



The Pie Card



Division Eight Newsletter - Mid-Central Region, National Model Railroad Association

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Number 12

From the Superintendent's Desk



WOW! December already -- seems like we were just up in Salem for our picnic.

As the year comes to an end, we all start looking back at our accomplishments and perhaps the things we wished we had completed.

Thanks to a good many of you who work on every event the division had this past year; we had a very successful convention, we have a fantastic new facility for our monthly meetings, we have a great Pie Card to read every month, and we have a fantastic website to keep us informed.

What about you? Did you get everything started, or finished on your layout that you wanted to? As I've preached to you many times, have an open house or an ops session and you're on fire getting your layout ready for your guests. That certainly works for me.

Last month you read in the Pie Card that a long time member Ivan Baugh passed away. Later you heard that Ivan's son donated all of Ivan's train items to the Division 8. As we went through the various items I couldn't help thinking about how many new items there were and how Ivan didn't get around to placing them on his layout.

So don't wait until later to do that layout work as later may not come!

Another end of the year topic is: don't forget to say a big thanks to our three hobby shop owners who keep us supplied with the train goodies we want or need.

Each year hobby shops around the country face stiffer competition from the online retailers, yet HobbyTown USA, The Roundhouse, and Scale Reproductions keep a shop full of train and other hobby supplies. Not only do they keep new items regularly arriving in their stores, they offer NMRA members a discount and are willing to special order items for us.

Russ Weis

NOVEMBER MEETING REPORT



The meeting was held on Thursday, 7:30 PM, November 16 at the Southern Indiana Club in Jeffersonville (the Division 8 Train Show and Sale fell on our regular meeting date). Superintendent Russ Weis thanked Duke Green and Ken Petit with Southern Indiana Club for hosting our meeting. Duke said Southern Indiana Superintendent Jeff McMahan sent his welcome; Jeff was in the process of moving and couldn't attend. Mike Berry said he had 44 reservations for the Division Christmas Party on December 2; cut off is 55. Paul Downs said the K-Sons is in the process of becoming a 100% NMRA Club. Achievement Program Chairman Joe Fields presented certificates to Tom Guenther, Bob Dawson, and Fred Soward (See page 3). Russ Weis said the January meeting is being moved forward a week to January 13 to avoid a conflict with the Great Train Show at

the Fairgrounds. He said a program is needed for the January meeting. Ron Ellison said help is needed for the Division Train Show at the Moose Lodge this weekend. Set up will be 3 PM Friday; help is needed to assist dealers to tables beginning at 7:30 AM, and to take-down at 3 PM. There were six dioramas entered in the contest. Bob Kuchler came in first and John Stoltz second. Phillip Johnson won the gift card drawing. The minutes for the November meeting are posted on the website.

TIME TABLE

Dec 16, Open House Sat 1-5 PM Swift Creek Railroad, Greenville, IN

Dec 16, Open House, Sat 11-4 PM Tom Guenther's L&N CV Division

Jan 13, Sat 2 PM, Div.8 Mtg., 600 Room

Jan 20-21, Great Train Show, Fairgrounds.

Feb 17, TBA

Mar 17, TBA

Mar 24, Sat. 10-3, Div8 Train Show and Sale, Moose Lodge.

CHARLIE KEELING MODEL CONTEST*Fred Soward, Contest Chairman*

December	NO CONTEST
January	Freight Cars
February	Diesel Locomotives
March	Commercial Structures
April	Passenger Cars
May	Cabooses
June	Open Loads
July	NO CONTEST
August	MOW Equipment
September	Photos
October	Steam Locomotives
November	Displays/Dioramas

There were six displays/dioramas entered in the November 2017 monthly meeting contest, from N scale to G. Bob Kuchler came in first with his N scale trailer park and John Stoltz came in second with his HO scale T&E Shop.

Bob Kuchler's display/diorama was of a 1950's era trailer park. The trailers came to the park in a variety of ways, much like the residents of a real trailer park. Some of them were purchased, some were modified, some were cast by Bob, and some were made from paper kits. Some of the people were hand painted by Bob and about half of the automobiles are castings that Bob made and painted. We found a LOT of detail in the numerous mini-scenes on the display including a letter carrier being challenged by two dogs at a mailbox.

