



**Three Lakes Model Railroad Club
Volume 3, Number 1**

**1st 100% Club in Wisconsin
Jan 2012**

Go West Young Man, Go West:

by R.G. Blocks

Were this a century back it could be compared with barn raising, fall roundup or your neighbors helping you pick your bumper crop. Folks come to Three Lakes Wisconsin to have a good time and this would be that. Some came this past Saturday to help Janel Wolke pack her store for moving. We started at 8 AM and were moved out by 11 AM. Some came to help Dale Wolke rehang and re-shelve goods. They finished by 4PM. Then, there were the guys in the middle, including Janel's dad, Paul who claims to have transported something like 12,500 items. It was Janel's dad who did much of the work on the big pyramids at Gaza: but that was long ago.



To the left, we find Marge Blocks and Janel Wolke with the first of many empty boxes to be filled. Note they are standing in front of some very over-crowded shelves in the old Choo Choo Store.

The idea would be to package everything in the shop and move it about 150 feet to the west to a much larger and attractive showroom location with additional provisions for training.

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn



The large O, HO Gauge train layout will be packed up and moved on the weekend of January 21-22.



Dale Wolke, Mr Choo himself, came down the street to pull a cartload of small parts. Mrs Choo is instructing him in the art of moving. Together, they form team Choo Choo.

The move was greatly aided by Rob Baker's Food who donated his shop carts. White Deer Liquor owner John Olkowski, Jr. provided some much needed talent in rigging fully loaded rotating display racks for transport. Janell a waitress at Main Street Café loaned two Coke

carts which lightened the workload. These business folks saved the pack and unpacking crews considerable effort and hours of labor.

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

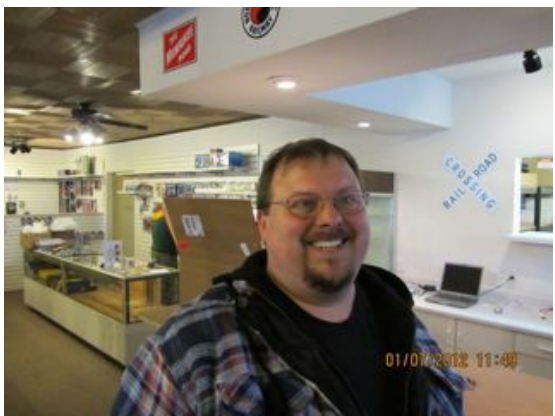
By and large the effort to move the Choo Choo Store went without a hitch and was a multiple laugh occasion. We won't say anything about pants sliding down as a plumber was imitated. The payroll for the day included coffee and sweet rolls, pizza, soft-drinks and lots of atta-boys.



John Olkowski, Jr. and Ray Grabowski are removing a security mirror. Diane Grabowski and Janel just about have the old store empty and are still smiling. Nothing was broken or lost.



Susan Macek and Tarena from New Orleans are shown unpacking boxes and stocking shelves.



Russ Szuta was a stalwart transportation specialist and Bill Voss took charge of HO track.

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn



Jerry Fiorovante a good friend of Dale's helped with tool stocking and Adam Forsyth was his number one assistant and can be credited with hanging the tool wall. Work got accomplished when Adam rolled up his sleeves.

Ed Jacobsen packed, moved and told stories. Russ Szuta, John Macek re-mounted the security mirrors. Wayne Campbell did a bang up job both packing and moving. Brian Fletcher was the O gauge track specialist. Dave Creadon helped pack. It was smooth as clockwork.

The new store was improved for 'eye wash' (ie, dolled up, prettied and organized) the following day. These Sunday stalwarts included Florian Bieschke, Jerry Fiorovante, Bill Thrall, Bill Voss, Russ Szuta and John Macek. Ray and Diane Grabowski also came back. One must conclude that they liked the pizza on Saturday. Dave Walker, proprietor of the Main Street Café, provided free of charge, some of the goodies served and the pizza's were of his creation. We all learned that good work and food go well together.

