

# Mohegan Pequot Model Railroad



## The News for: April 2006

### Club Member Jim Lemerlin Passes

Founding Mohegan and Pequot Club Member, Jim Lemerlin, passed away on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2006. Jim maintained his interest in model railroading and membership in the Club despite his health problems in recent years.

According to Jan Luth who worked with Jim at the Sub Base Administrative Department, Jim retired from the Navy in the late seventies. He graduated from Mohegan College and also retired later from the Fisher's Island Ferry where he was a freight clerk/ dispatcher. True to his naval heritage, Jim will be buried at sea.

Jim's wife, Brenda, would like to have his layouts dismantled and give the structures to the Club. Jan Luth will coordinate.

### Train Show/Display/Benefit at Old Lyme

Through the good auspices of Bill Paradis and the Men's Club of the Christ the King Church in Old Lyme, the M&P set up an HO layout on Sunday March 26 in the church hall. The display went well. There were not a lot of visitors but the Men's Club was happy with the amount collected at the gate. In the afternoon a bus arrived from Academy Point with about ten people, including Bert Beukelaer. You just can't keep a good model railroader down.

Short of Springfield and Avery Point, it might have been the largest HO layout we have ever done. The hall was ideal, and must have been designed with us in mind! The breakdown was done immediately after the show and unloading happened at Larry's the very same night.

### Willimantic Train Show

The Eastern Connecticut Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society Show will be held on Sunday, April 23 at Windham High School. In the past we have set up on Friday evening before the show and then walked in on Sunday morning to a nearly working layout. If we can get in on Friday, that is what we will do. We have not worked out the loading date and times yet but the Wednesday evening before the show is a good bet. Stay tuned for the exact details.

Joe Sokol always does an excellent job with this show but faces the obstacle of never knowing until the last minute whether the school is available.

### Extracts: March Meeting Notes

(Only information relevant this month or not in newsletter articles. Ref. John Waller's notes.)

#### March 12 at Larry's

Meeting started at 5:30 PM, chaired by John as Dan was away sick.

#### Little Rhody Division

This is being held on March 19, but we are not (and never were) expected to have a HO layout there. But our interest was noted and they will keep in touch.

#### NER Convention Worcester June 4

Negotiations are continuing.

#### P&W Railfan Club Webster

Scheduled for September 16; more details awaited. (Date changed: see separate file.)

#### March 26 at Larry's

A very short meeting was held after unloading Big Blue from the Old Lyme display. The Willimantic show is confirmed.

**M&P Participates in the Willimantic Show on April 23**

### Meetings, Schedule & Work Sessions

The first meetings this month, Sunday April 9 (Palm Sunday) may be held at Larry Southwick's house in North Stonington after the work session. The second meeting will be held after the Willimantic Show on Sunday April 23. At least that's the plan now but keep an eye out for posted changes.

### Field Trips

Ah springtime, and a model railroader's fancy turns to seeing layouts, railroad museums and some real trains. Our tripmeister, Jim Delany surely has some good ones up his sleeve for this year, don't you Jim?

## Movers and Shakers

### Member News

Here is where we actually try to communicate with our fellow Club members and those who might want to join us. Do you need some help with a model railroading problem, have expertise to share or just want to get out in the world more? Then let it be known in the Club newsletter.

### John Waller's Column

Issues about the main traction harnesses prompts me to write about something which we probably all know instinctively, but which has not been quantified. That something is the importance of the harnesses on the layout forming a closed loop.

Consider a layout where the circumference is  $C$  and the resistance per unit length is  $L$ . A locomotive is at point  $P$  on the layout with distance to the power-in point (origin)  $D$ .

If the harness is an open loop the resistance to the loco from the origin is  $D*L$ . The worst case, with the loco nearly back at the origin is  $C*L$ .

Now consider a closed-loop harness. There are two parallel paths from the loco to the origin of resistance  $D*L$  and  $(C-D)*L$ . The sum of two resistances ( $R1, R2$ ) in parallel is given by:

$$R = R1 * R2 / (R1 + R2)$$

Hence the loco to origin resistance is given by:

$$R = (D*(C-D)*L*L)/(D*L+(C-D)*L)$$

Simplifying:

$$R = D*C*L - D*D*L$$

Differentiating  $R$  with respect to  $D$ :

$$dR/dD = C*L - 2*D*L$$

Equating to zero to get a maximum:

$$C*L = 2*D*L \text{ or } D = C/2$$

Thus the highest resistance is half-way around the layout, as you might expect. Using this value of  $D$  to find  $R$  gives:

$$R = C*L/4$$

Now the worst resistance is 25% of the worst resistance in the open loop case, something well worth striving for.

