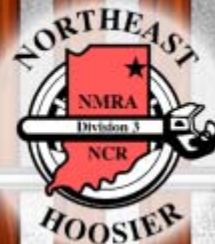




# The Dispatcher



## Meeting Notes North East Hoosier Division 3 January 12, 2004

Jeff Ashby, Division Superintendent, started things off at about 7pm.

Attending: Mel Wise, Jim Arens, Chuck White, Don Rhodenbaugh, Max Metzger, Alleyne Metzger, Gary Evans, Rich Schwab, Neil Burchett (Guest), Mark Gaeth, Rich Mohr, Bill Wemhoff, Jeff Ashby, Art Solomon, Rich Swihart, Gene Cowan, Reid Cowan, Alan Bell and John Cartwright

### 1. Meeting called to order:

- Jeff called the meeting together as our newly installed Superintendent of Division 3. He welcomed guest, Neil Burchett to our meeting and we went around the room introducing ourselves to Neil.

### 2. Old Business:

- Picnic at Alan Toy's. Alan would like to set a date soon, so he can work it into his calendar and arrange any special entertainment. A couple of years ago he was able to get a harpist to entertain the spouses. We discussed establishing a calendar of events for this. Chuck White said he'd handle as he already has several events planned. He'll also work with John Reitz to coordinate the dates for his Round Robin sessions.

*Note: A number of these events have already been posted on our web site.*

### 3. Clinic:

- None was planned or available to be presented. It was stated this is something John Reitz might handle scheduling. Jeff advised he'd been working on the one foot dioramas with the N Scale guys, and proposed a clinic/work session for these next time. Everyone is to bring a 1 foot piece of Styrofoam, some newspaper, trash bags, a tub for water, tooth picks, Elmer's Wood Glue\*, Plaster of Paris\*, Wisk broom, a knife, and foam cutter\*. Items with an asterisk (\*) will be provided.

### 4. Treasurer's Report.

- Gene presented a summary of our monetary assets. If you would like to know the balances, come to a meeting and you'll know!

### 5. 2007 Convention –

- The logo has been improved, but still has not been approved. Roger Parry, our past Region Pres., used our 2001 logo as an example of how a good looking creative logo should look. It was noted that the 2003 Convention logo also

closely resembled ours. Mark Gaeth will provide Rich Mohr and Don Rhodenbaugh with a copy of the logo for their advice and input. Don is listed as one of three persons responsible for the convention shirts, caps, etc. However, he has yet to be contacted. Chuck advised the 2007 convention meetings are usually held on a Saturday.

### 6. Annual Meet (3/20/04):

- Boy Scout Merit Badge event will be in the area to left of the front table, in front of the sanctuary. Blane Ryan (of T.R.A.I.N.) and John Reitz are to coordinate.

- Concessions – Church may not be able to handle. Alan has a group that may be able to take over handling this. He is discussing with his contact at the church. Discussion about the NMRA handling as we all agreed that food was an essential item for the success of this. Mark Gaeth said he would help get this taken care of.

- Publicity – Alan has contacted 21 Alive for some pre meet stuff.

- Make & Take – Contacted Athearn for cars & Atlas for buildings. Plans to contact Jeff at Hobbyland.

- Clinics – Bill Wemhoff has accepted the position as Clinic Coordinator. These clinics will all tie in together with the Make & Take. It will be like an assembly line where you go from one station to the next to complete the process.

- Home Layout Tour – Chuck is handling. Two tours planned. A Saturday "Eastside" one with Rich Swihart, Gary Evans, John Reitz and Jeff Ashby from 4:30 to 7:30. Jeff will open at 5:30. Sunday's will be from 1:00 to 5:00 and will feature the "Southside" with Mark Gaeth, Bill Wemhoff and Lon Hawkins of Decatur. Alan Toy in Ossian will be available for inspection. Dan Metzger will also have his garden layout on the tour. Glenn Roon said the Garrett club will be open both days. Chuck will get these all confirmed and advise Fergus so the tour maps can be finalized and printed. We need volunteers to help with manning the layouts at Jeff's, John's Gary's & Dan's.

- Timesaver - Gary Evans will bring his.

- Layouts: T.R.A.I.N. and N Scale

### 7. New Business

- New Web Site (<http://www.hoosierdiv3nmra.org>) – Rich Mohr is handling. We have lots of room, but not tons. Rich

is conserving. All the old newsletters are archived. Other Groups info can be posted. Looking for pictures of layouts. See the various sections. A listing of events has been included. The roster will also be posted, but no link given, to keep unwanted third persons from getting to it.

