

The Voyage of the Modern Boxcar Fleet: 1970-2010

By Dick Johannes

This clinic is focused upon the modern railroad boxcar fleet but many of the ideas and techniques can be generalized to other periods. In particular, the value of emulating a prototypic distribution of boxcar owners will be discussed. Specialized decals such as door details, wheel dots and consolidated lube plates add nice prototypic touches to even some of the best factory painted cars. The heart of this clinic will be the livery of the so-called "per diem" boxcar. These cars sprung into being in the fall of 1970 in response to a national boxcar shortage. Many lines such as the Raritan River, East Highland & Camden, the Pickens Lines among others had very colorful paint schemes. The model railroad manufacturers followed suit and Athearn, MDC, Accurail, LBF and Branchline all produce or produced copies of many of these cars. However, over time the "per diem" rates fell and the small short lines began to sell these cars to other railroads. Modeling these pre-owned cars is both fun and relatively simple use quite simple techniques. The use of sheets of solid color decal film called "trim decals" by MicroScale, alphabet sets and a few graffiti sets and you're in business.

JMRI for Everyone

By Erich Whitney

JMRI turns decoder programming from an exercise in complete frustration into a quick, easy, and fun exercise. Why waste time fiddling with bits and bytes when you can click a mouse and tune your locomotive like a pro in minutes. This clinic will take you through the basics of what you need to use your computer and FREE JMRI software to take control over your layout. I'll also introduce you to WiThrottle that turns your smart phone into a wireless throttle. I'll also introduce the Bachrus MTC-DCC speedometer that can be used with JMRI for locomotive speed matching. Please don't be intimidated if this sounds complex. I want to assure you it's easier than it sounds and well worth the effort to give it a try. The clinic will include a demonstration using a computer and a DCC locomotive on a test stand. I'll use the SPROG-II DCC USB which is an inexpensive computer interface for your test track that can be used to augment your layout by providing a convenient DCC controller for locomotive testing and setup. And I'll tell you some tricks to getting things to work when things go wrong. You'll be able to make a backup copy of all your decoder settings should you have to replace one due to a failure. I'll also discuss the options you have for using a computer with your layout so you can pick the option that makes the most sense for you. You might even already have what you need and

don't know it! JMRI runs on Windows, Mac, and Linux so no matter what your preference, there's an option for you!

Elements of Waterfront Scenery

By Ace Cutter

Harbor's, boats and their associated structures have similar elements to railroads, both are basically in the same business, commerce and transportation of goods and services. Each have deadlines and critical schedules due to the movement of perishable commodities and structures that are unique to their specific business. Harbors are mostly timeless, the era you model can extend from the 40's-the 80's with little change in the materials of the structures, boats and the functions they provide.

We will dissect a fairly typical harbor and what goods and services each business provides and what may have determined the unique shape, size and location of the structure. The Voyage

We will look at how street trackage can extend the railroad into the harbor on a granite pier and the types of traffic that it generates, things like a traveling crane for unloading barges and ships; diesel fuel/oil dealer; food warehouse; ships chandlery (boat building/repair; fish processing plant; cold storage; wholesale/retail lobster outlet, dinghy and boat repair, wooden and stone piers and their pilings (we will do a hands on demo of the pilings).

We will also look at the outer reaches of the harbor and how to model a rugged New England coastline complete with obligatory lighthouse and whale.

If you're a New Englander and model the coastal area then you should check out this clinic. Perhaps you too might find a place to portray a slice of a harbor that further defines the location you are modeling.

Installing a DCC Decoder in Your Locomotive;

A participation clinic

Gary Paulino and the TrainTek Crew

This will be a hands on participation clinic during which you will install a DCC decoder in a locomotive. You will supply your own locomotive and decoder for this clinic. If you wish, Gary can supply you with a decoder for your locomotive. You can contact him by e-mail at gary@traintekllc.com by phone at (888) 339-8724. He can assist you in selecting the correct decoder for your loco.

Due to the nature of this clinic and the and time limitations, this clinic will be limited to non sound decoders. Because of space limitations, it

will require pre-registration and will be limited to 18 people on a first come first served basis. See elsewhere in this issue for the registration form. Participants should also bring some basic modeling tools – small screw drivers, hobby knife, needle nose pliers, and wire cutters/strippers. TrainTek will supply soldering stations.

