

FLIMZIE

***The Newsletter of the Rock River Valley Division
Midwest Region, National Model Railroad Association***



May Volume 55, Number 9

The Rock River Valley Division, RRVD, is a local division of the Midwest Region of the National Model Railroad Association, NMRA. The RRVD serves NMRA members in areas of Green and Rock Counties of Wisconsin, and Boone, Jo Davies, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, Carol, DeKalb and Winnebago counties in Illinois. The RRVD holds monthly meets typically the first Sunday afternoon of each month, September through May, in Rockford at the at **The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 1829 North Rockton Avenue, Rockford, IL**. They consist of various clinics on model railroading, model contests, drawings for door prizes for NMRA members. The meets start at 1:00 PM, and the doors open at 12:30 PM.

Mark your Calendar

Indy Junction 2022 Three Regions Convention

The Three Regions Convention **INDY JUNCTION 2022** will take place **May 18-22, 2022**. The show will be held at the Marriott East hotel complex in Indianapolis, Indiana. You can receive updated convention information on the webpage

<https://www.indyjunction2022.org/> or the Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/indyjunction2022>

Gateway 2022

NMRA National Convention and National Show

The **Gateway 2022** NMRA National Convention and National Show will take place Sunday, **August 7, 2022 thru Saturday, August 13, 2022**. The Convention will be held at Marriott Grand, St Louis 800 Washington Ave, St Louis, MO Saint Louis, MO. The train show will be at the Collinsville, IL Gateway Convention Center. The website is https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?preview&event_id=13724

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Office Vacancies**Clinic and Layout tours for May**

In May, RRVD members will travel to Madison for a joint meet with the SCWD. We will meet at the Rockton Walmart parking lot by the gas station for car-pooling Sunday morning at 11:15AM for an 11:30 departure.

Flimzie Deadlines

The Flimzie is published once per month on the first of the month. It will be placed on the RRVD website for anyone that wants to read it.

The content for the Flimzie comes from you, our readers. Please submit your articles, pictures and editorial comments to the Editor, Ken Peterson, poplarken53@gmail.com, no later than 10 days before the 1st of the month, i.e., April 20, 2022, for a May 1st publication.

Message From the Superintendent

By Marty Hendrickx

Well as I write this report, all of us in the upper Midwest are going to make our annual transition from late winter to early summer! Tonight they are talking about a frost warning and next week it will be in the 80's? So before you abandon your basement railroad empires for warmer activities, be sure to turn on the dehumidifiers so your empires do not turn into a unworkable mess by the fall. With the

warmer weather in mind the RRVD does have several summer activities that we would like to invite all of our members to.

We will be having a June Junket to Oregon, Illinois on June 11th. We will be visiting the Oregon Depot Museum in the morning, having lunch at Father and Sons Pizza and then visiting the Blackhawk Model Railroad Club after lunch. Some of the details have not been resolved as where to meet to carpool and if lunch will be pizza with everyone contributing or if lunch will be on your own. Some of this will depend on the number of participants we have for this event. RRVD will be sending out an email invite shortly and I would ask anyone interested in going on the June Junket to RSVP so we can get a head count and better plan.

We are planning on having a RRVD picnic in August in lieu of our normal Board of Directors meeting. This will be open to all members. RRVD will provide the burgers and brats with each member bring a side dish to share. We did this last year for the first time and it was a fun event for everyone who attended.

Last weekend Ken Mosny, John Mann, Myron Peterson, Ron Johnson, and I made our bi-annual trip to Madison for our joint meet with the South-Central Wisconsin Division. They now meet at the Verona Senior Citizens Center which is a very large and modern facility. I did not get a count, but they said it was their largest turnout of the year and just taking a quick look around the room I would estimate at least 50 attendees. There were two very good clinics given on prototype roadbed construction and various scenery technics including a method of producing trees quickly and realistically. Ron did get the contact info from these two presenters and I would suspect we will be seeing these guys at our meets next year. They had three layout visits scheduled and I can say the layout tours by themselves were worth the trip.

- Bill Weber's Union Pacific RR was a 1813 ft² layout in a 2500 square foot basement.
- Dr. bill Clancy's Rio Grande Pacific is the featured layout in this month's issue of *Model Railroader*.
- John Schaffer's Layout. I did not make this layout but I heard it was also a gem.

