



The FUSEE



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Fall 2009

The end: How *not* to build a model railroad

By Paul Ullrich

Nothing lasts forever, including model railroad layouts. Especially model railroad layouts, if you're married and want to stay that way.

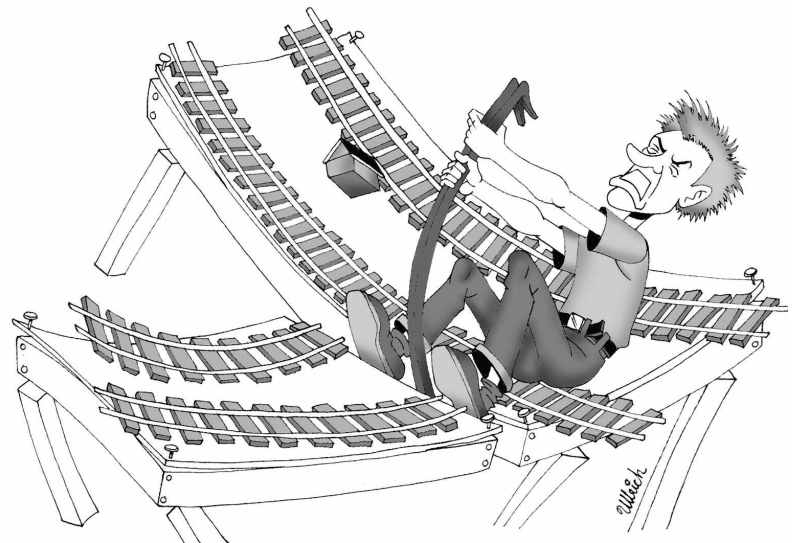
We decided to move, and we found a house with a basement that fit my layout perfectly. Actually, once you got down the stairs you'd have to suck in your gut and shimmy sideways between the layout and the doorway to get in, but it was all the more reason to keep trim and fit, especially if you were headed to the laundry room with a full hamper of dirty clothes.

When I started building my layout in 1980, I never thought I'd have to dismantle it. I didn't build it to be torn down easily. But eight years after I started construction, I found myself doing just that.

I thought it was going to be so easy that I left the disassembly to moving day. As the big, burly moving men took all of our earthly possessions and tossed them into their truck, I busied myself taking apart my O-scale empire. I rented a van to transport the layout by myself.

The layout was in four pieces. There were the two original 4'x8' sections, plus a 4'x5' section and a 2'x4' section that I had added on. All of these sections were fastened together with those dreaded spiral nails, the Gordian knot of the construction trade. I literally pulled a hammerhead off its handle when I tried to take these nails out. I ended up using a very large crowbar in extremely tight quarters underneath the layout to pry them out. Most of my brittle, slapdash wiring was close to these nails. It all disintegrated as I wrenched nail after nail out of the boards.

Eight years before, I carried those 4X8 plywood sheets up the narrow attic stairwell. I thought



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“You can’t always get what you want ...”

(with apologies to the Rolling Stones)

Most of us, I suspect, are familiar with the Rolling Stones’ hit song by this title. Many of us probably even recall the first release in 1969—already 40 years ago! At first, I thought of trying to come up with a witty take-off for this column, but thank goodness common sense returned and here we are in prose format with hopefully meaningful content.


The phrase still applies though – think of the title in the context of being a member of a Division in the Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA. Perhaps you agree that when it comes to Thousand Lakes Region conventions, “you can’t always get what you want.” But what is it you want? We on the Board of Directors don’t know for sure, especially from those of you who haven’t attended at all or recently. That’s why we’re asking you to invest five minutes (maybe ten, depending how fast you keyboard and take to access the website) to complete the survey on page 9

Why bother? Because your seven member Board of Directors, including recently elected vice president Gerry Miller, want to know what you think and what you would like to see for conventions, that’s why! You

can also add comments to expand on your thoughts, if you’d care to amplify.

What happens to the results? The Board will review them in detail prior to and during our October 17 mid-year meeting in Spirit Lake, Iowa. With Paul Ullrich’s group of the No. 1 Northern Division in Winnipeg putting together content and working on the details for next spring and Gerry working on 2011 in Dubuque, there’s ample opportunity for us to pay attention to your preferences.

As your president, I promise that we will pay attention to the feedback we receive – the more the merrier. If you’d like to join us in Spirit Lake on the 17th of October (Pizza Ranch, 10:00 a.m.), great. Otherwise you can read the published results and subsequent actions from our next minutes.

Better yet, make plans now to update your passport to travel across the border and join us next spring for a terrific weekend in Winnipeg. After all, if you try sometimes just might find you get what you need. 

TUNNEL VISION

by Editor Gerry Leone, MMR

Big thanks, big highlights. To me, big stuff.

Before I go one step further, I need to thank two authors who spent a great deal of time and effort contributing articles to THE FUSEE. Both wrote three-part articles – doesn’t sound like much until you try to do one yourself. It’s no mean feat. So these guys deserve a lot of credit.

The first “thank you” goes to Les Breuer, MMR, for putting together that extensive, exhaustive retrospective of the TLR’s first 60 years. He had no idea what he’d gotten into when I asked him to give it a whack, and from all reports, it took him over 120 hours to compile. Les told me he actually had fun paging through all the old FUSEES and seeing familiar faces and names. It was a great way to celebrate our birthday year. And Lord knows, the guy (or girl) who has to put together the TLR’s 75th Anniversary retrospective will certainly have a much easier time because s/he can use Les’s story as a guide. So again, THANKS, LES!

The second author that deserves a huge pat on the back is cartoonist and author extraordinaire, Paul Ullrich. Paul’s three-part series, “How not to build a model railroad” has graced our covers these past three issues, and frankly, I’ve gotten more positive comments on that series than I have on anything else I’ve run in my 5-year tenure as editor. Just as important as the writing, Paul volunteered to supply me with his own original drawings to accompany the series. Mostly, though, I appreciate the fact that Paul wasn’t shy about sharing his foibles with the rest of us. Took a lot of courage. Thanks again!

