and '88, Lionel made a grand total of eight add-on cars, so a diligent collector could end up with an 11-car heavyweight train!

The parade began with three additional Pullmans produced as uncataloged releases late in 1973 and then placed in the cataloged line as separate-sale items for three consecutive years, starting in 1974. The Nos. 9501 *City of Aberdeen*, 9504 *City of Tacoma*, and 9505 *City of Seattle* featured "fast angle" metal wheels, realistic plastic trucks, and illuminated interiors.

All three received special treatment in the Lionel catalogs, in which their metal fast angle wheels, fully lighted interiors and authentic (although plastic) trucks were touted.

Information about participating in the Lionel Bonus Coupon Program (described in the February 2019 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*) was printed on the sides of the boxes used for the three cataloged passenger cars in 1974. Participating in the program was the only way to obtain another of the uncataloged Milwaukee Road Pullman cars, the No. 9511 *City of Minneapolis*.

The fifth add-on to the heavyweight passenger train made its debut as an uncataloged car in 1974. The No. 9506 combination car entered the cataloged lineup the next year and stayed through 1965. Next was the No. 9522 baggage car – uncataloged in 1975 and cataloged in 1976.

The No. 1387 Milwaukee Special, one of nine sets cataloged in 1973 by Model Products Corp. (a division of General Mills), was the very first O gauge passenger train of the modern era of production.

A seventh add-on model appeared in 1976: the uncataloged No. 9527 *President Franklin D. Roosevelt* campaign observation car. Then everything went quiet for a dozen years, until in 1988 Lionel introduced the No. 19003 heavyweight dining car as an uncataloged piece.

■ Value and significance

Greenberg's Lionel Trains Pocket Price Guide, 1901-2023 values the 1387 Milwaukee Special outfit at \$143 in excellent condition and \$285 in mint condition. Factor in the respective values of all the cataloged and uncataloged add-ons, and the amounts rise to \$441 and \$665.

Yet the true value of the Milwaukee Special lies in its significance as a trailblazing set of many firsts at a time when Lionel, then based in Mount Clemens, Mich., was working diligently to improve the quality of its product offerings and bolster the proverbial bottom line. That effort must have paid off well, because the company's overall sales increased markedly in 1973. **CTT**

ILLUMINATED PASSENGER CARS

Three new cars for the Milwaukee road, beautiful additions to your passenger line. The Pullman 12-1 cars feature the names Aberdeen, Tacoma and Seattle. This classic of passenger cars traveled the North American railroads in the 1930's.

- Authentic Milwaukee road markings
- Metal fast-angle wheels
- Fully lighted from within
- Authentic trucks
- Two-tone paint scheme

CITY OF TACOMA No. 6-9504

CITY OF SEATTLE No. 6-9505

CITY OF ABERDEEN No. 6-9501

Eight additional cars were introduced between 1973 and 1988. The first three models, which initially were uncataloged items, joined the cataloged lineup in 1974 and remained through 1976.

THE LAYOUT SHE WAS DESTINED TO BUILD

Carey Tarkman, although a relative newcomer to the world of toy trains, has over the past 25 years dabbled in large scale and O gauge, but feels Standard gauge is her forte.



Carey Tarkman always knew she was a Standard gauger

STORY BY ROGER CARP ● Photos by Carey Tarkman

Carey Tarkman, whose Standard and O gauge display we're proudly introducing, is what you might call an "old soul." The term has nothing to do with a person's chronological age or outlook on life. Forget how many candles are on Carey's birthday cake; her approach to the hobby and her attitude to life define young.

Still, this enthusiastic and talented modeler deserves to be called an old soul. Carey appreciates the classics. She sings along with Ella Fitzgerald and Rosemary Clooney, laughs at jokes told by Bob Hope and Jack Benny, and may even tear up hearing Bogart say, "Here's looking at you, kid," in *Casablanca*.

Someone like Carey was destined to embrace Standard gauge trains. The size, elegance, rich color, and heritage of the large locomotives and rolling stock Lionel and American Flyer cataloged in the pre-war decades inevitably caught her attention. Once shown those classics, Carey began dreaming of developing layouts with them. To say she has succeeded is pretty much an understatement.

Getting ready

How does someone like Carey, who didn't come of age in the 1920s or '30s when Standard gauge dominated the world of toy trains, come to cherish them?

The transformative moment arrived in 1994, by which time Carey had an infant

daughter about to celebrate her very first Christmas. Somehow, perhaps in a gift brought by Santa Claus, the little girl ended up with a large scale train set.

As much as the 1-year-old was enamored of the large train, it was her mother – Carey – who was hypnotized by the sounds, lights, and magic. She immersed herself in modeling with large scale trains over the next decade before stumbling on her next life changer: the Polar Express outfit Lionel made in O gauge. The popular train set redirected her involvement.

Or at least it did until the day several years later, when Carey watched a video showing the Standard gauge layout belonging to television personality Tom Snyder. Repeated viewings caused a conversion experience. She realized those antique engines, freight and passenger cars, and accessories were right for her.

The right setting

An important factor in making Snyder's trains look so impressive was the setting. Standard gauge trains are best presented in

rooms and amid furnishings reminiscent of the period when they were assembled. Not that prewar engines and cars don't look fabulous in a contemporary environment, but they somehow feel more at home when set up in the spacious living areas common before the war.

Fortunately for Carey, her days on the West Coast were coming to an end. With her spouse, whom she calls "Hubby Tom," a move to the middle of the country was completed. They chanced upon a grand house built in 1939. This pair of old souls sensed it would be perfect and made it ready to host Standard gauge displays – a simple tabletop layout on the main floor and an elaborate layout upstairs.





Circus performers prepare for opening night on the Standard and O gauge display Carey built on the upper floor of her home. Her appreciation of prewar toy trains inspired the setup.

First things first

Carey, besides being an old soul, is a very practical one. She understood her budget wouldn't permit her to stock her shelves and tracks with original Standard gauge models. But the high quality of the reproductions made by Lionel and MTH Electric Trains more than compensated.

There was something satisfying, Carey believed, about owning updated versions of the trains she prized. Their paint was pristine, and their motors were better and more dependable. And they were no less dazzling than their ancestors.

Up first in 2016 went a 5½ x 10-foot table. It stood 42 inches above the polished wood floors. Carey laid a 4 x 8-foot sheet

of ¾-inch-thick birch plywood on top of 2 x 4 framing and 4 x 4 legs. She edged the platform with 6-inch mahogany planks.