So that is it for this month. I hope to see as many of our members at the June Junket and member's cookout this summer.

The Layout Design Column

By Ken Peterson

This month I would like to try a layout design to fit or share a bedroom. People I talk to at train shows so often tell me they cannot have a model railroad because they have no space. It is the number one excuse. Well, that is the excuse they give me when their wife is standing next them. I have built four small layouts and taken them to the RRVD Train Show and Sale for display and operation. The purpose of those layouts, other than my own selfish desire to design, build, detail and operate layouts, is to show everyone that they can have an operating layout in a small space. It can hang on a wall in any room of the house, basement, or garage. The main thing that stops most layouts is the spouse. Oops, did I say that out loud? I dare not say any more about that without getting into trouble. I am so fortunate that my wife likes my hobby. She knows where I spend my free time. She knows what I am spending money on. She likes fellow model railroaders. She likes going to the national NMRA conventions. It can't get any better than that!

If you can negotiate sharing space in a bedroom for a layout, you can have a model railroad that is fulfilling. With the right furniture it can still function as an office or spare bedroom. I am going to suggest the layout be mounted on a 12" to 16" deep shelf around the walls. The height will be set by the individual and design of the widows in the room. The height should allow for the windows to be opened and closed. The height should also come up to the owner's armpit for best operating ease and visuals. For me, the best height would be 54". That would allow me to reach over the top of the backdrop to lock/unlock the windows and reach under the shelf to open the window. My windows have the bottom sash movable, and

the top sash fixed. With that information, let's move on to the layout design.

1. CONCEPTUAL PHASE

The first step in the layout design process is always conceptual. This involves developing the theme, or the look, feel, experience, or the real story you want to tell with your model railroad (MR). You want to choose an era, locale, prototype, etc. What kind of experience do you want to create for the operator? What signature elements do you want to include? What can you include in the design to give that "typical" essence of the area you are representing? What are the space considerations required for operations by operators? Will it be portable, modular, permanent? These are important considerations in this phase of the design. To answer these questions, I begin with extensive research.

I recently visited a club layout in Argyle, IL. They are modelling the CNW KD Line. The railroad ran from Rockford, IL to Kenosha, WI. The group led by Clarence Welty has done a good job of including many features of the prototype in their large HO scale layout. Their layout inspired me to design an N-scale bedroom layout based on part of the KD Line. I have the book, *The KD Line*, by Paul Behrens. It was a self-published book in 1986 and is long out of print. It is well written and details all aspects of the railroad's history from its beginning to its demise. I also found Sanborn maps of Rockford, IL of the KD line in Rockford. The railroad was built in sections at different times. Completion came in January of 1864. Through abandonment of sections of track in different locations the railroad was broken up into pieces. The main portion was abandoned 5-31-1939. Today there are just a few short segments of the original track still in operation and lots of bike trails.

So, I must determine what era of the railroad do I want to model. Present day the Union Pacific owns and operates a part of the original track from downtown Rockford out to Loves Park, and other sections in Wisconsin. Operations include only a few industries. It would work for modern diesels and freight cars. The KD Line could be modelled as the CNW in the 1930's with steam engines, 40 ft wood freight cars, and wood passenger cars. Or it could even be

built as early as 1897, the year of the peak traffic flow on the railroad in Rockford. The track Rockford to Caledonia was originally laid with 60 lb. rail. That meant it could only handle lighter weight locomotives such as 4-4-0's and class R & R1's 4-6-0's. Some 2-8-0

Consolidations were able to use that track, but at reduced speed.

There was an interchange with the CB&Q in downtown Rockford.

That would allow for CB&Q locomotives when building the early era.

N-scale steam locomotives are available in CNW and CB&Q in 4-4-0, 2-6-2, and 4-6-0 configurations. There are 2-8-0's available but would require paint and CNW decals.

I have decided to design the layout for around the turn of the century. It will provide more industry and challenging operations. The layout will be modular, so it can be built at the workbench and carried to the installed location. That way there is no construction going on in the installed location (always take away any negatives the spouse may have to having a model railroad sharing space somewhere in the house). Also, the design could allow for portability, so there is the option to take it to a train show for display/exhibition.