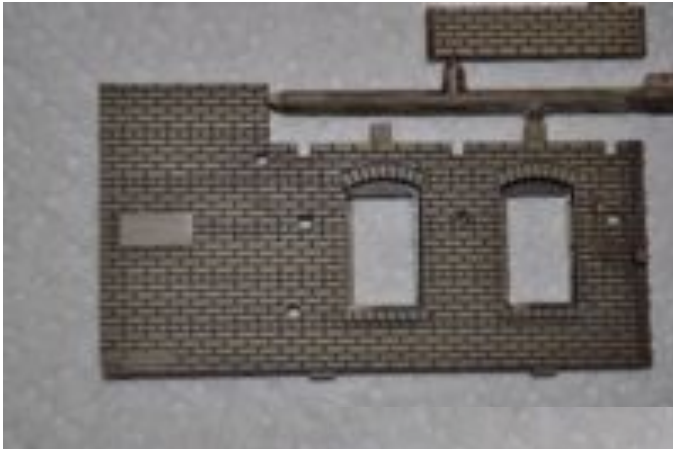
The new store address is 1805 Superior Street. The phones have not changed. Locally please use 715-546-8036 and the toll free is 888-546-3058. The fax is 888-546-3069 and email remains the same: dale@thechoochoostore.com. Packages may be sent to PO Box 234, Three Lakes, WI, 54562, which is the company mailbox. Thus, only the store location changed. Visit!



This move and the force that helped it happen is all about friendship. It was friends taking care of friends. It was a "smiles were written all over their faces" sort of day. Business is all about giving and receiving. Repeat business is all about being happily served and a desire for a continuation of that pleasure. Success is a two way street. We saw the making of it this weekend.

Kit A Long: a bricks and mortar approach

by K. McMillen



When I started the signal tower kit I wanted to try a different brick painting technique that sounded interesting. I sprayed all the brickwork pieces with Polly S aged concrete, the color I'd chosen for the mortar color. When it had dried properly, the plan was to daub a brick color on the surface of the plastic pieces, giving the brick

a nice dark color and leaving the lighter color in the mortar lines.



This proved to be difficult, very difficult. I tried several times to get a brush set with enough brick paint to daub onto the surface, without too much paint going into the mortar lines. It didn't work, the mortar lines just filled up. So I grabbed a paper towel and wiped the castings. Low and behold, the dark color stayed in the mortar grooves and

left the concrete color on the brick face. This is what it looks like:



Interesting, but not real normal looking. But the ease in which I was able to wipe the top of the casting, told me a more traditional approach would work nicely. So starting from an

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

unpainted wall (I have two kits, to allow for mistakes), I applied aged concrete with a brush and immediately wiped the surface. Here is the second attempt:



This much more like I had hoped. So the work continues . Did anyone else try the first method with better results? I may shoot the whole thing with a red or brown and try spackling compound. I read about that somewhere and thought it might be interesting to try.

KeithMcMillen – Las Vegas, NV

Railroad Happenings: or Semi-local events...

January 21-22, 2012 Arctic Run Train Show – Holiday Inn – Stevens Point, WI
More info at: www.trainweb.org/cwmr

January 28, 2012 Tri State Rail Sale – La Crosse Center, 2nd & Pearl Streets, La Crosse, WI <http://www.nmra-scwd.org/Badgerland> or www.4000foundation.com

February 18 – 19, 2012 Mad City Model RR Show – Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI www.nmra-scwd.org

February 19, 2012 WISE Division Meet, Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, 1005 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI

March 3 - 4, 2012 High Wheeler Train Show, Palatine, IL info at www.highwheelertrainshow.com

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

March 9, 10, 11, 2012, Midwest Region Convention, Annual Meeting of Members, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Springfield, Illinois. Discount Amtrak fares: host Illinois Valley Division.