There are other resistance issues with the main harness. It is not necessary to use the heavy gauge of wire used in the main harness for local wiring. A much lighter gauge suffices (18-22 AWG). There are two reasons for this:

- The number of locos drawing current through local wiring will generally be less than the total number of locos on the layout.
- The distance from the local origin (the point where local wires are attached to the main harness) to locos under local control will be less than for those on the main tracks.

Finally, if you have purchased a new 4-pin harness, check it out, or have it checked out, before committing it to use, preferably before fitting it to your module.

*John*

### The President's Corner

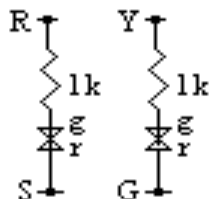
My God, a column by the President and the editor wasn't in town to see it! Maybe it really didn't happen. After all if a tree falls in the forest and nobody was around --- ah forget it. If there really was a column last month, prepare yourself for a famine in the near future.

*Dan*

## Vice President's Niche

I implemented a simple way of monitoring whether the outside or inside main traction harness power is up or down. It proved to be very useful, especially as I was at the end of the layout remote from the power origin<sup>1</sup>. I would have needed binoculars to see what was going on.

The diagram below shows the setup.



I used green/red two-wire LEDs with green showing for normal operations and red if backing up. To use separate LEDs just wire them in parallel, with the anode of one connected to the cathode of the other, and vice-versa.

The capital letters show connections to the harness (S = slate or gray).

The convention on DC two-rail track is that: looking at a train going away from you, the positive rail is on the right.

I recommend that this indicator, which draws no more than 20 mA total, be fitted to all modules, whether they are able to control main traction power or not.

The next step, which is harder, is to find a neat way of indicating to the operator, quickly and unequivocally, that power should be brought up or down.

On another topic, some members have expressed interest in using the small turnout PCBs from the Passenger Control Panel. Please tell me if you are interested. They will cost less than \$2 each if enough are required.

*John*



<sup>1</sup> It was good to see Henry back at the helm.

## The Market Place

### Club Member Ads


Advertise (free) here to reach more than seventy model railroaders eagerly waiting to buy your wonderful stuff. (Editor's Note: Let me know when your item sells or when you want to stop running the advertisement.)

### The Club Store

The Club Storekeeper, Larry Southwick, has model railroading supplies such as track, roadbed, wheels and couplers as well as a whole new slug of electrical parts. Unfortunately the price of "stuff" has increased in the market so be prepared for a price change. We still have Club hats and shirts.

All Club Members are encouraged to buy stuff from the Club Store. We have a lot of money tied up in stuff and it is for the convenience of Club Members.

### Commercial Corner

	<b>TACDAB, LLC</b> Authorized Broadway Limited Dealer Barbara 860-447-9023 <a href="mailto:schubb@myeastern.com">schubb@myeastern.com</a>
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Hello Train Buff's,

This is **TACDAB** again, letting you know that I have most of all your needs and wants for your hobbies.

PORTMAN HOBBIES, PRECISION CRAFT HOBBIES, HOBBYTYME, TONY'S TRAINS, AMERICAN HOBBY DISTRIBUTOR, BROADWAY-LIMITED, HOBBY STORES DISTRIBUTING, and a few others.

Whatever your needs, please let me know.

Since **TACDAB** is one of the few remaining hobby dealers in southeastern Connecticut, WHY NOT SHOP WITH TACDAB! You will be glad you did.

Barbara

TACDAB [schubb@myeastern.com](mailto:schubb@myeastern.com)  
860-447-9023 H; 860-460-4900 C



## The Technical Section

Contributions are welcome. You can write about anything from prototypes and history to model railroads, scenery, electrical, bench work, model building and more are all of interest to the club members.

### Tortoise Switch Machine Maintenance

"I had to inspect the tortoise electrical connections on the passenger station recently. There are some problems.

1. The etched conductor tracks on the tortoise connector are somewhat fragile and need to be soldered carefully. The board is single-sided and the track lifts too readily with heat. The hole is not plated through like the holes on the boards in the control panel.
2. You could use a connector, if you don't mind the additional expense.
3. The tortoise only draws 20 mA, so heavy wire is not necessary, and it must be stranded to reduce mechanical strain.
4. Do not use the tortoise connection for looping, that is, soldering more than one wire to the connection.

I recommend inserting the wire (already tinned) from the insulated side to protrude through the conductor track, bend the wire (so protruding) towards the tortoise body to lie flush with the track, then solder it. This reduces the possibility of a dry joint; I found dry joints on my inspection. If needed, carefully ream out the hole with a #60 bit by hand.

John Waller

### Making Low-Carb Junk Piles

(Thanks to Jim Hodgdon)

There are many of ways to model junk piles but here is one method that helps you lose weight. That's because the main component is something you would otherwise eat pasta.