And, of course, that’s a great lead-in for my annual plea for articles.

I need articles. I always need articles. Funny stuff. Touching stuff. “How-to” articles. “Guess what I saw” articles. “A funny thing hap-

pened to me on the way to the train club” articles. Anything. Please. Oh please. Send me your articles. Please.



Elsewhere in the news, I attended the NMRA’s annual convention in Hartford last July and had a really good time. For me, one of the highlights was the Board of Directors meeting (honest!), which I got to attend due to my new NMRA Communications Director position. People assume it’s a lot of politics – it’s not. It’s a bunch of people who are spending a load of their free time trying to make this a better organization for all of us. I was very impressed with their discussions, and with their concern for the NMRA.

The other two highlights for me were the layout tours. I got to meet one of my model railroading heroes, Earl Smallshaw, talk with him, and see the layout that spawned dozens of memorable (and for me, influential) magazine articles first-hand. It was a real treat. Earl’s a great guy.

I also got to meet George Sellios and see his famous “Franklin and South Manchester” layout. I have to tell you: it’s honestly better in person than it looks in the photos. It’s breathtaking.

Next year’s the NMRA’s 75th Anniversary. Hope I see a lot of you in Milwaukee!

THANKS!
Contributors to this issue
(in completely random order, I swear):

Dan Cioffi, Lester Breuer, MMR,
Paul Ullrich, Gerry Miller, Bruce
De Young, and Nick Andrusiak

Next issue’s deadline:
November 10, 2009

Recollections of the very first Board meeting held in the new NMRA HQ

For some of our newer members who may not know, until the early '80s, the NMRA's headquarters was in Canton, OH. The NMRA decided to build its own building in Chattanooga, TN, on land donated to the NMRA by the Tennessee Valley Railroad. A large "buy a brick" fundraiser was instituted, and before long a new building was erected... the building the NMRA still calls home today. - Gerry

By Nick Andrusiak

Hilt Friesen served as TLR trustee to the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) Board of Trustees in 1979 and 1980. Two years later I became TLR trustee and by this time Hilt had been elected to the position of Plains Vice President with jurisdiction over the TLR, MCoR and RMR. We traveled together to the midyear (first weekend in March) board meeting in 1983 to Chattanooga, TN, where the new building was under construction.

The trip to Chattanooga is memorable because we held the first Board Meeting in the new NMRA building. The drywall dust was swept up by the trustees from MCoR and TLR while the others went to borrow folding chairs from the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum nearby. Jim Hammer and I set up two of the contractor's 4x8 folding tables about seven feet apart and put a sheet of plywood between them. The lighting was a 100-watt bulb on the end of a wire hanging from the ceiling that you screwed in to turn the light on. But we were first group to have a meeting in the Chattanooga headquarters building in March 1983!

If you are in Winnipeg, there is no way to get to Chattanooga from here; you have to go somewhere else first (such as to Atlanta). The airfare for the 99 miles from Atlanta to Chattanooga was nearly as much as the fare from Winnipeg to Atlanta so we rented a car for the two-hour drive, saved money, and had local transportation all weekend.

The Northwest Airlines flight from Winnipeg that Friday morning was delayed on the leg from Winnipeg to Minneapolis-St. Paul so our connection to Atlanta had



left. The next plane was a Delta flight and the only seats left were the front two in first class. Hilt put his metal-sided briefcase on the floor in front of us but the flight attendant said it had to go in the overhead bin and started lifting it. She just about fell over from the weight. Hilt explained that he was a coin collector.

And what a collector! He worked for a pinball machine company, repairing and emptying the machines of quarters. Hilt drove a Ford Thunderbird with overload springs on the rear axle to hold up the 700 to 800 pounds of coins he would collect on trips to rural Manitoba. His boss had no use for American quarters (banks don't handle foreign coins) so he let Hilt keep them. Hilt rolled them into ten dollar rolls and took them with him when he went to the US. The entire hotel and restaurant stay in Chattanooga was paid in rolls of quarters, some of which he put down as a deposit and some of which he paid out at the end of a meal. I reimbursed him at the end of the trip.

Don't forget your passport or Nexus card!

Just a quick reminder that next year's annual TLR convention will be held in Winnipeg, MB. If you're a U.S. citizen, you'll need a valid, up-to-date passport in order to enter Canada and return to the U.S. You could also check into obtaining a Nexus card. Just Google "Nexus card" if you can't follow this link: http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/trustee_traveler/nexus_prog/nexus.xml.

Contest Corrections

We had some corrections from Contest Director Jim Bernier that came in after the Spring/Convention issue of THE FUSEE went to press:

Ron Einarson won 3rd Place in the Freight Cars category of the model contest with his On30 H&LB#3 Gondola.

Winning 1st Place in the Online Structures was Mike Engler's "Duluth Freight Transfer." "Leone's Meat Packing" won 1st Place in Online Displays, Mike's "Railroad Camp" came in 2nd, and his "Nelson Spice Co." took 3rd Place.

And my fault: I apparently wasn't looking at my fingers when I typed in the title of Tom Mauszycki's 3rd Place winning photograph. It was actually "Early Evening Switch Job," not "Ear;u Evemomg Swotcj Job." Sorry about that, Tom!

You may also want to check with Customs and Immigration to find out what can and can't be brought into Canada (for example, no guns, tobacco or alcohol). You'll also need to find out the maximum allowance for the value of anything you bring back with you.

See www.thousandlakesregion.org for the latest convention info!

HAPPY 60TH ANNIVERSARY, TLR!

To help us celebrate our 60th Anniversary, we've run highlights of the history of the Region in the previous two issues. This last installment will bring us up to the present. What a history the Region's had! As always, a million thanks to Les Breuer, MMR, for taking the time to weed through all the old issues of THE FUSEE to bring this to all of us.

