

The Official Newsletter of the Prince William County Model Railroad Club

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**Reminder:**

*40<sup>th</sup> Issue Special Layout Feature is Now Available. See Inside for Details!!*

The Prince William County Model Railroad Club is a non-profit 501(c)(7) Corporation. We provide a forum for model railroaders to learn and enjoy the hobby of model railroading. But more importantly, we are an organization who likes to have **fun!**

**MEMBERS GATHER FOR 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL LOCO PULL**



Ed B. prepares his engines for the first official PWMRC Loco Pull as Walt N. looks on from behind.

Photo by R. Rodriguez

"TUESDAY...TUESDAY" roared the Radio announcer. "THIS TUESDAY IN ARCOLA, SEE YOUR FAVORITE ENGINEER TAKE ON AN 86 CAR LOCO PULL. THIS TUESDAY IN ARCOLA. TUESDAY, TUESDAY...." Well, we didn't really have a radio announcer, but there were surely enough e-mail exchanges to make up to the lack of one. Thinking out of the box, Walt N. lined up one of the most exiting and enjoyable evenings at a PWMRC event. Members gathered in September with their fastest and heaviest locomotives for the first ever loco pull. Walt assembled a scale mile of modules and placed on the rails 86 train cars equipped with metal wheel sets and weighted to NMRA standards (58 feet in length or .98 scale miles long).

The rules were simple. Each contestant could use as many locomotives as would fit in a single module length (4 feet coupler to coupler). At the sound of the starting gun (Walt yelling go), the contestant would pull the consist around the layout as fast as possible without derailling for 2 full laps. At the end of the second lap the timer was stopped and the contestant had their race time.

Contestants entered steam, diesel, 4 axle & six axle mixes and yard switchers. Walt's trackwork was impeccable. His cars ran like a charm. The same could not always be said for the locos. Some eased out and gained speed. Some sat and spun wheels on metal as they tried desperately to get some traction. Some even gave off a prototypical electrical burning odor (Oops, that odor was real!).

**SEE LOCO PULL, PAGE 8, COL. 2.**



## THE CORPORATE OFFICE

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## MODULAR SHOW SCHEDULE

### OCTOBER

10 - 12 Manassas Freedom Festival - Manassas, VA

### NOVEMBER

15 - 16 Bull Run Library Show - Manassas, VA.

### DECEMBER

13 - 14 Chinn Park Library Show - Lake Ridge, Virginia

## 2004

### JANUARY

24-25 Great Scale Train Show, Timonium, MD - *Unconfirmed*

### MARCH

20-21 Boy Scout Show, Dale City, Va - *Unconfirmed*

### APRIL

3-4 Great Scale Train Show, Timonium, MD - *Unconfirmed*

### AUGUST

7-8 Greenberg Train Show & N-TRAK Convention - Chantilly, VA - *Unconfirmed*

### OCTOBER

9-10 Great Scale Train Show, Timonium, MD - *Unconfirmed* ☒

## From the Cab – Sept 03 Newsletter

By Bill Lyders

And so what did you do this summer to advance your model railroading dreams – besides come to club meetings and shows? Did you again think about building or at least making great strides on that empire - but didn't quite get started yet? Did you build some structures to add to your layout? Did you add some scenes to your layout? No, you say! It's probably because we are all very busy people and are reticent to take time out to do what we would really enjoy doing. Like me many times, we like to daydream about what we would build but won't take the time to really organize all our hopes, dreams, aspirations, and just plain ideas for our dream layout.

I know a certain model railroad club that may soon get the opportunity again to start that dream layout. The club set up a Layout Committee to come up with a design over 5 years ago in anticipation of that layout. The committee went right to work and polled every member of the club and gathered layout requirements and preferences. They even created a document of the club Layout Requirements and had the club vote it's approval in 1998. Then they started doing a layout track plan design. Then another one as the layout room changed. Then the layout room changed again. Enough, enough the committee said. So the committee went into hibernation waiting for something more concrete to get defined about a layout room. This summer I did something for my layout that could help that club in hibernation.

I decided that during the summer of '03, even though my Whitewater & Virginia (W&V) RR has 90% of it's track work completed and 60% of its scenery completed, I needed to document some things that I had kept between my ears for years. And they were critical for me to decide what I wanted to do to "finish" off the layout and actually, god forbid, launch real operating sessions like other members of the club were doing.

So while at the beach this year, for an hour a day instead of painting more nude bathers, over weight passengers, or brawny railroad workers, I brought my handy laptop and completed some design documentation for the W&V. I first wrote the History of the W&V. You've seen these histories many times at the beginning of magazine articles about someone's layout. Its about 3-4 paragraphs and relate the reasons for the railroad, the prototype functions supported, and the associated prototype railroads that pass through the W&V railroad trackage. From the history, I can then justify anything I want to include in my empire. In writing this, I defined (or actually discovered) some logical reasons for some of the prominent features on the W&V.

