



# THE Lantern

April 2011

Volume 16 Number 4

## April 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting at the old Tallahassee Antique Car Museum

The old Tallahassee Antique Car Museum is located on Mahan Drive just east of the intersection of Capital Circle and Mahan Drive (across from the McDonalds in the Wal-Mart parking lot). The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm.

## Minutes of March 2011 BBMRA Meeting

The March 2011 Membership Meeting took place! My apologies to the membership: I lost the March minutes. I usually format the minutes immediately so I don't lose them. But, lose them I did. So, I can report that the March meeting did take place, that we are solvent, the show is still in June and is sold out and that there will be an April meeting.

## April Program: Meeting Modules

The program for April introduces the concept of "Meeting Modules". More information can be found in this newsletter.

## Vintage Lantern/Switch Lighter Found By Larry Benson

Any time I'm in another town – Thomasville, Panama City, Micanopy – or wherever, I stroll through local shops. This is doubly true if some of the stores offer antiques and collectibles. Naturally, I search mostly for railroad memorabilia.

With that said, not long ago when I was browsing in an antique shop in Thomasville a unique vintage railroad item caught my eye. Sitting on a shelf was the lantern/switch lighter in the accompanying photo. There was a small white tag attached with the seller's description written on it. It said, "Lighter from early 1890s was used by Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to light signals and oil lanterns and comes complete with wick." The top unscrews so it won't leak when filled with kerosene. The 9 1/2 inch long handle is hollow so it remained cool when signal maintainers or other crews used it to ignite switch lights or a batch of switchman's oil lanterns.



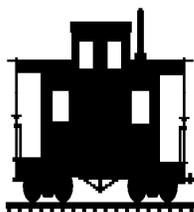
There isn't a railroad identification stamped in the metal so I questioned the seller about how he knew the item was from the 1890s and was used by the B&O Railroad. He said he had found one just like it on the Internet during his research. Although a little skeptical about its authenticity, I offered him half his asking price and he accepted.

Still unsure about whether or not the lighter is a legitimate piece of early railroad equipment, I showed it to my long time friend and knowledgeable trainman – Dan King. After inspecting it, Dan confirmed that the article is one of a type used by railroads in the late 1800s and early 1900s to light oil burning trackside signal switches and kerosene lanterns.

I think it is an unusual vintage railroad "tool" and I doubt I will see another one like for a long, long time - if ever.

## TALLAHASSEE MODEL RAILROAD SHOW & SALE

Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – North Florida Fairgrounds, Building #4 – 9 am to 4 pm  
Adults & Children 13 and older: \$5 – Children 12 and younger are free – Free Parking



## For Sale – 4 x 4 ft. Portable Layout “Base” submitted by Larry Benson

I am offering my 4 x 4 ft. (48 in. square) portable layout “base” for sale to members for \$25. The money will be donated to BBMRA. The base is made of wood with 1x3 in. sides and ½ in. plywood top. It is ideal for someone with limited space who wants to have a small N-scale or HO layout. No track is mounted on the base and there is no fixed scenery except for a narrow path painted brown. While sturdy, it is light enough to be carried by one person. Although it isn't stand-alone, it sits nicely on a small table or, if desired, legs could be attached easily to the bottom.



Members may remember my HO layout at our 2009 and 2010 BBMRA train shows. As seen in the photo, I had my DeWitt Clinton train set running around in a circle that represented Goodwood Museum and Gardens.

I will deliver the base to a buyer who lives within a reasonable distance of my home. If interested, contact Larry Benson at 877-7001 or [larben75@comcast.net](mailto:larben75@comcast.net)