John Stoltz's T&E shop is a kitbash, scrap box, scratchbuilt, and borrowed pieces solution. The scratchbuilt part includes the water tank, sanding tower and house, and tool house. The repair shop itself is a Bill's Train Shop laser cut kit, and the 2-6-0 mogul locomotive is a Roundhouse kit that was purchased at one of our Division 8 swap meets. John did have to assemble and paint it, though. The code 70 track is "borrowed" from Mike Shane's layout while most of the accessories are from Woodland Scenics.

Current standings: Bill Lynch leads with 9 points; John Stoltz moved into second place with 7 points; Bob Frankrone and Joe Fields are tied for third with 5 points; Bob Kuchler and Ed Brennan are fourth with 4 points; Barry Christensen is next with 3 points; Patrick Hardesty and Ron Ellison are next with 2 points; and Bob Johnson, Rick Maloney, and Robin White are at 1 point.

December has no contest because of the Christmas party. In January, be sure to bring your favorite freight car to share with the group.

There will be blank contest entry forms for anyone who needs one at the January meeting. You can save yourself some time at the meeting by downloading the entry form from the Division 8 website or Facebook page and completing it prior to arriving at the meeting. The judging is strictly people's choice. If you would also like your model to be judged for the Achievement program, contact Joe Fields and he will arrange to have AP judges present.



NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.

January meeting will be Saturday JANUARY 13, 2018 at the 600 Room.

MAINTENANCE TIES FUND 2017

The Maintenance Ties Fund helps underwrite the Member Welfare Fund and the printing of the Pie Card for those members who don't have access to a computer. The Member Welfare Fund provides a gift certificate to a member or spouse who has been hospitalized. It is also used for an expression of sympathy upon the death of a member or a member's spouse. Donations to date: \$100 Fred and Barbara Soward; \$40 John Ottman, Steve Taylor and John Czwerninski; \$44 James Kuzirian; \$25 Ed Brennan; \$ 20 Mark Hedge.

THANKS FOR ANOTHER GREAT TRAIN SHOW*Ron Ellison, Show Chairman*

Thank you !

I just wanted to take a moment to thank all the Division 8 members who help with and attended our Fall Train Show & Sale. 2017 was the 27th year of the show. Because of all of you our Fall Show was a success. A special "Thank You" to Brenda Stewart and Ruth & Bill Lynch for taking care of our admissions table -- also to Barbara Soward for greeting our Dealers at the back door -- and to Don Fowler for keeping our parking organized. Some may not know it but the lot became full during the show, and Don spent several hours outside directing traffic so our attendees could come into the Show. And last but not least, to Mark Hedge who once again sold every dealer table. We're already working on our 28th year and the Spring Show on March 24, 2018.

Thanks everyone, Ron



Above: Bob Kuchler's December contest winner. Fred Soward Photo

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

AP Chairman Joe Fields



At our October and November Division meetings it was my pleasure to present several NMRA AP Certificates. At the October meeting Mark Norman received his certificate for Model Railroad Author; Richard Maloney and Robert Kuchler received certificates for Association Volunteer. (Photos were in the October issue of the Pie Card). At the November meeting, Fred Soward, Bob Dawson and Tom Guenther received certificates for Chief Dispatcher. Tom also received certificates for Association Volunteer, Scenery, and Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical. Congratulations to each of you.

Left: From left to right, Tom Guentner, Bob Dawson, Fred Soward.
Photo by Barbara Soward.

If you have had the chance to read the MCR newsletter, Division 8 was well represented in the Achievement Program report. Out of 23 AP Certificates Division 8 members received 9, in the merit award section out of 20 awards Division 8 claimed 6. Congratulations to all who received these awards. As we begin to think about a New Year, it will as always be my privilege and pleasure to help you obtain AP Certificates for your endeavors. Just give me a call or email me to set up a time and place to look at your work. This Christmas season I hope you and yours will be truly blessed and that the New Year will find you healthy and happy.



PIKE SHOWCASE

Left: Leased units on Tom Guentner's L & N Cumberland Valley Div. coming out of Keeman, running between Norton and Louisville.

The locomotives belong to Fred Soward. Fred said, "This was their first run out of the box. Looked good, ran well, & sounded great!"

