

# L.E.N.S.

Monthly publication of the  
**Lake Erie N Scale Society**



**N-TRAK**  
N SCALE MODULAR RAILROADING

**December, 2004**

## Welcome!

LENS is a group of people with a common interest in modeling N scale railroads using the “NTRAK” modular concept.

Any time we meet and/or display our work and promote this hobby, we would love to have you join us.

This means that ALL of us have chances to participate in the hobby by helping with any or all of the following:

**Setting up/tearing down**  
**Running trains**  
**Sharing your knowledge**  
**Learning something new**  
**Answering questions**  
**Hosting a meeting**

Notice that NONE of the above requires a module. We need your help... so bring yourself, your enthusiasm, your interest and your trains.

Thanks in advance for helping! Hopefully, we will continue to see you at the meetings and display events.

***Come and join in the fun!***

[www.geocities.com/lensohio/](http://www.geocities.com/lensohio/)

The Lake Erie N Scale Society newsletter is published monthly for the sole use of its members by a crew of volunteers.

Opinions published here are solely those of the editor and/or the members of the Lake Erie N Scale Society.

This publication is intended to be a monthly newsletter describing the business, events and the common interest in N scale model railroading enjoyed by the members of the Lake Erie N Scale Society.

**For information or questions regarding our Society, you may contact Dennis Lloyd at 440-352-7081 - or - (dlloyd@apk.net)**

Meetings normally start at 8:00 p.m., the fourth Friday of each month.

# Lake Erie N Scale Society

**December, 2004**

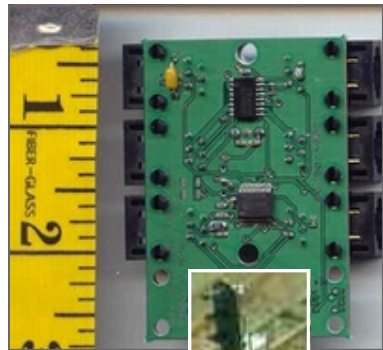


## **FREE STUFF!**



Bonnie sent an e-mail recently referencing a person in Canada who is selling several products for model railroading (in many scales). The contact information is below if you have interest in any of the products offered. However, the web site has an offer that says "Request FREE Samples".

It appears as though there are 5 or more categories of signs, electronic parts, LED's, laser cut structures, N scale signals, scenery parts and more. They seem to be able to make up items that are missing, and add them to the offerings.



I have included some pictures from the site, showing some of the different offerings. Signs are in the \$1.50 to \$3.00 (USD) range.

Alain Pelletier  
15 21E AV  
Edmundston NB E3V 2B8  
Canada

Tel / Fax: (506) 739-0757

<http://www.traffic-signs.scale-train.com/?scale=n>

## Last Month's Meeting



It was reported that the crowds at the Burton Library were steady and the layout was appreciated and enjoyed by several visitors.

Many thanks to everyone who helped during the setup and tear down, as well as those members who took time out to operate trains and entertain the public.



We also understand that the "tradition" of meeting for PIE at Belle's Restaurant (on the square) after setup, is alive and well.

## This Month's Meeting

We have again been invited to set up a display at the Lake County FarmPark. This year however, based on a discussion by the membership, we have limited the amount of days that we would provide. In the past few years, we have been asked to cover more and more of the available days. The thinking was, that the burden at the “holiday” time of year was too great. So we “put our foot down” (a dangerous thing to do at a farm), and agreed to 6 days.



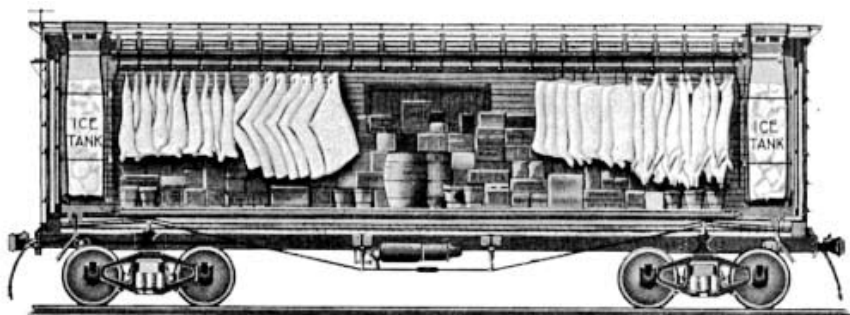
Note the starting time is 5 p.m. Typically, we have two shifts—those persons that are able to be there at 5 p.m. and put in (1 or more) hours, and those folks who arrive later and close the doors.

Remember, that as a member of the LENS group, you may enter via the rear service drive (west of the main entrance) and go through the offices to gain access to the display room.

This venue has always been a “tough” one to control as the room is small and the crowds come in “herds” (as other events let out). As such, we need to have as many members present to do crowd control. Try to set aside as much time as possible to attend. We can use a minimum of 1 person inside the layout and 2 people outside. With the radio controllers, it is possible to run trains and watch the crowds.