This railroad like 99% of all prototype railroads operated from point A to point B, Rockford to Kenosha. It didn't go around in circles and didn't have return loops at either end. Trains originated in one town, travelled down the road, and terminated in another town. That destination can be anywhere along the length of the railroad. Due to the severe space limitation of building a model railroad to fit into a small space like a spare room, I will design a layout that is only a portion of the KD Line. This month I will start with the design of Rockford.

2. STRUCTURAL PHASE

The second phase of the design process is the structural considerations. This involves considering the available space for the layout structure, self-standing table style, shelf style, if it must share space with other uses, does it require to be able to provide storage under it, what kind of shape can be used, what are the track standards going to be, standards for aisle widths, layout height, and how will the operators fit in the layout space? What are the lighting

requirements? How much staging should be included? Should the layout be expandable?

Two types of shelf designs involve building a structural frame with plywood and 1" x 3"s. This is design weighs a lot, 30 - 50 lbs. It can be more difficult to carry from the workshop to the layout room how long you build each module or section. It does have the advantage of flexibility of length of the sections. You can build them 48" 54", 60" or 96" long. Using hollow core doors (HCD) is fast to build and easy to move around. I have built two HCD layouts that I took to train shows. One person can move each section from the workshop to the layout room and install on the shelf brackets. I have read in several different model railroad forums that shelf layouts can be built of entirely 2" foam. The backdrop is attached to the wall brackets and the fascia is glued to the foam. They have held up well. I am not ready to try that. I have built several foam core proscenium style shelf layouts. These have worked well for me. They hold up well going to train shows and back. They are a lot of work to fabricate. If I were to build an around the room shelf layout of that style, I would have to design and build a fixture to aid building dimensionally identical modules.

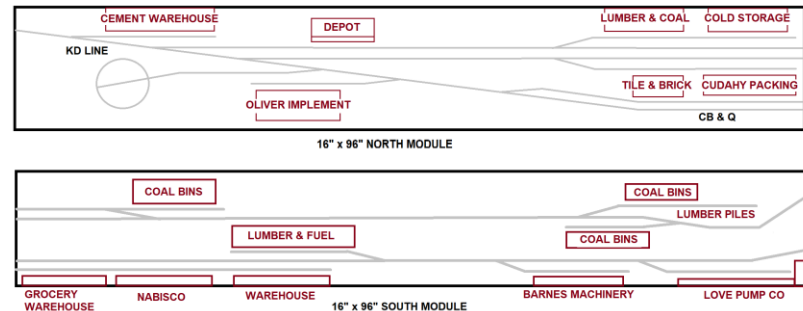
For this design article I will show two designs. One for the dining room, and the other for a larger bedroom. The smaller one will use two HCD's. The other will be 96" long 1" x 3" frames with 1/4" plywood top covered in 1" foam. I used this method for my permanent layout in my basement. It has worked very well. It has been disassembled three times and moved to new houses. Sections of it are over 20 years old. After each move it underwent revisions and expansion. Now it is in its final version. It has about 250 linear feet of run, and there is no more room in the basement.

3. SKETCHING

The sketching phase begins with studying the 1891 Sanborn maps of Rockford east of the river, and the 1930 map of Rockford in Paul Behrens book *The KD Line*. The maps do not agree completely. Industries came and went, and track change in those 39 years. Since I am trying to fit eight blocks of railroad into a small space, I have made some changes to the prototype track layout. The HCD design is more compressed than the larger design. Both designs have a lot

of the industries that existed in Rockford. The larger design has more than 20 car spots. Both will be fun to operate on. My goal is to create a layout that is fun to operate. Future articles will describe the rest of the layout as it goes around the room.

The sketches below show larger bedroom layout of Rockford. The left end of the bottom module is attached to the right end of the top module. The bottom edge of both modules is against the wall. The Rock River is where the wall is.



I did not include all the coal bins that were served by the two railroads. On the sketch of the south module the two tracks that curve off to the right are the CB & Q (lower) and the CNW KD Line (upper). An extension off the side of the layout can hold staging tracks. The line of the upper left end of the north module is the CNW KD Line to Caledonia. A temporary clamp on staging track can be used to operate trains while the rest of the layout is being built or can be used when the layout is taken to shows. Next month I will show the smaller HCD version of Rockford and the around the room layout sections. The following month I will discuss several ways to operate The KD Line.

