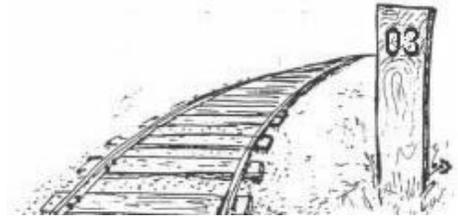


The MILEPOST

March 2003

Volume 22, Issue 3

www.ppdnmra.com



Module Setup 28-30 March



Superintendent's Notes

by

Bill Poley

This month's notes are a bit diverse, but less so than last months.

First, if you are reading this on line but haven't received a paper copy this means you have not paid the ten dollars of your 2003 subscription to the Mile Post. See me [or Wade] before the meeting or during the break to take care of this.

Speaking of publications brings me to the Call Board, the region's publication. I don't want to spend much time in the meeting on this, but I am curious as to how many of us actually receive this, so I in-

NEXT MEETING

Friday, March 14, 2003 7:30 PM

Sand Creek Police Station

4125 Center Park Drive

(southeast of Academy and Fountain)

Program: How I Built My Home Layout

By: Bob Bandy

Contest: Maintenance of Way (rail & offrail)

tend to ask for a quick show of hands during the meeting.

If we don't have coffee that means I forgot the coffee pot -- again. Remember we are rotating bringing the refreshments. Thank you, Jim, for bringing them this month. I will be looking for a volunteer for next month.

This is the last meeting before the March Modular set up at the Southern Colorado Expo Center. See John Emmot's Modular Musings for more on this.

A reminder of the Division Swap meet in Security on April 19th. It is not too early to be getting stuff read for this. More details at the meeting from Jerry Hansz.

A quick personal note: If Wade is running the meeting but you see me there, that just means I am temporally speechless. I am having a little problem with my throat which makes it difficult for me to talk. This changes a bit from day to day, but I can reasonably expect to be back to normal fairly soon.

Superintendent
Bill Poley
266-8989

Assist Superintendent
Wade Mountz
380-9060

Secretary
Bill LaFollette
574-6279

Treasurer
Frank Pareso
591-9470

Newsletter Editor
John Emmot
380-8421

Module Chairman
John Emmot
380-8421

Achievement Program
Bob Haggart
390-8911

Contest Chairman
Alan Hutchins
382-8651

Librarian
Ed Pagels
534-9232

Swap Meet
Jerry Hansz
390-4106

Nominating
Wayne Lemle
632-1969

WEBSITE

Membership

Raffle Chairman
Frank Pareso
591-9470

Refreshment Chairman
Charly O'Neill





**PIKES PEAK DIVISION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD
ASSOCIATION**

Secretary's Minutes

By: William L. LaFollette

Date: February 14, 2003

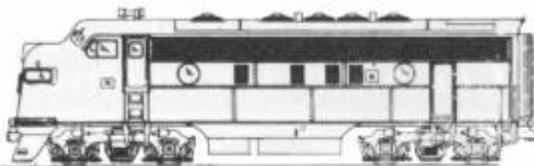
Opening Time: 7:30 PM

By: Bill Poley, Superintendent

Attendance: 19 Visitors: None

Old Business:

1. The January minutes were accepted as printed in the Milepost
2. The Treasurer's report was give by Frank Pareso.
3. The March 28-30 module set up was discussed and a decision was made to set up on Thursday March 27th. Bob Haggart is building a connector for the eventual use on the modules for DCC.
4. A motion was made by Wade Mountz and seconded by Jim Lipper to Extend the website annual fee until for 1 year at a cost of \$99. The motion was voted on and passed.
5. A motion was made by Jim Lipper and seconded by Jerry Hansz to extend the Domain Name "PPDNMRA" for 5 years at a cost of \$95. The motion was voted on and passed.
6. Jerry Hansz reported three tables were already sold for the April swap meet.
7. No one came forth to volunteer for full-time refreshments. Jim Lipper did volunteer to provide the refreshments for one month (March).



STEEL CITY STEAMER

**2003 NMRA Rocky Mountain Region
Convention
June 12-15, Pueblo Convention Center,
Pueblo, CO**



New Business:

1. Ed Pagels suggested the Club consider having the annual July layout tours on Sunday afternoon instead of the night of the July Club meeting. A general discussion followed and it was decided to bring the subject up for a vote in the March meeting.