## Learning From Prototype

Beginning in the 1840s, refrigerated cars were used to transport milk and butter. By 1860, refrigerated transport was limited to mostly seafood and dairy products. The refrigerated railroad car was patented by J.B. Sutherland of Detroit, Michigan in 1867. He designed an insulated car with ice bunkers in each end. Air came in on the top,



passed through the bunkers, and circulated through the car by gravity, controlled by the use of hanging flaps that created differences in air temperature.

The cars helped establish mid-Western cities, especially Chicago and Kansas City, as the slaughter centers of the country and also created regional produce specialization. Consider Georgia peaches, California grapes, Washington and Oregon apples, and of course, Florida citrus. The increasingly widespread distribution of fresh foods expanded markets and helped to create healthier diets of meat, produce, eggs, butter, milk, cheese and fish.

There were different car designs based upon the type of cargo, whether meat or fruit. The first refrigerated car to carry fresh fruit was built in 1867 by Parker Earle of Illinois,

*(Continued on page 7)*

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who shipped strawberries on the Illinois Central Railroad. Each chest contained 100 pounds of ice and 200 quarts of strawberries.

In general, steel cars replaced wood due to their strength and longevity. In the case of reefers, the better insulating quality of the wood was not an issue, as the steel cars continued to be wood lined (until urethane insulation replaced the wood). As late as August of 1957, ice was still used to keep railroad cars cold. But mechanical refrigeration-diesel powered units in each car soon took over. The "plug" door was introduced in the 1960's as an option that provided a larger door to ease loading and unloading of certain commodities. These tight-fitting doors were better insulated and could keep the car at a more even temperature.

Truck deregulation, along with the emergence of intermodal, changed the transportation scenario for large perishable-products shippers. It was not the superior efficiency of the truck that killed the reefer (trucks are less efficient, which is why Tropicana stays with reefers) but its reliability. Railroads are notorious for losing cars and performing erratically in other respects.

Amtrak's Mail and Express business is currently investing in mechanical reefers in an effort to become more truck competitive and expand upon their 1999 success. Amtrak will offer an express four-day, cross-country service for perishable goods with the purchase of a fleet of eight 70-ton reefer units.

***Our "Annual Swap Meet", is now available at every meeting!***

If you have surplus engines, buildings, rolling stock, modules, etc., bring them to any of the meetings to offer great deals to your fellow members.

## Next Month's Meeting

Bob V. has offered to host the January meeting of our club. This may be a "meeting of the brave", as Bob lives in the heart of the "snow belt", and we are talking January here!

We will have plenty of topics to discuss as we review the past setups in Burton, and the Holiday setup at the Lake Farmpark. In addition, we will need to get started on the planning for our layout to be displayed at the NMRA Railfest at Lakeland Community College.



There has also been some renewed interest in adding another library to our schedule for February. As you may know, many libraries have not been able to host our layout, as budget cuts forced them to close on Sundays. Our requirements are at least two days open to the public, plus setup / tear down time.

Perhaps we will find a volunteer to teach a clinic or give a demonstration on some subject at the meeting. How about you? Is there something you would be able to present to the group, some photos to share, stories to tell? Please contact Lou D. or Denny L. to be added to the agenda.



## Layout Planner

Venue	<i>FarmPark</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Event times</i>
<b>Set up</b>	Saturday	12/18/04	1:00 p.m.
<b>Oper.</b>	Saturday	12/18/04	5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
	Sunday	12/19/04	5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
	Monday	12/20/04	5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
	Tuesday	12/21/04	5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
	Wednesday	12/22/04	5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
	Thursday	12/23/04	5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Venue	<i>Railfest</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Event times</i>
<b>Set up</b>	Friday	Mar, '05	
<b>Oper.</b>	Saturday	Mar, '05	
	Sunday	Mar, '05	

### *This just in...*

The folks who are organizing the 2005 T-trak layout at the 2005 NMRA convention in Cincinnati, are looking for a preliminary count of modules by next Wednesday (12/15/04). Contact Paul Musselman ([PaulMmn@ix.netcom.com](mailto:PaulMmn@ix.netcom.com)) if you are interested.

What's T-trak, you say? Check out details at:  
[www.ttrak.org](http://www.ttrak.org)

[“web.page”](#)

Instead of “Take a ride on the Reading” let’s take a ride on the MRL, N-style at:

<http://home.att.net/~larrymcwi/index.htm>



MRL SD35 # 703 & SD40 #264 Pull the Swift Road-railers after Interchange with the BNSF

In 1993, after some prodding from my then ten-year-old daughter, I left the world of HO scale and dropped a little (smaller). N gauge would be our new scale. This move was not a mistake. It opened an opportunity to double the size of our present model railroad, which was at that time dying from lack of interest. The "MRL in Miniature" is at this time is under construction. The layout is 16' x 20', along two walls of our rec room. Our MRL will have a double track Main line on the lower route and single track on the upper. As the layout progresses, photos will be added to our

page. We hope you enjoy the photos of our miniature world and with a little luck maybe you will be inspired to do a little bit of modeling of your own!



Visit our web site at [www.geocities.com/lensohio/](http://www.geocities.com/lensohio/)

**“F.R.E.D.”**



*See you at the next station!*

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