The next document that I created was a set of W&V Layout Standards to consider "before" I should have built the W&V. This now organized set of "rules" for construction of my W&V define my standards for the layout room, animation & subliminal message features, what I expect observers to see visually, operational standards, and how I want to control the layout. Again, most were "organized" in my head but just the act of sitting down and documenting them caused me to rethink some, add some, clarify some, and to start to dream of more new things to add. Because I believe this is such a critical document as a basis for doing layout design, I have submitted it to the Editor and it is included in this newsletter for your enjoyment. Read it closely. It could also be used as a reference for both the Layout Committee and the Building Committee to prepare one for their upcoming design. Then the **SEE CAB, PAGE 9, COL. 1.**



**BOARD BRIEFS**

*A Summary of Club Business Meetings*

**JULY**

- Art Hawk memorial donation to the Heart Association was completed
- 6 members are delinquent on paying dues for the year. They will probably be removed shortly in accordance with the By-laws.
- Four new inquiries about the club had been received, but no responses.
- The recent club outing to the Danielson's layout in Centreville was enjoyed by all.
- Hugh M. will retrieve the computer disk with our design and check prices with another vendor.
- John H. and Ernie L. gave clinics at the last Timonium show which were profitable and created goodwill for the club.
- Participation at the Manassas Airshow is a proposed.
- NMRA Mid East Region Convention. Clinics are proposed, but this will generate no income.
- Timonium, is the same weekend as the Manassas Airshow.
- The club must vote on whether to participate in the Air Show, Timonium, NMRA Regional Convention in Reston, 2 of the above, or all 3 of the above. Votes will be taken at the August business meeting.
- Several members briefed the club on their visits to different railroads, including London to Paris to Amsterdam, Cass and Cape Cod.
- Robin gave the club information on the upcoming Freedom Museum event at the Manassas Airport.
- Jim C. stated that, perhaps we need to make commitments made upon the number of modules a member can commit to the show in question. There was much discussion on the number of modules the club possesses and how many members have.

**JULY BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**

**Web page updates**

There is a need for the web page to be kept up to date with the various events that the club is participating in. The website committee has recently done this and it looks good. But we need to work with them closer to provide information to keep it current.

**Show functions**

There is need for a better system to get commitments for modules for the shows from the membership so that the show coordinator isn't left out on a limb as a show date grows near. Key points of discussion were:

- Need to sign up at the meeting where we make the commitment to go to a show. If can't get some % then don't commit then.
- Members vote by number of modules.
- How do members that don't have modules get a vote is the above is done.
- Is there a better way? This will be brought up at a club business meeting in the near future.
- Should there be a cut off date after which a decision will be made if the club is going to participate in a show.
- Could folks sign up for one of several ways to participate in the show: 1) Run trains, 2) supply a module, 3) show up for set up and run trains, 4) show up for break down and run trains, 5) attend the entire show for running of trains, set up, and break down, 6) bring someone else's module who can't make it. It was discussed that the sign up sheet be expanded to include sign ups for "running trains during the first hour of a show with shopping", commitments to bring or take modules, and the DCC Setup/Coordinator.

- There is a need for more members to become familiar with the Digitrax system and how it is set up for our shows. Maybe a Digitrax Qualified level list? Some discussion about there being clinics and clear instructions on how to set the system up for the shows. Perhaps George H. or someone else could give the clinics.
- Need to include Digitrax setup directions and operation sheets in the tubs. Bill says he has copies of previous operations sheets and some plastic holders to keep them in.

**2004 Calendar**

- John H. brought up the fact that 2004 is rapidly approaching and there is a need to get the library shows scheduled, as well as the tentative schedule for the other shows the club participates in. A candidate list of 2004 shows was created.

**Club Outings**

There was discussion about the idea of club outings being scheduled. This had been brought up at a prior business meeting and there hasn't been any follow up on the idea. Outings had been brought up at a past meeting. The Outings could take the place of a show or be in addition: A list of the possible outings from previous meetings and the BOD meeting and people currently investigating included:

- Baltimore Live Steam (Tim)
- Amtrak facility (Brion)
- CASS RR in WVA (John H/Matt T)
- Richmond Garden layout (Ken)
- Metro Maintenance Yard @ Van Dorn/Eisenhower (Roger B/Bill L)
- Gaithersburg Club Layout (Dave R)
- Strasburg PA (Martin)
- Reading Railroad (Lew R)
- EBT
- Western MD Scenic RR
- Blue Ridge Summit Railfest and Layout Tour (Waynesboro Club)

**Club Survey Topics**

There was discussion of conducting a "club survey" to find out what is on the mind of members. This would include: Are members expectations of the club being met, what do members like the best, what do members like the least, are we participating in the shows the members want to participate in, and do members want more clinics. Tim B. is to develop a survey and bring it back for review.

**Outreach Efforts**

It was noted that some of our members have not been seen quite as much lately. It was recommended that current members reach out and contact any of these missed members as they are important to our club family. The BOD will be taking a lead in this effort.

**AUGUST**

- A prospective member attended and expressed a desire to join the club
- Eric N. put out a call for articles and pictures to update the site.
- Communications Committee - Walt N. reported that the issue of information backup/redundancy was ready to be discussed. He distributed a report and requested member comments. Additional topics would be provided in the future
- Trips. Tim B. discussed the Blue Ridge Summit event and a possible road trip. Tim will send out an email. David R. discussed the visit to Wesley House layout in Gaithersburg for 9-12 people in conjunction with another outing.