Intermission/Refreshments: Refreshments were provided by Charly O'Neill

Following the break, the Program was presented.

Program Title: "Wade's Homemade Model Paint Booth" by Wade Mountz with assistance from Bill LaFollette on some reasons and tips for custom painting. A 15 minute video on Airbrushing was also shown.

The contest subject was "FREIGHT CARS".

The winners were:

- 1st Place: Wade Mountz
- 2nd Place: Alan Hutchins
- 3rd Place: Alan Hutchins

Following the raffle, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 PM.





Custom Railway Supply

March Sale

all power supplies, dcc, sound systems,
20% discount

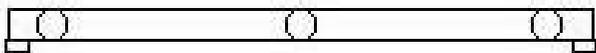
Have questions? call Mike Clark at 634-4616

Modular Musings

By John Emmot

We will setup a module layout at the Southern Colorado Exhibition Center at Union and Constitution 28 - 30 March, this year. Hours are 12-5 Friday, 9-5 Saturday, and 9-4 Sunday. Most of those at the February meeting liked the idea of at least starting the setup on Thursday evening so they could drive to the location inside the Exhibition Center. We can deliver and setup as much as possible then and finish the layout on Friday morning. Chris Fox may not be able to bring his module before Friday. We will work out a specific times at the meeting. I hope all module owners will mark these dates as this will probably be our best opportunity for maximum layout size this year.

Some notes on setup. It has been awhile since I visited this topic, so I will toss it out for what it is worth. Sometimes we get half way done and find that the adjustment left in the legs isn't enough to compensate either way. As we all know, not every module is perfectly flat from end to end. However, the variations on each module are small in the overall scheme of things. Thus if we set a first reference module at the 40 inch height to the top of the rail and level the two ends, it becomes a benchmark. We can work both ways from the benchmark. Match the height of the adjacent module to the benchmark and then level the other end with it. Since we say the modules aren't flat, don't just set the level in the middle and use it. The best way is to have a four foot level like Wade's with a shim on each end.



The level will span the module so that the ends will be level without regard to the middle of the module. Using sight and feel, set the end of the

next module even with the end of the previous and level it the same way. With due care, the two ends of the layout will be even when they come together. Obviously, the corners and eight foot modules would require longer straight edges to span the distance from end to end. The point is that we don't care about "level" except as it relates to the ends of each module. On the corners where scenery stands above the track, it will require thicker shims. This is no problem as long as the shims are both the same thickness.

Another thing to be aware of when putting up the layout is that not all of the ends are square with the rail top. If you happen to get two modules that are set back, you will create a hump if you bring the bottom edges together. Be careful of tightening the C clamps too much in this situation. The large spring clamps would work well here.



Bob Haggart is working on the connector to use DCC on the modules. My thought is to designate Saturday as the DCC day for the show. Please let me know if this will work for your plans.

A track cleaning car by Centerline has been ordered through Mizells. The item was not in stock, but hopefully, it will be available before the setup.

Remember we will also setup a layout for the April 19 Swap meet at the Knights of Columbus hall in Security. That will probably be a twenty foot layout.

Another event we don't want to forget about is the visit to the library to promote the hobby of railroading. I believe this is scheduled for April, but Bill Poley will have to provide the date and location at the meeting. This is an opportunity to share your knowledge of trains with those who have an interest, but lack information.

See you all at the meeting.



Deadline for Milepost material is two weeks prior to the regular meeting date. If you have material that you want published, please contact the Newsletter editor.

2003 Contest Schedule

- January - Cabeese
- February - Freight cars
- March - Maintenance of Way (rail & offrail)
- April - Bent Screwdriver (unlikely equipment)
- May - Locomotives (steam, diesel, other)
- June - Passenger equip (all types)
- July - NO CONTEST Layout Tour
- August - Weathering (any item)
- September - Photos (model, prototype)
- October - Automobiles, trucks
- November - Worktrain (loco, caboose, one or more cars)
- December - NO CONTEST Christmas Party

February Contest

1st Place Wade Mountz



2nd Place Alan Hutchens



3rd Place Alan Hutchins



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Odds & Ends

Jerry Hansz still has a set of three modules that make up one end of our layout. He would like to transfer them to someone who can store and transport them to module setups. See Jerry if you can help out.

