



Lake Erie “N” Scale Society

“L.E.N.S.”

February 2019



NTRAK™

oNe-Track

T-TRAK™
N-Scale Modular Railroading

Fremo-N

Over 30 years of promoting model 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.lensohio.org

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 - (denlloyd@gmail.com)

Meetings normally start at 7:30 p.m., the fourth Friday of each month.

Last Month's Meeting

Last month we had the annual January meeting (Winterfest)) at the home of Dave N. . Dave shared updates on his layout., including signals and various turnout controls We then adjourned to the living room to enjoy food and discuss necessary business. Discussed were the one day Jefferson show (they wanted our commitment now for the July event), and the "Hive" at Lakeland Community College, where we hope to have our April, meeting.

This Month's Meeting

This month's meeting will be at 7:30 on Friday, February 22 at the home of Chuck L. (Map is attached.) We need to finalize plans for Railfest (see next month's meeting.) See you there!

Next Month's Meeting

March means Railfest. Instead of a meeting we will set-up, run, and tear down our modules for March 16th and 17th show at Lakeland Community College. As usual, we will have a sales table there. If you have items to sell, label each item with your initials and the price. Bring a labeled envelop with your name on it and change (at least 10 \$1.00 bills) and a sheet (or more) listing the items you are selling A few plastic bags would help. Also, spend some time at the table.

Looking for LENS apparel?



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



Amherst 2019



Atlas Springfield 2019 (Vehicles)

Springfield Railroad Hobby Show Wrap-Up

As some of you may know, I chose to skip the annual January meeting held at Dave Neff's place and make the 530-mile trek to western Massachusetts and attend the Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show (a.k.a. Springfield). This is one of the larger if not the largest rail shows in the country, with a little more than 400,000 square feet of displays, vendors, exhibits, etc. And yes I did get that right, it's 5 zeros following the 4, or just a little bit larger than 9 acres of railroading under four roofs. They estimate that some 22,500 railfans and public attend the show. To do it justice, you really need to budget two days to see all of the show, although it can be done in one day if you skip over a lot of tables.

(Continued on page 5)

The event features real life railroads, scale model railroads, historical societies, art work, flea market tables, manufacturers and photographers. Modelers' exhibits consisted of small table displays (and yes Charlie T-track was on display) starting with Z scale to a huge Freemo, N-Trak system and HO displays. It seemed to be a toss-up as to which display was the largest, as both the Freemo and the Amherst Belt Lines layouts were enormous. I'm giving the nod to the Amherst group as the most complete modular layout since most of their modules were close to or full scenery. The Dry Hill Club (HO) seemed to be running the longest trains at 250+ car trains. The Boothbay Railway Village had their 1:1 scale Plymouth switcher present outside of the buildings and it's steam whistle was being used to open the show. (Sd: See front cover of this newsletter.)

National manufacturers attending the show included Atlas, Athearn, Bowser, Intermountain, Scale Trains, N Scale Architect, Walthers, Osborne Models, Rapido, MicroTrains, Tichy and Bar Mills to name a few, and some had significant new product releases. Some of the show highlights as they relate to N-scale commercial products include:

The ProtoThrottle was being demonstrated at the Spring Creek Model Trains booth. The ProtoThrottle mimics a standard EMD control stand including full detent throttle and reverser handles, a spring-loaded horn handle, a push-on/push-off bell button, and fully programmable front and rear headlights with a setting for ditch lights. A very nice unit, but at just under \$500 I'm not sure how many casual model railroaders are going to purchase something that costs more \$\$ than a DCC set and is still just a throttle.

Scale Trains will be bringing out two versions of the GE C-44-9CW, aka Dash 9. Look for these in their Rivet-Counter and Operator lines. They were showing

NS, UP and BNSF versions of the new release at the show. Unfortunately, I walked by their booth about 15 minutes before the new release announcement and the place was a mob scene and they desperately needed more space to show off new and current products.

River Point Station will be coming out with modern (1992) Ford F-series trucks (both cab and crew cab). Atlas will also be bringing out Ford F-100 trucks (1973), as well as a bulkhead flat car, several hoppers and a Difco dumper. Atlas was also displaying several versions of an SD60E and ALP-45DP.