Photo by Fred Soward

TRACKSIDE WITH BOB DAWSON

Right: December 19, 2007, a southbound CSX freight slowly passes over the Falls of the Ohio on the Louisville & Indiana Bridge.



LOVE THOSE LOADS

By Bob Frankrone



In my February 2017 Pie Card article I wrote about building open loads from common plumbing items such as PVC pipe and tubing. This month I would like to expand on that theme with another load that I built from PVC plumbing materials.

Several years ago Walthers released a 66 foot, 8-axle, heavy-duty flat car that I just had to purchase. It ran “empty” on my layout for some time before I decided on a proper load for it to haul. I needed something rather large to warrant that type of car, but not very tall as the flat car was not depressed-center. I decided upon a large cylinder tank load that I would make from PVC plumbing materials. So it was off to my local home improvement store where I found three rather inexpensive pieces that were perfectly suited for the load I had in mind. I selected a T-joint and two matching end caps. I model in HO scale so the pipe diameter I selected was 1 ½”, which represents a fairly large tank. The diameter of the opening in the center of the T-joint is slightly less at 1”.

I sanded the open ends of the T-joint and end caps so that they fit together flush. I glued the three pieces together with CA adhesive, being very careful to align their centers. To conceal the two vertical joints, I used .010” thick styrene strip, 1/8” wide, that I wrapped around the cylinder and glued in place. These could be considered reinforcing straps on the prototype load. I made sure the two ends of each styrene strip were positioned on the underside of the tank so they wouldn’t show when the load was mounted atop the flat car. The opening at the center of the T-joint is located on the topside of the tank.

I spray painted the tank a flat black and constructed a wooden plate from scale lumber to cover the opening at the top. I weathered the tank with rust colored chalks and stained the cover plate a light brown. I made four tie-down fixtures from a styrene angle strip and glued them to the surface of the flat car. These were necessary to secure the load to the car and they were relatively easy to make. The photo of the model shows the location of the tie-down fixtures. To mount the load, I glued the tank directly to the car’s surface, being extremely careful to center it on all three axes – i.e. front to back, side to side, and vertical with the center opening pointing straight up. Once again using scale lumber, I created anti-roll chocks to place at the base of the tank on both its sides. I further secured the tank to the flat car by using a heavy duty thread to simulate tie-down cables.

DIVISION 8 FALL TRAIN SHOW

There was a full house at the Fall Train Show. Lots of happy sellers, buyers, and train enthusiasts. We even managed to get Barbara Soward to run a train as the engineer, assisted by Herman Weir as her switchman, on the HO Scale Pikeville switching layout. Look at that - Barbara running a train!!! Looks like Herman, is waiting for her next move in town. Phillip Johnson is watching, possibly to make sure there are no safety violations!



Photo by Fred Soward

Tis the season for Holiday Open houses

These are the open houses known at the time of publication.



**TOM GUENTHNER'S
L & N MODEL RAILROAD**
Saturday December 16
11 AM to 4 PM
4523 So. 1st Street,
Louisville, KY 40214-1953



HARRY MUNZER
Saturday December 16
1PM to 5 PM
6265 Buttontown Rd.
Greenville, IN 47124
812-923-1537

Harry will be running both the HO and Lionel layout.

Light snacks and refreshments will be available.



KENTUCKY & INDIANA CLUB

Southwest regional Library
9725 Dixie Hwy.
Louisville, KY 40272
Layout will be open December 23 until New Year's during regular Library operating hours.

INSTALLING A DECODER

By Eric Waggoner



Fig. 1. Preparing to install your decoder.

Like a good many HO Scale model railroaders, I have a few locomotives. I really have too many for my layout and will start to sell off a few using eBay. Well, for that matter I am just starting my layout but I digress. In any case, my plans for a model railroad do indeed call for multiple people (more than one anyway) to operate at least two trains or more on it at the same time.

Experience with many model railroad layouts I have operated on have shown that the best way to be successful in this endeavor today is with digital command control, or DCC. The multiple cabs and control circuits on some of the DC model railroads prove complex for some operators and DCC seems to make this so much easier. I am an engineer by training and when I get away from the office, I want life to be simple and DCC makes that possible. DCC also makes wiring the layout simpler and easier to accomplish, plus it opens up so many ??

possibilities that I cannot go into in this simple article.