March 11, 2012 Metro Model RR Club Show & Swap Meet, Circle B Recreation 6261 Hwy 60, Cedarburg, WI info at www.metrorrclub.org

March 18, 2012 WISE Division Meet, Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, 1005 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI

April 15, 2012 WISE Division Meet, Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, 1005 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI

April 28 – 29, 2012 Titledown Train Show, Shopko Hall, Green Bay, WI Info at www.ttsgbllc.com

May 5, 2012 NMRA Winnebagoland Division Spring Meet, Plymouth, WI

July 29 – August 4, 2012 it's the 77th National Model Railroad Convention, Grand Rapids, MI. The host club is found at www.grmrhs.org a 100% NMRA club. For info on the convention: www.gr2012.org Seventy fantastic layouts within one hour of the 12th best hotel in North America (Amway). Let's all go!

April 2013 Convention, Midwest Region, Marriot Indianapolis, IN (tentative).

Life's Little Challenges

by R.G. Blocks

We were observing the RRA guys operating their modular layout. It was running both DC and DCC at the same time. The scenery looked good. I asked Brendan how he was coming on his module and he answered with the question, "How do you design and build a 3-D layout?" Making the assumption that he knew how RRA guys built their foam top setup, I said there are many approaches. He said, "Tell me one".



This is my response to Brendan's question. One-way to meet the challenge of the hills, valleys and depth of 3-D can be found here; an answer to life's little challenges. It is 'one answer'.

I am in the process of building five portable modules in code 83 rail for our On30 Thunderlake and OutaSite RR. Not unlike the RRA guys; my

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

modules, while portable, do not entirely conform to Free Mo. Three of my modules are foam top flat: a single track branch-line each with track on the module centerline. The other two modules are transitions from a flat foam top world into the rugged mountainous 3-D world of our fixed in place Thomasville Region of the C&NW. Our focus here will be on the 3-D aspects.

Our narrow gauge railroad transports Wisconsin potatoes, logs and rough lumber, ores of the element Prevaricum (including Prevaricator and Prevaricati) and a twice daily passenger run from Sugar Camp/ Three Lakes to rail interchanges at Ivankovic and Roger’s Park. It is a busy branch

Our rail to parallel rail centerlines are necessarily wider than HO specs and On30 obstacle clearances are for On30 rolling stock thus modestly wider than HO. Our modules should work fine as a branch line for RRA using a ‘track bridge’ to go from RRA’s code 100 to our code 83 rail. One to five of our modules can thus provide a short line and some variation to any Free Mo, or Free Mo like operation.



Here, on the left, grandson TJ is operating an On30 engine on the T&O using a wireless DCC device.

The above, essentially depicts the extent of the rather flat elevation portion of the T&O narrow gauge. The photo to the right shows my modest attempt at ‘mountainous’, perhaps what Brendan envisions a 3-D environment.



The frame is ½ inch ply, as are track supports in both vertical and horizontal directions.

Screws, #2 square drive in lengths from 1.5 to 3.5 inches and a modest amount of wood glue provide joint security (solid, not floating, not a point of vibration). Track support spans are roughly eighteen to twenty four inches apart. Table legs (not installed for these photos) are clear, 1.5 inch square with anti sway bracing. One module 43” x 31”, rounds the corner and then near seamlessly joins to a second

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

module 64" x 31". Both units fit our station wagon. The longer one transitions to the permanent portion of the layout.

That longer module features the main line and it's passing track using a gauntlet track to cross a slightly curved, slight inclined narrow wooden trestle. The T&O was not making the mistake of predecessor firms by over-committing on plant and equipment and has track-work with grades < 4%. The trestle crosses a deep valley



and rail spurs serving a pair of mines and their product, ash and concentrated gangue removal. These spur and older feed-lines use expensive concrete reinforced stone bridges to cross the same valley and river. While beautiful, the spur has a 6%+ grade thus limiting the number of cars being pulled from the mines and raising production and finished product handling cost.

My granddaughter Laura helped with a bit of the construction. In this scene, only a portion of the aluminum screen wire, used to support plaster-soaked rags is affixed to the track. Laura has her hand on one end of what will be the end of the gauntlet trestle. A narrow road, also cut from the track support board, runs to our right of her hand and follows on the wider track board.