My Thanks to Ryan for his discussion of trackwork and problem solving. This is really what the hobby is about. Use your friends to help. You'll get good ideas and better friends. More than that, think about the problems you have solved on your own layout and write a description of it. It doesn't have to be long, just describe the problem or project and how you approached the job. I think this kind of material would also work well on the Website. Most of us have a story about our layout. Here is a chance to share our knowledge with our surfers. Ryan mentioned submitting the item to the Callboard and with his permission I will add it to our site so it will be available without downloading the Milepost.



Remember
 Pikes Peak Division
 Train show and Swap meet
 April 19, 2003

You May Not Have to Blast - or - Patience and The Calibrated Eye

By Ryan D. Bates

I was at my wits end from frustration with regard to a particular curved turnout entering the north yard lead of by McCloud River yard.

Everyone knows that curved turnouts are problematic to begin with, but due to limited available space, I had to have one there, or not have a workable layout at all.

The Problem? I had NO IDEA! I just knew that the darn thing would not work in any sort of reliable manner. There was no rhyme or reason to the conditions or frequency of derailments other than being way too frequent.

The Solution? Well, my initial plan was to remove the problem all together with some well placed C-4 or other suitable explosive compound. After sending out a message to my other modeling friends to invite them over to watch the fireworks, several called back and suggested that I may not have to blast just yet.

Each of my responding friends proposed to me unique and individual considerations and solutions to the problem. One friend suggested filing the points to a razors edge, so I gave that a try. I still had derailments, but less frequent when traveling into the switch. Another friend suggested looking very close at the heel of the throw rail and filing that as needed to make a smoother the transition. Did that. Still derailed...but even less frequent now. Well OK! Making some progress.

By this time, I was feeling better with the demonstrated improvements in operation, so as a show of good faith with the offending turnout, I removed the primers on the previously placed explosives.

More advice from yet another friend suggested a very close look at the track gage, grade, and transition into the turnout as a whole. I did a careful survey and acted on the advice by moving the super-elevation in the curve back six inches. OK, that improved things still further, but I still had a few derailments.

The last bit of advice I chose to act on was to shim the frog. Gawd! I expected to go blind trying to cut brass or styrene shims within a few 1/100th of an inch. Instead, I tried a different approach to

achieve the same intent. Rather than shim up, I filled the frog with a couple drops of hot candle wax. After the wax cooled a little, I carved flange-ways with a scrap wheel-set and a knife. Now I know that this method sounds counterproductive and a little foolish, but the results were fantastic! Not only did I get improved operation across the frog, I no longer had that unrealistic little 'wiggle' as locos and rolling stock crossed over it. I was so impressed with the technique that I did it to all my turnouts on the layout. While 'tuning' the waxed frogs takes a little time, the results are more than worth it. I have not experienced any negative effects such as dirty track or excessive wheel grim. So far, so good.

As for the original curved turnout and focus of my 'affection', PROBLEM SOLVED! I have achieved a near 100% reliability rate. Indeed, I backed a seventeen-car train through it 20 times without a single flaw. The train in question even had five skeleton log cars mid-train, and a mixture of plastic and steel wheels. Aaaaah, now that was Nice!

I have since removed all explosive charges from the layout, saving them for some other time and purpose.

So, what did I learn from all this?

One - Running trains is much more fun than blowing them up. Be patient.

Two - Many problems are multifaceted. A single action may only solve a single component of the problem. Look for a net gain in performance rather than expect a total solution and then adjust your diagnosis accordingly.

Three - Talk to your friends. I am lucky enough to be able to draw on the knowledge of several Master Modelers and some really smart guys. Never underestimate the value of a fresh perspective.

Four - Develop a 'Calibrated Eye'. Now that I know what 'wrong' looks like, I am much better able to make things 'right'. Many previously hidden problems (or potential problems) now jump out as obvious, thus making diagnosis, maintenance, and repairs much easier.

See ya on the High Iron!



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U.S.A.**

Support the hobby shops that support the raffle. Without their donations there would be no raffle.

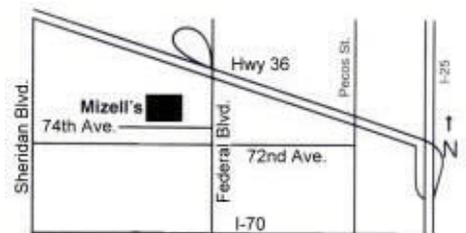
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