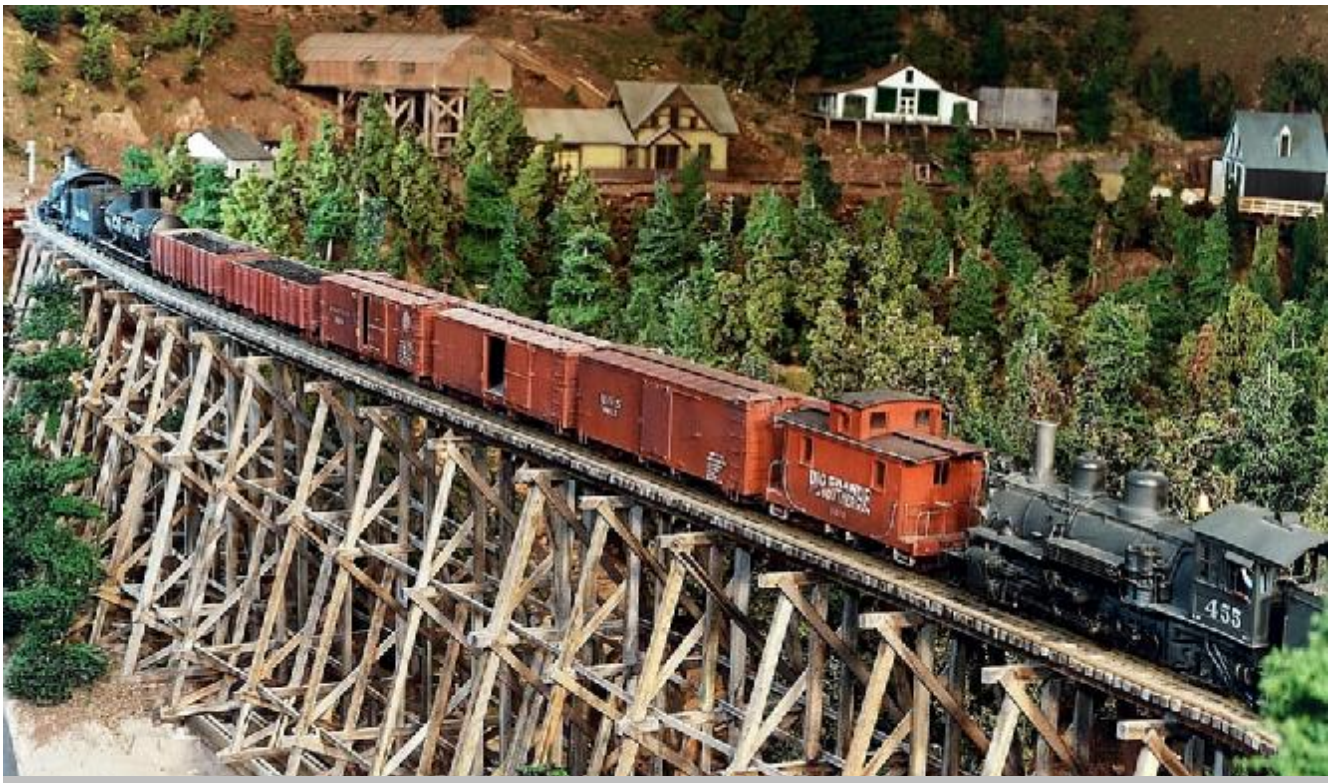
Rochester Model Rails

Dedicated to Quality Model Railroading

VOL. 3, NO. 21 **ROCHESTER, N.Y.** **SEPTEMBER 2004**



A D&RGW 2-8-2 Mikado snakes along the Ophir Loop on the Northern Division of the RGS on Bill Scobie's Sn3 layout. The helper 2-8-2 engine to the right is the RGS #455 – the version before it was wrecked.

In this issue ……

Modeling the
Bath and Hammondsport Railroad
Part 5 – The Wiring

by Dick Senges

Since my layout is scenery oriented focusing on historical modeling rather than operations, i.e., the *Oil Creek Rail Road Company* circa 1866 and the B & H RR circa 1900, I have not yet switched to DCC. Investigations are ongoing evaluating carefully *NCE* DCC, engines manufactured by *Broadway Limited* and sound decoders by *Soundtraxx*. Someday I may switch over. But for now it's DC.