The problem with DCC is that you need to have locomotives that operate on DCC. Fortunately, the newer locomotives manufactured by the major suppliers including Atlas, Broadway Limited, Bachmann and a host of others offer them with DCC decoders already installed. While these locomotives are flawless in operation and look fantastic, they can be somewhat expensive when they come with complete sound systems with all the bells and whistles! The value of having these on your layout is tremendous and I highly recommend investigating in them at your local hobby shop. However, if you are like me you already have a host of locomotives that are DCC ready but have no decoder installed. This offers the average modeler a slightly lower-cost alternative to get into DCC -- installing the decoder yourself.

Let me focus on one particular locomotive design although many are similar in configuration and installation. I have quite a few of the Atlas locomotives that are DCC ready but no decoder installed. These are found in almost every swap meet, hobby store and basement with model trains. These locomotives are plentiful and relatively inexpensive when compared to their fully sound equipped, ready to run cousins. The locomotive to focus on today is an Atlas GP-40 L&N locomotive. The GP-40 is a very common locomotive and most railroads had a few. This particular model was originally built by EMD for the L&N in the mid 1960's and probably is still running someplace today although its exact disposition is currently unknown to me.

After a trip to my favorite local hobby store, I selected the Digitrax® DH165IP DCC Plug "N Play decoder for the installation process. The Digitrax web site helps you pick out a decoder if you need help but the folks in the hobby store are excellent at this too. This decoder features 128 speed steps, momentum, user selectable direction of travel, and function outputs for prototypical lighting effects. While I was at the hobby store, I also picked up some Kadee® #148 Magne-Matic standard head metal "whisker" couplers to install instead of the standard Atlas couplers. I just like the operation of the Kadee couplers better and since I was going to be removing them anyway, now is a good time for the simple upgrade.

Figure #1 shows the assembled supplies for this installation. One of the things I really recommend is a good place to install the decoders, or to do anything on your motive power or rolling stock. For this type of work a workbench with adequate lighting is very helpful as well as a place to sit the locomotive while working on it. The Atlas locomotives as well as many others have a lot of small detail parts already installed such as lift rings on the top of the long hoods, handrails and hand grabs. This is one thing that really sets these locomotives apart from the rest of the pack. I like to use a foam cradle to rest the locomotive on (as in the photograph); these are available at your local hobby store or via mail-order from several suppliers.

Looking at the diagram from Atlas, I removed the small screws that held the couplers pockets in place and removed the couplers. I discarded the standard couplers as they will be replaced by the new Kadee #148 couplers. I then proceeded to remove the shell from the locomotive only to discover to my wonderment that the top cover on the long hood is removable to allow access to the decoder. Even simpler! Refer to Figure 2.

Now that I have (accidentally) gained access to the interior of the locomotive, I can quickly verify that this locomotive does not have a decoder installed and then remove the dummy plug Atlas installs. Note that this model has a circuit card assembly installed that controls lighting. There are optional decoders that simply replace this card as well, however the Digitrax decoder I selected is a direct

replacement for the dummy plug and operates the lights as is with no bulb replacements or soldering in resistors. Having done this during my early days as an engineer for the Navy, I can tell you that anytime I can avoid soldering, then we are way ahead of the game. The next important thing is to identify which pin hole on this circuit card assembly is the #1 hole. This one is clearly marked in Figure 2 with an arrow. Even a dummy like me can see this arrow.