Making a Silk Purse

Part One: Selecting a Candidate

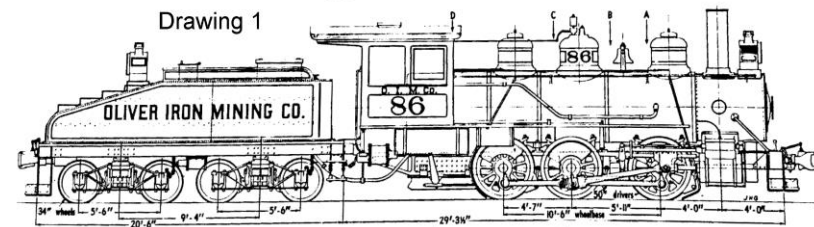
By Ken Mosny

We have all heard the phrase, “Trying to make a silk purse from a sow's ear”. It refers to an effort to create something useful from something that is sub-par. It may be an effort that is even viewed as “not worth the trouble”. Many of us all too often succumb to this challenge. I like the challenge because it appeals to the frugal nature of my modeling. It all started with a Model Die Casting Southern Pacific 0-6-0. In the beginning, I was just going to make a few changes like replacing the steel cab with a wooden one, backdating some modern details like the electric lights to oil lamps, converting the oil tender to coal, and then adding upgraded minor parts such as a better bell, whistle and air pump using lost wax castings. A modern motor to replace the open frame motor, and a decoder, possibly with sound, would round out the project. Well, things got out of hand, and I ended up scratch building a new boiler, tender frame, pilots and a host of other details using traditional methods my new 3D printer. The following is the first of a series of articles chronicling the building of a late 19th century 0-6-0 from the cast-off MDC 0-6-0. While I realize that few, if any, readers will actually build this project as described, I hope it will provide ideas and methods to revitalize old venerable locomotives to modern modeling standards or perhaps encourage you to change something that is “close” to something that is “just right”. For some of the modeling, I used my metalworking lathes and milling machine, but they are not essential and depend on how far you want to go. Much of this can be done with typical hand tools.

The first question is, “Why not just buy one of these models instead of building it?”. Well, there are no mass-produced late 19th century 0-6-0 switchers and only a couple of imported brass ones that I know are commonly available. There were a few soft metal kits produced in low numbers. The brass ones were made in the 1970's and 1980's. We all know that in order to meet current operational

standards old brass will need to have new motors, wiring, possibly gears, and decoders installed. Virtually all mass-produced cast HO steam of all wheel arrangements represent early to mid-20th century locomotives. Even if the original locomotive prototype was built in the 1890's, the available HO model almost always has more modern details, lights, pumps, stack, domes, piping, air tanks, etc., applied as the locomotive was rebuilt during its life. So, just about any mass-produced model needs to be re-detailed, anyway. Also, since no recent 0-6-0 switchers based on a late 19th century prototype have been made recently, I saw the best choice was to “make a silk purse” by reworking an old die cast model.

The prototypes for this model that caught my eye are in Kalmbach's *Model Railroader Cyclopedia-Volume I, Steam Locomotives* by Lynn Wescott on pages 28-30. One of these is shown in drawing 1 from that book.



It is of a typical heavy, for 1890's, 0-6-0 switcher with a straight boiler and slope tender. At one time, MDC made an 0-6-0 that represents a more modern version of this type of locomotive, and I thought the MDC model would make a good starting point for an HO model. This model is no longer made but is still readily available at train shows derelict in the forgotten boxes under the tables. I did not attempt to copy one of these prototype drawings exactly, but rather freelance a credible model. Of course, having two complete junk box examples and a cache of assorted parts for an MDC 0-6-0 meant that I could be off and running without too much scrounging. Let the frugality begin!

Other than I already had a few, the MDC 0-6-0 had a lot going for it for me to select it. See photo 1.