That said, conventional block wiring was installed. My track plan called for nine blocks for this area and I used 16-gauge industrial grade wire. The rails from each block have two wires running back to a terminal strip. Terminal strips were mounted onto an 8.5" x 11" thick tan paper template that was glued to a 10" x 16" x 1" wood board. The unique thing about this arrangement is the paper template was designed on *Microsoft Word - Draw* and fits the terminal strips exactly. This process makes block number labeling a snap. See the template on Page 2 for the full size Block Control template.

As you can see from the template, the different parts of the terminal strips are labeled for the track and for the switches. These are the DTDP switches that are mounted on a Control Panel.

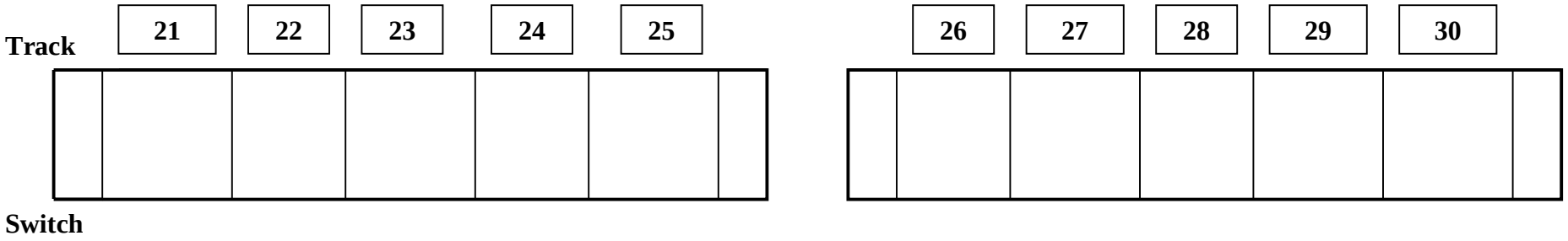
The wood board has two hinges attached to the 16" side and is mounted to one of the joists that span the L girders under the layout. The hinges allow the board to be lowered to be worked on and raised to be out of the way.

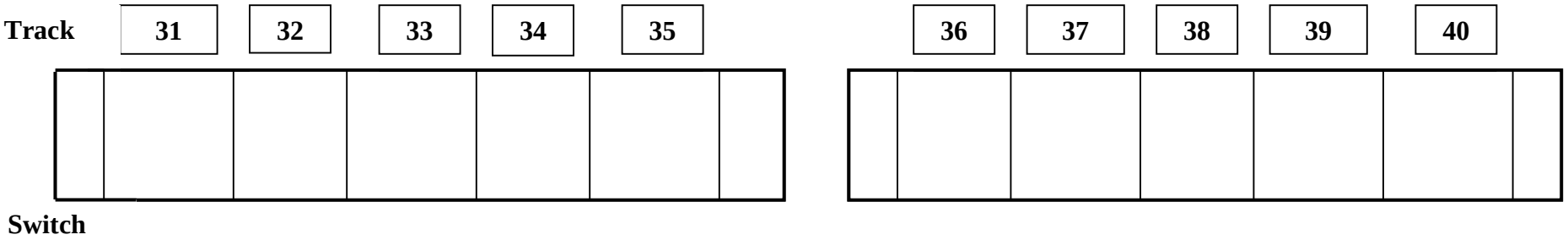
The Block Control template/board also has terminal strips for Cab A and Cab C – connections to the power supply to the DPDT switches on the control panel.

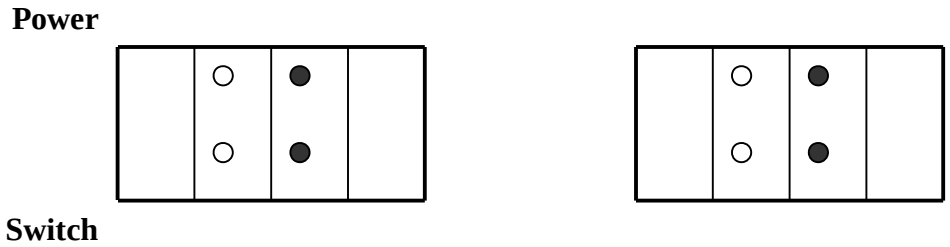
A second template/board was constructed for the Turnout Control – see Page 4 for the full size Template. Here again the paper template was glued to a 1" board and the terminal strips screwed to the template/board composite. The printed numbers indicate the Turnout number.

