



# SCALE RAILS of Southwest Florida

Newsletter

June, 2007

Volume 8 Issue 6

## OFFICERS

Chairman: Dennis Little

President: Peter Gross

Vice President: Jim Edmier

Secretary: Jim Morse

Treasurer: Stan Seeds, MMR

## Calendar

July 14, Monthly meeting, 1:30pm

Aug 11, Western Div. Meet, Plant City, FL  
(no Scale Rails club meeting this month)

Sept 8, Monthly meeting, 1:30pm

Oct 13, Monthly meeting, 1:30pm

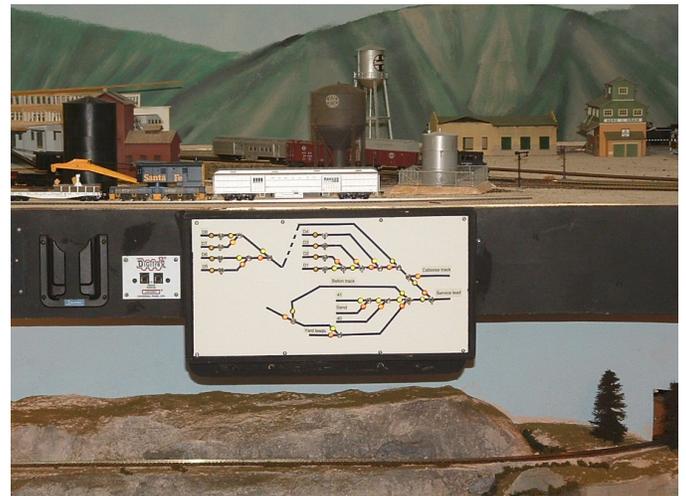
Oct 20, Western Div. Meet, Scale Rails  
Depot

Nov 10, Monthly Meeting, 1:30pm

## HO Layout Status

### LA Division 1

After taking copious amounts of unrelenting abuse from his friends, Peter rebuilt the San Bernardino Hostler's control panel so it has a lower profile. There was a great, audible sigh of relief heard from all over the United States!



Stan has been busy installing lighting into the brass STSF Super Chief cars he has. Nice looking cars. He took white LEDs, cut the ends off, and found this spread, softened and diffused the light. It looks good.

Our student member, Ryan, is building a bungalow style house that will go in San Bernardino.

### Joint Line

The Rock Island interchange construction in Colorado Springs is now finished. Dennis built a new control panel and Jim Morse is

wiring it up to the layout. This has two three way turnouts on it, which will be driven using the SIC 24 logic boards as we have done with the other three ways on the layout. Wiring them in will wait till Lee is back from his trip to CA.



Dan will demonstrate this technique also at the clinic.

Darrin has started scenicizing one of the end modules.

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## NTRAK Layout Status

Dwight has been busy working on the track work, designing a new staging yard, and working out a fool proof way to join the modules that have all the yard tracks to assure repeatability in the alignments.

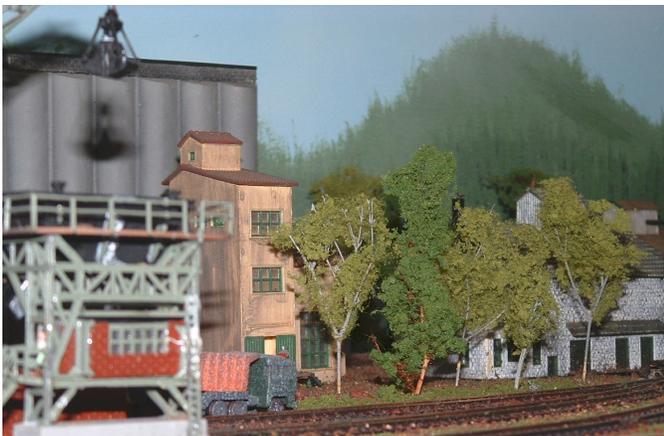
Dan has been very busy making and installing a forest of trees. He has some very interesting techniques for doing this and will be giving a clinic on it at the October 20 Division Meet we will host at the Depot. Dan also has finished up the 'sky boards' and they are spectacular.



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## A Ghost Story

We have had off and on some problems with our DCC system. They are referred to as ghosts, because they tend to come and go with no apparent cause and effect. While tracking down a short circuit in Pueblo, Lee noted that the meter for the booster providing power to Cajon, Summit and Victorville was reacting to the shorts. In tracking that down he discovered all the bus wires coming from the DCS 100 and each DB 150 were loose in their terminal blocks. After tightening up these connections the mysterious ghosts seem to have gone on



vacation. Was this the cure? We don't really know, but think it was part of the cure. There may have been a combination of two or three problems all ganging up on us. However, if you have similar problems and you use terminal blocks, you should consider a program to tighten every one on your layout periodically. A good maintenance practice.