**SEE BOARD, PAGE 10, COL. 1.**

**All Good Things...**

By Bob Rodriguez  
With contributions by Brion Boyles and Michael Haman



The RIP Track Hobby Shop Photo by R. Rodriguez

...Must come to an end. And so it was for **The RIP Track** hobby shop in Woodbridge. On September 6, 2003, **The RIP Track** opened its doors one last time to the public. The one day liquidation sale would be the last for a shop that grew from humble beginnings over 12 years ago and helped nurture a sprouting model railroad club with no name back then into the Prince William County Model Railroad Club as it is known today.

**The RIP Track** was founded by Angus Gordon Johnson as a home business in Dumfries, Virginia. Gordon sold mostly one-at-a-time items he built himself and stuff he'd collected over the years. In 1986 he'd acquired enough business to open small shop in Woodbridge at the PS Business Center. In fact, he was one of their first occupants.

That section of Prince Wiliam County in those days was mostly woods. Banks junk yard had recently moved away and a mall by the name of Potomac Mills had just opened down the street. The two lane Smoketown Road was recently widened, but there was an abundance of woods and farmland around and many thought it was a waste of good tax monies. (Little did they know!)

The first shop was small and buried deep in the bowels of the business center. In fact, if you didn't venture in deep enough in, you wouldn't know it was there. Never the less, model railroaders passed the word and Gordon Johnson had enough business to keep the shop alive. In the early 90s, Gordon moved the shop to a new location in the shopping center. The new store had a small customer area up front crammed with as much HO and N scale items as it could fit. You would have to stare in one spot for a period of time in order to see all that was stocked in one place. A single door at the back of the customer area lead to a large unfinished rear portion of the space where more model railroad stock was stored. Customers were permitted to browse in the back area as well. This was also where Gordon had his locomotive repair shop. He would work on all makes and models of locomotives, repairing, lubricating and fine tuning them for customers. Evelyn, Gordon's wife, would be at the front counter. Evelyn was had a nice and warm personality, and would recognize most customers if they had visited the shop before. That was where PWMRC began. Near Evelyn was a piece of notebook

paper hanging on the wall. It read "Anyone Interested in starting a Model Railroad Club, sign up here"

As PWMRC gained more members, Gordon cleared a twenty foot section in the rear of his store and the club constructed a 6 x 20 foot layout. Club meetings were



held each

Tuesday evening at **The RIP Track**. The club would run trains on the layout and shop for items for their own layouts.

The first PWMRC club layout - 1991 Photo by E. Barr.

In 1993, Gordon moved the store down a few units to its' final location. The club moved their layout with the store by actually cutting the layout in half and moving it down the back alley to the store's new location. Members even helped Gordon move and help build and paint display shelves in the new store. Here in the new location, Gordon could be usually found buried under a pile of thirty year old Champs Decals and forty year old Central Valley car kits. He was NOT the easiest person to get close to, but once you were in his circle he was a wealth of information, tales and sardonic wit. He was quick to let you take something home on the honor system, to make a trade, tinker and poke around the joint.



The second PWMRC club layout - 1993. Photo by E. Barr.

Brion got his start as a professional painter when, without much hobby money, Gordon let him repair second hand kits (and there was a TON of them) for store credit. Soon Brion was painting for Gordon (Missing In Action) painter. **SEE RIP TRACK, PAGE 9, COL. 1**



## Whitewater & Virginia Railroad Layout Standards

By William Lyders

The Whitewater and Virginia (W&V) model railroad layout was built to a set of standards based on a lot of planning based on my previous layout constructions and from reading model railroading magazine articles (See references at the end of this article). I continuously update my standards as I see new functions and features I want to add to my layout.

It's a lot easier to do the construction of the layout if the room cosmetics are finished before the layout is begun. I know from experience. Spelunking in my bench work to install hidden track work or install turnout motors and wiring, after the track work and layout scenery is in place, is not the approach to follow. Painting the backdrop, while sitting on the yard track work, is painful on the knees and rear end. It can also be damaging to the track work.

Getting trains running as fast as possible may be a goal but should not override the objectives of creating your labor of love & work of art to be displayed in it's proper setting

Before starting the layout bench work, complete the ceilings, lighting, walls, floor, and align the lighting with a temporary track diagram on the floor. Then do the bench work and install the wiring for all the layout features you are planning before installing track work and scenery. How do you know what you want to do? Define your layout standards similar to what I did below.

### Layout Room Standards

In order to create a double deck layout in a limited amount of space:

1. **Finished walls with painted backdrops.** The layout was to be an around the room design. So a smooth, seamless surface for painting backdrops rather than a series of low backdrops my choice. The backdrops would be blue painted walls with clouds and distant mountains.
2. **Dropped ceiling with ceiling tiles and fluorescent light sections.** The layout room was a basement room beneath the family room with a necessary requirement to be able to easily access the wiring in the ceiling. The potential for using incandescent spotlights or recessed lighting for warming up focal points or approximating real sunlight was not an option. The use of a series of fluorescent lights down the middle of the room provided enough light to easily see all the scenes. Photography that needed special lighting would have to use portable lights.
3. **Layout base of fascia board made of Masonite.** The edges of the layout would be Masonite cut to set the shape of the scenery terrain on the top with horizontal straight edges below, about 18 inches below the terrain. This allows easy overhang access below the layout level for access to layout wiring. The Masonite will be painted an earth brown or a dark hunter green in order not to lead the eye away from the lighter layout. Turnout controls and signage for layout scenes above it will be mounted on the fascia, as necessary. Fascia board is to be used below both levels of the layout.
4. **Layout skirting below the lower level fascia board.** Recessed below the fascia board and extending to about 3 inches from the floor will be skirting made of medium to dark blue material or a color that blends with the fascia. This provides "toe room" in the aisles and provides easy

access to the main wiring routes that are suspended inside the overhanging portions of the layout. It also provides easy access to all the boxes of model railroad supplies and household boxes stored under the layout.