Connections for the wires from the *Peco* Turnout Motors are indicated, as are the wire connections for the wires from the momentary-on push button switches from the Control Panel. Another terminal block was used for the common third wire.

In addition to these two terminal block template/boards, a Control Panel was constructed out of a piece of aluminum 8" x 24" x 1/16". Switches were attached to the panel and tape was used to indicate the track plan.

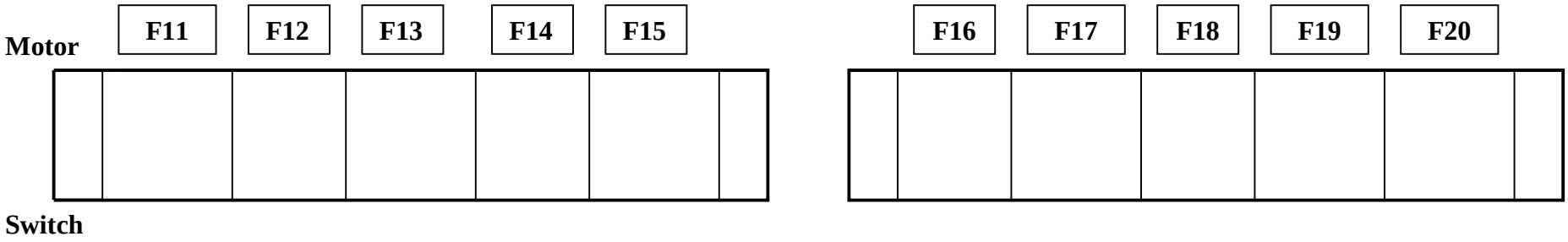


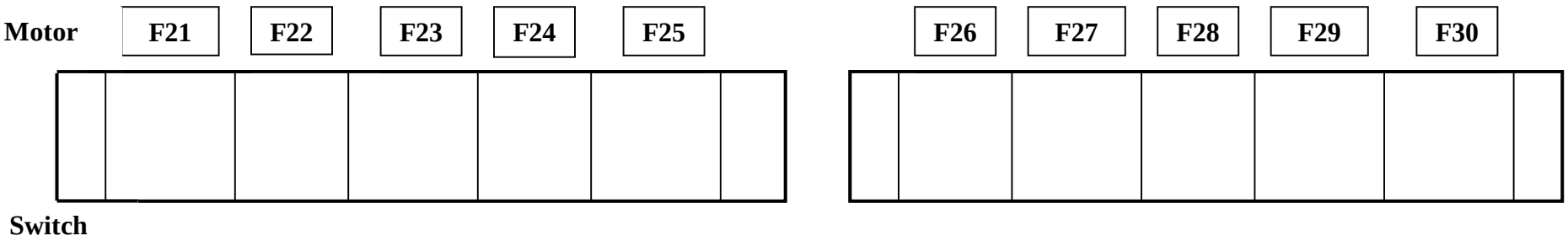


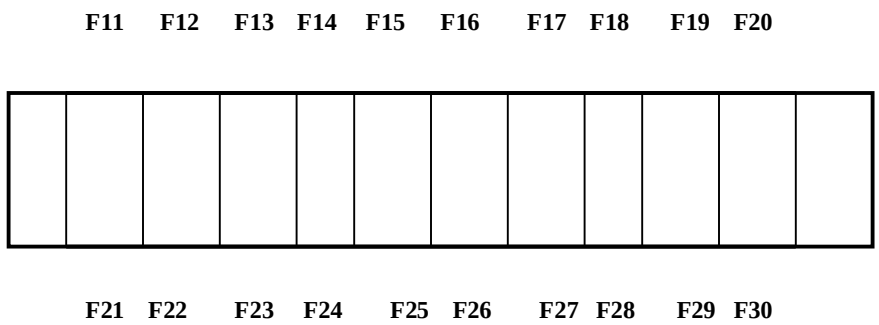


A CAB **C CAB**

BLOCK CONTROL







Common Power for Switch Machine Motors

TURNOUT CONTROL

How to Make

Scenic Express Supertrees

by Bill Carl

For photos, see the web site of the *Four County Society of Model Engineers* – www.FCSME.ORG
Click on " Online Clinics" and the "The Art of SuperTrees".