Before I go any further, I owe thanks to Dennis Ivinson of Garden Grove, California, for much of this innovative scenery method. While visiting Dennis' outstanding Southern Pacific N-scale layout, I noticed some

realistic industrial junk piles not produced by any manufacturer known to me. The piles turned out to be Dennis' creations. Using what Dennis shared with me I created my own piles and developed a few additional techniques.

Here is what you will need:

Various pasta shapes,  
Re-sealable plastic bag, Small wooden block  
Paper towel, Paper cup, Ice cream stick,  
Wax paper, ACC adhesive  
Eye protection  
Rust colored and primer spray paints  
Assorted model paint in jars  
Paint brushes, Rust colored chalks  
Assorted scale scrap, shapes and parts  
India ink and alcohol solution

First, obtain small quantities of various pasta shapes. Look for the smaller pasta shapes similar to rods, pipes, strips, sheets and bent metal.

Put some of each pasta shape in a plastic bag and crush them with a small wooden block into small, irregular fragments. In HO scale the maximum size for the resulting fragments should be about half an inch or less. Open the bag and pour the contents onto a paper towel. Gently shake the paper towel to separate the dust and very small pasta crumbs from the useable fragments. Discard the dust and crumbs.

Put about half a cup of the pasta fragments in a sturdy PAPER cup. Do not use a plastic cup. Working in a well-ventilated area, carefully open a small tube (1/10 oz.) of ACC adhesive and pour it in the cup. Wood glues will soften the pasta and should not be used.

Eye protection is suggested for the mixing process. Mix the pasta and the ACC with an ice cream stick and pour the mixture onto a piece of wax paper. Shape the mix into a free-form pile and let it solidify.

Remove the pile from the wax paper and lightly spray the top and bottom with primer gray paint. After the paint is dry, lightly spray the pile with a dark rust color but don't try to completely cover the gray primer. I prefer to use Krylon's Satin Nutmeg paint. The satin paint finish gives the pile additional texture and enhances any

subsequent dry-brushing.

After the second coat of spray paint is dry, paint just a few of the pieces with some basic dull colors. Using an assortment of rust colored paints (from different paint manufacturers), lightly paint the remaining pasta fragments and lightly dry brush all the fragments. Feel free to let some of the original spray paint colors show through. The effect you are trying to achieve is a junk pile with a variety of subdued colors and rust shades.

Now, use ACC to attach plastic and metal bits of junk to the pile and use other bits to fill the larger voids in the pile. These should be painted and recognizable shapes such as railroad wheels, I-beams, H-columns, Plastruct rods and tubes, corrugated sheet, pipe and pipe fittings, crushed oil drums and the like. Dry brush these top pieces with an assortment of rust colored paints.

As optional steps, give the entire pile a light wash of an India ink and alcohol solution to bring out details, and then selectively brush the pile with rust colored chalks after the wash has dried.

You also may add newer, unruined junk details to the pile either in the area closest to front where the newest junk would be deposited or randomly all over the top of the pile.

You now have a realistic, one-of-a-kind junk pile and you have saved a few calories to boot! Celebrate your accomplishment with a pizza.

Bob Chaparro, Moderator  
Citrus Industry Modeling Group  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/citrusmodeling/>

## World Wide Web

### Newsletters for the Website

by Jim Spavins

The history section is starting to grow thanks to Glenn Siter. He has started to scan old newsletters and we are putting them up on the website under the history section. This is a call to action for members to dig through their old files and send us your old

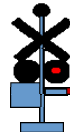
paper newsletters. Go take a look at the list on the website and if we don't have it online, we don't have it. Feel free to get in contact with Jim Spavins or Glenn and we can get the old newsletters scanned. We are trying to get a complete collection but we need your help.

### What You Want to Know

One of the guys that works at Pfizer with Jack Howie is an avid railfan, and will travel almost anywhere/anytime to get a photo. If anyone has questions about prototypes, Dave is more than willing to talk. The link to his webpage is. <http://www.davesrailpage.com/> (Lot'sa stuff on here. CWP)

## The Life Section

### We're Not Getting Any Younger Contributions?



## Model Railroad Calendar

### This Month in 2006

**April 2, 2006 – Milford, CT.** Train Show at Jonathan Law HS, 10:00 – 3:00. Exit 34 on I-95. Turn left on U.S. 1; school on right.

**April 5, 12, 19 & 26, North Stonington, CT.** Work sessions at Larry Southwick's house beginning around 7:00 PM.

**April 9, 2006; North Stonington, CT –** Work session beginning at ~1:00 PM and meeting at 7:30 PM at Larry Southwick's house.