5. **Floor of dark commercial grade carpeting.** Construction on the layout will involve a significant amount of time crawling across the floor under the layout, so carpeting is the easiest on the knees. Plush carpeting is not practical and dark carpeting is needed in all the aisles to hide the dirt. Making the carpet match a color of the region being modeled e.g. green or brown was not chosen over blue as a pleasing color.
6. **Layout Room Access Doors.** My ideal access would be from a stairwell into the center of the layout so that no duck under or return loops would be required in order to let the viewers walk around layout in the center of the room. The W&V was designated to be in a separate room in the basement with the door access at one end of the room. This room decision required 2 return loops be created so that continuous operation could be achieved. Since I added a fiddle staging yard in the next room, a duck under for the upper level at about 5' above the floor was added. The duck under at this height is not too difficult to maneuver around for most people.
7. **Aisle space ample for viewers/operators to maneuver around.** During initial construction, the W&V had a section with an aisle only 18" wide. After one club operating session. I knew I had to make it wider. So I made it a 24" wide section. If at all possible, the aisles should be at least 36" to allow viewers to stand and observe operations and operators to follow their trains with a minimum of collisions with each other.
8. **Sectional construction.** I don't see myself taking sections of my layout to train shows, but the idea of constructing sections for unique scenes that can be easily moved, should I move to a new house, is desirable. I do have a train module used at train shows. The ability to integrate that module or any additional modules into my layout adds scenes and would eliminate the need too store them some place else.

### Animation and Background Sounds Standards

In order to involve motion and include sound that can add more interest and put the viewer in the mood for a scene:

1. **Audible sounds from the environment.** Providing hidden speakers attached to tape recorders that emit sounds from the different environments being captured on the layout are planned to be included. For example: raging river sounds, coal industry noises, automobiles, or lumber yard saws, or animal sounds. Sounds should be barely audible as they are background.
2. **Crossing Signals and Track Signals.** Inserting track sensors and block sensors to cause cross bars to come down/go back up, lights to flash and track signals to indicate go/stop for the engineers.
3. **Day/Night with town lights and street signals.** The ability to dim the lights in the layout room and have the town lights and other operations that are open at night become visible. This requires non-track power sources and wiring to all the lighted structures and "outside" lights.
4. **Locomotives with Sound.** The insertion of sound decoders in both the diesel and steam locomotives.
5. **Include animation with motion and simulated motion.** The inclusion of a simulated fire (e.g. hobo camp), a house on fire, an industrial worker in action  
**SEE W&V, PAGE 7, COL. 1.**

**AN UNPLANNED RAILROAD VACATION**

By Bob Rodriguez

I read our President's column in the last issue of the newsletter where Bill exclaims "...where have all the snippets of my train time gone?" I have shared Bill's disappointment when I travel places and either can't find a hobby shop or the shop or event doesn't live up to my expectations.

As I prepared our family gathering this year in Wheeling, West Virginia, I didn't do much research on railroad venues or hobby shops. I guess I was too busy with other matters to give it my usual attention. As a result I was unprepared. Never the less, we departed on our holiday in August as planned and traveled up through Maryland and West Virginia. What I didn't realize was I would find more train related events than I would have if I had made a plan ahead of time.

It took us roughly 6 hours to drive to Wheeling, so a lunch stop was appropriate along the way. As it turned out, Cumberland Maryland was the perfect spot for lunch. We arrived and found a beautifully restored historic section of town. Unfortunately, as we walked around, most stores were closed on Sunday, including the restaurant. After some search, we decided to stop at the tourist information center to see what was open. As it turned out, the tourist center is located in the historic Cumberland Train Station, home of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. We entered the station to find it to be a real gem. We also found the station had an operating restaurant.



A Fairmont Speeder during a NARCOA excursion. Courtesy of NARCOA

So we ordered our lunch and enjoyed the sights. While eating our meal inside the station, we heard a blast of a train air horn. I knew from looking at the schedule board that the excursion was not due for another 90 minutes. Standing up and looking out the chin high windows I expected to see a large diesel pass through the station. Instead, I heard the hum of engines and saw a pair of air horns and a small roof roll past the window just beneath my view. Curious, I stepped out side to be witness to 30 Fairmont Speeders from the North American Rail Car Owners Association (NARCOA) pull into the station on one of the tracks. NARCOA was holding one of its monthly excursions for speeder owners. This weekend they were touring the rails of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. The speeders varied from "kitbashed" to fully restored to free lanced design. It was a real treat to see folks and families of all ages

touring in these speeders. What a great way to see some beautiful sights!

After a 15 minute rest break and a blast from the air horn on the lead speeder, the NARCOA members headed down the track and we headed off on our way as well.

In Wheeling, we stayed at Oglebay Resort. The facility is a City run park, with a lodge, cabins, golf, swimming, a zoo, nature center, hiking trails and much more. We spent a day at the zoo where I ran into my second and third railroad encounters. The first was the zoo's train. The typical small scale gasoline powered tourist train. But hey, it's a train and you can ride it, and my son went nuts over it! The third was inside the zoo's exhibit hall.