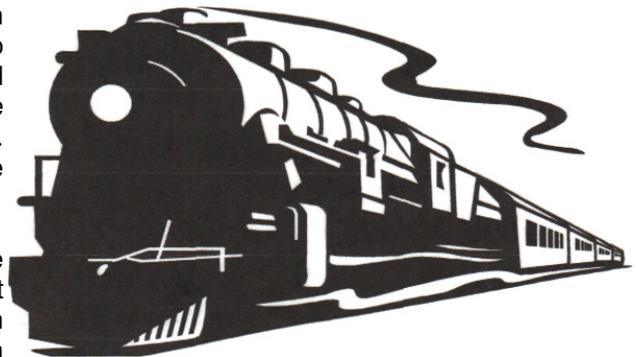
**Bill Thompson is having a “moving sale”** – For sale: a HO layout 6' x 8' that comes with a 4' high stand that disassembles. Has 4 separate tracks, some light wiring installed, two flashing crossing signals, bridge, junk yard, drive-in movie, hobo camp, etc. Also, HO scale structures, track, many rolling stock items, diesels and steam engine, several used transformers, sound system and miscellaneous items.

Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 8 am – 10 am only, at 2431 Oakdale Street in Waverly Hills. Directions: turn off of Thomasville Road or Centerville Road onto Woodgate Way to Oakdale Street. After first curve you will see 2431 above the garage door. All of the items are USED and inexpensive items so they are priced to sell because of pending move.

## RAILS TO CALIFORNIA

At the height of rail travel to California, there was The City of San Francisco. It was the longest, fastest, most beautiful, most elegant train to grace the rails. It was operated by the Southern Pacific, Union Pacific and Chicago & North Western railroads. Her power was comprised of the longest locomotives ever built, six 900 horsepower 12 cylinder diesels. She was capable of 110 miles per hour. Her observation car was the longest in the world. She ran between Chicago and the Golden Gate.

It all started with the driving of the golden spike at Promontory, Utah. The spike was wired to the telegraph. He swung the hammer and missed, but a fast thinking telegrapher sent the message. The engines were Union Pacific's No. 119 and Central Pacific's Jupiter. Now there were rails from Chicago to San Francisco.



Along came improvements like the Pullman car, and a man named Fred Harvey. He built elegant restaurants and hotels all along the way. The train now stopped long enough for the passengers to eat. Soon passengers began flocking to the Union Pacific because it was the only railroad that provided meals. Harvey introduced the Harvey Girls and kept the standards high.

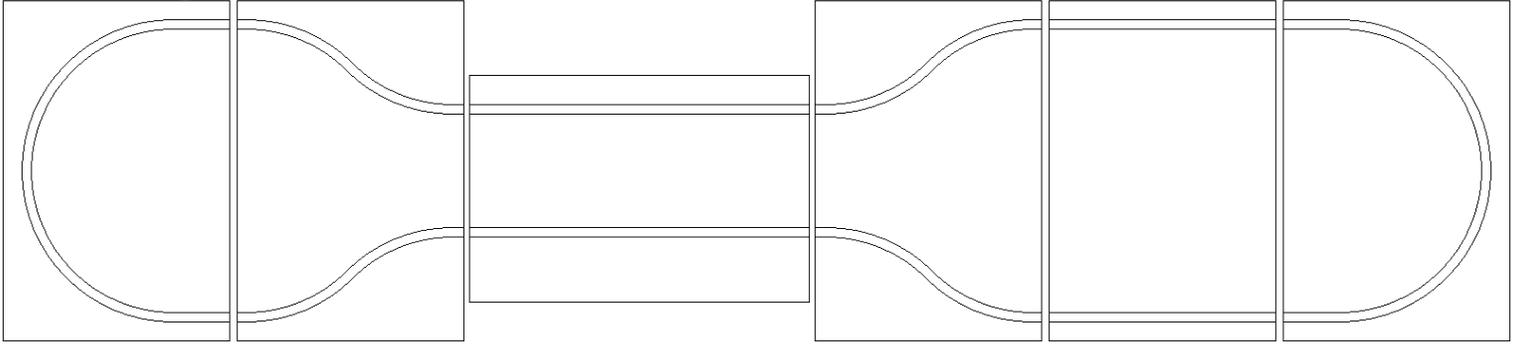
Dining cars appeared and the California Limited was a pride and joy between Chicago and Los Angeles.

We should mention another aspect, speed. The Scott Special ran from Los Angeles to Chicago in 44 hours and fifty four minutes. Once it hit a speed of 96 mph.