Compiled by Lester J. Breuer, MMR

1986

TLR membership hits a new record of 653 members. Jeffrey Hanson receives the first model contest "Youth Award" at the TLR Spring convention in Duluth, MN. A year of numerous articles informing us about installing Kadee couplers, track laying and wiring, living near a railroad, tips for better modeling, modeling for fun and profit, West Virginia railfanning, trolley poles, model RR insurance, hints for fine scale modeling, animation effects, and car order operations. "Where Were You?" by Cy Svobodny, the TLR Historian, tells us of past milestones and accomplishments. Plans for a small tool shed, pipe culverts, and two DM&IR cabooses are reproduced for our modeling use. Mike Penn drawings begin to appear. Regular columns stress open communication and sharing the TLR model railroading spirit. A special joint fall convention in Rapid City, SD is sponsored by the Black Hills Railroad Historical Society, The Rocky Mountain Region and the TLR.

1987

In his regular column, the "Traffic Department" Gordon Hanson tells readers TLR membership continues to record growth reaching 750 members and provides the demographics of the record number. Nick Andrusiak's series of "Living Near The Railroad" continues. John Hotvet tells us how to hand lay turnouts and begins a new regular column "Model Construction Reviews." John Whitlock begins the "Electronic Niche" with a caboose flasher circuit. Dave Vos takes readers on a tour of his Cumberland Railroad. "Division News" offers congratulations to the Prairie Lakes Division for the first edition of their newsletter "The Journal." THE FUSEE staff in memory of Bud Sima and his NMRA "Bulletin" cardboard boxcar sides begins a pull out center section of TLR cardboard boxcar sides with the "Minneapolis & Northland" of Lester Breuer chosen for the first center-fold.

1988

The only FUSEE color cover in its long history has a photo taken by Mark Wilson of a scene on Gene Hickey's Idaho Midland layout. Not only a color cover but one printed on glossy paper. The TLR announces its first prototype model Region car, Canadian Pacific

International of Maine Division, (see photo on TLR website, TLR History) first available at the annual convention in Winnipeg, Canada. Nick Andrusiak's series continues another year. A reprinted article from The Mainstreeter on the NP in Brainerd makes readers aware of the fine resources available to us as modelers by the historical societies. In the regular "RPO Car" column we read, "the FUSEE looks better than the BULLETIN" (today Scale Rails), professional appearance, beautifully done, informative, interesting and fun. And, you've got "THUMBS" cartoons.

1989

We meet John Whitlock, MMR 140 the newest TLR MMR. "The Master's Corner" which first featured Gene Hickey, MMR 24, continues with Larry Schreiber, MMR 92, Stafford Swain, MMR 98, and Gayle Olson, MMR 113 telling us about their railroads.



Frank Gerry makes us aware of the impact "Thomas The Tank Engine" is having on our hobby in England, Canada and the United States. In "The RPO Car" a note of thanks from the NMRA to everyone in the TLR for the generous contribution to the Building Fund in memory of Gene Hickey.

1990

The Northern Lights Model Railroad Association, a club in Grand Forks, helps further the hobby by getting the Community Education Division of the Grand Forks Public Schools to conduct an eight week course in model railroading. The Northstar Limited TLR annual convention location has to be quickly changed to the NCR Comten

Corporate Headquarters due to the convention hotel closing its doors on Friday, April 13th. In its fourth year, Nick Andrusiak's FUSEE series, now called "Living Near the Rails" fills three issues making it the longest series in FUSEE history. "DM&IR Steam Power" by Martin Boyask is reprinted from the ROUNDHOUSE, publication of the British Region with photos of Wayne C. Olsen added by Gordon Hanson, FUSEE editor. Ron Einarson's "Casting and Carving a Brick Foundation" with plaster helps add detail to a structure and "Tips" provides valuable tips collected for years from various sources.

1991

A year focusing on TLR contests. "How Are The Model Contest Entries Judged?" by Dave Downie. "Locomotive Performance Contest Rules" reprinted from the NMRA BULLETIN. "Judging Photo Contests" series by Mike Penn in which he informs us that judging a photo contest is an extremely subjective concept. "Silverton Warehouse" by Keith Koch, MMR a wood structure scratch building project including plans. Ron Einarson explains how to make trees using garden grown Sedum and has more tips to share. A constant lighting circuit in "Lighting Passenger Cars" by John Whitlock, MMR. And, "Railfanning a New Way" by Gordon Hanson introduces us to the computer railroad bulletin boards (the beginning internet). Bill McKean presents the President's Award to Rodger Williams, who is one of those "behind the scenes" people who are absolutely necessary for our organization to function.

1992

"Taking Better Model Pictures" series by Mark Wilson focus is on selecting a camera, lens and building a pinhole lens, to allow us to take better model photos. At the TLR Annual General meeting in Marshall, MN Pat Walker reports on work done to bid for the NMRA 1999 National Convention in Minneapolis/St. Paul.

1993

The TLR BOD and membership at the Region convention in Rochester, MN approve to sponsor the bid to hold the NMRA 1999 national convention in the Twin Cities. The original issue of The FUSEE, Vol. 0, Number 0, is reprinted. The Fusee now can receive electronic article submissions via modem.

1994

At the annual convention in Grand Forks, ND. Bob O'Brien is honored as MMR 217. The special video contest held in Rochester, MN is repeated in Grand Forks, ND. "The Information Super-Railroad" by Wes Barris introduces us to the kind of railroad information available on the INTERNET. "Molding with Alginate" by John Williams familiarizes us with a dental molding material we can use for casting. Prototype information on General American's airslide covered hopper and trailer train reporting marks taken from the Car and Locomotive Cyclopeda, Centennial 1974 Edition is shared by Corey Gated (Mike Penn). It is now official, the NMRA awards the 1999 convention to the Twin Cities. Current membership is 414, one less than 1993.

1995

We meet Keith Koch, MMR 228. Terry Davis describes the history, track plan and wiring of his Cat Creek Central. "Railfanning In Western Manitoba" by Ron Einarson provides a detailed account photographing the CN and CP with Larry Leavens for a day. A new FUSEE feature "From the Archives" plans on presenting photographs from private collections.

