



Monthly publication of the

Lake Erie "N" Scale Society

"L.E.N.S."

February, 2006

News and Opinions
Monthly Meeting Info
Web Sites of Interest
Learning from Prototypes
Show Schedules
and more!

N-TRAK
N SCALE MODULAR RAILROADING

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

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 - (dennis.lloyd@comcast.net)

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

Lake Erie N Scale Society

February, 2006

We all should take a step back and reflect a little as to what this hobby means to all of us. In the last 3 months, we have lost two of our members (one past member & one very active one). These losses were not taken lightly by some of us who have been involved with this group for a long time.

Not only do the members of our group share a common hobby, but we share some great friendships. Personally, I can count the time passage in decades - about thirty years!

As I said, stop and take a look at what we as a group are offering to each other. Be thankful we are able to share our interest in model railroading with such great people, We must be doing something right.

The last three months have also produced some of the smoothest set up and tear down sessions that I remember in some time. Not only that, but 3 in a row!

I am realizing that some of the older members are starting to pass the torch as it were, but I am confident the legacy that was left to me as a new member, will be carried on by myself and all those who will follow.

Once in awhile there are some rough edges, but that's why we developed the Guidelines (there is a copy on the web site). Take a moment to review them and be proud of what we are accomplishing together.

Let's go run some trains! Oh, oh; breakaway on yell.....

Last Month's Meeting

We begin a series of “back to basic” module building demonstrations by starting with frame construction. This process will continue each month, until we have finished a completed, decorated module. Once built, someone can become the proud owner by covering the costs (and winning a lottery if more than one member is interested).

Using a process to “qualify” modules like we did in Chantilly, VA., as well as the planning for



“RailFest 2006” and other upcoming set ups were discussed.

Bob V. suggested we may be able to set up at the Burton Steam Show; he will research and report back.

Bob G. passed around a sample of a new concept for a module skirt. Although well received, the members present didn't feel that we needed to change everyone's modules at this

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This Month's Meeting

Warren L. has offered to host February's meeting. We will continue with another installment of the module building project, and planning the upcoming "Railfest 2006" set up (among other things).

We will also take time to visit Warren's home layout to view the progress he has made since our last visit.

If you have ever wanted to build a module and were not sure how to begin, or thought it was beyond your level of talent, we are going to show you the steps that will quell those fears. These concepts will apply to not only the standard 4' x 2' straight module (POFF, or **P**lain **O**ld **F**our **F**oot), but to the newer iterations of modules that have appeared over the last several years.

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time. Thanks Bob! (...hold that thought - it took 7 years to agree on shirts)*

The new "Anderson Connectors" for the modules is an alternate method that has been adopted for the standards to accommodate DCC and voltage drop in very large layouts. It is **not** necessary to convert modules - just suggested. Review of the abstract is available on the N-trak web site (can be linked to, from ours).



Learning From Prototype

Aerospace vs. A Horse's Hind End

Does the statement, "We've always done it like that" ring any bells?

The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and English expatriates built the US Railroads.

Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used. Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So who built those old rutted roads? Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (and England) for their legions.

The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts in the roads? Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot. And bureaucracies live forever. So the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's ass came up with it, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial

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Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses.

Now the twist to the story!

When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory at Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site.

The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's hind end.

And you thought being a HORSE'S ASS wasn't important!

Our “Annual Swap Meet”, is 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

RAILFEST 2006



March's meeting is replaced by our attendance at "Ohio's largest 2 day train show", at Lakeland Community College. LENS has set up our display there for over thirty years in a row. This year we are being offered a 12' x 48" space that we would like to fill with modules.

As a member of LENS, you are able to attend free of charge, although we would love to have you earn your way by helping with some facet of the display (set up, tear down, running, sale table, etc.)

Pull out those modules, touch up the details, and join us for a weekend of fun. More information in the next issue.

Stewart's Hobbies & Collector's Toys

38033 Euclid Ave.

440-942-6632

Microtrains Dealer

You've seen Rob & Sandy at Railfest — why not visit their store in Willoughby when you get a chance

Event Planner

Venue	Railfest 2006	Dates	Times
Set up	Friday	3/17/06	7 p.m.
Operate	Saturday	3/18/06	10 a.m.—4 p.m.
Operate	Sunday	3/19/06	10 a.m.—4 p.m.

Venue	FarmPark	Dates	Times
Set up	Friday	4/28/06	7 p.m.
Operate	Saturday	4/28/06	9 a.m.—5 p.m.
Operate	Sunday	4/28/06	9 a.m.—5 p.m.

