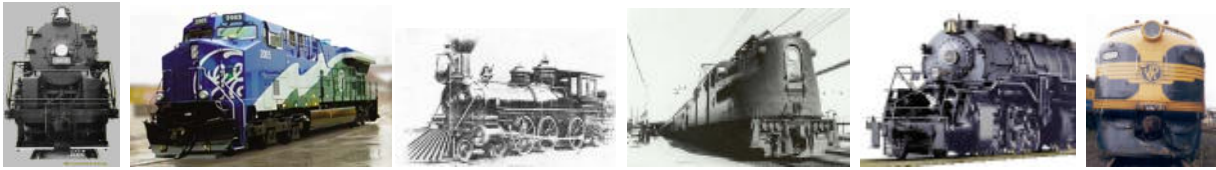


# Mohegan Pequot Model Railroad



## The News for: March, 2008

### Extracts: February Meeting Notes

John Waller's February 24  
at Bill Library, 7:30 PM.

There were 18 members present.

*Springfield* Dan commented favorably on Springfield 2008. There were five scales exhibited, the most we have ever done. Big-wigs inspecting the layouts were reportedly impressed.

Connector problems reported elsewhere occurred on the HO main harness. Power routing problems still need attention.

We took a long time to break down with HO, and this requires attention. We need a "load master" for each of the trailers, preferably someone who is not concerned with their own modules.

Covers should be stored within the layouts wherever possible.

The vehicle access door in the Young Building was blocked for a considerable time by a vendor. This is beyond our control but it should not have happened.

Trailers should have a standard loading plan, as Sandy and I do.

The wind-down of operations should start much sooner to reduce the time spent putting trains away after closing time.

Radio comms were better, but still require some work.

The HO main track control point, remote from the passenger station and transition module area, was good.

### *Future shows*

Willimantic is set for Sunday April 13. We need to reckon on setting up that morning, as the previous Friday night does not seem to work.

The Friendship School has a break April 14-18. Conditions under which we can work are still

very vague. Clark will clarify. We favored the idea of two daytime sessions, with one evening session, if permitted. Possibly, the Willimantic layout can be taken straight to the School.

*(Clark did check and evening operating sessions will be OK. We just have to come up with a supportable schedule.)*

Bill P is still working on a display at Christ the King, Old Lyme.

*Pomfret* Larry and Bill E are still attending Thursday morning sessions. Speak to Larry if you want to go.

*Other* Jonathon Harger is still holding operating sessions on selected Monday evenings; check with him.

*National train show 2009* Packages for layouts will be going out "soon".

### Meetings, Schedule & Work Sessions

The main business meeting this month will be held on Sunday March 23 at 7:30PM at the Bill Library in Ledyard, Work sessions will be at Larry Southwick's house in North Stonington. on Wednesday evenings, March 5, 12, 19 and 26.

### John Waller's Column

The saga of the HO main harness continues. Sandy called Cinch, the connector manufacturers, who claim the 4-pin connector we use is still being manufactured. Nevertheless, connectors I bought recently from Mouser had all the appearance of being around, albeit unused, for a long time. Sandy also advised we should have been mating male/female connectors together before soldering them. We did not do this consistently.

I think the problem is we are trying to put a quart into a pint pot. The 14-gauge wire we use is too big to fit through the hole in the lug. This

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should have sent us a message. Stu is saying much the same thing.

The problems we have had with connectors have led Stu and me to conclude that crimping is to be preferred to soldering. One important factor is that it is easier to teach people to crimp than to solder! We are working on it.

My dear wife Rae surprises me! Or perhaps I should say as a dumb male I can't keep up. She looked at a picture of a train last week and said: "Where is the caboose?". I replied that they were no longer used. She found this offensive as she had lived close to a railroad long before I met her, and always waved to the crew in the caboose.

And, how prescient can you get? After the above conversation Dan handed out our compensation for working at Springfield. Rae was delighted to see it is a caboose. She loves the colours.