**April 23, 2006; Willimantic, CT –**Eastern Connecticut Chapter of the NRHS Train Show at Windham High School. M&P sets up HO (and N?) scale layouts. Second meeting of the month after show.

### Next Month and Beyond

**June 1-4, 2006 Worcester, MA.** NMRA-NER, Hub Division Spring Convention — Holiday Inn, 500 Lincoln St. Thrifty Sixty

**July 2/8, 2006 Independence Junction, PA** Mid-Eastern Region, National Model

**M&P Participates in the Willimantic Show on April 23**

Railroad Association National Convention –  
at Pennsylvania Convention Center

**July 12-16, 2006 Points West**, The annual  
M&P train-watching trip to points yet to be  
determined.

**August 20, 2006, New Haven, CT.** Train  
Show 9 AM to 3 PM,– New Haven City-  
Wide Field House; Contact: John or Robin  
Vanacore (203) 629-1083

[www.AFSTrains.com](http://www.AFSTrains.com)

**October 8, 2006, Orange, CT** Derby &  
New Haven Model R/R Club Train Show  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, High Plains  
Community Center. Contact: Number (203)  
932-0185 or (203) 795-9644

**October 20/22, 2006 Parsippany, NJ** Fall  
Convention –, TBA

**November 11, 2006 North Haven, CT**  
NHRHTA Train Show –9 AM – 3:30 PM,  
North Haven, CT. Holiday Inn

**November 19, 2006; Cheshire, CT -**  
**Cheshire Band Train Show, Cheshire**  
**High School , 10 – 3**

**December 2/3/, 2006, Marlborough, MA**  
Train Show 10 AM – 4 PM, - Royal Plaza  
Hotel, NMRA-NER, Hub Division. For  
Info: 781-862-0388 or 508-528-8587

**January 27/28, 2007 West Springfield, MA**  
Big Railroad Hobby Show, Sat. 9 AM-5  
PM, Sun. 10AM-5 PM, Amherst Railway  
Society, Eastern States Exposition Grounds

**Ron Pothier's** 2006 list of train shows is  
available from him at [repth@snet.net](mailto:repth@snet.net).

### **The Lighter Side** **CATHOLIC DOG**

Muldoon lived alone in the Irish  
countryside with only a pet dog for  
company.

One day the dog died, and Muldoon went  
to the parish priest and asked

"Father, me dog is dead. Could ya' be  
saying' a mass for the poor creature?"

Father Patrick replied, "I'm afraid not; we  
cannot have services for an animal in the  
church. But there are some Baptists down  
the lane, and there's no tellin' what they  
believe. Maybe they'll do something for the  
creature."

Muldoon said, "I'll go right away Father.

Do ya' think \$5,000 is enough to donate to  
them for the service?"

Father Patrick exclaimed, "Sweet Mary,  
Mother of Jesus! Why didn't ya tell me the  
dog was Catholic?"

### **DONATION**

Father O'Malley answers the phone.

"Hello, is this Father O'Malley?"

"It is"

"This is the IRS. Can you help us?"

"I can"

"Do you know a Ted Houlihan?"

"I do"

"Is he a member of your congregation?"

"He is"

"Did he donate \$10,000 to the church?"

"He will".

## ***Club Administration***

### **M&PMRR Officers & Functionaries**

**The President Dan DeLany** 860 748-7581

**Vice President John Waller** 564-3114

**Treasurer Don Counsellor** 739-6381

**Secretary Robert Applegate** 464-2118

**Storekeeper Larry Southwick** 535-2996

**Field Trips Jim DeLany** 889-4029

**Newsletter Editor Clark Pritchett** 444-1884

**Newsletter Mailing, Meeting Speakers and**

**Bulk Purchases Bill Evans** 267-9482

**New Passenger Modules, Name Tags and**

**Show Layouts Stu Dom** 536-7637

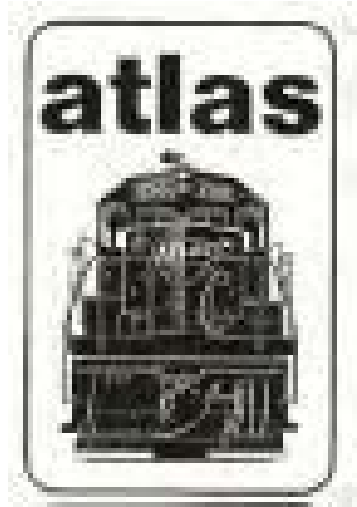
**Webmaster Jim Spavins**

[jimspav@alum.rpi.edu](mailto:jimspav@alum.rpi.edu)

**Real Prototype Railroading Information**

**Richard Peiffer** [rpeiffer@charter.net](mailto:rpeiffer@charter.net)

<http://www.mpr.org>



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