- Constitution – Rich will email proposed change to By Laws.

- Foellinger Botanical Gardens Great Train Weekend (GTW) Show – Gary Evans passed around a sign up sheet for manning the NMRA table. It was suggested that if you do come, to bring something to work on, so you have something to talk about. This table and the Timesaver Gary is bringing will not be in the rooms with the layouts due to space limitations. If you can help out with the NMRA's table, please contact Gary. Alan Bell said he'd bring the set up materials and will man the table the first hour.

- Hobbyland Gift Certificate – No one picked up. Rich Schwab said he'd handle in the future. A NS 2004 calendar donated by Gary Evans was won by Jim Arens.

## 8. Announcements

- Jan 17 – Round Robin at John Reitz's, from 1pm to 4pm. Gary Sturm will present a slide show of train pix from all his rail fanning. Bring your own chair. Donations accepted to order pizza.

- Feb 14 – Maumee Swap at Coliseum Bingo (911 W. Washington Center) from 9am to 2pm. \$3 for adults. Children under 12 free. 3 operating layouts, including O, N & HO. A toy area for tots is also planned. Free parking. Concession stand will be open.

- Feb 29 – Michigan City Swap. 10:00am to 3:00pm Chicago time. \$3.00 for adults. 301 E. 8<sup>th</sup> (at the NECA/IBEW Community Service Center) Possible Magical Mystery Train Trip. The swap is located about 1 mile from the Light House Outlet Shops. Hosted by the Duneland MR Club. Contact Chuck White if you're interested in going.

- March 6 – Indy trip for St. Joseph Swap & visit to Naptown club. 10:00 to 3:00. Another possible MMTT. Contact Chuck White if you're interested...

- March 26-28 – Troy, MI Op Weekend – “Op til U Drop” For info see their web site at: <http://www.michops.org> Bill Wemhoff, Alan Bell & Chuck are planning to go for the entire weekend. Gary Evans, Rich Swihart, Don Rhodenbaugh & Gale Jordan may go for one day.

- Mark announced that Mel Wise was profiled in the 01/04 edition of “Senior Life.” He brought extra copies that were passed out. The article tells how Mel got into the hobby and how they fit into the relationship with his wife.

- Op Session at Drake's on 1/10. Jeff & Alan attended. Said they had a great time. Alan said things were much improved from the initial “shake down” session.

## 9. Next Time – No Show & Tell due to the planned clinic.

## Working on the (model) railroad all the livelong day

Text AND Photo  
By Barb Sieminski  
Feature Writer  
Senior Life



A long time train aficionado, retired forging die designer, Mel Wise recalls getting his first train set for Christmas, at the tender age of 5. It wasn't a completely happy occasion, Mel says. "In the middle of Christmas afternoon, I remember crying because I wanted to play with my new train, but I didn't get to – my dad was playing with it himself!"

An Oneida, NY, native Mel grew up with trains – there were many railroaders on his mother's side of the family – and he lived across the street from the West Shore Railroad. Faithfully, twice a day, Mel would either watch out the window, or run outside to wave as the train passed by. One fateful morning, he woke up with chicken pox and didn't appear at the window or go outside to wave, for several days. The crew became concerned and when they found out Mel's uncle was a conductor, they sought him out to ask where Mel was. When Mel recovered and once again was able to go outside and wave to the train, the crew threw a big bag of candy to him. That happy memory has stayed with him throughout the years.

He also fondly remembers his great-uncle taking him for his first ever train ride when he was only 6 years old from Syracuse to Albany, NY.

Mel's model train collection actually began with the set he received when he was 5 years old, and he added new cars and books about trains obtained as Christmas or birthday gifts through the years. When he went into the service, he gave that first train to a cousin, "because I didn't think I'd be interested anymore."

"Right now, I keep other train sets packed away, for sentimental value. I'll have to downsize if I move to smaller quar-

ters," explained Mel. "After I got out of the Army, I bought a Penn Line scale train – one engine and three passenger cars."

A West Technical High School graduate, Mel also spent a year at Cleveland Engineering Institute. After 30 years plying his trade, he retired and now chases trains.

"I attend about six train shows a year, including in Pittsburgh and Allentown, PA., Dayton and Cincinnati, OH. Some shows are for trading and buying; others are just for show, and for people to enjoy viewing."

Asked if any of his trains were smoke belchers, Mel, who owns several trains, in N-gauge and HO sizes, said no. "Toy trains are the ones that smoke, and collectors collect these; other collectors' trains are built to scale."

Mel's first, late wife, Pat, became interested in trains, and one day Mel came home to find that she had put little wads of cotton in his trains' smokestack to make it look like smoke was curling up as the trains chugged through their little town. Mel didn't like them, so for Christmas, he bought Pat her own set, with the gentle admonishment to, "stay out of my trains!"

Susan, Mel's wife, and stepson Matthew Cramer round out Mel's family now. Susan's brother-in-law was a train engineer and her dad was a conductor on the B & O line; she herself is mainly interested in the historical part of the railroads. Both Susan and Mel subscribe to three train magazines - "Model Railroader," "Model Railroad Craftsmen" and "Trains." The latter publication features real trains, rather than model trains.

Two years ago, Mel and Susan took a 29-day train trip from Waterloo to Seattle. They then flew to Anchorage, Alaska, and then took a train to Fairbanks. The trip broadened more, including a boat ride to Vancouver, BC, and another train trip to San Francisco, Denver, Chicago and finally back to Waterloo.

Mel is a member of several train clubs - the National Model Railroad Association (Division 3 of the North Central Region), Maumee Valley Model Railroad Club, Northeast Indiana N-scale Club and the Garrett Model Railroad Club.

Sometimes Susan gets exasperated with Mel, because he promises to take her someplace, and then doesn't show up. She knows exactly where to find him: shooting the breeze with other railroad fans, having completely forgotten about his wife and their prior plans.

A lot of Mel's train creation comes from kits, which can be bought at hobby stores. Other parts of his layout he has had to build himself from photos or from scratch.

"You can build your own towns and modify them to whatever you want. If there's anything you want but can't buy, you make it yourself," said Mel, who is particularly proud of his built-from-scratch model ore boat, made about eight years ago.

His current train set is set up like a waterfront of Cleveland, with lots of intriguing details that capture the onlooker's awe, as he or she recognizes well-crafted landmarks, comparing them to the real thing.

In his heart Mel is a lifelong wanderer by rail, and for whom these words by writer Robert Louis Stevenson were meant: "I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move."



Senior Life

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## Installation and Wiring of a Tortoise Switch Machine

By Mark Gaeth

As many of you know, I prefer to throw all turnouts by hand. I feel it is very prototypical when operating a layout. The real railroads do this still, even today, because of the costs involved with maintaining remote switches. Most often remote control of the switches is done in very large yards by the larger class 1 railroads. However, it would not be practical or cost effective for them to have every switch on their line to be remotely controlled. The same premise holds true for most home layouts and my layout is no exception.

My layout consists of mainly sprung HO hand throws manufactured by Caboose Industries. I do have several areas with turnouts that would create a hassle for the operator of that section of railroad. Most layouts that I have visited, including those I have visited outside the state of Indiana, have a need to include a remotely operated turnout. Many times this is because of a loss of direct access to the switch. There are various ways that can accomplish the same results, so you should always keep an open mind on how you want to solve the remote control of the turnout that best suits your individual layout and style. You will note the hard to reach turnouts located behind the Gaeth Pallet and Custom Crating Company which necessitates the need for remote actuation of these turnouts

Several years ago while in the planning stages of my layout, I decided that I wanted to have any turnout that was not in a clear, unconstructive location to be remotely controlled by a slow motion switch machine. I first bought 24 kits manufactured by Scale Shops which were not difficult to build but after testing a few they were very hard to run at a slow speed. I had purchased them at a good price but felt they would be more of a pain than I had time for to get the speed to an acceptable level I desired. I then decided to purchase the Tortoise switch machine which is manufactured by Circuitron. While the price is almost double in cost, about \$12.75 from Hobbyland, it was what I was looking for in a remote control device. I still have the Scale Shop machines that I will be selling in case anyone is interested in them. The Tortoise is a self contained completely assembled controller that is really simple to install and wire up. It also provides a couple of internal Single-Pole-Double-Throw (SPDT) auxiliary switches inside to control other functions relating to the position of the actual switch machine.



These internal switches can be used to power switch signals or power routing of the switch frog if you need it. At the present time I will not be using these extra internal switches but in the future as I incorporate detection into the layout they will be used.

## Assembly:

The switch is built but you do need to assemble the fulcrum arm and spring wire. The spring wire must be bent at few locations at different angles. The first bend is located about 1/8" from one end at a 75 – 80 degree angle. The second bend located at 3/4" from the first bend at a 15 degree angle. Note: These 2 angles are bent on the same plane. (See Figure 1 )

## Mounting:

The first thing to be determined is the mounting location and layout structure. In my case I used 1/8" Luan for my upper deck surface. While this material is great to make the layout lighter it does not provide much material for the Tortoise mounting screw to "bite" into and hold securely. My solution was to cut out a small piece of 5/8" plywood to mount the switch to it. (See Figure 2 below)

Figure 1

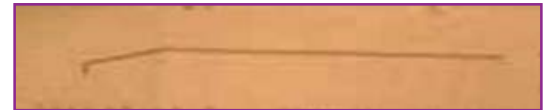


Figure 2

This allowed me to run screws from the top down into the added plywood to firmly secure it into place. I then mounted the switch machine to it near the edge so that I had clearance for the fulcrum and spring wire to have ample room to move. I mounted the switch machine to the plywood piece with 2 #4 X 3/8' long screws. You can also drill a hole that is large enough in the plywood to accomplish the same results. I then drilled a small pilot hole from the top surface near my turnout throw-arm. Next, I drilled a 1/2" hole at the pilot hole to provide ample room for the spring wire to move unobstructed and actuate the turnout. I made my hole slightly larger than the instruction said in order to have some extra room for final adjustments if needed later. I will come back to this and lay a thin piece of fitted styrene plastic over the excess cutout. I will then cover up the area with ballast or other scenic material and it will not be seen. (See Figure 3 below)

Figure 3

The instructions also detailed an alternative mounting for the machine to the layout by using double back tape. This would help to deaden the vibration of the internal motor if you desire to do it this way. I chose to use the screw method because if the switch had to be replaced it would be easy to "Plug-n-Play". If the tape was used you would need to realign the switch mounting and spend time cleaning the surface of the tape residue. I like to keep it quick and easy if at all possible.



## Wiring of the switch machines:

Wiring up the machines can be accomplished in several different ways according to the instructions. I found it best to look at all three options and see which way best to suit your needs. I chose to use option #2 which is a Bi-Polar DC with SPDT toggle switches. This method requires the use of 2 - 12 Volt DC power supplies. It is simple to wire up 2 DC power supplies

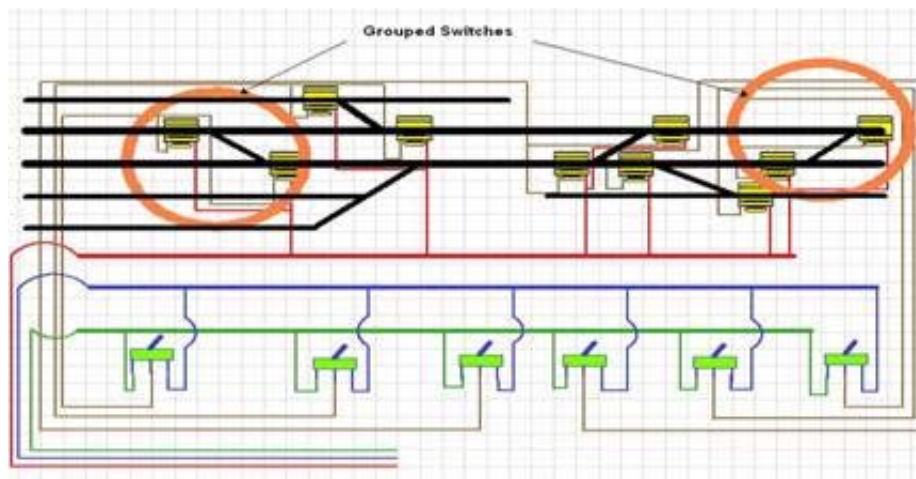
or you can do what I did. I purchased a MRC SLO-MO power supply, again from Hobbyland, which has 2 12 Volt power supplies already built into one contained unit. It was about the same price as two separate power supplies but you do not need to do any extra wiring. It is ready to go right out of the box. I will detail the wire hook up later with pictures.