1996

Brian Wordes "One Dollar" article tells us how he purchased the Sacred Heart depot, built by the MILW and now owned by the TC&W, had it moved to a site near his house, and restored it. THE FUSEE ends the gloss paper cover begun in 1988.

1997

We meet Arnold Walker, MMR 225. John Hotvet, MMR 259 receives his MMR plaque at Twin Rails '97 the TLR Region convention. The generosity of convention attendees was notable in the Flood Relief raffle for the Red River Valley area. THE FUSEE downsizes to 12 to 16 pages due to printing costs exceeding dues income from a falling TLR membership which is now under 250 members.

1998

At the TLR annual convention in Minot, ND NMRA President Bob Charles presents a clinic giving an insight into the workings of the NMRA. After numerous Fusee contributions, Ron Einarson has his own column "Ron's Ramblings" to provide modeling information and tips.

1999

Coverage of the NorthStar '99 experience is reported by Fred Headon and excerpts from the diary of Bill Taylor provide another perspective. TLR 50th Anniversary is commemorated by a party at NorthStar '99, a "TLR 50 Year History" publication edited by Lester

Breuer is given to each TLR member, and a Region car is produced (see TLR website, TLR History for photo). Featured model railroads described by John Hotvet, MMR are: Great Northern-Willmar Div. of Richard Remiarz, CNR Cougar River Subdivision of Ken and Jeremy Epp's, Sogan Valley Route of Michael Moormann, and the Cumberland Northern Railway of David Vos. TLR membership, now 371, is growing again.

2000

"Pike Chatter" by Bill Taylor visits the Northland Route of Arnie Walker, the Twin Lakes Terminal & Transfer Railroad of Ray Goy, and the Cumbrian Mountain Lines of Ed Mulholland. Dick William's "Model Railroad Travels" visits model railroads in Hawaii and France. "Vintage RR Ads" is a new FUSEE feature showing us railroad ads from the collection of Hilt Friesen. TLR's spring convention, Millennium Express, held in Winnipeg has Jim Kelly from MR giving a layout design clinic and Clark Kooning delivering one on gadgets.

2001

"The Dakota, Minnesota And Eastern Railroad vs. The Coal And Railroad Industry" by Tom Mauszycki tells us about planned expansion into the Powder River Basin of Wyoming. John Hotvet, MMR and Mark Wilson hand over the proceeds from Northstar '99 NMRA National Convention to the TLR at the annual convention in Fargo.

2002

"Worlds Greatest Hobby" is a new effort to promote the hobby of model railroading. "Central States Fire Apparatus" by Lester Breuer provides a review of building fire trucks in Lyons, SD. The article is based on a prototype tour at the TLR Sioux Falls convention. "Operation on the Faribault and Central Minnesota" by Mike Penn lets us know how he moves cars using a basic card system on his railroad. Bill McKean tells us about prototype cars called "paint-outs" (a car with its number painted out and new one applied) and how to model them.

2003

"Division News" informs us Ron Einarson, new No. 1 Northern Division superintendent, thanks Wolfgang von Thuelen who steps down after his 10 years of service. Ron still makes time to tell us about storage organization and making telephone poles. Terry Davis's "Info and Photos of Divisional Shows" series fills most of two FUSEE issues. TLR participates in Thunder Bay train show to raise money for the Therapeutic Riding Assoc. to support their work with physically and mentally disadvantaged children.

2004

Fred Headon, MMR 328, receives his plaque at TLR's annual convention in Grand Forks, ND.. Bill McKean's "Vehicles for the Layout" tells us using period vehicles can help make the scene more real, more identifiable to both the modeler and to other viewers. We learn grade crossing details that can be modeled in "Grade Crossings" by Fred Headon. Corey Gated is back with a method for making trees. Digital Photography now in TLR photo contest. NMRA eliminates the Region Trustee position.

2005

Gerry Leone, MMR 364, is the TLR's newest MMR and FUSEE editor. NMRA Long Range Plan which contains single dues membership for National, Region and Division is approved. TLR adopts By-law changes to bring TLR into compliance with NMRA. We are introduced to the NMRA Kalmbach Memorial Library by Thomas Mossbeck and NMRA Rail Pass membership. Ted Hotvet with the help of his dad John Hotvet, MMR repaints a GN boxcar for his Eagle Scout project. Fred Headon, MMR, tells us how to improve coal and ore car loads and Dave Vos lets us know how NSP unloaded power poles in the '50s. "TrainToons" created and drawn by Paul Ulrich appears.

2006

THE FUSEE has special insert to provide each members a copy of the new TLR By-laws. Jim Bernier's series takes us on a tour of his Pecatonica Division railroad. John Hotvet's "Kit Review" column continues another year. Thomas Mossbeck explains how to use an Official Railway Equipment Register available from the Kalmbach Memorial Library. Paul Ulrich describes his first train ride: a short trip to Long Island, NY. "World's Greatest Hobby On Tour" comes to St. Paul. Brass Car Sides, a supporter of THE FUSEE via advertising for many years, owned by TLR member Dennis Henry of St. Peter, MN introduces a video compilation of trains in Indiana and Minnesota.

2007

We meet the TLR's newest Master Model Railroaders Lester J. Breuer, MMR 387 and Thomas E. Mauszycki, MMR 388. NMRA approves Achievement Program changes. TLR's Ron Einarson becomes NMRA Canada President. At the TLR Winona convention the "Chinese auction" fund raiser is used for the first time. Gerry Leone, MMR, our FUSEE editor said he would pack THE FUSEE with articles – "meat" to make it worth the subscription price and he does, along with regular columns, and "TrainToons". (You can revisit these and many other FUSEE articles in FUSEE back issues on the TLR website.)

Craft paints and model railroading – perfect together

By Bruce De Young

Wouldn't it be nice if we had an almost unlimited choice of paint colors available to us? Wouldn't it be even nicer if a two ounce bottle of that paint was routinely priced at less than a dollar? Well, we do, and they are!