All the above arose because Rae is going to Australia with me this July. And, this is the part where she "knocked me down with a feather", she wants to take the train from Sydney to Perth.

The train takes three days and we can have our own suite. This is a once-in-a life-time thing. One of our current songs with the Plainfield Senior Chorus is: "Enjoy yourself, it's later than you think!"

Naturally, I am ecstatic about the idea. Rae will see aspects of Australia she has never seen; all of our previous visits have concentrated on populated areas. One whole day will be spent crossing the Nullabor Plain, where the word "Nullabor" means "treeless".

There will be side visits, such as a quick tour of Adelaide, and Kalgoorlie, the goldfields. The line was opened in the 1920s and was operated by steam, so the usual water and coaling stops had to be included, each one a little oasis in the desert. Only one of these now remains as a museum.

### The President's Corner

Do we need more embarrassing comments here or just a blank space? Vote. Results in the next newsletter.

*Dan*



### The Vice President's Niche

Stu is implementing dwarf signals for the turnouts on his new module. He is using the colour convention which I use on mine and on Jim/Dan's main ladder:

- Red: turnout will cause you to derail; stop.
- Yellow: turnout will cause you to traverse a curve; slow.
- Green: turnout offers you a straight path; go.

This seems logical enough, but each railroad seems to adopt its own convention. As many railroads share tracks this must lead to great confusion.

One would have thought the FRA would have addressed the issue. But I once talked with an FRA engineer, who explained ruefully that they hardly have enough funding to do anything innovative. If someone offers them a ready solution, then they might be able to afford it.

Signalling falls into two broad categories:

- The signal designates a not-to-exceed-speed, including zero. This is what I have always used. It means there are other constraints on speed, such as curvature, which add to the message given by the signal. The message, stop, caution, or go, is easily covered by the three coloured lights, red, yellow, and green, or by a three-position semaphore.
- The signal designates the speed, but with much greater resolution, such as the 10 aspects used by Amtrak. It is almost like the signal actually controlling the train throttle, and the crew is there to stop the train in a crisis. Naturally, as a track-side visual signal, this is more complex. Signals in the loco cab are the answer.

The NMRA, in specifying standards for decoders which drive signals, was planning to allow for 15 aspects. I don't know if this came to pass.

*John*

### Operating Sessions

Jonathan Harger is still holding operating sessions at his home layout in East Lyme on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7:00 PM. Check with Jonathan for directions and to see

if there are any changes. Call (860) 739-4224 or [hejeharger@ct.metrocast.net](mailto:hejeharger@ct.metrocast.net)

## Letters to the Editor

See the bottom of the page.

## The Market Place

### Club Member Ads

Advertise (free) here to reach more than fifty 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.)

### Wanted Items

Looking for junk plastic steam engine bodies for kitbashing, the Athearn clips to hold in the couplers if anyone had replaced them with something else and firewood or potential firewood (prototype). Contact Jonathan Harger at 860-739-4224 or [hejeharger@ct.metrocast.net](mailto:hejeharger@ct.metrocast.net)

### The Club Store

Inventory is complete. Please buy from the Club store if you need "stuff". A list of "stuff" will be published in the Newsletter year 2008 (2009/10?)

### Commercial Corner

Nothing here

## The Life Section

No life again this month.

## The Technical Section

In his book *The Railroad- What it is, What It Does* The Introduction to Railroading, John Armstrong asks the question "Why trains?" (Well, Duh, because we model them.) Railroads could operate like highways with individual cars following each other on the track with an appropriate spacing (unlike the highway) for safety. If you use single commuter rail cars a single track can safely handle 550 vehicles per hour at 30 MPH and 365 at 60 MPH. If they are hooked up as four-car trains the capacity increases to 1,015 at 30 MPH and 945 at 60.

Of course we all know that the real driver is the economic cost of having people to operate the trains but running passenger trains instead of doodlebugs does increase the capacity of the rails.