The Zoo Train at Oglebay Resort. Photo by R. Rodriguez

In a large room was the Oglebay Miniture Train and Village Display. The layout occupied 1200 square feet and had over 900 feet of track. The layout is designed for O scale Trains. 5 trains run continuously through highly detailed scenes. Originally constructed in the late 1950s, the layout boast over 15,500 hours of work to construct it. The setting is wild and wonderful West Virginia. There is a lake with two operating paddle boats and over 130 gallons of real water. The scenery was impressive and the trains ran flawlessly. We visited the layout at least three times during our week long stay.



The Lionel model train exhibit at Oglebay Resort. Photo by R. Rodriguez

Pittsburgh is about 40 minutes away and warranted a day trip to sightsee. My forth and fifth experiences would happen there. **SEE VACATION, PAGE 11, COL. 1.**



**W&V, From Page 5.**

(e.g. a welder) or a real motion (e.g. a mill wheel, Ferris wheel, etc.) requires additional non-track power and focuses attention in a scene.

6. **Storms.** It's normal to paint lots of clouds in the backdrop. But paint a stormy cloud scene on the horizon with lightning and then add simulated lightning bolts and thunder sounds too.

**Visual Standards**

To allow both "railfan" and "operate" activities on the layout:

1. **Loops and crossovers track plan.** The W&V is a mountain railroad so a linear track plan is not practical unless the layout was to just be a single valley or run along a major river to towns and coal mines only. My plan was to go between multiple valleys and over multiple rivers and include an interchange yard/ servicing facility on a separate plateau. The trains need to appear and disappear in and out of different valleys with their different industries and towns. A potential problem with this design feature is that fast and long trains will not have long straight sections and wide curves to operate without having a much larger room. Short trains of nominally 15-20 cars are expected.
2. **Double track main lines.** The operation of multiple trains on independent loops is desired. The dual mainlines do not need to travel in parallel as they can separate and come back together in subsequent valleys.
3. **Railroad passes each scene just once.** This standard is normally reserved for a linear walk around plan. For a mountain railroad I view this to mean a train doesn't pass through the same scene more than once on each continuous loop on the layout.
4. **Discrete scenes capturing typical prototype situations.** Towns, industrial areas, servicing facilities, and bridges over whitewater rivers should be somewhat isolated by scenic dividers or mountains.
5. **Ample view blocks so the visitor must play tourist.** If the scenic areas or train operations are at the discrete sites, the railfan must move from place to place to experience and hopefully enjoy the thrill of new discoveries.
6. **Dual-layer layout to capture more scenes and operations.** A single level layout offers a "big sky" effect. However my dual level layout offers more operations and discrete scenes to interest the railfan and operators. This also allows the creation of many different sky scenes as storms, blue sky, and cloudy skies can be more easily included in the design. The lower level will tend to be the "birds-eye" view and the upper layer will be the ground-level views of the layout scenes.
7. **Hidden track to "extend" time.** Trains should not always be visible. By including hidden track (tunnels, going behind mountains or buildings, a helix, etc.), the time a train is "away" makes the layout appear longer. Having too much hidden track can bring about the comment "where (or when) will this train come out" and make following a train around the layout more difficult. Also if hidden track is less that easily accessible, Murphy's Laws says something will happen there.

**Operational Standards**

To make operation and maintenance comfortable:

1. **At least two train lengths of mainline between towns or associated industries.** Passenger operations should not stop at a train station and be visible from the previous scene with a train station. Similarly, a train that is picking

up or delivering rolling stock should do so from scenes not too close together. This lets trains do switching in any two adjacent scenes and not get in each other's way.

2. **Continuous operation.** Visitors and operators enjoy seeing trains continuously operating. A layout design that includes that feature without requiring a special "turnaround" operation is desirable. A point-to-point mainline with disguised reverse loop at the "far end" is one method. However I would rather conduct operations on a continuous loop.
3. **Walk around control operation.** The ability to walk around and easily follow your train and have it reappear within view is strongly desired. To have it disappear into a tunnel and come out on some other aisle that would require the engineer to quickly run around to that location is not an option.
4. **Ample passing sidings.** The ability to pull off and stop a train to let another train pass or just take a break, without running all the way back to the fiddle yard, is strongly desired. The passing sidings should be at least 10-15 cars in length.
5. **Different operational interchanges.** The ability to exchange or transfer consist from shippers to be picked up by another railroad or local switcher using operational interchanges, e.g. passing sidings between parallel roads or end-to-end connection yards
6. **Ample hidden yard that can be easily viewed while standing.** A fiddle or staging yard that can be easily used by people setting up trains to enter the layout while standing is necessary. My initial staging yard was to be on a sub-lower level about 3' from the floor and under my normal lower level and on a main aisle. It took one club operation event to realize I needed this to be at eye level off the upper level and in another room, i.e. "hidden" but easily accessible. I completed this as an eight track yard about 8' long in the adjacent workshop somewhat hidden from the finished train room. This has worked out very well as 2-3 members can be setting up while others are operating on the main layout.
7. **Limited or no duck under.** If access to portions of the layout can't be done any other way, a high duck under is desirable. I have one duck under at 5' to exit the train room to get to a wall to the staging yard in another room. A second duck under, that is lower in elevation, is to an access area behind the servicing facility that is not a normal operating area.
8. **Thirty-inch maximum reach over scenery.** I find this an important standard as Murphy's Laws will have train derailments or scenery access problems occur in the most inaccessible places. I would prefer to keep track work 24" or less from the edge of the layout.
9. **Wiring locations where one may walk and view while standing.** The W&V uses DCC so control panels for blocks are not required. However all electronic turnout controls are to be mounted on the fascia panels near the turnouts. The interchange yard/servicing facility tracks will have a number of older DC engines parked as scenery and I don't want them all to suddenly start moving if a DC engine starts to operate on the mainline. Hence a yard control panel to turn track power on/off was installed next to the yards. The DCC computer/power source is located in a central location on the layout visible beneath the lower level. Most of my turnouts are manual and close to the edge of the layout easily accessible for train engineers/brakeman to operate. Any W&V Yard Masters or Dispatchers would have to locate themselves **SEE W&V, PAGE 8, COL.1**