If you haven't discovered the many uses of the inexpensive lines of acrylic craft paints available at Wal-Mart and craft stores like Michaels, A.C. Moore, and JoAnn's Fabrics, read on. Although there are other brands, the primary ones that are available in the stores just mentioned are made by Apple Barrel, Folk Art, Americana, and Delta Ceramcoat. A list of the available colors would take up the entire newsletter!

Some of the brands have thicker paints than others, but most can be brushed on right out of the bottle. I squeeze some out of the bottle into a small plastic cup (like the kind some fast food restaurants use for condiments), and stir it good with a toothpick. If you want to thin the paint a bit, either water or windshield washer fluid will do the job—again, just stir it good with that toothpick.

Now let's talk about uses of these paints in our hobby.

Structures

If you build wood structures, these are the paints for you. If you normally stain your walls first with one of the alcohol and ink (or leather dye) mixes you can still do that. The same is true if you want to paint your walls first with an oil-based paint (like Floquil CN Gray) as a base coat. Once those base coats are dry, the craft paints will go over them the same as any other paints.

As with any water-based paint, heavy applications can warp wood walls. However, any warping can be eliminated by bracing the inside of the walls first or by painting both sides of the wall with the craft paints.

To be safe, I apply the craft paint to the wood walls with a stiff brush. I only put a little paint on the brush, and keep spreading the paint out over the wall until it is almost dry. This 'semi-dry brushing' technique allows some of the base coat to show through, and gives a



nice weathered look. It also helps prevent any warping of the walls.

As I have already mentioned, the selection of paint colors is almost unlimited, let your imagination go wild. If you want suggestions, the inset box contains some I like.

Wall Color	Trim Color
Apple Barrel Lemon Chiffon	Delta Ceramcoat Wedgewood Green
Folk Art Light Gray	Delta Ceramcoat Maroon
Delta Ceramcoat Parchment	Folk Art Real Brown
Folk Art Butter Pecan	Apple Barrel Burnt Umber

Craft paints are also ideal for painting plaster

structures. In this case, I like to thin the paint (again, with either water or with windshield washer fluid), and apply it more like a stain. It soaks nicely into the plaster walls. For stone walls, use an assortment of browns, tans, grays, or any of the earth tones. For a mortar color, I have had good luck with a mix of Apple Barrel Burnt Umber and Folk Art Light Gray (mix in a ratio of 3:2). For brick work, the Americana line has three colors that I like: Terra Cotta, Georgia Clay, and Burnt Orange.

Again, you can use the mortar color mix I mentioned above, or try a mix of Apple Barrel

Country Tan and Folk Art Pewter Gray in a 7:3 ratio. Then, you can play around with your own mixes.

For styrene or resin kits, I find that you really need to prime the walls before using craft paints. Over the years, I have used the Polly

"Paints" continued on page 7

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"Paints" continued from page 6

Scale gray primer, Floquil primer, or more often, an inexpensive spray primer from Wal-Mart. Once any one of these primers are dry, the craft paints will adhere to the plastic or resin quite well. I find that I often have to use several thin coats to get good coverage on plastic and resin.

Detail Items

If you have a collection of plastic, metal, or resin detail items (barrels, crates, etc.), prime them with a cheap spray primer, and paint them up with craft paints. It works quite well. If you are familiar with the black plastic fencing available from Central Valley, I have gotten great results by dry brushing Folk Art Barnwood right onto the black plastic, with no priming. That Barnwood color also looks great dry brushed onto the walls of a wood structure, especially if you have given it a base color with alcohol and India ink.

Scenery

As mentioned above, thinned craft paints make a great stain on plaster. So, when you want to color your plaster ground, rocks, cliffs, etc., think of using the various earth colors that are available with these craft paints. Just make them into a wash and apply them the way you would any other wash.

Making a concrete road or sidewalk? Try the 7:3 mix of Apple Barrel Country Tan and Folk Art Pewter Gray. For black top roads, I play around with mixes of Folk Art Dark Gray, Folk Art Wrought Iron, Americana Charcoal Gray, and Americana Asphaltum.

Just a tip here: once you get a mix that you like, write down the formula. Also, when making up a batch, make sure you make plenty for the entire job. The chances are, your next mix will look just a little different. (Ask me how I know!)

Want to dry brush some color on the tops of the ripples/waves you have formed in your rivers and streams? I love Folk Art Icy White for that application (white with just a hint of blue).

Rolling Stock


Although I have not used craft paints for rolling stock, a modeling friend of mine routinely does. He had found a variety of craft paint colors that closely match the corresponding railroad colors. He thins the paints down with windshield washer fluid, and applies it with an air brush. If you are inter-

ested in learning how he does this, he has posted a detailed explanation on the Railroad-Line Forum. Here is the link to those instructions: http://www.railroad-line.com/forum/topic.asp?ARCHIVE=true&TOPIC_ID=3558.

As you can see, there are plenty of uses of acrylic craft paints in our hobby. I am often asked if the paint is so thick that it covers up the details on the model. I have not found that to be a problem. However, I tend to model primarily with wood where that is less likely to happen. Also, I apply the paint in thin coats.

Another frequent question concerns the care of the brushes I use with these paints. When I see the paint starting to build up on the brush, I simply dip it in some water, and wipe it off in a rag. Then it is right back to painting. When done, I clean my brushes well with Octagon Soap and water. Others swear by either the blue windshield washer fluid or Windex. I find that my brushes last just as long when using craft paints as with any other type of paint.

Finally, I want to mention that new colors are always being added to these lines of paints, and old colors are dropped. If you have trouble finding a specific color that I have mentioned, that might be why. Not too long ago, Apple Barrel dropped one of my favorite colors – Indian Red. Luckily, a friend was able to find some still on the shelf, and he sent it to me. I now use it for "special applications."

So there you have it. If you haven't tried using these paints yet, go for it. Just watch out. Collecting additional colors can become habit forming! 

Arrivals and Departures

Latest arrivals are NP "Holiday Lounge" sides in HO (#65, \$31.75) and N (#565, \$21.75). We have also retooled the #60 Milwaukee Road "Grove" cafe-parlor and #52 RPO-Express HO sides to fit the Walther's *Hiawatha* car bodies. We continue to solicit reservations for a variety of HO and N-scale sets as listed on our website and printed reservation form.