Venue	Burton - Steam Show	Dates	Times
Set up	Friday	April (tba)	---
Operate	Saturday	April (tba)	---
Operate	Sunday	April (tba)	---

Looking for LENS “gear”?



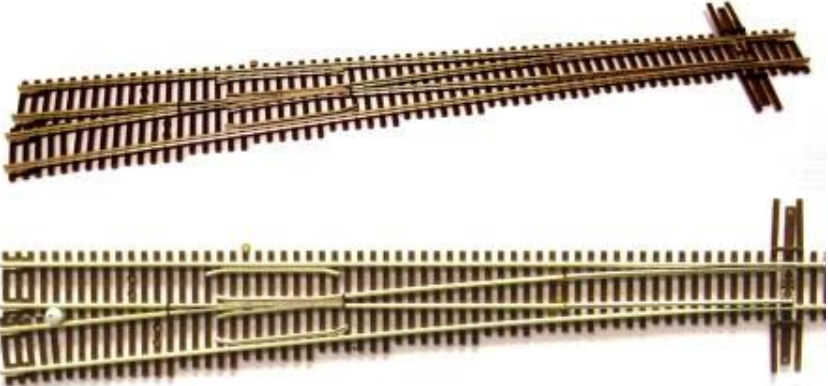
Contact Karen (440-347-0938) to order your favorite items. Quality, prices & selection to fit every budget!



“ [web.page](#) ”

Wayne L. sent an e-mail with a link to the Atlas web site's, forum. There is a posting from Cory Rothlisberger (Atlas Model RR Co. product Development group) announcing a #10 RH & LH Code 55 turnout.

The actual length of this product will be 8" long. It also states, "when using two of the turnouts for a crossover, it will produce a 1.25" track center". He also indicated price and delivery information will be available in about 2 months.



Here are some "low profile" wheels to along with the new track...



FYI - This was forwarded to me from Denny L....

To my fellow N scale modelers,

I would like to personally invite each and everyone of you to attend the 2006 National N Scale Convention in Denver, CO; August 8th through August 13th.

The Denver Area N Scale Club has teamed up with NTRAK and the N Scale Collector to bring to the N Scale Community one of the most promising conventions yet.

Information can be found at www.denvernscale.org or www.nscalecollector.com If anyone has any questions they can contact me directly at NScale2006@...

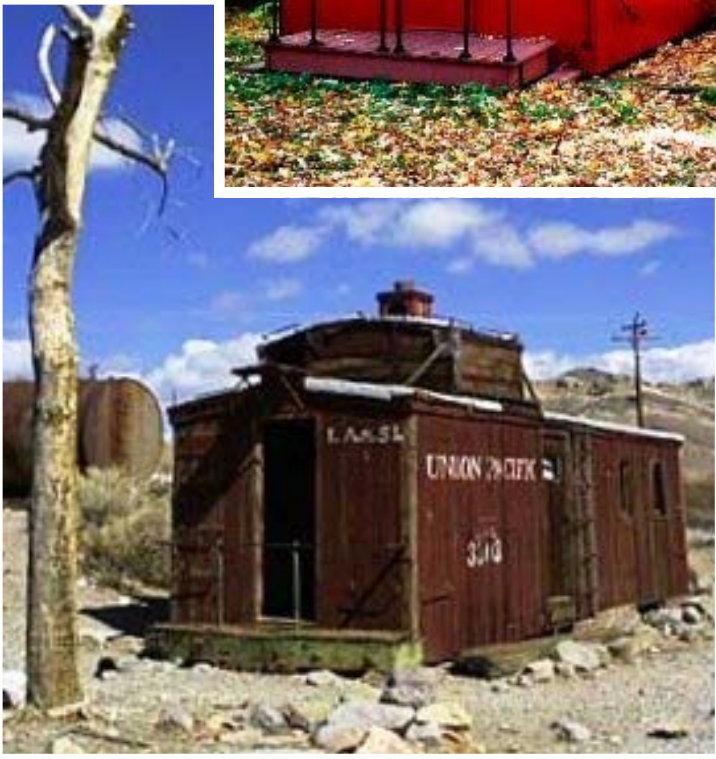
We are also looking for several clinicians for our clinic program. If you are interested in presenting a clinic, please contact me.

I am looking forward to seeing as many fellow N Scale modelers this year as possible.

*Happy N Rails,
Ray Schneringer
President - Denver Area N Scale Club
Co-Chairman - 2006 National N Scale Convention*

Visit our web site at www.geocities.com/lensohio/

“F.R.E.D.”



See you at the next station!

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