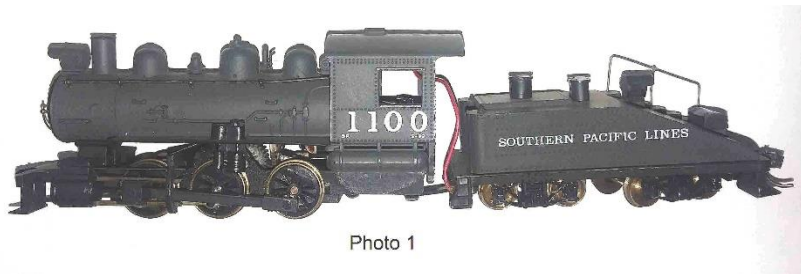


Photo 1

Its basic features indicate a locomotive of prior 1900 vintage which has been modernized. The general driver and rod arrangement is right. The model has a slide valve steam chest denoted by a single round main cylinder on each side with square valve housing on top. It has a Stevenson valve gear which is mostly buried between the side frames and rarely modeled because it is not easily visible. Later piston valve steam chests were oval shaped with a larger round main cylinder and smaller round valve cylinder above. The switch to piston valves was required because of higher boiler pressures after about 1900. It also has a double instead of a single crosshead guide on each side, a slope back tender (albeit rather large), extended smokebox (smoke boxes not extending in front the steam chest were typically wood burners), decently molded smokebox front, decently detailed riveted smoke box, straight stack and appropriate, if a little modern, domes. In short, it has decent basics.

This model was made by MDC with two drive configurations. The earlier versions had the worm gear on the motor shaft directly engaging the worm wheel on the driver axle with a 36:1 ratio. See photo 2.

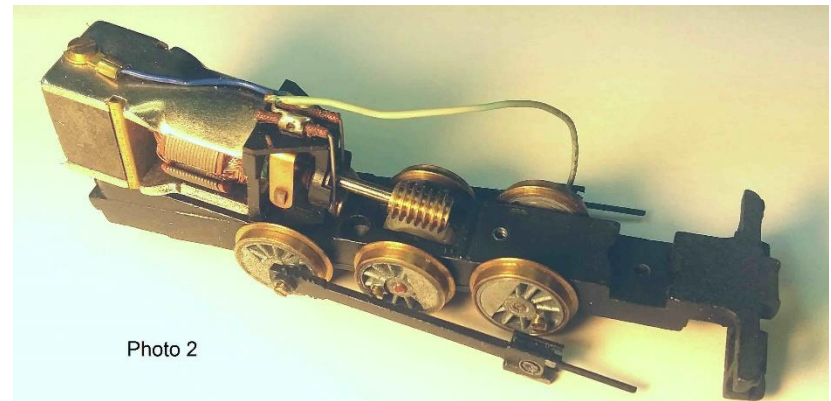


Photo 2

This is a typical arrangement for most all locomotives of the era but is a compromise for good low speed operation. Later, MDC added a 2:1 reduction gear to the drive for an overall ratio of 72:1 which operates much better although it has a lower top speed. See photo 3.

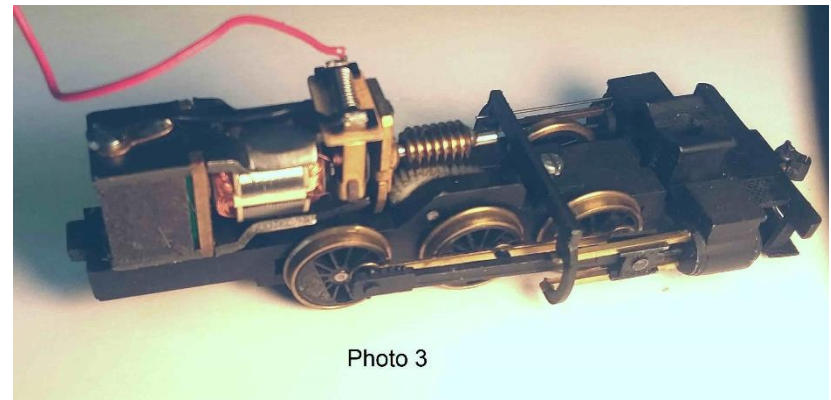


Photo 3

Most model trains are operated too fast, anyway, so no complaints here. Other MDC locomotives have the same 72:1 gears, too. I always select the 72:1 version when looking to buy one.