The basic loop on the tabletop consisted of sections of Standard gauge track manufactured and sold by USA Track. Tom screwed them into the wood.

Connecting an MTH No. Z-4000 transformer sufficed for Carey to get a train up and running. As for the scenery, the plan remained to adopt a simple look enhanced by toys made in prewar days by J. Chein & Co. A Ferris wheel from that toy maker represented an amusement park, while a windup cathedral anchored a wedding

scene. Repainted vintage and new Barclay figures populated the different areas.

Climb the staircase

The Standard gauge railroad on the main floor serves as a showcase for Carey and Tom. It enables them to present their finest acquisitions and to introduce Standard gauge trains to friends who may not ever have heard of them. Once those folks are suitably in awe of the big and beautiful engines and cars, they're invited to climb the stairs to the upper floor to see more.

Carey imagines similar scenes took place in the homes of wealthy families

The colorful 15 x 20-foot Standard and O gauge display Carey designed for a room on the second floor features a circus, a mountain with tunnel, and original and reissued Lionel accessories.



A simpler yet no less entertaining Standard gauge layout greets visitors on the primary level of the Tarkman residence. The wedding scene outside the collectible J. Chein & Co. windup cathedral reminds Carey and Tom of the day they were married.

almost a century ago. Relatives might gaze initially at the Standard gauge display set up by the youngest child, only to keep walking to the upstairs bedroom where the first son kept his larger layout.

As Carey explains, “Our upstairs layout has its own room.” She points out the toy

train catalog art serving as “wallpaper” on the walls.” Depictions of classic Lionel accessories capture attention, as you see the Nos. 300 Hellgate bridge, 444 round-house sections, and 840 power station.

Then you can admire the main event, the display consisting of two adjoining

tables. The front one measures 7 x 9 feet; connected to it from behind is a table measuring 6 x 13 feet. Adding them up gives Carey a model railroad 15 x 20 feet.

Carey’s method of forming benchwork duplicated what she had done downstairs. The same brand of Standard gauge track was used. Where she thought an O gauge line would complement the display, she opted for sections of Lionel FasTrack.

Conventional control was the rule upstairs, with a Lionel No. CW80 and an MTH Z-4000 providing current to the rails. A few postwar power supplies from Lionel, notably KW, SW, and ZW transformers, handle the buildings and lights.

Circus and mountain

When layout builders operating modern O or S gauge trains talk about scenery, they typically have in mind making hills, forests, and ponds. When their peers concentrating on Standard gauge trains talk about scenery, they have in mind locating and wiring structures, light towers, and signals.

The elements needed to give life to a display featuring prewar models differ from the norm. They demand different skills and artistry from the builder. He or she must figure out how to balance the color, size, and purpose of the various

AT A GLANCE

Carey Tarkman's Standard and O gauge layout

Dimensions: 15 x 20 feet

Track and switches: Standard gauge USA Track (diameters range from 42" to 57"); O gauge Lionel FasTrack (36" diameter)

Motive power: American Flyer, Lionel, MTH

Rolling stock: American Flyer, Lionel, MTH

Controls: Lionel types CW80, KW, SW, ZW and MTH no. Z-4000 transformers

Accessories: American Flyer, LGB, Lionel, Marx, MTH, Wings of Texaco

Structures: Acuity, American Flyer, Chein, Department 56, Grandma Wild's, Harry London, Hornby, Lionel, Marx, MTH, Pride Lines, Silver Crane

items to create any number of memorable and pleasing scenes.

Carey has mastered the talents essential for a Standard gauge display both fascinating and entertaining. Perhaps the finest example of her work is the three-ring circus playing host to an MTH reproduction of the famous circus set marketed by Ives in the 1920s. She has arranged vivid backdrops, animals, a tightrope walker, acrobats, billboards, and spectators.

Fans of circuses and the trains serving them should not miss the two custom cars Don Kelly made for Carey. He reworked two Lionel prewar cars and modified them with eye-catching circus markings.

Carey fashioned the towering Majestic Mountain after a large landform pictured in the American Flyer catalog for 1929. The mountain started with a wood box as the base to which she added chicken wire stuffed with brown paper. She made a hard shell by covering it with papier-mache and light drywall compound.

Carey enjoys talking about how she made Majestic Mountain on the table in the breakfast room. She colored the tough exterior with Folk Art acrylic paints before sealing the colors. When her masterpiece was ready, she carefully carried it upstairs and incorporated it into the railroad.



Figures crowd by the original Lionel Nos. 124 station and 155 station platform. The Stephen Girard apple green passenger express hightails it out of the city.



Under the shadow of a reproduction of a Dorfan crane, a Lionel passenger train headed by a No. 381E electric-profile locomotive painted pea green can be seen pulling State Set cars past the Lionel Nos. 444 roundhouse sections and 200 turntable.

Plenty to love

Carey confesses that she could easily talk for hours about vignettes on the upstairs layout and the details Tom and she either made or bought and then placed thoughtfully. Figures particularly intrigue them, and there can never be enough of the painted travelers, laborers, residents, and animals. Also high on their list of items giving personality to the display are the billboards they have created.

Everyone should notice the black-and-white marble pieces in the corners of the stained tables. "They are perfect," Carey

says with a laugh, "for setting down your art-deco-era cocktail when enjoying the art-deco trains we're running."

Getting serious for a minute or two as we wrap up our conversation, Carey expresses her gratitude to Tom, their friends, and the toy train enthusiasts who encouraged her every step of the way. Thanks to them, she says, "I have designed and built layouts hearkening back to a special time in the past." The prewar era has beckoned Carey, offering inspiration for how she enjoys life, spends her leisure, and shares her artistic talents. **CTT**

Marx eight-wheel lithographed diesels

These colorful O gauge beauties mirrored real railroading

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ROBERT WENDT

Along with the popular four-wheel Fairbanks Morse diesel locomotives of the mid-1950s, Louis Marx & Co. produced three types of eight-wheel lithographed metal diesels between 1950 and the mid-1960s. Beautifully decorated engines, those O gauge diesels should be viewed as toy trains rather than scale model trains. Faithfulness to prototype in appearance was not a factor in their creation.

As interest in diesel locomotives rapidly increased in the late 1950s, Marx answered by further expanding its diesel offering with five more locomotive types made with injection-molded plastic bodies. They included four- and eight-wheel versions in a range of railways and color schemes. Production of the plastic diesels continued until the mid-1970s, and they were among the last O gauge trains the firm made.