W&V, From Page 7.

- near the staging yard or interchange yard and guide or support the train engineer/ brakeman operations.
- Ability to conduct real type train operations.** The layout should be able to support at least 4-6 concurrent trains conducting typical train operations. This means that enough aisle space, cab control support, communications capabilities, industrial sidings and fiddle/staging yards should be available to allow 8-10 people to be conveniently around the layout continuously for a couple of hours. Conducting layout tours is a viewer operation primarily with it's own separate set of standards – basically only a couple of trains in continuous operation.
  - Operating preferences.** The operational roles I see myself and friends playing on the W&V are: Engineer and Conductor/Brakeman, Yardmaster, Industrial switcher, Yard switcher, Dispatcher, and Railfan

Control Standards

The control system must be simple yet allow operations to be realistic.

- Cab Control.** The W&V will be DCC operation with each cab controlled by its respective engineer. Block Control will only be in the interchange yard/servicing facility for the reasons described above. Digitrax DC100s and UP-3s are to be used. If I get more space and can operate more than 4-6 concurrent trains, a booster power source (DB100) would be required. Currently I use DT-100 throttles but will have to upgrade when they start to fail. An upgrade to radio receivers for throttles is a potential, if I get more space.
- Communications.** Until the layout room gets larger, headsets will not be required. If more space becomes available and the layout gets larger, a 5-channel headset will be used for communications between the engineers and to yard masters.

Identifying My Train Room

In my current home, I finished off the basement for a recreation room for use by the whole family. The recreation room is currently the crew's lounge. The train room was a separate 13'x25' room underneath the first floor family room. This space did not allow me to meet all my standards above. The 13' dimension was the most difficult one to deal with. The ability to create continuous operation was squeezed in but the fiddle staging caused a duck under to be created. The ability to have the long straight runs and an adequate number of passing sidings were not achieved. I have many "miles" of curved track but very few straight sections. There is too much hidden track.

To meet my standards above, I would need to buy another house where I can have a larger section of the basement or take over the current family room. Then I would take all the current W&V features and spread them out by adding straight sections and some more sweeping curves between them. I feel a space of 20' x 30' minimum is desired for the W&V. Every time my wife and I walk through new houses, I comment about checking out the "train room", meaning the basement layout options.

References

- Set the Standards Before You Build the Layout, NMRA Bulletin, November 2000).
- How to plan your layout, Model Railroader, June 1995.
- Top 10 goals in layout design, Model Railroader, May 2002.
- The all-important Interchange, Model Railroader, September 2003 ☒

Loco Pull From Page 1.

In the end the laughter and cheers surpassed any groans of the competitors which made for an evening of great fun. The final results of the first great loco pull are (last to first):

- Bob R. KATO GP35, Spectrum FP40, 2 ea. ATHEARN 433Cs, and a BACHMAN "dash" 2 min. 48 sec
- John D. 2 each PROTO 2000 SD60s and one KATO SD45 2 min. 43 sec.
- Ernie KATO SD80, PROTO 2K\* SD60 & E7, BACHMAN SPECTRUM GP7 and an ATLAS GP9 - 2 min. 29 sec.
- John H. Two ATHEARN F-3s and three Intermountain F-7s 2 min. 26 sec.
- Pete L. Two BROADWAY LTD. N&W 2-6-6- A"s 2 min. 21 sec.

And then -

There was the Manager, Owner, Operator, gun chewing, bespeckled CEO of the D & J RR. After he used some masking tape to enhance the performance of a coupler between two of his locos, he was "OFF AND PULLING!"

- Ken TYCO "O-4-O" switcher (diesel), two BACHMAN SPECTRUM C44-9s, and two ATHEARN SD70 MACs 1 min. 35 sec.

Walt added "It's interesting to note that there really wasn't that much spread in the times, except for Ken. His average speed was about 83 MPH!! That means that his speed on the second lap had to approach 90 MPH! I had to send a number of cars and tankers to the shops this morning to replace several hot boxes. The mechanics also noted some stretching in the coupler shanks!"

First place puller received 15 pieces of Model Power 3 foot flex track (Code 100 NS, by the way) and that many pieces of cork road bed.

Second place puller received an Intermountain 59 foot cylindrical covered hopper kit. Honorable mentions for valor should also go to Jason, Ed B. and Ed M.; however, intra-engine coupler problems, insufficient traction force and, what appeared to be clogged fuel filters on one diesel engine, curtailed successful runs.