We regret that we have had to discontinue some older items due to insufficient sales. See our website or write us for updated list. We still offer over 100 items for GN, NP, SP&S, CB&Q, BN, MILW, UP, PRR, NYC, SP, C&NW, IC, RI, B&O, C&E, L&N, KCS, N&W, ERIE, ATSF, MP, CN, CP, VIA & Amtrak. Use HO sides with TSP, Rivarossi, Con-Cor, ECW, Bachmann, Kato, Walther's, our HO Body Kits, or in N the ALM core kits or plastic dome car overlays. Send 7-oz. SAE for catalog and bulletin. Available through hobby shops or direct from us (\$4.50 for shipping, plus \$0.50 per ALM core kit if ordered.) Add 6.875% MN sales tax for MN orders. See our website for current information sheets, forms, bulletins, DVD, CV trucks, and magazines.

www.brasscarsides.com

www.granitecitytrainshow.com



All Aboard!
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA

GRANITE CITY TRAIN SHOW

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2009
Buy, sell, trade or just view hundreds of trains under one roof.
9am-3:30pm - National Guard Armory - 1710 Veteran's Drive - Saint Cloud, MN
Admission: \$4.00 - Kids 12 and under FREE!

REGISTER TO WIN **WIN A LIONEL HOGWART'S EXPRESS TRAIN SET!** **REGISTER TO WIN**

FOOD & REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE **COME SEE!** Model & Toy Trains (all scales), Accessories, Books, Videos, Railroad Collectibles and Memorabilia, Antique Toys, Hobby Items and More!
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Operating Model and Toy Train Displays
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Vendors and hobbyists welcome!
Call 320-255-0033 or visit www.granitecitytrainshow.com
email: edwardolson@cloudnet.com

Map & Directions: www.granitecitytrainshow.com/GCTS_map.pdf

Think you know your train trivia? Try these on for size!

Compiled by Dan Cioffi

Think you know your trains? See how well you do at this Transcontinental Railroad Train Trivia! The answers are on page 10. But no cheating!

1) Known as "One of the classic icons of American imagery", the photograph "laying the last rail" shows two locomotives nose to nose after the last tie was placed and the last rail was spiked. The two railroads formed the transcontinental railroad. In the photograph, which is on the left and which is on the right?

2) What are the locomotive numbers for the two locomotives shown in the photograph?

3) Though the date of the photograph was May 10, 1869, what is the legal completion date of the Transcontinental Railroad?

4) What were the eastern and western terminals for the railroad?

5) On what date did construction start?

6) How long was the Transcontinental Railroad?

7) Which railroad laid more miles of track?

8) The Pacific Railroad Act provided federal money to help pay for construction and was signed by what President?

9) What President was a former Railroad Attorney for the Union Pacific? What other railroads did he perform legal services for?

10) A portable city followed the UP's progress. It was the "location" of company headquarters for the construction. What tongue-in-cheek name was this "city" affectionately known by?

You'll find all the answers are on page 10!

Want us to remind you when your FUSEE subscription expires?

No problem! Just send your email address to Treasurer Dave Hamilton at mzz64@yahoo.com. Put "FUSEE Reminder" in the subject. He'll send you a reminder when your subscription needs renewing.

Plus, you can check the date on your mailing label on each FUSEE issue!

31st Annual Spud Valley Hobby Show

Sunday, October 18, 2009
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Admission: \$5
(under 12 free with paid adult)

Ramada Plaza Suites
Crystal Ballroom
1635 42nd St. S.,
Fargo ND

For information, call Gerald: 701-799-0534

- ★ 15th Annual "Plastics on the Prairie" model contest
- ★ Large & small operating model railroads
- ★ Vendors selling farm toys, plastic models, model railroad items, die cast vehicles, old toys, railroad collectibles and more
- ★ Door prizes -- No need to be present to win
- ★ Valley RC Flyers displaying their planes

Take a few minutes to answer our convention survey!

The TLR Board of Directors is looking for your feedback regarding our conventions. They'll use your opinions to tailor future conventions to meet your interests. Any opinions on past conventions or what you would like to see at a future convention would be greatly appreciated.

Please email your answers to TLR VP Gerry Miller at: tlrsurvey@hotmail.com. If you have additional ideas, please include those in your email.

1. What would be the best convention schedule?
 - A. More clinics, fewer tours
 - B. More tours, fewer clinics
 - C. More of both
 - D. Less of both
 - E. I like the conventions the way they are

Add your ideas to your reply!
2. What clinic format do you like best?
 - A. Hands-on (such as the Hales' clinic at Hutchinson)
 - B. Clinics with PowerPoint/slides
 - C. Clinics with examples to pass around
 - D. All of the above

Add your ideas to your reply!

We are always looking for people to present a clinic. If this interests you please mention this in your email.

3. Have you ever attended a TLR convention?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No Please tell us why not.
4. How often do you attend a TLR convention?
 - A. Every year.
 - B. Every other year
 - C. Only if the convention is in a town close to where I live

Please include the year of the last TLR convention you attended.

Our next two conventions cover the far reaches of our region: Winnipeg in the north and Dubuque in the southeast.

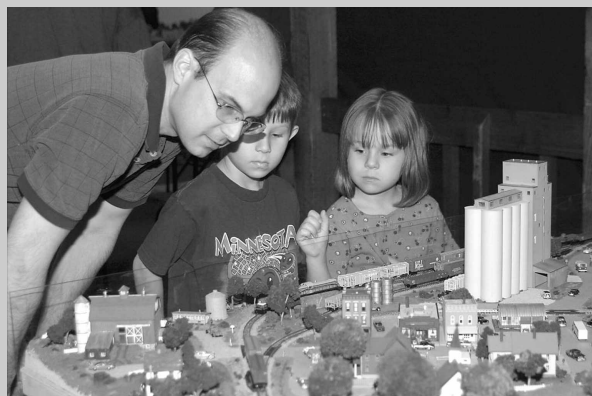
5. How far are you willing to travel to a convention?
 - A. 50 miles
 - B. 100 miles
 - C. 200 miles
 - D. I'll go wherever the convention is held

Please include your city in your email.
6. Are you willing to host a convention in your town?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Maybe
7. What is the best length for a convention?
 - A. 2 days
 - B. 3 days
 - C. 4 days
8. If the cost of the convention is an issue for you, how would you reduce the cost?
9. We do our best to include a variety of activities at conventions. What would you like to see included that isn't now?
10. What is your favorite part of a TLR convention?
11. What is your least favorite part of a TLR convention?