This model requires some changes, though. The steel sheathed cab will be changed to an all-wood style. The boiler is too

high so the saddle and cab mounting will be reworked to lower the boiler. The steam chest will have end and top covers added. The oil bunker needs to be cut out of the tender and a coal load substituted. The lights will be changed from electric to oil style and the double air pump will have to go to become a single. All the piping cast into the boiler is too modern in arrangement, and it needs a better bell, whistle and pop valves. The steps on the pilot and tender, although appropriate, are rather coarsely cast but could be left as is. The domes are a tossup as to whether they are too modern. Domes were changing to this style around 1900. As the building progresses, more details will be added, too.

Electrical upgrades need to be made. The open frame motor will need to be replaced with a modern can or coreless motor. A new motor will lower the current load on a decoder. The open frame motor is way too powerful for such a small locomotive, anyway, and would probably fry a decoder if the rotor became locked. A lower current motor will help keep the wheels cleaner, too. To perform decently, all wheel pickup tender trucks with nickel silver wheels need to be installed and wipers fitted to the drivers. Later MDC locomotives like this one have plastic driver centers. To conduct current from one rail to the frame, spring plungers rub the back of the driver tires, but these stiff plungers add a lot of friction to the mechanism. I always replace them with wipers. Nickel plating the driver tires will also help electrical pickup.

This is a long list of changes, but as a modeler of an outcast era, they need to be done for a credible model. Next month I will cover the mechanism. Much of that will apply to all similar steam locomotives. Stay tuned.

What Are Friends For?

Gary D. Loisel

On April 12, 2022, the completion of the dismantling of Charlie Wickhorst's model railroad layout culminated with two pickup truck

loads of layout building material headed off to its new home. New home, not a landfill.

I want to start by giving a shout-out to Dave Hopper, Scott Larson, Les Zimmerman, and Rich Woock for their sweat-equity in taking down the layout, sorting, boxing, and transporting everything to the RRVD Train Show and Sale, and manning the sale tables. Also, a big thank you to those who came over ahead of the show and sale to make purchase or two. This helped lighten the load. I would also like to think it is somewhat comforting to know that some of the "stuff" of Charlie's is now with people who knew Charlie and can remember our friend through the hobby we all enjoy.

The entire process began in late January with a visit to Charlie's wife Carol. My wife had a quilting question. That visit evolved into several weeks of "Wickhorst-Wednesday-Workday". The quilting project is still at, shall-we-say, "at square-one". I'm pretty sure the crew will also miss the weekly lunches Carol served up. A thank you to Carol.

This endeavor has prompted me to start to take inventory of my own "stuff"! It's not surprising that I've found several projects that haven't been finished and, of course, more that are waiting to be started. RIGHT!

As we all know, "one thing leads to another" and this process is no exception. Last September, I was the open-layout tour for the RRVD. I gave a presentation at the Meet titled "*What you need to know before you come to visit.*" I described my layout construction, scenery process, and general location in Wisconsin where the railroads operate. Of course, I used my modeler's license to include family and "friends".

To that point, I thought it can be of interest to share how each of us has included our friends on our individual model railroads. I will use Charlie Wickhorst as my illustration for this segment.

C & D Wickhorst Scrap & Salvage is an industry that can ship and receive gondola loads of scrap metal. This is quite appropriate for those of us that knew Charlie's passion for "open loads". Also, I should make note that Charlie's middle initial was not "D". "C & D" is

reminiscent of the phrase “CHEAP AND DIRTY”. Where have you heard that before?

Next to C & D Wickhorst Scrap and Salvage is a small industry, Swenson Spreader. You have probably seen Swenson Spreaders during the winter on the back of dump trucks. They are used to spread salt on our roads and highways. Swenson Spreader is a small company in Lindenwood, Il. It is just one of the places that Charlie worked, and I was able to visit. My spreaders are 2 x 4 cut on a table saw.

One of the open loads on my layout (and many of yours as well) that is uniquely Charlie is a load of black pipe with St. Charles Pipe stenciled along the sides. The good-sized structure “ST. CHARLES PIPE” that was on Charlie’s layout is now incorporated into my layout. It took some shuffling, but I made it fit. Now I need to figure out how Charlie labeled his loads. I have the rubber stamps, but the process will take some learning.

As I mentioned earlier, this is the beginning of what I am hoping will be one of several articles remembering our fellow model railroad enthusiasts. I would definitely like to hear from you and how you have included your friends.

As a postscript, 20-20 hindsight, if you haven’t already, get your layout on film. