



# The Dispatcher

April 2003 Issue

## Officers for 2002-2004

Superintendent:  
**Mark Gaeth**

Dispatcher:  
**Chuck White**

Treasurer:  
**Gene Cowan**

Board of Directors:  
**Alan Bell**  
**Bill Wemhoff**

AP Chairman:  
**Daniel Metzger**

Membership Chair:  
**Dan Brown**

Meetings:  
2nd Monday of  
each month  
7:00 pm

North Central Region

Northeast Hoosier  
Division 3



## MEMBERS PRESENT

Bill Wemhoff	Max Metzger	Don Rhodenbaugh	Jim Arens
Carl Dirig	Art Solomon	Chuck White	Tony Remero
Alan Bell	Rich Swihart	Rich Schwab	Bruce Carpenter
Mel Wise	Victor Baird	Drake Omstead	Robert Dugan
Dan Metzger	Mark Gaeth	Gene Cowan	
Alleyne Metzger	Jim Mize	Jeff Hedge	

## CLINIC

Mark Gaeth and Bill Wemhoff showed how to install decoders in HO gauge engines. Mark demonstrated the proper way of installing decoders in an Athearn and a Life Like Proto 2000 diesel locomotive. Bill demonstrated how to install a North Coast Engineering decoder in an Atlas FP-9 diesel locomotive.

One of the main items is that the electric motor must be isolated from the frame of the diesel locomotive. Athearn locomotives use the pot metal frame as a conductor for the electric motor. It was suggested to solder a wire connection directly to the trucks to be sure of good conductivity. Also at the same time be careful of the heat of the solder iron. The excess heat can melt the plastic very quickly.

There were many good questions asked from the attending members. There were many in attendance that already had a layout with a DCC System. There were also others that are planning on a DCC system in the future. Many times a discussion is about what system is best and that only leads to biased answer. Anyone interested in DCC should understand that most DCC systems are very good and have very supportive companies to back them up. The following suggestions should help you make the right choice for your particular usage:

### 1. Make a "Givens & Druthers" List

- a. What do I need now?
- b. What is my future needs?
- c. What are the basic things I must have?
- d. What would be on my Wish List?

### 2. Test drive all systems in your area

### 3. Research the various companies to see what best fits into your "Givens & Druthers" List

### 4. Give consideration to other layouts in the local area and what system they use.

- a. Keep in mind that while all decoders will be built to the NMRA standards, most command stations and throttles must be from the same company. I.E. a Digitrax throttle will not work on an Atlas system etc.
- b. Ask the owner of any concerns he has had with the system he chose and how the company of the system handled it.
- c. Ask the owner what he likes about the system he chose.

d. Do you plan on having many operators that you will need additional throttles? If so, will your guests be able to use their own throttle?

## 5. *Set up a budget*

- a. You do not need to purchase the most expensive system on the market. You can start with Beginner sets and add/expand as your layout and budget grows.
- b. You do not need to purchase all your decoders at one time as they can be added as your budget allows.
- c. Keep it flexible and add as you go.

There is no system that is the best for you or anyone. The best system is the one that you choose, that meet all or most of your criteria. With a little research and some thoughtful planning you can be very satisfied with the results. If you have questions please do not hesitate to talk to a fellow member and ask any question you may have. The only "Dumb" question is the one that never gets asked.

**GOOD JOB MARK AND BILL!**

## **SHOW AND TELL** Bring your favorite engine.

**Don Rhodenbaugh** - brought in a Russian Decapod –Frisco Railroad.

**Max Metzger** - brought in a G scale SD-45 Erie Lackawanna.

**Art Solomon** - brought in an "N" scale Articulated Steam Locomotive.

**Chuck White** - brought in his Atlas, Alco C-425.

## **TREASURY REPORT**

Our treasurer Gene Cowan says we are in black and everything is OK. If you want to see the books just, give him a call.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

The only old business discussed was relating to the upcoming Spring Meet. Alan Bell took the controls and finished up work assignments and final preparation details.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss because all attention was focused on the Spring Meet.

## **SPRING MEET**

The Spring Meet went well. The weather was just gorgeous, with lots of sunshine and warm spring-like temperatures. Normally this would not be considered an ideal situation as this causes a low attendance. However, since the weekends before had left a lot of snowfall the customer sought out our Spring Meet as the "To Do" choice.

There was an excellent selection of clubs displaying the local clubs such and the "N" Scalers, Maumee Valley RR Club (HO) and the "G-Trak" Club "(G). There layouts lit up the eyes of young and old alike. We also had an excellent attendance at our clinic tables. These clinics concentrated on the "Hands On" approach for our attendees who watched and learned from the skills of our members. Of particular note was the table where Chuck White had set up shop. He had his daughter by his side to help assemble his rolling stock. It looked as though she (Katy) was getting more fun out of it than the attendees as her smile was very evident and projected a positive image to everyone that this is a family hobby to be enjoyed by anyone. Thanks Katy, for your help and look forward to seeing you at future modeling events.

We should have a full report on the attendance and other details at the next regular NMRA meeting in April. We hope to see you there.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Troy, Michigan is having their "Annual Op Till You Drop" April 4 –6, 2003. If you are interested in attending contact Rich Gosselin at 248-644-3125 or his e-mail address is [rich@gossel.org](mailto:rich@gossel.org).

If you are interested in going to the Science and Industry Museum in Chicago, Illinois, please contact Chuck White by March 31, 2003.

**Next Show and Tell:** "Dumb things my wife/family/friends bought me that are train related that they thought I'd like."

**Next Clinic:** Nothing planned at this time. May use this time to critique the Spring Meet.

**Announcements:**

1. Here is the Layout Tour Schedule as of 5 January 2003.

”TBD” means “To Be Determined at a later time”. These will be updated as soon as possible.

**April 25, 2003, Friday 7:00 PM**

Host, Bill Piercy, 5026 Vance Avenue, Ft. Wayne, IN

May 4, 2003, Sunday 12:00 Noon

Host, Carl, 1321 Furguson Avenue, Ft. Wayne, IN

June 21, 2003, Friday 7:00 PM

Host, Alan Bell, 5822 Kruse Drive, Ft. Wayne, IN

July 18, 2003, Friday 7:00 PM

Host, John Reitz, 1401 Kenwood Avenue, Ft. Wayne

August date and time T.B.D. 2003

Host, Dan Metzger, 4322 Arlington Avenue, Ft. Wayne, IN

September 19, 2003, Friday 7:00 PM

Host, Mark Wilson, 11523 Green Holly Cove,  
Ft. Wayne, IN

October 17, 2003, Friday 7:00 PM

Host, Rich Swihart, 2519 East State Blvd, Ft. Wayne, IN

November date and time T.B.D. 2003

Host, Jeff Ashby, 7608 Antebellum Blvd, Ft. Wayne, IN

December 12, 2003, Friday 7:00 PM:

Host, Art Solomon, 1120 Lake Point Cove, Ft. Wayne