In the case of freight trains, 7,000-foot trains with eighty cars have a stopping distance of 3,000 feet. At 60 MPH this gives an astonishing 2,535 cars per hour capacity of a single track. ( Clark's crude arithmetic on this is an 88 foot car can pass in one second and there are 3,600 seconds in an hour so the track would be occupied 2,535/3,600 (70.4%) of the time.) Clearly the rails are not saturated, as any train watcher who has stood for any length of time knows.

If this is the theoretical limit for train capacity on a single track then it begs the question of what is the cost tradeoff of more sophisticated train control (scheduling and tracking) and more tracks.

## World-Wide-Web

From Jim Hodgdon

Perhaps a link is in order for the newsletter. And we thought the M&P layout was big! Get a load of this monstrosity. Amazing. I don't understand this whole Fremo concept, and the site is in German, but big is big in any language.

<http://www.westportterminal.de/meetings/JT2006braunlage.html>

In a notable act of railway vandalism, thieves in the Czech Republic stole a four-ton iron railway bridge. The single-track bridge located on an out-of-service rail line near the Western-Bohemian town of Cheb. Police said that the bridge had apparently been removed from the line sometime between mid-December and the present. The police also said that thefts of metal to be cut up and sold for scrap had notably increased of late in the Czech Republic, but that they hadn't seen anything "of this magnitude." (ffd: Earth Times, wire services)

From Ross McLean

Please find enclosed a link to 'MORTDALE MATTERS' an online News Letter of the Australian Model Railway Club, New South Wales Branch.

From time to time, I hope to have the M & P Club Exchange Train featured.

Yours

Ross McLean

<http://www.amra.asn.au/nsw.htm>



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## Railroad Calendar

### This Month in 2008

**March 2, Cheshire, CT** 10 AM – 3 PM. –  
Cheshire High School Cheshire Band Association  
Contact: Thomas J. Kotulaki, 54 Old Lane Rd,  
Wallingford, Ct. 06492 (203) 265-7527

**March 5, 12, 19 & 26, North Stonington, CT**  
Work sessions at Larry Southwick's house at 200  
Wyassup Rd., beginning around 7:00 PM.

**March 9, Fairfield, CT.** 10 AM-4 PM, Station  
Stop Train Show – Ludlowe Middle  
School/Housatonic R/R Club, Station Stop Show  
Contact: (203) 255-3795 Friday 7-10 PM or  
[www.housatonicmr.org](http://www.housatonicmr.org)

**Little Rhody Show on March 16 Canceled**

**March 23, 2008 Hingham, MA** 10 AM-4 PM,. –  
South Shore Country Club Train Show & Open  
House — Bare Cove Park, Building 51 South  
Shore Model Railroad Club

**March 23 Ledyard, CT** M&P Club Meeting at  
the Bill Library at 7:30 PM.

**March 29/30, Wilmington, MA** 10 AM – 4 PM,  
Greenberg Great Train Expo Shriners  
Auditorium, Greenburg Shows

**March, 30, Ansonia, CT.,** 10 AM-3 PM, –  
Warsaw Park Rt. 234 Pulaski Hwy Howard  
Hobbies Berry Howard (203) 732-7346

### Next Month in 2008

**April 12 Milford, MA** Spring Training & Show  
–10 AM – 4 PM, , Sheraton Hotel NMRA-NER,  
Hub Division Info: 781-862-0388 or 508-528-  
8587, e-mail [info@hubdiv.org](mailto:info@hubdiv.org)

**April 13 Willimantic, CT.** – Windhan High  
School 10 AM-3 PM, Eastern Connecticut  
Chapter NRHS

**April 12/13 Timonium, MD** Great Scale Model  
Train Show 9 AM – 4 PM, Maryland State  
Fairgrounds, I-83, Exit 17E, Howard Zane

**April 22-25 Waterford, CT** The Friendship  
School. Set up HO layout (others?) Tuesday, Run  
Wednesday-Friday. Schedule to be determined.