There are two methods to making *Supertrees*. There is the longer method that I think is worth the time and effort and there is a shorter method. If you want to follow the shorter method, skip steps 2 and 3 below.

Step 1: Take the *Supertree* bush and carefully break off smaller realistic trees. Try to make the trees as big as possible. You can always break them later to make smaller trees if needed but you will find that in the course of making trees, you end up with tons of smaller ones.

Step 2: I have learned that boiling the trees helps to straighten them so I boil them for at least 20 minutes in a large covered pot. This process may produce a slightly unpleasant odor but it doesn't linger. I have left some trees in for an hour with no harm (a friend of mine actually uses a pressure cooker to cook his trees). I would highly recommend buying a dedicated pot to boil the trees. (Ed. – You can use the same pot that you use to boil your Sisal rope when making bottle brush trees.) The bigger it is, the more you can cook in every batch. I use a 32-quart pot and that keeps me quite busy hanging trees (next step) while the next batch is cooking.

See the photos on the web site for three potentially beautiful trees. But their only problem is that they aren't straight. Now I know that every tree isn't perfectly straight but the three to the right look like a hurricane hit them. If you notice their trunks are straight into the foam but in the trees themselves they have a rather unrealistic bend. We'll follow the progress of these demo trees.

Step 3: After boiling, the trees need to be hung up to dry. Use one clothespin to hold the tree and a couple to pull it straight while it dries. Some only require one on the bottom while the bigger ones may require up to five. You can't have too many clothespins on hand. I built a temporary rack using sawhorses to hang a few hundred trees at a time. The trees should be allowed to dry for at least 24-48 hours.

See the photos on the web site for the three demo trees. They have been boiled and dried straight. They aren't perfectly straight but they have great potential. I think it is a tremendous improvement.

Step 4: If you carefully look at prototype trees, you will notice that a vast majority of them have grayish trunks. There are occasional browns (pine), beige and white (birch) but most are gray. This step is a must as the gray trunks look so much better. Carefully remove the trees from their drying lines and poke them into pieces of foam. Be gentle, as you don't want to break the trunks if you can help it. Then, thoroughly spray them all gray (outside or in a ventilated spray booth) from all angles using cheap automotive gray primer. Incidentally, this helps to 'seal' the branch from decay and rot. Let them dry at least 24 hours. Although the portion of the tree that is in the foam is not painted, it will be coated by glue when 'planted' and thereby sealed.

See the photos on the web site for the three demo trees which have been painted gray. This will greatly enhance their appearance when they are done.

Step 5: Dip the tree into a tub of 50/50 mix of *Elmer's Glue* and water. Some people prefer Matte Medium instead of *Elmer's*. I use a rather large *Rubbermaid* tub so I can seal the lid so the glue won't dry out over time. Just be sure to stir the glue mix thoroughly before dipping trees. When you pull the tree out of the glue, it may form bubble-like webs between the branches. A quick shot of hair spray will pop the bubbles.

Step 6a: Place the tree in a box or tub of ground foam. Again, I use another rather large plastic tub to seal the unused ground foam in between tree making sessions. Completely cover the tree with ground foam and then shake off the excess. This is the base color for the tree.

Step 6b: Highlight the tree with another color of ground foam. As a general rule, I use lighter colors on top and darker colors underneath. This helps to provide a sun-like effect on the tree.

Step 6c: After sprinkling the highlighting material, it needs to be secured. The best low cost method I have found is hair spray. I try to get the cheapest, strongest hold hair spray I can. (Ed. – check the *Dollar Store*.) It is basically aerosol lacquer. Just spray all over the tree as this will help secure the base color too.