The prototypes

Let's start with the FA. It was a B-B diesel freight locomotive built between 1946 and

'59 through a partnership between the American Locomotive Co. (Alco) and General Electric, both of which were located in Schenectady, N.Y. There were cab-equipped (A unit) FAs and cabless booster (B unit) FB models. The partnership also developed a dual passenger-freight version, designated the FPA/FPB. It came equipped with a steam generator for heating passenger cars.

The first FA-2 diesel locomotives were delivered in 1950 to the Baltimore & Ohio. By that time, unfortunately, cab units were being surpassed on the market by road switchers due to the greater versatility of the latter. Domestic production of the FA lineup came to an end in 1956.

A second notable diesel prototype influencing Marx was the FT, which was produced by the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors between 1939 and '45. It was the first model in EMD's highly successful F-unit series of freight diesels and, as such, turned out to be the engine that convinced officers of many American railroads the diesel-electric freight locomotive

was the future.

Regarding the name, the "F" stood for "Fourteen Hundred" horsepower (in actuality, the FT generated 1,350 hp) and the "T" stood for Twin (the locomotives typically came as a two-unit set). Altogether, EMD assembled 555 cab-equipped A units and 541 cabless booster B units.

The first units EMD built in December 1940 and January 1941 were destined for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe. The 155 A units were initially geared for freight service and so came painted in the Santa Fe's blue-and-yellow freight colors. Some units later were regearred for passenger service and therefore were painted in the railroad's red-and-silver warbonnet scheme.

Marx models

Marx's No. 21, the company's first eight-wheel diesel model fabricated out of litho-

Fans of the O gauge trains capably developed by Louis Marx & Co. in the 1950s prized the Nos. 21 Santa Fe EMD FT, 6000 Southern Pacific Alco FA, and 62 Baltimore & Ohio FA diesel locomotives.





graphed sheet metal, started production in 1950 and ended in 1954. The shape of the body and its four side portholes suggested it was Marx's interpretation of an FT A unit. The model's truck side frames simulated a six-wheel truck, which was used exclusively on EMD passenger diesels.

As Eric Beheim observes in the May-June 2022 issue of *Classic Toy Trains*, the 21 came only in the Santa Fe red-and-silver warbonnet scheme. The timing of its release suggested Marx was trying to compete against Lionel's Santa Fe F3s.

The next O gauge lithographed eight-wheel diesel manufactured by Marx was Southern Pacific No. 6000, which made its debut in 1952. The shortness of the body and the shape of the nose combined to suggest it was the company's interpretation of an Alco FA diesel A unit.

Truth be told, however, nothing else about the 6000 reflected the characteristics of an FA. In fact, Eric Matzke, the author of the second volume of *Greenberg's Guide to Marx Trains*, referred to it as an EMD F3, even though that comparison is no more accurate than it is to an Alco FA.

Marx offered the 6000 in two similar color schemes. The more common one used orange and silver; less often seen were orange units with off-white being substituted for silver.

Timing suggested Marx aimed to compete with Lionel's FAs (Union Pacific, then Erie and Rock Island). Production of the 6000 ended in 1954, when the switch to plastic bodies began.

Also brand new in 1952 was the No. 62 Baltimore & Ohio. The diesel, identical except in paint with the 6000, was produced through 1954 and again in 1958 and 1967. Its production overlapped the conversion to plastic bodies at Marx. But it couldn't be confirmed whether later runs were made with newly lithographed bodies or if they depended on leftover stock in the warehouse.

Miscellaneous details

Collectors and operators find plenty to appreciate about the Marx Alco and EMD diesels. Even if you're more interested in the trains from other manufacturers, keep these points in mind:

First of all, A units represented the only type of body Marx ever made – powered and non-powered.

Second, the power truck for the FT was newly designed for that application and shared relatively few parts with other Marx motor units. There were thick geared flanges on the power wheels.

Third, the FT and FA locomotives were prone to losing their horns – a serious flaw in the design of the cab units. Even models given plenty of tender, loving care could end up with their horns breaking off or falling out. Fortunately for Marx fans, reproductions are readily available from parts dealers.

Fourth, the 62 and 6000 FA diesels utilized a standard four-wheel power unit (single- as well as double-reduction gear versions. Most of the motors had a single-

In addition to the three great lithographed diesels Louis Marx & Co. used to lead freight and passenger sets, the toy maker put out equally eye-catching cabooses lettered for the same popular railroads.

reduction gear with a thick-gear flange that limits them to O gauge layouts with Marx or similar switches.

Fifth, the powered wheels varied from steam-type box spoke to a solid disk. The non-powered trucks used a wheelset that was identical to those on Marx's four-wheel cars.

Sixth, those motor units had a bracket spot welded to their side plate so they could be connected to the body at the roof. Such units resembled their prewar predecessors used on Marx M-10000 locomotives and could be used to replace missing or inoperable prewar motor units.

Sets and cabooses

While Marx occasionally offered its various diesel locomotives for individual sale, most of them entered the toy train market as the motive power of a freight or passenger set. To be precise, all three – Baltimore & Ohio, Santa Fe, and Southern Pacific – diesels led a number of freight sets.

Meanwhile, the FT diesel locomotive headed several Marx passenger sets, as well as some sets with both freight and passenger cars. The sets often included unpowered units and either three or four lithographed 7-inch metal cars in FA sets and 3/16-inch scale freight or passenger cars with large trucks in FT sets. **CTT**