Ken M. prepares to "jack rabbit" out of the starting gate as Walt gives the final countdown. Note the bend in the rails beneath the Lead Loaded switcher!!!

Photo by R. Rodriguez

SEE LOCO PULL, PAGE 9, COL. 1.

**Loco Pull, From Page 8.**

A total of nine members participated. Except for Ken's speed, Walt believes the most impressive pull was Pete L.'s double headed steam consist. Whether you enjoyed the race or just watching the trains run by, it was a great evening which kept many of us chuckling for days after. Thanks Walt. ☼

**Cab, From Page 2.**

thoughts in many of our heads can get captured.

The last "document" I started was a spreadsheet capturing the layout "regions", their businesses/industries and potential shipment items, types of rolling stock involved, and potential operations between the regional businesses/industries. This effort forces me to name my regions, etc. and really look at the logical region per my standards (did I place them correctly) of related industries for items to be moved. It also gives me ideas of how I would build train consists (maybe I need to buy more).

All 3 of the above "documents" need to be prepared for the PWMRC Layout. I would suggest that creating them would benefit anyone of us building a layout. Getting back to that club I mentioned above, the Layout Committee should consider this an activity that could be started on at any time – even before a layout room is final. ☼

**Rip Track, From Page 4.**

Rent at the new shop when up and in 1993, PWMRC was asked to leave. Gordon had a hard choice to make but ultimately sales space took precedence over layout space. The layout was dismantled and club members immediately began round robin meetings on Tuesday evenings thereafter.

In 1996 Gordon suffered several small strokes which left him unable to do much of his fine detail work. His frustration was often felt by his customers, yet many understood and remained faithful to the store. He died of a sudden stroke, in his sleep, in November 2000. His wife, Evelyn, moved to California to live with their daughter, Jan, and son-in-law Al Vasquez in Ontario, California, where she died in February, 2002.



Zack at the Helm.

Photo by R. Rodriguez

Zack Richards, long time business partner, took over operation of **The RIP Track** after Gordon's passing. Zack loves the hobby and was the Train Show arm of the store. He loved nothing more than to evoke a craggy, gap-toothed smile from Gordon after a successful

show during the slow summer months. A C & O historian in his own right, Zack still enjoys the hobby and traveling to bucolic locations for that next show. Zack began a make over of **The RIP Track**. Cleaning out old corners of the store and placing discontinued items on a "Fire Sale" table at the front of the store. Zack also began updating the store's inventory with more up to date products.



Zack tends to his customers at the final sale.

Photo by R. Rodriguez

The store expanded in 2002 which provided more display space to browse. PWMRC was asked to help build a new store layout for display. Members quickly accepted the invitation and in a few months, built a spectacular layout that any model railroader would be proud of. PWMRC and Brion conducted Saturday morning clinics on model railroading subjects which were well attended by customers. The store had become alive with activity again and was a social outlet for model railroaders as well. Often loyal customers and club members would gather beforehand at 9am around the corner at Greg's, for a mouthful of sausage and grilled potatoes (drenched in maple syrup, of course). Then head to **The RIP Track** for a clinic and finally wrap up with some shopping and socializing. It sure beat mowing the lawn in the summer!

This past summer was too tough for the shop to hang on. The normal slow summer sales on the tail of an expensive expansion; eBay and internet competition; hobby warehouses undercutting store prices; not enough income to hire help; Zacks' health; and many other reasons finally sounded taps for **The Rip Track**. After 17 years, the storefront is now a memory. Yet, many new friends were made and friendships rekindled over the past year. PWMRC has gained a few new members. The store layout was the nicest **The RIP Track** had in the store, and it's going to a good home when PWMRC occupies its new quarters in the depot at Quantico soon. PWMRC and Brion gave around 50 clinics to newcomers and old timers alike, sparking a lot of interest, confidence and adventure.

The loss of **The RIP Track** has placed a big void in the area for model railroad hobby shops. Although there are a few others nearby in the Woodbridge and Stafford areas, none stock items of comparable value as **The RIP Track** did. Ultimately, we hobbyist will have to travel farther to other shops or shows or even resort to mail orders. The loss is truly a real impact for many of us.

**SEE RIP TRACK, PAGE 10, COL. 1.**

**Rip Track, From Page 9.**



Bryan takes home a substantial amount of inventory from the RIP Track's last sale. Photo by R. Rodriguez

Although the physical store is a memory, Zack has informed us **The RIP Track** will continue to do business at area train shows and through mail order requests. Brion will continue his custom painting and model building business through special orders placed directly or through Grandad's Hobby Shop in Springfield or Trains, etc in Newington.

We truly did have "A Friend at the **RIP Track**". Good luck and bests wished to Zack and Brion and thanks for providing us modelers with an invaluable service we will all miss. ☹

**Board, From Page 3.**

- Club shirts. Club data is on two disks and in the hands of two members. Both members are getting prices.
- Show Commitment Discussion. Bill L noted that Issue was serious enough that all members requested to review previous BOD and club minutes.
- Greenberg Show in Chantilly on August 16 and 17<sup>th</sup> - a general discussion on the arrangements took place.
- Participation at the Manassas Airshow/NMRA/Timonium. Only interest from the club was the Manassas Airshow on October 9 through the 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Robin B. reported that the Riptrack hobby shop is now closed and it is unknown if it will be reopening under a new owner or not.
- There was discussion as to whether the membership wanted to try to get the RIP Track layout that had been built for possible use at Quantico. Dave K. offered to assist Robin B. in getting the layout if it can be removed from the store. A location where the layout would be stored is being sought.

**SEPTEMBER**

- Excursion - The Mainline Hobby tour is on September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 40<sup>th</sup> issue of Club newsletter - The 40<sup>th</sup> issue of the Club newsletter is available in several forms. The special issue has been uploaded (low resolution version) to the Yahoo group page
- Membership - Membership now consists of 9 charter members, 44 active members, 5 honorary members, 2 associate members, and 5 junior members.
- Richmond layout tour- Ken M. reported that the individual who has the layout in Richmond is going to be out of town until early October. The tour will take place late October to early November.
- Shirt vendor - Hugh M. advised that Shirt Art, in P S Business Center would make shirts for \$25.00 with two embroidery locations. He will get another price from another vendor. ☹



**THE PWMRC 40<sup>TH</sup> ISSUE SPECIAL LAYOUT FEATURE IS HERE.**

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**Vacation, From Page 6.**

Arriving in Pittsburgh, the first place to visit is the incline. At one time Pittsburgh had about fifteen inclines. Two of them remain, on the south bank of the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers, across from downtown Pittsburgh. They provide service to the Mount Washington residential area. The Monongahela Incline (built in 1870) is located near the Smithfield Street bridge and The Duquesne Incline (built in 1877) is located just west of the Fort Pitt Bridge, and faces the Ohio River. We took the Duquesne Incline and got a spectacular view of the city from on top of the bluffs.



The Duquesne Incline in Pittsburgh.

Photo by R. Rodriguez

These cars are the original cars and are maintained in top condition. Commuters still use them daily to reach the bus lines at the lower stations. The fare is cheap and there is plenty of historical information about the incline system to browse through during your visit.

After our visit to the incline, we headed for lunch at the Shops at Station Square. This is a touristy area converted from an old passenger train station filled with shops and restaurants. We settled for a restaurant with outdoor seating. What I was surprised to find is, besides a great view of the City, we had a great view of the CSX mainline running next to the river. Needless to say, it didn't take long before several freights passed by during our lunch break.

A few days later we made a day trip from Wheeling, down Route 2 towards Parkerburg to visit a glass factory. Route 2 was a great scenic route which passed through many small working towns. It also passed several ore and steel factories, pharmaceutical plants, power plans, chemical plants and barge docks....all serviced by the railroad along a single track that ran almost entirely parallel to Route

2 and the Ohio River. The modeling ideas were running in overtime. You could really see how the railroads interfaced with each of these plants and how the plants were dependent upon the railroad for continuous service. What a great day for a road trip.



A CSX leased consist moves along the mainline across from Pittsburgh.

Photo by R. Rodriguez



Dining alongside the mainline at the Shops at Station Square.

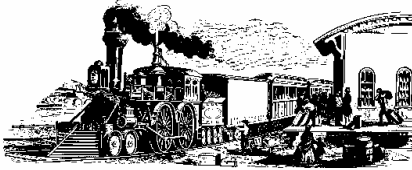
Photo by R. Rodriguez



Hauling coal along the Ohio River Valley.

Photographer unknown.

So despite a lack of good planning, I managed to stumble upon some really great model, scale and prototypical railroad sites which cured my "train fix" for a few weeks. ☺



**THE TIME TABLE**

**October 11 - 12 (Saturday - Sunday)**  
 Manassas Freedom Festival - Manassas Airport,  
 Manassas, Virginia

**October 14 (Tuesday)**  
 Club Meeting - Manassas, Virginia

**October 18 (Saturday)**  
 NMRA Special Layout Tour Excursion - Maryland

**November 11 (Tuesday)**  
 Club Meeting - Woodbridge, Virginia

**November 15-16 (Saturday - Sunday)**  
 Bull Run Library Show - Manassas, Virginia

**November 25 (Tuesday)**  
 Club Meeting - Woodbridge, Va.

**December 6 (Saturday)**  
 PWMRC Holiday Party - More Details to Come!!!

**December 9 (Tuesday)**  
 Club Meeting - Westridge, Virginia

**December 13-14 (Saturday - Sunday)**  
 Chinn Park Library Show - Lake Ridge, Virginia

**December 23 (Tuesday)**  
**NO MEETING - HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

**January 13 (Tuesday)**  
 Club Meeting - Dumfries, Va.

**January 24 - 25 (Saturday - Sunday)**  
 Great Scale Model Train Show - Timonium, MD -  
**Unconfirmed**

**January 27 (Tuesday)**  
 Club Meeting - TBA

Key: =Home Layout, =DCC equipped  
 =DCC Radio/IR =DCC Infrared  
 = Clinic Scheduled

**The PWMRC News**

Published Quarterly and is the official publication of the Prince William County Model Railroad Club. PWMRC News is distributed to the general membership of the Prince William County Model Railroad Club and affiliated organizations.

Articles from members are welcome. All articles should be submitted at least one month prior to publication dates as listed below:

- December for Winter Issue
- March for Spring Issue
- June for Summer Issue
- September for Fall Issue

Views expressed are not necessarily endorsed by PWMRC.  
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