The next step you will need to do is determine your wiring schematic. I have always found that if you draw out your wiring plan on paper or like I did with a CAD program such as 3rdPlanIt, it will be easier trace wiring concerns in the future should you have any shorts or open connections. Set up a color coded wiring print that anyone can follow by just a simple trace of the colored wires. An ounce of prevention now will be prevent a ton of frustration later should you have any troubles with operations.

The instructions say you can solder the connection wires directly to the Tortoise circuit board pads. I always like the idea of preventing problems before they occur. I found a 10 position circuit board edge connector from an electronics supply house and made my solder connection to this instead of directly to the Tortoise. This allows me to quick change the power connection to the machine with just a flip of the connector. Also, it prevents solder heat from going up into the machine and possibly damaging the internal components. This also makes short work of changing out a machine if I need to sometime in the future. (See the attached picture for details)

If you look at the attached wiring schematic you will see that on cross-over sections I wired then to the same controller toggle. This way when I operated the turnout to cross over to the parallel track the opposing switch would also move to meet it in synchronized movement. This prevents having to throw 2 toggles to complete the action. They are just wired opposite direction of each other. (See Figure 4 )

**Figure 4**



I wired the red wire as a common buss to each of the switch machines. With my option choice of a DC Bi-Polar setup this will act as the ground in completing the circuit. Power for the Green line is from one of the internal power packs and the Blue is the power from the second internal power pack. The Red is the wire tapped off the center of the 2 combined power packs. In electrical reality voltage readings between Blue and Green will be 24 Volts, while voltage reading between Red and Green or Red and Blue will be 12 Volts DC. The Brown wires are routed to the center tap of the SPDT toggle and provide the actual directional flow of current to throw the switch or group of switches.

The lower level presented a similar wiring setup but a couple of switches needed a little extra tweak to the wiring scheme. I wanted to throw the same machine but also wanted to control it from 2 different control panels depending on where the operator was located. To accomplish this I used the same basic scheme but used a SPDT Center-Off momentary toggle. The wire set up is the same but the Tortoise is not powered until the toggle is moved into a powered state on either end of the throw of the toggle. Since the normal condition is for the switch motor to be constant on the normal wiring would have had the 2 toggles constantly fighting each other for powered control unless they were operated at the same time. Using the momentary toggles left the switch motor in the un-powered state and either one was separated from the other. This setup relies heavily on good spring tension on the fulcrum spring wire to keep the frogs position against the rails to prevent picking of the frog by the wheels of the train.

## Wiring of the CTC Panel:

The panels were built, painted and the toggles installed in the normal fashion. If you would like instructions on how I did mine please feel free to ask. Maybe that is another article to be written sometime in the future.

I wanted to make the wiring as simple as possible behind the CTC panel. Too many wires can be confusing and distracting. First I connected one side of the toggle to a single wire and then I tied the other side of the toggle switch to a different colored wire. This wire was then routed down to the Blue and Green main buss lines from the power pack. (See Figure 5 & 6 ) Then it was time to run the Brown lines to each individual switch machine to complete the circuit. These Brown lines are connected to the center post of the SPDT toggle.

After a test of each machine and any wiring corrections you can now reinstall the CTC panel and enjoy the feeling of not having to stand on a step ladder to move a switch to throw it into the required position. You can just throw the toggle and the Tortoise switch machines do the rest. Some time in the future, when it warms up to be livable in the garage, I plan to hook up a lighting system to indicate which way the switch is thrown.

I hope this will give you some ideas for your layout. It really is not all that difficult but it is a little time consuming. It is better to take your time and do it right the first time. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me and I would be more than happy to assist.

Keep it on the rails!!!!

Figure 5

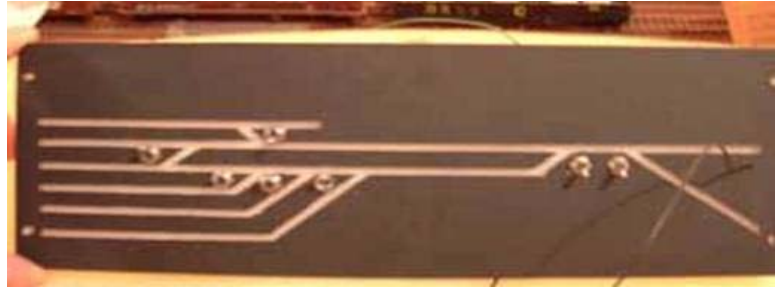


Figure 6