BY PAUL ULLRICH

Build an inexpensive lift span

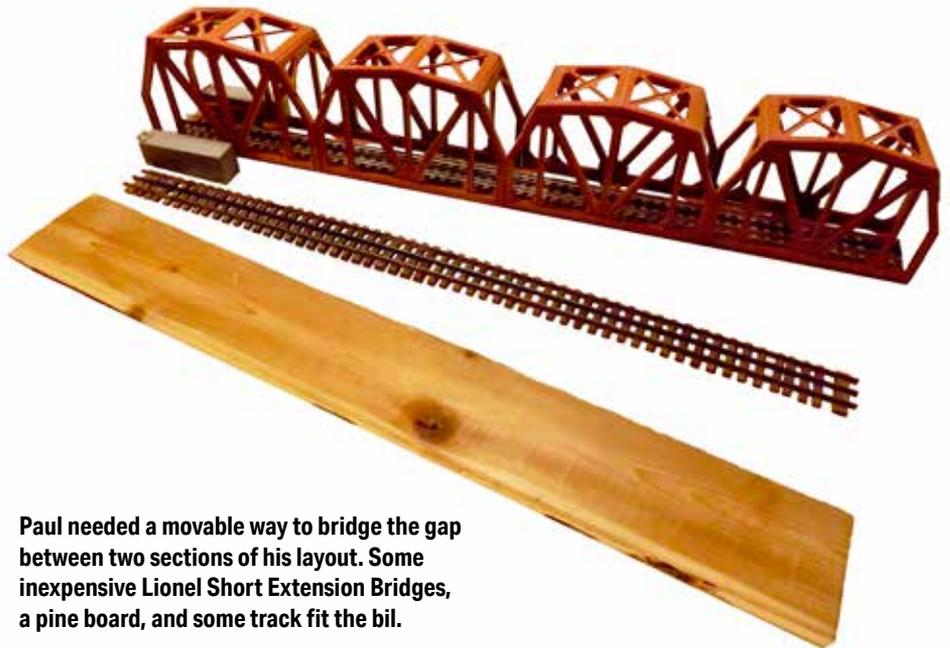
Lionel Short Extension Bridges and some scrap lumber help bridge the gap

■ **I NEEDED A 40-INCH LIFT BRIDGE** to span the two sections of my U-shaped O gauge layout, and I didn't want to spend a lot of money on it. I bought four Lionel Short Extension Bridges (No. 62716) at a local train show for about \$10 apiece. They are 10 inches each, the exact combined length I needed.

I was also after a base for the bridge strong enough to carry the weight of my heavier engines without bending. The previous owner of my house used pine tongue-and-groove panels and had left behind a few spare boards. One board gave me the strength, and it was so thin that it was barely noticeable.

I used a spare 36-inch length of GarGraves flextrack and added a 6-inch piece. The extra 2 inches were needed to fasten the tracks at the end of the bridge. I then removed the pins at the end and enlarged the hollow rails slightly so they would fit snugly over tubular track pins, yet be easy enough to disconnect when I wanted to get between the two sections of my layout to reach the controls.

I fastened track to the wood base using $\frac{3}{4}$ " screws, taking special care to drill holes through the ties to prevent them from splitting. The bridge bases were too thick to lay the track perfectly flat, so I cut the floor stringers of each one to allow the



Paul needed a movable way to bridge the gap between two sections of his layout. Some inexpensive Lionel Short Extension Bridges, a pine board, and some track fit the bill.

track to go through them instead of over. The pieces of the Lionel Short Extension Bridges all snap together. Then I used a hot glue gun to fasten the bridge bases to the wood.

I used GarGraves lockons for the electrical connections. Next, I drilled holes in my layout and fed the wires through them.

I used several small pieces of scrap lumber to create a hinged base at the other end. For extra strength, I used corner

braces to fasten them to the plywood base of my layout.

As there was a switch at this end of the layout, I had to round off some of the pieces to provide clearance for the trains. I used small squares of scrap lumber to make a support for the bridge when it was upright. I painted them gray to make them look like concrete.

The total cost, including the track and the hardware, came to about \$50. **CTD**



Paul used scrap wood blocks painted concrete gray to attach the board part of the bridge to the layout. A couple more make the bridge stand.



The floor stringers prevented the track from laying flat so Paul cut and removed them. Then he attached the bridges with hot glue.



With the bridge in its upright position, operators can enter the layout. The span closes easily by hand.

LIONEL'S SUBMARINE RISE TO THE SURFACE



Cold War tensions began to intrude on Lionelville in the manufacturer's cataloged line for 1958. A new accessory could launch a rocket, and two entry-level sets hauled military hardware lettered for the U.S. Marine Corps. More armaments appeared a year later in the form of intermediate-range missiles hurled aloft from a launching platform or a flatcar and a diesel that fired short-range missiles.

Submarines joined Lionel's growing arsenal in 1960. Designers at the toy train company were paying close attention to the news as they looked carefully at the small nuclear-powered submarines actually being introduced. Understanding what was happening in the country at the time enables hobbyists to better appreciate the new entries in the Lionel line while expanding their interest in collecting the models.

What Lionel offered

First, let's summarize exactly what Lionel offered young sailors in its burgeoning fleet of O gauge submarines in 1960. The toy train manufacturer cataloged four items priced differently, although in every case the sub was the same unpainted gray plastic model with black heat-stamped lettering (U.S. NAVY and "3830"). Interestingly, the sub was mistakenly shown in the consumer catalog for 1960 as black with white lettering.

- Number 3830: An 11" long blue flatcar carried a fully assembled sub powered by a rubber band. When lifted off the car, the sub could be operated in water. The 3830, priced at \$8.95, was a set component (Super O No. 2553WS).

- Number 3820: An 11" long olive drab flatcar carried the same sub. The 3820 appeared only as a part of the No. 1805 Land-Sea-and-Air Gift Pack.

- Number 3330: An 11" long flatcar carried an unassembled sub that, once put together, could be operated in water. The 3330,

Lionel cataloged different flatcars loaded with operating as well as non-operating submarines between 1960 and '63. The No. 3830 was used as a separate-sale item and a component of a few outfits, including Super O set No. 2572 in 1961.

a separate-sale item priced at \$7.95), was also a component of one outfit (Super O No. 2547WS).

- Number 6830: An 11" long flatcar carried a fully assembled sub that didn't operate. Priced at \$5.95, it was also an outfit component (O-27 No. 1633).

Operating submarines were available in kit form as No. 3330-100 for \$3.95 each.

The choice of catalog numbers in the 3000 series was curious, if only because that group of models typically featured action generated by track voltage or a remote controller. Yet with the submarine transporters, only the load operated, not the flatcar; also, the sub's action was not electrically powered.

Subs in the news

For Lionel to announce miniature subs as its latest flatcar load made good sense from a marketing standpoint. Nuclear-powered submarines developed by the U.S. Navy were in the news then. Unlike diesel-powered subs that had to surface frequently to recharge their batteries, a nuclear sub could remain completely submerged for weeks. The USS *Nautilus*, the world's first operational nuclear sub, made international headlines in 1958, when it demonstrated its potential by becoming the first oceangoing vessel to cross the earth's geographic north pole.

The accomplishments of other American nuclear submarines,

CARS

Naval vessels influenced the postwar line



Toy train designers based the Lionel model after the *Cetacean*, the first privately owned civilian sub. The Southern Pacific moved it from Los Angeles to New Orleans.

along with the release of *Run Silent, Run Deep*, a motion picture dramatizing life aboard a World War II-era sub, thrilled Americans of all ages. No wonder hundreds of thousands of youngsters kept busy assembling plastic models of submarines or playing with battery-powered toy subs in swimming pools and bathtubs.