The years of greatest train travel were from 1900 to 1939. There were many famous "name" trains, The Chief, The Corn King Limited, The Katy Flyer, The Viking, The Meteor, The FFV, The Flamingo, El Capitan, The San Francisco Chief, The Wolverine, The Zephyr, The Columbine, The Golden Arrow and for Lionel lovers there really was The Scout. Much emphasis was put on elegance and luxury. There were dome cars and double-deckers. The three main railroads remained the Union Pacific, the Southern Pacific, who bragged of being the most modern and the Santa Fe.

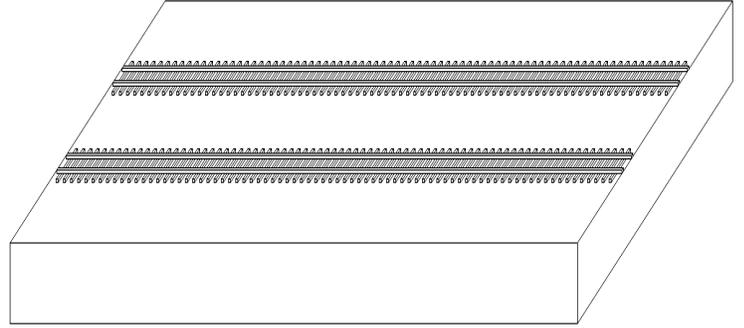
Happy Rails, Mike Sassard TTOS# 21388 [msassard@centurylink.net](mailto:msassard@centurylink.net)

# Meeting Modules: A Program Alternative



## Styrofoam Modules

Meeting Modules are small 12 by 18 by 2 inch rigid Styrofoam modules that will allow BBMRA members to "Run Trains" more often. I'll grant you, these are small and any curves will have a tight radius, but they would be lightweight and easy to carry and easy to set up on a table top. Scenery can be anything you want, from non-existent (track only), bare-bones (grass and maybe a tree or two or three...) or with lots of scenery. It would be up to you. "Running Trains" on these modules would be easy to set-up and tear-down.



## T-TRAK

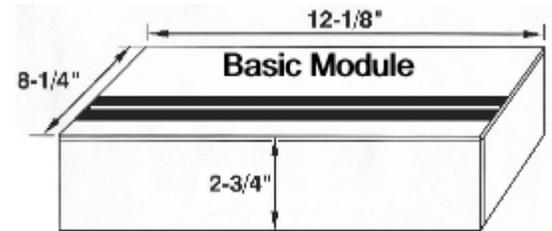
T-TRAK is a new form of scale model railroading. It is based on the Principles of NTRAK Modules and use small wood bases placed on table tops.

Modules are built according to T-TRAK Standards for unity and presentation, just as the full size NTRAK modules have standards for properly built modules. The difference is the overall sizes and the height of NTRAK modules on long legs and T-TRAK modules placed right on tables. Modules are simple to build, easily joined together with locking track for electrical power, strength and lasting stability. Modules can be of varying sizes to suit your needs.

For prospective modelers this is an easy way to learn about building a module for yourself and to help you learn the true basics of model railroading.

A two track module is the basic track starter plan used, but the plan can easily be modified. The size is not restrictive, for beginners or experienced modelers.

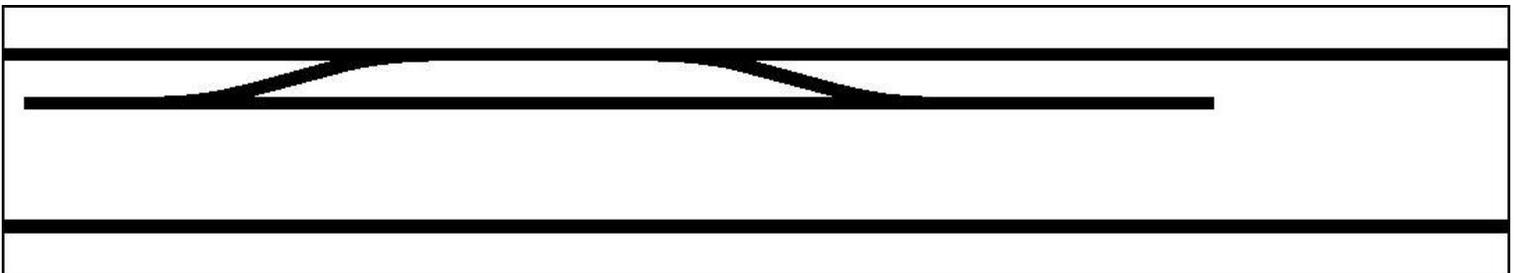
[www.T-TRAK.org](http://www.T-TRAK.org)