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

Gerry Miller, TLR Vice President

15th Hutchinson Model RR Show



Layouts paid \$25 to attend!
Call David Zachmeyer: (320) 587-8641
or e-mail: zachmeyer@mac.com

8-foot flea market tables only \$20 each!
Call Mark Brauh: (320) 587-2279
or e-mail: mkbraun@hutchtel.net

Sat. Sept. 26, 2009
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

McLeod County Fairgrounds
780 Century Ave. S.W.
Hutchinson, MN.

Admission: \$4 adults, 12 & younger free

Many operating model railroads on display, a large flea market, modeling clinics and a model contest in such categories as structures, rolling stock, MOW, cabooses and motive power.

www.lucelinerailroadclub.com

For more info: call (320) 587-7820 or e-mail: ptdavis@hutchtel.net

“How NOT to” continued from page 1

there'd be no problem getting them down. But the plywood sheets weren't braced with 1x4's when I took them upstairs.

I pulled one of the braced boards down the stairwell. When reached the landing, I saw that there was no way it was going to be angled through the narrow doorway. I had no choice but to push the section back up the stairwell and cut it into smaller and more easily navigable sections.

In the midst of the chaos of moving day, my wife watched in awe as I dashed frantically to the basement to fetch my crowbar and saw, then rushed to the attic again. After decades of being married to a model railroader, she doesn't shock easily, but my actions on that day surprised her. Her strongest memory of that moving day is the sound of me tearing apart my layout while the movers stripped our house bare.

In less than an hour, well before the movers had finished, I had completely destroyed my layout, and the eight years of work that went with it. Wires, track, bent nails and sawdust were scattered everywhere. But I now had six easily totable sections to carry downstairs.

As I took the pieces of my layout out to the van, I realized that reconstruction wasn't impossible, but it was not going to be easy. I wondered if it was worth resurrecting this ungainly abomination. Did I really want to recreate it, warts and all?

My wife put the kibosh on the deal when she announced that the basement rec room should be a future place for our son and his delinquent friends to hang out. My layout was exiled to the adjoining room, which housed the furnace, the water heater, and the washing machine. This space was much smaller than the rec room, so I had no choice but to start from scratch.

This was a blessing, for it was a perfect opportunity to build a layout without the built-in mistakes I'd suffered through for eight years. With bitter experience as my guide, I set forth planning a smaller but more efficient layout.

The first thing I did was use a plan from a book. I strongly recommend this to all beginning model railroaders. A book plan is tried and tested. There are no surprises when you build a layout and operate trains with a book plan. The layout I picked gave me an easy reach from anywhere in case of derailments. No one would build a deck or a garage without a plan. You couldn't get a building permit without showing the city a plan. Hey, maybe it should be a requirement to get a building

permit to construct a model railroad! Using tracing paper, a T-square and a compass, I drew plans for placing track, buildings, accessories, extra sidings and wiring. I salvaged the lumber from my old layout and constructed my layout in several pieces that could fit through a door. The sections were bolted, not nailed together. To give me clearance under the table, I boosted the height of my layout to 48".

I studied model railroad landscaping from several books. I attended landscaping clinics at the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club. I asked a lot of questions. Much to my surprise (and not anyone else's), landscaping with ground foam and other modern materials was a lot easier than struggling with those green dyed sawdust mats!

I covered the entire layout with 1" thick Styrofoam for quiet operating. It was easy to sculpt, and I made a convincing river bed by simply digging down to the plywood. It doesn't take a screw very well, but once the roadbed was secured and the ballast was laid, screws weren't necessary. I used scrap pieces of Styrofoam to build retaining walls for the elevated section of my layout. I broke them up by hand and stacked them on top of each other, fastening them with a glue gun. With a little paint, lichen and ground foam, I had a very nice looking rocky surface.

I discovered a unique substance for roadbed. The previous owners of our house had stuck 12" square cork and mirror tiles all over one wall of the rec room. No one liked the cheezy '70s disco feeling this brought to the room, so down it came. With a little cutting and shaping, the cork tiles made a great roadbed!

I wanted to solder as little as possible, so I bought terminal strips for power, ground, accessories and lights and placed them roughly in the center of each section. The feeder wires to the track run from the track to the strips in a star pattern. I found out much later that this is the preferred wiring system to use for a digital command system. The spider web pattern isn't very neat, but it's easy to trace a wire from its source to the strip. Terminal strips are also used where each section of the layout is joined, making disassembly a snap. Only four wires lead back to the transformer.

I took my time building my new layout. I was able to run trains on the layout since the first year, while I fiddled around with everything else. The layout is complete, and it's very nice, but the room is very cramped. My son moved out four days after his 18th birthday, and that large rec room area that was supposed to be his den of iniquity is being used as a storage area. I want to move the layout out there! 🚂

Answers to Transcontinental Train Trivia (found on page 8)

HEY! No cheating! Go back and read the questions first!