With all the publicity accorded to America's undersea defenses in the late 1950s, Lionel had good reason to add a submarine to its growing line of military and space items.

Which sub?

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing the designers supervised by Lionel's chief engineer Joseph Bonanno was deciding which full-size sub could best be replicated as a successful flatcar load. They knew an actual nuclear sub could hardly be scaled down to create a plausible load for a three-rail freight train. An O scale model of the *USS Nautilus* would measure more than 6 feet in length.

Fortunately for Lionel, another kind of submarine had earned publicity in the 1950s. The *Cetacean* (named after the taxonomic

order that included whales, dolphins, and porpoises) was the first privately owned, civilian submarine.

Edmund Martine had developed the *Cetacean* over a three-year period at a cost of approximately \$200,000. Designed for underwater photography, the vessel had 8-inch-thick glass viewports on its nose, sides, and bottom and carried a dozen 600-watt flood lamps to illuminate its surroundings. The double hull, fabricated out of $\frac{9}{16}$ " thick steel plate, could withstand the pressure at ocean depths of five miles.

Launched at Los Angeles in September 1955 and christened two months later, the *Cetacean*, it was noted in the December 1955 issue of *Popular Mechanics* magazine, was 41 feet long (as opposed to the 320-foot USS *Nautilus*) and 10½ feet wide. Weighing 50 tons, the *Cetacean* could easily be transported on a standard 50-foot flatcar. And it was – as shown by a 1960 advertisement placed by the Southern Pacific in *Trains* magazine (reprinted on the preceding page).

Martine, eager to explore the crystal-clear waters off the coast of Florida, arranged for the *Cetacean* to be hoisted aboard a 50-foot flatcar in November of 1958 for a 2,700-mile trans-continental ride. The Southern Pacific handled the submarine from Los Angeles to New Orleans, where an unspecified railroad took over. An article in the *Miami Herald* reported the arrival of the novel miniature sub on November 17.

Inspiring Lionel

After studying the appearance of the *Cetacean*, we conclude that Lionel patterned its 3830 submarine after it. Our principal reason for doing so relates to the dimensions of the sub. The model's $9\frac{1}{4}$ " length and $2\frac{5}{16}$ " height over the escape hatch are only slightly smaller than true O scale.

Admittedly, Lionel's talented designers did take a few liberties with their toy sub. First, the *Cetacean* had a series of nine semi-circular openings beneath the conning tower that supported the observation deck. The Lionel model has eight.

Second, Lionel gave its sub a sleek nose cone, unlike the stubby, rounded one on the actual miniature sub.

Third, Lionel omitted handrails, floodlights, and other details that would have given away the craft's true size.

Fourth, Lionel didn't replicate the *Cetacean*'s prominent "feet." Don't worry too much about that omission. In defense of the toy train maker, we should remember that in an emergency the full-size submarine could jettison those feet.

SUBMARINE BASE, TOO

While virtually all collectors and operators of Lionel trains from the postwar era are familiar with the miniature submarines, many of them may not know about a related and scarce accessory: the No. 910-1 Navy Yard Cardboard Display, also known as the atomic submarine base. This highly desirable cardboard item came in nine promotional outfits introduced between 1960 and '64.

The 910-1 Navy Yard Cardboard Display consists of sheets of die-cut cardboard designed to be folded and assembled to form a platform sturdy enough to support a loop of O-27 track. A three-story command post stood next to a lagoon in which were anchored three "submarines." The train in those uncataloged sets passed under a loading shed on the command building and through a truss bridge spanning the lagoon's inlet.

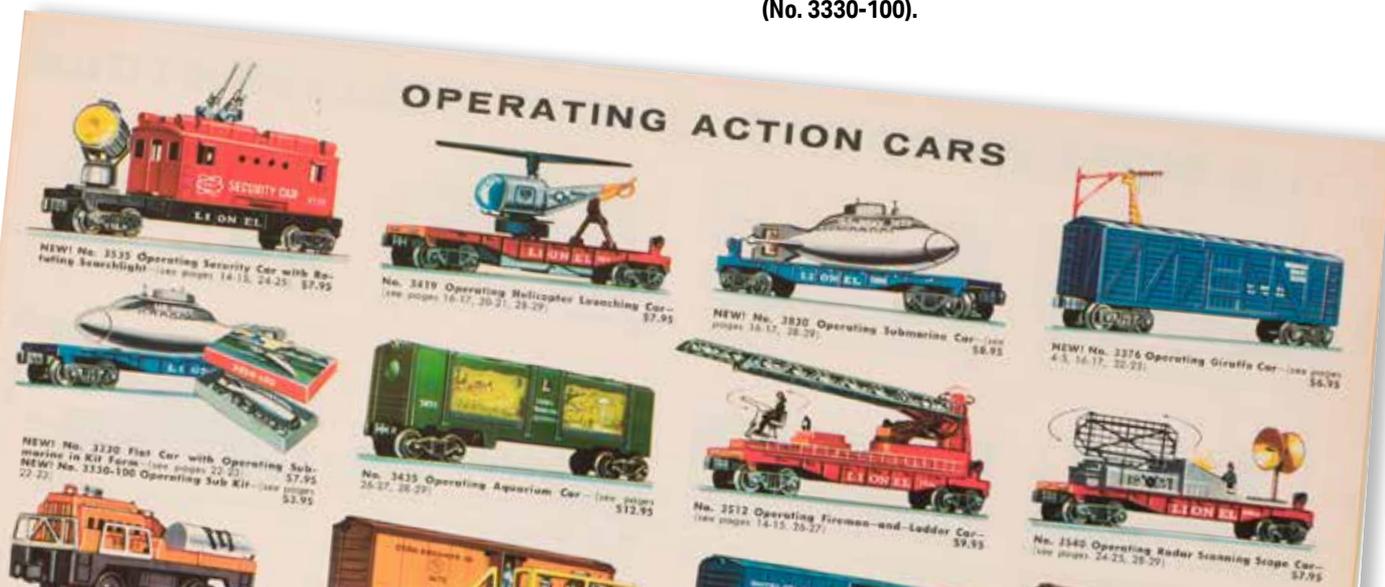
According to John W. Schmid, the author of *Authoritative Guide to Lionel Promotional Outfits, 1960-1969* (Project Roar Publishing, 2007), approximately 6,500 examples of the submarine base were produced to use in the same quantity of train sets. Needless to say, few of the fragile accessories have survived.

Fifth, Lionel lettered its subs U. S. NAVY in keeping with its other space-age toys that clearly represented a military purpose. An illustration on the 3330-100 package leaves no doubt that Lionel intended to capitalize on the recent achievement of the USS *Nautilus*: the artwork depicts a Navy submarine diving beneath an arctic ice cap, inhabited by polar bears, with Northern Lights illuminating the night sky.

Not for the last time – and not for the first time – engineers at Lionel aimed to present to customers miniature versions of machines and equipment, railroad locomotives, and rolling stock that were new and fascinating. **CTD**

The authors wish to express their gratitude to Timothy Radcliffe, director of Thorne Library at Mount Vernon Nazarene University, for his assistance.

Besides various ready-to use versions, Lionel offered its submarine as an easily assembled kit available with a flatcar (No. 3330) or by itself (No. 3830-100).



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Lionel's Union Pacific Rocket Booster Train is one of the biggest outfits the maker has ever produced.

Lionel's rocket booster set

One of the company's largest-ever O gauge outfits models a real train

As an aerospace engineer formerly employed by NASA, this set hit home! I knew the second I saw it advertised in the Lionel 2022 Volume 1 catalog that I had to have Lionel's Union Pacific Rocket Booster Train!

A soon as I opened the brown cardboard shipping carton and saw the unique colorful box with an image of the rocket booster train going across it, I knew I was in for an unforgettable experience.

After soaking in the colorful artwork, I opened it and was greeted by a plethora of orange and blue Lionel boxes.

This is easily one of the largest sets ever offered by Lionel. Included are six idler boxcars, five heavy-duty flatcars with loads and protective covers, and a 21"

sleeping car. Powering the consist is a Union Pacific ES44AC locomotive.

A word of caution: you will need plenty of space to unbox the contents of this set. There are a total of 13 boxes inside the large one itself!

Making my way through the unboxing process I opened the six standard O gauge boxcars first. One of them features special clearance bars mounted on it. These serve to make sure the flatcars with the booster segments have adequate clearance along the train's journey.

Be sure to check your layout for any tight areas such as low clearances and tunnels. If you don't find the trouble spots beforehand, the clearance bars will, just as on the prototype.

The remainder of the idler cars are there for braking and weight distribution.

Now for the good stuff, time to unbox the five flatcars with the booster segments. The protective covers for each part are easily removed by simply lifting them off; the top of each cover is hinged to accommodate this process.

Removing the covers reveals the different sections to the rocket, the most notable of which is the flatcar that holds the engine nozzle and the nosecone.

After admiring the details of the entire set, I made it my mission to put the rocket together. Each section is held in place with rings and screws.

I carefully unscrewed each clamp from the bottom of the flatcars and removed



Clockwise from top left, the articulated flatcars feature covers over each of the sections of the booster rocket. The racks holding the sections, including the nosecone and engine bell, are mounted to the flatcars with screws. They can be assembled into a good-sized rocket booster.

each booster section and started assembly. Quickly I realized the booster was much bigger than I had imagined. It was at this point I knew I had to get the expansion pack which consists of five additional flatcars and loads (enough to build another rocket booster) and six idler boxcars.

After taking the booster apart and reinstalling each section onto the flatcars, it was finally time to get this set on the layout. What makes this set enjoyable is you can either run the set with the protective covers on the flatcars or remove them to show off the rocket booster segments.

The ES44AC that's included with the set sounds great and is a welcome addition to the modern power on my roster, but I decided to spice things up a bit and

grabbed my Lionel Legacy Union Pacific Veranda Turbine. Running the set with it isn't prototypical but it sure looks good!

The prototype rocket booster train is designed to carry the NASA's SLS rocket over a 2,800-mile journey from the manufacturing facility in Utah to Florida's Space Coast. Each booster consists of five individual segments weighing 180 tons each. A planning team from each railroad the train travels over determines the best route and accounts for any obstructions.

Lionel's Union Pacific Rocket Booster Train will go down as one of the most out-of-this-world O gauge sets ever made. They are selling out fast, and the prices will be sure to skyrocket. – Ben Laremont, Youtube: @Bens_Trains_

O Gauge Union Pacific Rocket Booster Train by Lionel

Stock No: 2222020

Price: \$1,699.99

Features: Locomotive can be run in Legacy, TrainMaster Command Control, or conventional mode with a standard transformer; Bluetooth control to operate with Universal Remote or Lion-Chief App; rocket section loads on each flatcar can be removed and assembled into 30" tall scale booster model.

Website: Lionel.com

WITH THE CTT STAFF



Figures are mounted in the doorway. Sound control switches are underneath (right).

Hoppin' a train to anywhere

Lionel's Hobo Sounds Boxcar has a vagabond spirit



It's time to go riding the rails with the Lionel Hobo Sounds Boxcar. Initially offered in the Lionel 2021 Volume II catalog, it was confined to half of page 47. Perhaps uncertain of how the product would be received, the manufacturer only offered it in Erie and Rock Island liveries.

The design is simple: a detailed 40-foot, steam-era boxcar with a door ajar and two traveling vagabonds seated inside. The MSRP for this release is \$189.99.

While the car is stationary, the sound emitted mimics a "hobo camp." "Freight

sounds" take over while the car is in motion, like we've heard on previous sound boxcar releases.

Hobo camp sounds include harmonica playing and silly dialogue between the two characters on board. The chatter seems to be similar to the sound files from the kitchen cars a few catalogs ago. When you listen closely you can also hear the sounds of birds chirping in the background, a nice addition for any layout scene.

The cars are advertised as coming with two pewter figures, die-cast trucks, and operating couplers. The figures on the models are plastic. One of the selling features of these cars is their 1 1/4-inch length and ability to navigate O-31 curves.

The boxcars arrived in the fourth quarter of 2022 and have been well received by modelers. Lionel seems to be leaning toward putting more sound effects in its rolling stock. These fall into their freight sounds lineup just after the basic boxcars from previous years and before the Vision Line offerings. The latter have ElectroCou-

plers and controlled loading-unloading sequences triggered by the Cab 2 remote.

The car has a pick-up roller on each truck, an off-center speaker, and add on details including a brake wheel and chain, ladders, and roof details.

The underside of the car is detailed and there are two switches. "Min/Max" increases or decreases the sounds, and there's a Sound On/Off switch in case you just want silent operation. Due to the weight of the speaker, this car comes in at 17.2 ounces and tracks nicely.

If you're interested in picking up one of these cars up but your local hobby shop is sold out, Lionel has already announced more roadnames in its Volume II 2022 catalog. These include Cotton Belt (No.: 2326230), Frisco (No. 2326240), Ann Arbor (No. 2326250), and Western Railway of Alabama (No. 2326260). The MSRP has gone up to \$209.99 and they are advertised with plastic, not pewter figures.

– Chris Montagna, YouTube: @ChrissTrainsandThings

The Hobo Sounds Boxcar from Lionel

Stock No. 2796130 (Erie)

Price: \$189.99

Other roadnames: Rock Island (No. 226020).

Website: Lionel.com

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Events Rate: \$45 per issue (55 word maximum). Ads will contain the following information about the event: state, city, sponsoring organization and name of event, meet, auction or show, dates, location, times, admission fee, name and/or telephone number and/or email of person to

Events

CA, SACRAMENTO: Sac-Sierra TCA. Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 6151 H Street, Sacramento, CA 95819. Saturday, May 27, 2023, 10:00am-3:00pm. Admission \$10.00, children 12 and under free. 160+ tables of trains for sale, free parking, operating layouts, food. Free train set drawing for 17 and under. Contact: Bryan Stanton at brsta@comcast.net

CT, ANSONIA: Classic Shows, LLC will hold a Train and Toy Show on Sunday, May 7, 2023, from 9:00am-2:00pm at Warsaw Park, 119 Pulaski Hwy (Route 243), Ansonia, CT 06401. Admission \$6.00, children 15 and under are free with an adult. For information, please call 203-926-1327 or go to: www.ClassicShowsLLC.com

FL, MELBOURNE: The Melbourne Train and Toy Show. Azan Shrine Center, 1591 West Eau Gallie Blvd, Melbourne, FL 32935. Saturday, June 3, 2023, 9am-2pm. Admission: \$5, kids under 10 FREE. Vendor tables \$25 each or 3 or more \$20 each. Join us for trains, toys, and fun! Lunch/snacks available. For more information: SchultzSpaceCoastTrains@aol.com or 321-805-1963

FL, OCALA: Lions Tri-Annual Train Show. First Christian Church, 1908 E. Fort King St., Ocala, FL 34471. Saturday, June 10, 2023, and November 4, 2023, 9:00am-2:00pm. Model trains, accessories, detail parts, toys. Adults \$5.00, 12 and under free w/adult. Bring two canned goods and receive \$1.00 off admission. Food/snacks available. Information: Bob 352-694-6381 or 813-203-3216

FL, TALLAHASSEE: 32nd Annual Tallahassee Model Railroad Show and Sale! 2-DAYS! June 24-25, 2023. Saturday, 9:00am-5:00pm & Sunday, 9:00am-4:00pm. Leon County Fair Grounds, 441 Paul Russell Rd., Bldg. 2 & 4. Admission: Adults/Children 13 & over, \$10 BOTH DAYS! Scouts in uniform/children 12 & under FREE! SCALES Z-GI FOOD! Contact: Andy Zimmerman, 850-524-4399. Email: GNTrainman@comcast.net

IL, GALESBURG: 2023 Galesburg Train Show. June 24-25. Saturday 10am-4pm, Sunday 10am-2pm. Knox College, T. Fleming Fieldhouse, 199 East Knox Street. Admission \$5, under 12 free. 400 tables of model trains, books, videos, t-shirts, memorabilia. 80+ vendors and exhibitors. Operating layouts. Tables: \$30 each. Refreshments available. Handicap accessible. Show Directors: Greg Norris 309-335-2634, John Manderscheid 563-349-0134

KS, HUTCHINSON: Kansas Central Model Railroaders, Center of the Nation Model Railroad Expo. Kansas State Fairgrounds, Pride of Kansas Building, 2000 N Poplar, Hutchinson, KS 67502. June 3-4, 2023. Saturday 9am-5pm, Sunday 10am-3pm. Admission \$8.00, under 13 free w/adult. 125+ vendor tables & numerous operating layouts. 25,800 sq.ft. of fun! Free parking (handicap accessible). Info: www.kansascentralmodelrailroaders.org

contact for information. Name, daytime telephone number and street address of the person providing the information is also required but need not be included in the ad. Unless otherwise requested, ads will be published in the issue month that the event occurs in. Additional months are available at the \$45 per issue fee. Please specify issue date(s).

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NJ, BRICK: ECTP and Collectibles LLC presents The Brick Train Show. Elks Lodge, 2491 Hooper Avenue, Brick, NJ 08723. Sunday, May 21, 2023, 9:00am-2:00pm. Admission: \$7.00; under 12 free with adult. John LaLima 732-845-5966. Go to www.eastcoastrainparts.com and click on The Brick Show.

NY, DUNKIRK: TCA Upstate NY Chapter Toy Train Show. Dunkirk Fairgrounds, 1089 Central Ave., Dunkirk, NY 14048. Saturday, May 13, 2023. TCA Members: 8:30am. General Public: 9:00am-3:30pm. Admission: Chapter Members, free. General Public, \$5.00, children 12-17, \$3.00, under 12 free w/ paid adult. Tables are \$20, for reservations email: tcaupstatechapter@gmail.com. Mike: 716-913-4195 or Dave: 716-208-5842

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TX, AUSTIN: Austin Train Show. Over 25,000 sq.ft. of railroading fun for the whole family! Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX. May 6-7, 2023. Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 10am-4pm. Admission: \$8 online, \$10 at the door (includes both days), 12 and under FREE w/adult. Vendors, model/Lego railroads, tour, clinics. For more information visit: austintrainshow.org

All listed events were confirmed as active at the time of press. Please contact event sponsor for current status of the event.

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■ **HERE ARE SOME PHOTOS**

of two campsites that I've set up on different layouts. The little trailers are cast resin decorations I picked up at a local dollar store for a buck each. They looked to be 3/16"- to 1/4" scale and fit in just right with my O-27 tinplate scenery.

I added figures, a sycamore tree seed pod painted red to simulate a fire, a few bushes and trees, and that was it. Note that the prickly seed pod was cut in half to provide a flat mounting surface. – *Harry Noble, Xenia, Ohio*



GOOD INSULATION

I have discovered that rolled emery cloth makes an excellent insulator for repairing or modifying traditional O gauge track sections. It is tough without being too thick, and its abrasive side helps to keep it from sliding around. – *Robert Nordberg, Canton, N.Y.*

Insulated rails can be used to activate some operating accessories. – *H.M.*

5 TIME-TESTED TIPS

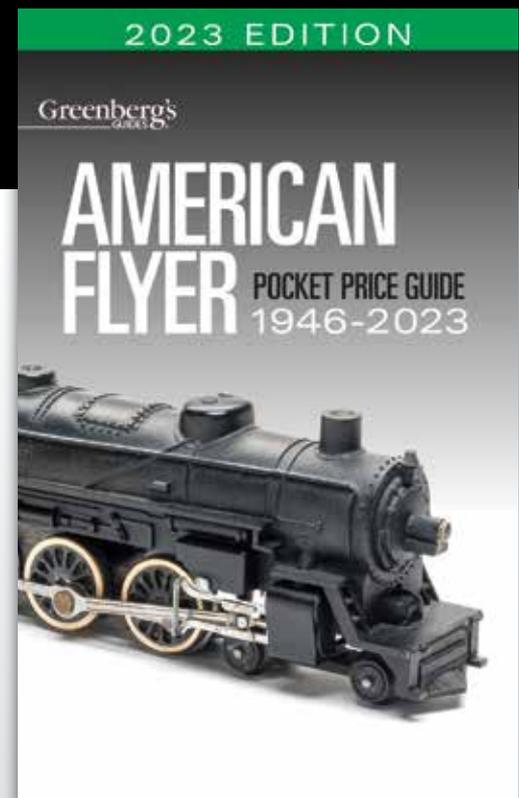
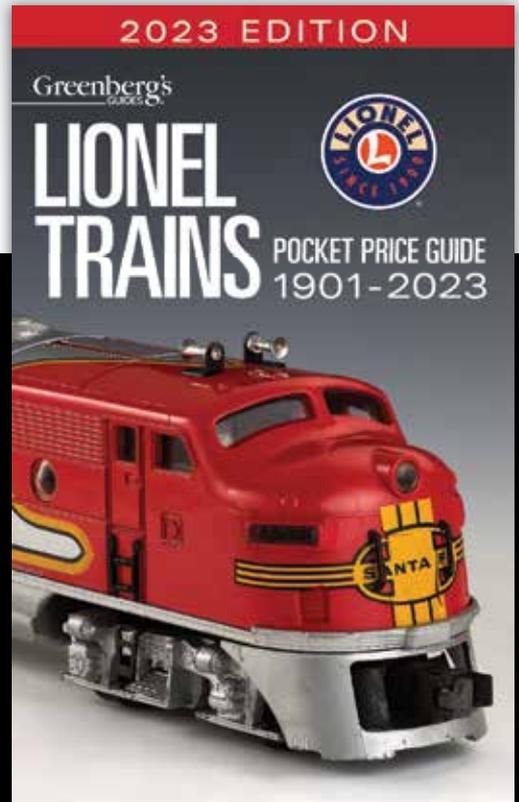
- 1 Try making your own trees and ground cover – it's easy and saves money.
- 2 Use HO structures in some spots on your layout to create forced perspective.
- 3 Experiment with scratch-building – start with a model of your home.
- 4 Buy inexpensive brands of latex house paint for a scenery base.
- 5 Dye sawdust and sponges for inexpensive scenery materials. – *CTT Staff*

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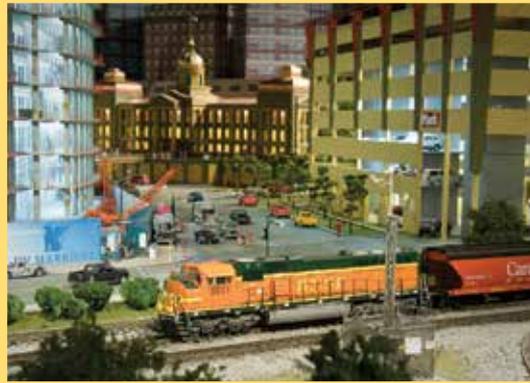


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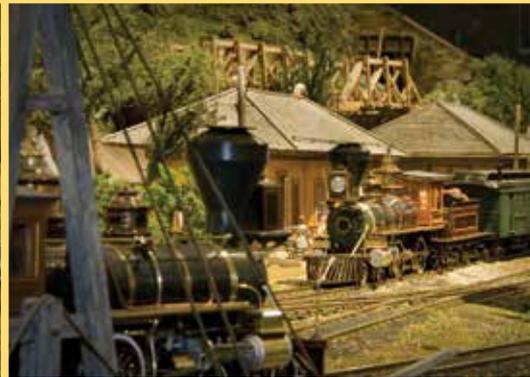
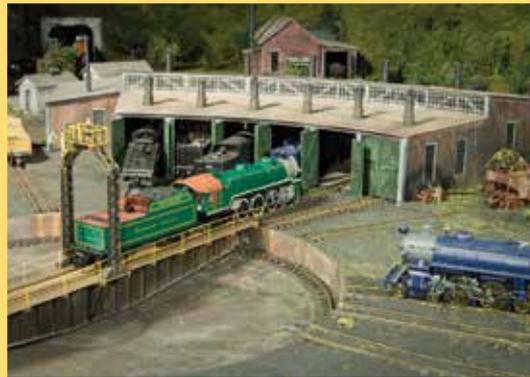
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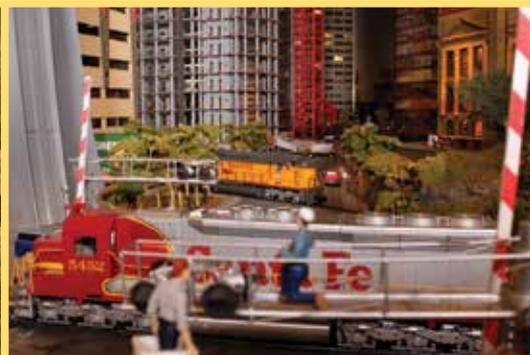
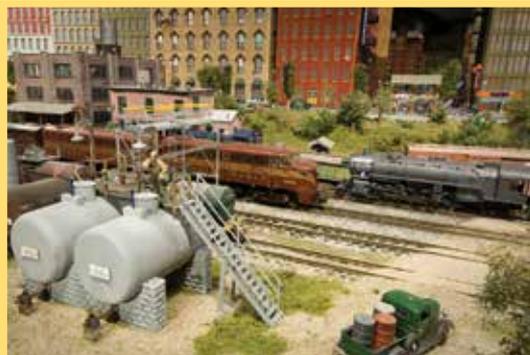


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