Step 7: Now the trees have to dry again so hang them back on the drying rack with clothespins as weights as needed. Let them dry at least 24 hours. I like to spray them again with hair spray after 24 hours just to make them a little stiffer and durable.

Step 8: Plant them! This isn't rocket science. I just take an awl to punch a hole in the scenery, squirt in some *Elmer's Glue*, stick in the tree, and that's it! (Ed. – when pulling the awl or ice pick out of the plaster scenery, twist and pull up slowly so that no plaster is removed from the hole.) It's a good idea to have plenty of trees on hand when planting so that you have a wide choice to pick just the right tree for just the right place.

Side Note 1: Not all trees are the same shade of green. See the website photos for various shade of green.

Side Note 2: Not all trees are green. Although I model the month of August, there are occasionally some trees that are colors other than green. They could be red maples, trees that turn color very early, trees that have a colored blossom, or trees that have a colored vine growing through them. *Scenic Express* makes small packs of autumn colors that I used to make my colored trees. I start with a base green and sprinkle on the color afterward. If you model autumn, you can purchase large quantities of fall foliage.

Side Note 3: Not all trees are healthy. Some trees are sickly and not full of foliage. This is a very neat effect. To accomplish this, just dip the very tips of a few branches in the glue and then apply the foliage. Check out the photo on the web site.

Side Note 4: Not all trees have foliage! There are dead trees standing in the forest too. Take a boiled tree and gently scrape off the little buds on the branches with an *Exacto* knife and then paint the tree. This adds a great touch of realism.

Cincinnati Union Terminal

Gets a Face Lift

by Gerald Brimacombe

Here is a recent view of the fully restored, art deco styled Cincinnati Union Terminal. The terminal now serves as a major civic center and museum for the city, and once again, true to its heritage, is a railroad station serving AMTRAK. Note the mural in the lower part of the image. This mural, like several others in the terminal, are beautiful mosaics.

The terminal was designed by the well-known architectural team of Fellheimer & Wagner, and was completed in 1930. The same architects also designed the once and equally beautiful Buffalo, NY terminal in 1933, but, sad to say, it stands abandoned and deteriorating.

Ask Doctor Dick (The Scenery Doctor)

OCRR@frontiernet.net

Steve writes:

I want to make a large rock face for my N scale layout. The space for the rock face is 10" x 87" (133' x 1160' N scale) and is straight. The rock face will be vertical. How can I do this minimizing the rock casting seams and ending up with a good looking rock face?

Doc:

Here are my suggestions based on actual experience. First to minimize the time it takes to fit various casting together, use very large castings made from molds such as those sold by *Bragdon Enterprises* (www.bragdonent.com/). I like his mold # 1 and some others of his very large molds that measure about 12" x 30". For an 87" casting, use four castings made from various molds. (*I used only two molds.)*

One of the problems with this large of a casting is how to support the 87" casting if the work is done off site and then transported to the layout. I like to do my casting and coloring work in the shop on a work table that measures about 2' x 11'. Here I have plenty of light, the right angle to color the castings, a sink to wash the molds, a good working height, all the tools, and plenty of space to complete the work.

First go ahead and make the four castings using Moulding Plaster. Moulding Plaster is much softer than *Hydrocal* (but harder than Plaster of Paris) and will give us very pleasing results. *Hydrocal* plaster is too hard and will not absorb the acrylic washes properly. Moulding Plaster here in Upstate NY costs about $13.50 per 50 pound bag.

Then lay out the four castings in a pattern that is pleasing to you matching up the rock strata and deciding where the three seams will be. At the point where casting #1 (left to right) butts against casting #2, overlap one casting over the other a little and draw a pencil line. Using a hack saw blade inserted into a special hack saw handle, cut on the pencil line. Then butt the two casings together. Continue making small cuts until the two castings butt together minimizing the space between the two castings. Continue this process for the other two seams.

In order to keep the total 87" casing in tact, you will need some sort of firm base. (Of course if you do this process on the layout no special base is required other than the typical scenery form.) I mounted the whole thing on a base made of corrugated and a 1" x 4" that was leftover layout fascia.