- 1) The Central Pacific and the Union Pacific
- 2) The CP Jupiter is on the left. It has no road number. On the right is UP # 119.
- 3) In 1879, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision in Union Pacific Railroad vs. United States (99 U.S. 402), the official "date of completion" of the Transcontinental Railroad as November 6, 1869.
- 4) Sacramento, CA and Omaha, NE.
- 5) On January 1, 1863, Governor Leland Stanford broke ground in Sacramento, California, to begin construction of the Central Pacific Railroad. Stanford was also a part owner of the CP.
- 6) 1,776 miles were laid between Omaha and Sacramento.
- 7) The Central Pacific laid 690 miles of track, much to their chagrin. The UP laid 1,087 miles of track. Since the US government was paying the railroads based on the amount of track laid, both had incentive to lay as much track as possible.
- 8) Abraham Lincoln
- 9) Abraham Lincoln was known as a skilful railroad attorney. Besides the UP, he also did legal work for the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific and the Illinois Central Railroads.
- 10) The city was known as Hell-On-Wheels. It not only contained a company store, suppliers and such, it was also home to gambling, drinking and prostitution for the construction workers. When the railroad reached the site of Benton, WY, Hell on Wheels was permanently located there. Reaching a population of 3,000 residents at its peak, it was only in existence from July to September 1868. There wasn't a close source of water for the city to exist. 🚂

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Nuts. I forgot to put some bogus copy in here.

Changes of address should be sent to the Treasurer.

FUSEE Advertising

Commercial advertising from hobby shops, manufacturers, and other businesses with a model railroading interest is accepted. Pike ads are for individual layouts, model railroad clubs, or other non-commercial groups. All ads can be run in a single issue at the rate of 35% of the annual rate.

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Full pg 9 1/8" x 7 1/8"	\$145.00	\$50.75	\$90.00
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1/4 pg 4 1/4" x 3 1/2"	45.00	15.75	25.00
1/6 pg 4 1/4" x 2 1/4"	35.00	12.25	18.50
1/8 pg 2 3/8" x 2 1/4"	25.00	8.75	15.00
1/8 pg 3 1/4" x 2 1/4"	25.00	8.75	15.00
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1/16 pg 1 1/8" x 3 1/2"	15.00	5.25	7.50

All advertising should be mailed to THE FUSEE editor as camera-ready artwork or electronic files (jpeg, tiff, gif, or EPS with outlined fonts). Payment must be enclosed and should be in U.S. funds, international money order, or by check drawn on U.S. Banks. Questions? Contact the Editor!

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**Mail to: Dave Hamilton, Treasurer
18015 33rd Place N., Plymouth, MN 55447**



Fall 2009

THE FUSEE

18015 33rd Place N.
Plymouth, MN 55447

INSIDE:

Conclusions:

The TLR's 60th Anniversary

*How not to build a
model railroad*

Train shows & events in and near the Region

Compiled by Gerry Leone, Jim Bernier, and Terry Davis

Saturday, 9/18/09, Fourth Annual Model Train Open House, 12 PM - 5 PM, Five Sioux Falls home layouts plus the recently updated Sioux Valley Model Engineers Society club layout at the Sioux Empire Fairgrounds. Layouts include new HO-scale and award-winning N-scale. Railpasses: \$5 per person, \$10 per family available at 10 AM that morning at HobbyTown, 1007 West 41st Street, Sioux Falls. For info, <http://dsed.svmes.net> or call Terry Anderson at 605-767-5423

Saturday, 9/26/09, 15th Hutchinson Model Railroad Show, 9 AM - 4 PM, McLeod County Fairgrounds, 780 Century Ave. SW, Hutchinson, MN. Admission: \$4, 12 and under free. Operating railroads, flea market, modeling clinics and model contest. For more info 320-587-7820 or ptdavis@hutchtel.net

Saturday, 10/3/09, Soo Line Historical & Technical Society Convention Model RR Swap Meet, 8:30 AM - 1 PM, Alexandria Holiday Inn Convention Center courtyard 4. Admission free. For more info, www.sooline.org or call Ken Ohlfs, 608-781-4835, ohlfs.kent@uwlax.edu.

Saturday, 10/17/09, Prairie Lakes Division Fall Meet, 8:30 AM - 3 PM, Spirit Lake Expo Building, Spirit Lake, IA. Admission: \$3 (Kids 12 and under free). Contests, raffle, vendor tables, clinics, club modular layout, business meeting and layout tours. For more info: Ronald Peterson, 712-225-4780, ron31545@yahoo.com or Doug Harding, 712-754-3303, dougharding@iowacentralrr.org.

Saturday - Sunday, 10/17-18/09, Great Canadian Train Show and Flea market, 10 AM - 5 PM (Sat.), 11 AM - 4 PM (Sun.), Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute, 180 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB.

Sunday, 10/18/09, 31st Annual Spud Valley Hobby Show, 9 AM - 3 PM, Ramada Plaza Suites, Crystal Ballroom, 1635 42nd St. S., Fargo, ND. Admission: \$5, under 12 free with paid adult. 15th Annual "Plastics on the Prairie" model contest, operating model railroads, vendors selling toys, models, railroad items, collectibles and more, door prizes, Valley RC Flyers displaying planes. For more information call Gerald, 701-799-0534.

Sunday, 10/18/09, 6th Annual Hobby and Craft Show and Swap Meet, 9 AM - 4 PM, Grant River Center, 500 Bell St., Dubuque, IA. Admission: \$3, under 12 free. Presented by Fagan's Hobbies. Trains and RR memorabilia, RC trucks, cars and airplanes, model vehicles, trading cars, more. More info: 563-588-0846 or email fagansonline@yahoo.com.

Sunday, 11/1/09, 24th Annual Dubuque Model RR Show & Swap Meet, 10 AM - 4 PM, Dubuque County Fairgrounds Ballroom, 14569 Old Highway Rd. Admission: \$3, children 50-cents with adult. For more info: 563-663-425

Saturday - Sunday, 11/21-22/09, Trains At Christmas 2009, 10 AM - 5 PM (Sat.), 11 AM - 4 PM (Sun.), W.H. Lyons Fairgrounds Expo Building, Sioux Falls, SD. For more info: www.svmes.net

If you're in the Thousand Lakes Region and would like your train show, swap meet, Division meeting, club meeting or other railroad/model railroad-related event listed in our calendar, please send it to Jim Bernier at jrbernier@hotmail.com by the deadline listed inside.