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## June 9, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by President Gross at 1:30 pm.

**Members Present:** Dan Cermak, Jim Edmier, Lee Dobyns, Steve Gdovin, Alex Grantt, Peter Gross, Alex Halberda, Ryan Hanaway, Darrin Kerwin, George Nink, Gordon Roeding, Dwight Sedgwick, Stan Seeds, Oren Stephane, Luther Ward, and Ray Welliver.

### May Minutes:

Minutes from the previous meeting were printed in the newsletter. Steve Gdovin corrected the minutes that he had five models at the Ocala convention: three to be judged and two for display. Motion by Gordon Roeding, seconded by Steve Gdovin to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion approved.

### Treasurer's Report:

Stan Seeds reported that we have \$11,128.23 in cash; \$6100.85 in checking and \$5027.38 in savings. Our net worth is now \$110,718 and the mortgage is down to \$36,424. Stan also reported that he is starting to see a drop in the electric bills with the use of the humidistat that was installed.

### Membership:

We are a 100% NMRA club. It is beneficial for our insurance requirements especially when holding events like our train show. A couple of members are late in renewing their membership and a few are close to renewal. Please check and make sure you are up to date with the NMRA.

### Layout Status:

**Upper Level:** Stan reported that the short has been found which was causing phasing problems. Oren Stephane is progressing on the roundhouse. George Mocko has been sick but took items home to continue work on the diesel houses. Jim Morse is going to rework the track in Summit so that there are two east and two west bound tracks.

**Joint Line:** Jim Edmier reported that the track for the Rock Island Interface and accompanying wiring is 75% installed.

**N Scale:** Dwight Sedgwick reported that Dan Cermak has completed all of the sky boards for the layout. They are now all the same height and have a common look (Dan will be providing a clinic at the October 20 Division Meet to show how easy he makes it look to do scenery). Dwight Sedgwick is working on standardizing the connecting tracks. A plan for a two-module yard is under review.

**Signals:** Lee Dobyns reported that the helix occupancy signals have been completed along with signals in the accompanying area on the lower level.

### Building Maintenance:

Jim Edmier reported that Jim Morse had installed the security grates on the front windows. They look good and because of the design with the steel grate material, they will offer excellent hurricane protection. The fill and tile next door is supposed to be spread for future development. The county code enforcement is aware of the tile and horticulture waste.

### Operations:

We had hoped to have an operation session on June 7. But due to the electrical problems it was cancelled. Now that they have been solved, a new session will be scheduled.

### A/P Program:

Stan reported that several awards were received at the Ocala convention. We now have twelve merit award models on our layout.

We want to get more awards for our members. If you have a model, see Stan Seeds or Alex Halberda for information on applying for merit awards.

#### **Brick City Express (Ocala Convention):**

Peter Gross reported that they had a great hotel, great layouts, excellent meetings, and a generally fine time. Of significant importance, Stan Seeds received his eleventh Achievement Certification. This makes Stan one of only eight NMRA members who have received all eleven certificates. He is now a Grand Master Model Railroader.

#### **Student Members:**

Since we now have student members, a policy needed to be approved and implemented. Motion by Lee Dobyns, seconded by Ray Welliver: When a student is in the building, we must have two adults also in attendance. Should a member have to leave, leaving only one adult, it will be necessary to call the parent and have them present until the student is ready to leave. Motion passed to become effective immediately.

#### **Western Division Meet - October 20, 2007:**

We will be hosting a Western Division Meet on October 20, 2007. It is a one-day event. There will be two clinics in the morning and an operating session in the afternoon. Dan Cermak will do one of the clinics but we need one more clinician. If you have any ideas, please see Peter. Peter will also be working on an operating sequence for the afternoon.

#### **Procurement Process:**

In order to avoid excess or duplicate purchases, all items to be purchased should first be cleared through Stan Seeds to make sure it fits into the budget and is not already on order.

#### **Tools:**

We are all becoming very lax in putting away our tools and cleaning up areas we are working in. Please make use of the bins that Skip Giddings set up to take tools to a work site, and then replace them at the end of the day so people can find them.

#### **Evening Hours:**

In order to get more involvement from members that are still working for a living and to possibly encourage new people to join who also still work, discussion was held on being open at night one day a week. It was decided to be open on Thursday nights from 6pm to 9pm beginning on June 14. An email will be sent out notifying every one of the new hours.

#### **Train Show:**

Jim Edmier reported that he has already sold 16 tables for the train show in November. He needs some ideas for a "big draw" to get people to come to the show. Two layouts, one O Scale and the other Legos are not available this year. As it stands right now, we only have the N Scale layout. If you have any ideas please see Jim.

#### **Event Invitations:**

Alex Grantt suggested that for all future events we send out invitations to local politicians. Hopefully they will become more aware of trains and also could be helpful to us in future events.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Dwight Sedgwick,  
substitute secretary.

## **Mining the Internet**

### **OCLC Announces Public Access Site for WorldCat**

The Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) is a nonprofit, membership, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing

information costs. More than 55,000 libraries in 110 countries and territories around the world use OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalog, lend and preserve library materials.

OCLC has just announced that they are now allowing public access to their WorldCat catalog. Previously available only at libraries, WorldCat allows you to search the catalogs of their member libraries in a single step. Users can then locate materials in a library close to them. Many articles and books are online and available for download directly from these libraries. Others may provide access to materials through Interlibrary Loan. WorldCat results often include a link to Ask a Librarian and other features at member libraries.

The new public-access interface also includes downloadable browser tools for Google and Yahoo toolbars. The new site for public access is currently in a beta test version and can be accessed at [www.WorldCat.org](http://www.WorldCat.org) . To find out more about OCLC, visit [www.OCLC.org](http://www.OCLC.org) .

### Painting with Acrylics

Get some of Ceramcoat's "Gel Blending Medium". It extends the setting/drying time so that you won't have to work too fast to get things blended. Also works nicely for keeping the brush marks off smooth, flat surfaces, like a couple old Marx tinsplate cars that I repainted with Ceramcoat and the blending medium.

Yep...Ceramcoat and Grumbacher call it blending medium and one of the other brands (Americana? Apple Barrel? I don't remember which one) calls it acrylic retarder while another one calls it "Acrylic Extender", but they all serve the same purpose...acrylics dry so fast that they don't have time to self level to eliminate brush marks but the blending medium/retarder/extender solves that

problem...takes a bit longer to dry but leaves a much smoother finish...and it doesn't reduce the coverage properties as water does...vinegar also works if you can tolerate the smell for a few days...

Another handy product is Americana's "Cool Neutral Toning"...when blending multiple colors as in doing scenery with several different earth/grass colors the "Cool Neutral" reduces color intensity of each color so that the different colors look like they were meant to go together...takes away the harshness that you sometimes get when doing scenery in several colors...but you'll still want to use the blending medium as Cool Neutral doesn't retard the drying time...I also use it when painting clothing on Preiser figures to tone them down a bit...

### Thicketts

The following is from Model Railroad Hobby Internet (e)News Bi-Weekly Modeling Tip:

I found a product that makes a great thicket along the sides of roads and tracks. It is called "Create-A-Craft" floral moss. It is made by FloraCraft, Ludington, MI 49431 and is available in the craft department of Wal-Mart stores. If I recall, the product sells for under two dollars and one bag goes a long way. It is mostly green and brown with some tan mixed in. For realism, it certainly beats ground foam or polyfiber.

### Shirts

If you want a Club shirt, contact the Club Shirt Lady, Dianne Korf. Shirts are about \$28 each. Let her know your size and she will order them for you. You can contact her at (239) 281-8636 or by email at [dkorf@msn.com](mailto:dkorf@msn.com)

# Scale Rails of Southwest Florida

## Our Charter

Our intent and purpose is to promote and encourage the art of model railroading and preserve the history, science and technology of rail transportation. To this end we have organized our efforts for charitable, educational, literary and scientific purposes. As part of our endeavors, we host railroad displays, give talks and presentations for school, museums and various organizations. Our members do not presume to be experts, but rather a group of individuals sharing knowledge with each other.

Scale Rails of Southwest Florida

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## EDITORIAL

We need to think about ideas to attract people to our train show in November. Some of the big layouts we have invited in the past are not able to make it this year. We are left right now with only our NTRAK layout. Everyone should think about what attracts people to our train show, and what we can do to add to that or make it more attractive. Model displays or dioramas; modular units even it not hooked up to others; modeling table where we make things; clinics for kids helping them to make a box car, or shed, or a tree; these are some ideas some have suggested. What's yours?

Keep having fun!  
PETER GROSS, Editor