In order to attach each casting to the base, wet both the back of the casting and the form with water and use *Hydrocal* to "cement" the casting to the form making sure none of the *Hydrocal* oozes out onto the casting. As you attach the second casting to the base make sure the butt is as close as possible. Complete the other two seams in the same fashion.

Make a mixture of Moulding Plaster, but a wet mixture, i.e., 1 part water to one part powder (normal mixture = 1 water to 2 powder). Pre-wet the gaps with water and using a large eyedropper very carefully fill in the small gaps between the castings. As the plaster in the crack is drying, use an old toothbrush or a small wire brush and stipple the area slightly blending the crack area to match the surrounding rock face. Some chipping and carving may also be required.

In order to minimize the repeat pattern of the castings, put some of the castings upside down. Also, using a chisel and a mallet (wearing safety glasses) chip some of the most obvious rock protrusions so that the castings look somewhat different. If you have a large area that needs filling, use some of the rock chips from the castings.

When dry, color the rock castings using India Ink and water followed by various color washes made from acrylic paints and water.

The 'Model Railroad Post Office' - # 7

by Norm Wright

This toy 2-2-2 steam locomotive stamp from Germany is a "semi-postal," with the surtax intended for "independent welfare organizations." The Scott catalog number is B450, and the stamp sold for 15 pfennings -- ten pfennings to pay for the postage plus five pfennings for the charities.

Note: The United States has issued only three semi-postal stamps: 1998 for breast cancer research, 2002 "Heroes of 9-11," and 2003 "Stop Family Violence. More are planned -- maybe some day one will picture a model train?

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

or

HOW TO MAKE GOOD PHOTOS BETTER

by Leaf Shutter

Guideline No. 11 -

Subject Elevation

If the subject is at a higher elevation than the picture taker, the subject should be in the top half of the frame. Conversely, if the subject is at a lower elevation, the subject should be in the lower half of the frame.

Don't Forget to Visit the

www.railroadmuseum.com

Coming Next Month

Reminisces - The NYO & W RR

Proto 2000 E8/9A

Bath & Hammondsport RR
Part 6 – *The Installation*

Product Review –
Fishing Shack and Dock

Scenery Tips from *Doctor Dick*

Rochester Model Rails

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Mailing Address
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Web Site: **www.trainweb.org/rmr**

Recommended Train Events for 2004 – Updated 7-26-04

August 4-8	**Chantilly, VA**	- N Scale Collector's Convention 4th – 7th - N Scale East Convention 5th – 8th s - www.nscalecollrctor.com
August 12 – 15	**Canandaigua, NY** – Annual Pageant of Steam, Route 5 and 20	
August 19-22	**Durango, CO** – Railfest 2004 – Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge RR	
August 21-22	**Rochester, NY** - Diesel Days at the Museums: NY Museum of Transportation and Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum	
September 1-4	**Santa Clara, CA -** 24th National Narrow Gauge Convention	
September 11	**Welland, Ontario, Canada** – International Division Meet	
September 25	**Lindsay, Ontario, Canada** - Central Ontario Division Meet	
September 25 – 26	**Rochester, NY** – Finger Lakes Live Steamers Fall Meet	
October 24	**Rochester, NY** – RIT Train Show and Sale	
November 6 – 7	**Syracuse, NY** – Train Show at Fairgrounds	
November 18	**Rochester, NY** – NRHS Meeting – "*The Oil Creek Rail Road Company 1860 – 1868*"	
November 14	**Batavia, NY** – Train Show/Sale at Batavia Downs	

For a detailed listing of events, go on the Internet to:

WWW.CAORM.ORG
Shows
Look for dates and location

WWW.RAILROAD.NET
Events
Look for date and location

WWW.GATS.COM
Great American Train Show
Show Schedule
Month of Year
Look for your city

WWW.TTOS.ORG
Calendar
Month of the year
Look for your area

WWW.GSMTS.COM
Great American Model Train Show
Dates and Events

WWW.TRAINS.COM
Schedule of Events
Events

WWW.MODELRAILNEWS.COM
Events
Look for your area

WWW.FINGERLAKESLIVESTEAMERS.ORG
Events