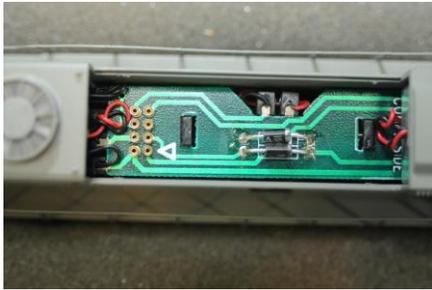


Fig. 2 Atlas Circuit Card Assembly

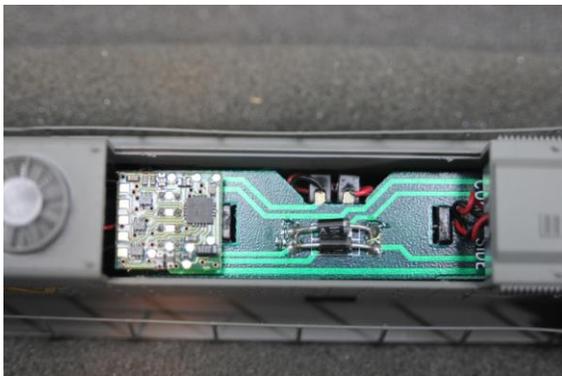
photograph, this is the one in the center of the card closest to me (or the camera lens in this case). Now it is a simple task to remove the protective foam and install the decoder in the circuit card assembly. Yippee skippy. We're done. As the instructions usually say; reassemble in reverse order of disassembly. The next challenge is getting the upside-down couplers to stay in the little pockets while reinserting them into the locomotive pilot. Once accomplished, you're ready for the programming track. Wait. I don't have a programming track yet as I am still under construction. No worries. Any small piece of track connected to your DCC system will work. Simply follow the instructions you have for programming using your system but remember that this decoder is identified as 03 since it has not been programmed yet. You will most likely want to identify it as your locomotive number using a long address.

See, even a dummy like me can install a decoder. I did not even need call in the electronics engineer in my office to do this. So, for all those individuals who want to get the locomotives on their roster shopped and brought up to the latest standards, you really do not have an excuse anymore. This really is as simple and can be done in several minutes and it is relatively inexpensive.

Now for the hardest part of the installation process; identifying which is pin #1 on the decoder? Refer to figure 3. This decoder and as you can see from the metric scale is tiny. Now that I am older than I care to admit, I need glasses to read and certainly some magnification to see this decoder but today, the decoders are thankfully smaller and easier to fit in a locomotive body shell. According to the manual supplied with the decoder, the #1 pin is the one that is round. Well shoot, four of them look square but fortunately the illustration supplied in the manufacturer's instructions indicates that the #1 pin is the one away from the four-square ones on the left edge. Looking at my



Fig. 3. The Decoder



In reality, DCC makes operating a layout with multiple engines and consists a lot easier. I think it really simplifies locomotive operation and the layout in general. Most of the modelers today I hope have switched to DCC by now but if you are holding out, I hope this shows you that this is a really easy chore, is not that expensive, and can be accomplished on just about any locomotive. Older locomotive will require more effort to solder the connections for the motor, pick-up and bulbs or LEDs, or may require a resistor but in reality, it's a simple task. In a single evening, you can upgrade quite a few locomotives.

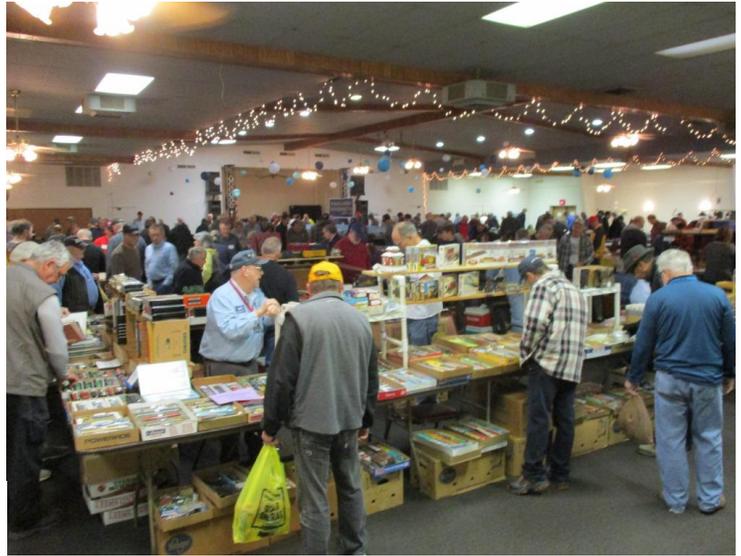
Fig. 4. Installed Decoder



CINCINNATI EXPRESS
Mid-Central Region Convention
West Chester, Ohio, May 17-20, 2018
Hosted by Cincinnati Division 7, MCR, NMRA
Mailing Address: CX Registrar
6526 Hollowview Ct.
Liberty Township, OH 45011

FALL TRAIN SHOW AND SALE

Photos by Bob Dawson and Fred Soward



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THE PIE CARD

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