Along the Right of Way - Modeling Modern Telecommunications Infrastructure

Dave (Shack) Haralambou

In this clinic we will present a sampling of both real and modeled scenes of TV, radio, and telecom facilities. Covers Telephone poles, cell towers, satellite dishes, TV Towers, Antennas and all the things that we take for granted in the real world but rarely model accurately on our layouts.

Sunset Valley Oregon System and Grand Rails 2012

Bruce Chubb, MMR

The SVOS occupies 2600 sqft with up to 4 decks. Its dominate roll is maximizing prototypical fidelity and operations. Based upon specific prototypes, over 1000 structures are being constructed along with 150 feet of bridges and trestles. It's a monumental project with over 1400 feet of main/branch line trackage modeling 10 prototype railroads in the Pacific Northwest. Dr. Chubb explains how the teamwork of 38 associates is pulling together to have the system ready for the 2012 NMRA National Convention in Grand Rapids where it will be on tour all day every day throughout the convention. Bruce explains how the SVOS is setting up to host a 12-hour pre-convention operating session in addition to being on tour for 76 hours, i.e. the 38 tours at 2-hours per tour.

Interfacing a Computer to Your Model Railroad

Bruce Chubb, MMR

Bruce, the inventor of the Computer/Model Railroad Interface (C/MRI) explains how easy it is to interface a computer to your model railroad. Focus is on the Super Mini-Node that greatly improves I/O distribution and significantly reduces system cost. Up to 128 nodes can be distributed all around your layout making wiring a snap. Simply connect any device directly to the nearest node. Only wiring between nodes is a single 4-wire cable. Applications focus on reducing layout wiring, signaling systems, staging track control, and interfacing to DCC. The result can greatly increase your railroad's prototypical realism and hobby enjoyment.

Signaling Your Model Railroad – Part 1

Fundamental Concepts – Prototype and Model

Bruce Chubb, MMR

Bruce expands upon the *Signaling Made Easier* series published in MR, and the newly released multi-volume *Railroader's Application Handbook* to cover prototypical signaling and how to adapt it to our models. The differences between ABS, APB and CTC signaling are discussed along with their impact on how railroads operate. A clear understanding is established regarding the difference between block and interlocking signals, speed versus route signaling and the corresponding aspects and indications used by different railroads and how they can be adapted to our models. Correct signal placement, total compatibility with DCC and how to easily drive different signal types are addressed. Bruce explains how to use the new Super Mini-Node card coupled with the power of the computer to joyfully reduce layout wiring and significantly reduce system cost while maximizing system flexibility and prototype fidelity.

Signaling Your Model Railroad – Part 2

ABS, APB and Grade Crossing Warning Systems

Bruce Chubb, MMR

Expanding upon the content of the *Railroader's Application Handbook*, Bruce provides detailed coverage of optimized block occupancy detection and its application to establish Automatic Block Signaling (ABS) including its programming. Then, Bruce explains how the prototype utilizes "Traffic Sticks" to determine directional movement across block boundaries. Such capability plays a key role in setting up Absolute Permissive Block (APB) signaling thereby providing protection for bi-directional operation on the same track. The importance of "traffic sticks" in setting up grade crossing warning systems is discussed along with its utilization with a new Prototypical Grade Crossing Control (PGCC) card. Software examples are included for ABS, APB and for driving the PGCC.

Signaling to Your Model Railroad – Part 3

Centralized Traffic Control Systems

Bruce Chubb, MMR

Bruce explains CTC operations and how it can smooth traffic flow on your railroad. As illustrated, constructing a dispatcher's CTC panel and interfacing it to your railroad is much easier than most modelers realize. Differences between US&S and GRS machines are explained and how their different components are interfaced. Straightforward programming techniques are introduced making it easy to "cut-paste-and-change-

numbers” to set up a highly accurate C/MRI-based CTC system for any model railroad. Utilizing a standardized set of callable subroutines makes the programming easy while maximizing prototype fidelity. Additionally, entrance-exit interlocking is discussed along with using computer graphics to emulate modern dispatching operations.

Making it Fit - Switch Machine Installation tips

By Peter Watson

Installing switch machines on a layout can be a relatively straight forward task as long as there is plenty of space. When the benchwork just happens to be right where the switch machine needs to go, installation can become a real challenge. This clinic will examine basic installation of switch machines. Then we'll take a look at some ways to get them into those impossible places.