Roomettes plans to introduce building interior scenes for N-scale later in the year. What they were showing for HO scale was interesting, with about 10 different types of store and building interiors. A little pricey at \$20 a room, but maybe the detail level is worth it plus they can use the Woodland Scenic lighting system to illuminate the interior.

Jacksonville Terminal Company was showing some of their new containers, which seemed to be mostly corrugated containers.

Eastern Scale Models was displaying several new truck and wheelsets. Plans are in the works to release some detail parts and structures, as well as a X72 class boxcar.

Osborne was displaying a new lumber shed and yard fueling station in both HO and N scale.

I should also point out that this show seems to have a large number of n-scale sellers (example was TexNrails) in attendance. Plenty of engines, structures and rolling stock were evident and for sale, although I did stay away from most as I had no real need to add any more to my collection and lines tend to be long and busy. But if you're in the market for new and used equipment, you probably could find just about anything. I especially liked one booth where they were selling used structures at close to new prices,

with the advertisement that they built them for you to save you time and get them on your layout. I wonder how many people bought into this.

Lastly, the show is made up of various layouts. This is really one of the reasons I wanted to attend this show to see what other modelers have done, especially since many clubs from the greater New England area were present.

Here's some of the representative N scale layouts:

Forest Diorama – built by Patrick Arbez of Montreal, PQ, this display consisted of a very nice shadow box diorama consisting of 3 sections and totaling about 12 feet or more. He was modeling an early century, wooded setting involving a steam engine.

Northeast N-Trak – comprised of the New Jersey Southern, MaiNe Trak and possibly another club, this was one of the bigger N scale displays. While basically rectangular in shape, the layout featured several interior curves as well as interior staging yards and open space between the long axis of the layout, which allowed visitor to freely roam throughout most of the layout. Most of the layout was without protective plexi as well. Note: none of the layouts at the show used a closed, rectangular layout like we do for the March show. Rather, some displays had protective railings while others were wide open to visitors. Most participants were running trains and following their train, which did prevent the crowds from reaching out to touch the layout.

Northeast Region T-Trak – a large display although unfortunately no information about many modules were joined together. A little disappointing in my opinion, as there were obvious gaps between the backs and sides of the modules, as well as roads and scenery not aligning, which really detracted from the overall quality of the models in my opinion.

New Middletown & Stoney Creek was displaying a sectional layout that was reported to have over 21,000 feet (scale?) of track.

Valley Ntrak of CT – another sizable Ntrak based layout for a club based in Seymour, CT. Somehow late in the day and I didn't grab any photos but a nice mixture of scenes and modules.

My only negative comments on some of the layouts....where were the trains? I lost count of how many layouts which were seemingly having problems running or just not running any trains at all. Maybe a case of too many trains still in the yard or Saturday morning gremlins but a lack of trains was noticeable. You've heard many of us say this at our own displays but non-running trains really detract from the layout quality and lose visitor interest.

So, would I attend the show again? A qualified yes, as it's not a cheap show to attend, given the distance and associated drive time it takes, the cost of a hotel and meals, as well as the \$15 daily entrance fee plus \$5 parking fee. But there are certainly some deals to be had, and it's really amazing to see so many vendors, displays, museums, etc under roof and be able to talk with their representatives. I was even amazed to find the Fostoria Rail Preservation Society present and promoting railfanning at their newly completed display area (maybe a good place for a group outing to watch the 1:1 scale stuff). Of course, the other down side is the time of year it is held and the fact that you never know where and when you'll encounter winter weather. I left OH in what I consider a manageable snow event (e.g. snow and 45-mph roads until Jamestown, NY) which only put me an hour behind schedule before hitting dry roads and speed limit conditions. However, the drive back found me battling snow covered roads northeast of Binghamton and once again from Salamanca to Erie. I heard the next day that Erie got hit with 7 inches of the white stuff and a bad accident closed a part of the Interstate, which I did get to sit in the traffic until being diverted off the road. Maybe next time I'll fly there.

Submitted by Ken S.



JTC Containers



River Point Station (N Scale trucks) (2 photos)





ScaleTrains (Engines Rolling Stock)



Springcreek Model Trains (Throttle)



Northeast N-Trak (Layout) (4 photos)



↑ Unknown N scale Layout

← Northeast Region T-Trak (

“F.R.E.D.”



See you at the next station!