**April 27 Wallingford, CT.** 9AM – 3PM,  
Zandri's Stillwood Inn Contact: Lud Spinelli  
(203) 926-1327 or [www.ClassisShowsLLC.com](http://www.ClassisShowsLLC.com)

### Train Shows from Ron's List

(Ron Pothier at [repth@snet.net](mailto:repth@snet.net) for latest information.)

### The Lighter/Heavier Side

#### Modern Day Parable

Once upon a time in a village, a man appeared and announced to the villagers that he would buy monkeys for \$10 each. The villagers seeing that there were many monkeys around, went out to the forest, and started catching them. The man bought thousands at \$10 and as supply started to diminish, the villagers stopped their effort, and returned to farming.

The man further announced that he would now buy monkeys at \$20. This renewed the efforts of the villagers and they started catching monkeys again, but soon the supply diminished even further, and people started going back to their farms.

The man then offered to buy them for \$25 each, but the supply of monkeys became so little that it was an effort to even see a monkey, let alone catch it!

The man now announced that he would buy monkeys at \$50! However, since he had to go to the city on some business, his assistant would now buy on behalf of him.

In the absence of the man, the assistant told the villagers. "Look at all these monkeys in the big cage that the man has collected. I will sell them to you at \$35 and when the man returns from the city, you can sell them to him for \$50 each."

The villagers rounded up with all their savings and bought all the monkeys.

Then they never saw the man nor his assistant again, only monkeys everywhere!

Now you have a better understanding of how the stock market works.

From John Waller

The HO connector problem reminded me of the following:

A woman spent her whole life as a virgin. She was so proud of this she wanted the following on her gravestone:

"Born a virgin, lived a virgin, died a virgin."

The engraver found this too much and substituted: "Returned unopened."



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## Club Administration

### **Club Pins**

At the February 24 meeting, Clark Pritchett presented a price quote from Sundance Marketing in Portland, OR (near Overland at Springfield) for Club pins. The cost options are presented below for a 1 1/8" pin with the Indian logo.

Setup Charge \$85, per pin cost, \$1.29 and \$1.12 each for 50 and 100 respectively. Total cost for 50 and 100 pins would be \$149.50 and \$197.00 which comes out to \$2.99 and \$1.97 per pin. If we wanted more pins in the future then we would only pay the per pin cost above.

There was some discussion about dropping the barely visible M&P wording on the outside of the logo and putting MPRR.ORG at the bottom of the pin since it would be more legible.

Club pins can be a source of revenue for the Club and a way to get our name in front of more people. Let's discuss it more at the next meeting.

The letter from Sundance is attached to the end of the Newsletter if you get it by mail. If you receive the Newsletter electronically then you received it as an email.

### M&PMRR Officers & Functionaries

<b>The President</b>	<b>Dan DeLany</b>	860 748-7581
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>John Waller</b>	564-3114
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Don Counsellor</b>	739-6381
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Robert Applegate</b>	464-2118
Storekeeper	<b>Larry Southwick</b>	535-2996
Field Trips	<b>Jim DeLany</b>	889-4029
Newsletter	<b>Clark Pritchett</b>	444-1884
Newsletter Mailing and Meeting Speakers	<b>Bill Evans</b>	267-9482
New Passenger Modules, Name Tags and Show Layouts	<b>Stu Dom</b>	536-7637
Webmaster	<b>Jim Spavins</b>	

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

Prototype Questions

Dave at <http://www.davesrailpage.com/>



BLUE MOUNTAIN & READING R.R.-HAMBURG, PA.

## Club Scale Contacts

G - Bob MacGregor, O - Jim Weitlauf, On3 - Sandy Alonzo, S - Dave Alley, HO - Dan Delany, TT - Future, Z - TBD, N - Sandy Alonzo, Live Steam - Jim Weitlauf. These "Go-To" guys will mentor new members who want to learn more about particular model railroad scales.



Milwaukee Road E-50 Electric Locomotive



The End

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