## The Closet Railroad

The Closet Railroad is based on the same ideas and principles in the above two articles. The difference is the size of the modules and their construction: they are closet doors, either 6'8" by 14 1/2" or 8' by 16". Both can be cut down making smaller modules for ease of transport.

With the exception of a Styrofoam top the modules would not have to be built as they are bought ready to go. Modules would use a standard track placement at the end of each module for connection purposes and can be of varying sizes. As stated above this can be an easy way to learn the basics of model railroading.



# Father and Son Railroad

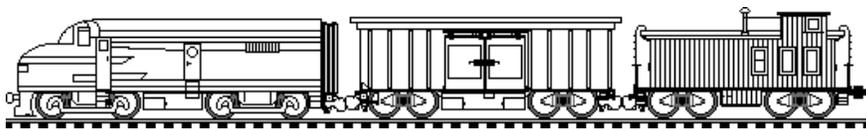
My 94 year old Father lives in California. Little did I know, he was scratch building all kinds of structures. On day when I was telling him about my train layout and I called it Camelot, he asked if I needed a castle. I said yes and I could use it as a tourist attraction, like the old fort in St. Augustine.

He sent me a beautiful castle along with an Inn and a lighthouse. The castle is now the centerpiece of the layout.

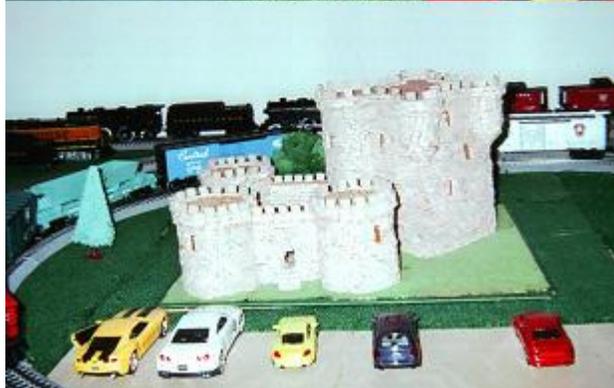
I use Lionel's Fastrack and run all Lionel trains. I also have 2 Weaver BL2's. There are three loops on the layout and two on the floor, under the layout.

I enjoy running and listening, ( all but one have Train Sounds), to my trains, but I am the most proud of that castle. This is a true father and son railroad.

Happy Rails, Mike Sassard [msassard@centurylink.net](mailto:msassard@centurylink.net)



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## Welcome to the Town of Camelot

Unlike many ultra realistic layouts, Camelot is an ideal, fantasy land, a Florida tourist attraction. There is a framed "welcome" with the words to the song Camelot on the front corner of the layout.

The layout is approximately 10' by 12'. It is "L" shaped and has three loops of Lionel FasTrack on the layout surface. There is only one turnout and siding. The surface is covered with green indoor/outdoor carpet. The roads and parking lots are not yet paved.

There are two passenger trains and one freight train, all with full sound.

The main attraction is a scratch built castle. It was built by my 94 year old father, DuPre' Sassard. He also built an "Inn". The remainder of the buildings are Lionel or Plasticville.

Under the layout are two more loops of Lionel FasTrack. The inner loop has one turnout and two uncoupling tracks. There I run a little industrial switcher. On the outer loop is another passenger train. There is also a large "lighthouse", built by my dad.

I run my trains to Bluegrass music. I named my railroad the Florida Coast Line, a combination of the Florida East Coast and the Atlantic Coast Line.

I belong to the TTOS and the Big Bend Model Railroad Association.

Happy Rails, Mike Sassard [msassard@centurylink.net](mailto:msassard@centurylink.net)