Below, with all the screen wire in place, and a 'Stand Rock' sort of memorable feature of nature providing reason for the T&O to avoid its damage (and thus install the narrow cost saving gauntlet trestle) I provide you with an idea of the module size. The next steps, in order, will be to apply (and glue down) cork roadbed, lay track, wire, and test both modules. I show you this longer module since it features several requirements for the Civil, Scenery, Electrical and Structures Achievement Programs of the NMRA.



Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

For the Civil AP we must build and submit for judging, three pieces of hand-laid track. The gauntlet, a 30-degree crossing and one of the two turnouts in this module will be my entry for Civil AP. All must be shown to operate. Hence, I'll wire them and thus make them my demonstrated work. The modules will thus serve several purposes. The five modules do not have quite enough square feet (nearly 50) to satisfy the O gauge scenery AP requirement that says we must detail 60 square feet total for the Scenery AP. We intend to show, on these pages how the 3-D modules are built and turn out as 3-D components regardless of construction technique.

We also have another positive consideration: Chief Dispatcher AP can be, in part achieved on the operable portion of these (or RRA's) modules. Switching and car interchange exercises are now solved on the two operable modules as shown in the first photo where two engines are routinely in operation.

Below, the photo shows the two 3-D modules sitting on the floor, leveled. All five modules will have legs the next time you see them. The corner module woodwork and screen to match its longer sister; however, grades have been shown to conform to the design. The start of the gauntlet trestle is immediately left of 'Stand Rock'. The lowest track has the steepest grade on its way to the remove mine offal.



The sketch below, gives you an idea of what was in my mind before we started this affair. It basically shows only the longer module that we've kept our eye on in this modest discussion. The drawing shows that the maximum vertical dimension is 24 inches. Stand Rock, seems a bit larger than the knob I drew in this sketch. That's artistic license.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. My perfection does not need to be yours: nor yours mine. Simply make a plan and execute the plan. Any plan can be modified and improved. It's a hobby not a compulsion.



Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

View from the Tower

by P.A. Wussow

Congratulations to the entire crew that came together to move the Choo Choo Store to the new location. Community and customer spirit of the people of the North Woods was in full swing. I am sorry that I am still down in the Glen Ellyn house and could not help.

On that note Sharon is doing better in her recovery from spinal surgery and we expected to be up at the lake right after Christmas. Unfortunately her mother had to be admitted to the hospital again for additional treatment. Her condition is becoming stable. We are now looking forward to see you all later sometime soon.

I have taken the time in Glen Ellyn to hold operating sessions on the Perch Lake and Superior testing not only the Car card and Waybill system but also switch lists and a new photo enhanced car card system. This system is easy on the eyes and also easy to understand the operations of the trains by the timetable. I have turned in my paper work for the NMRA AP Chief Dispatcher and when I am sure I have fulfilled the requirements I will be publishing a clinic on the web and presenting at our meetings.

A second activity that came from the operations with new operators is the addition of a long passing siding on my layout. I have used a spline sub-roadbed system to create the base for the track that is inside a 32 inch radius reverse loop at the highest point on the layout. I will have more on that on the web and in the news. Editor Roger keeps our newsletter to a downloadable size; however, here squeezed in, is a before construction view.



Above, is before construction of the passing siding around Thunder Lake on the PL&S. You can see the top level with the CNW train, the foreground track rising on two different percent grades, and a careful look lets you see the lower loop (code 100 Atlas track) at level 0. This is L girder construction with risers holding the sub-roadbed. The Thunder lake Loop uses 2 layers of ½" plywood for sub-roadbed to allow for wider spacing of risers. Inside this loop is where I added a passing siding without additional risers.

Thanks to Keith for his article on the brick part of the tower in the Kit- A- Long project. We need more input as I know there are people from all over the NMRA watching to see how this all works.

Looking at the web site www.tlmrc.org I have added a link to the new Rhinelander site and a preview link to my PL&S site. Please look these over and send me your thoughts.

Paul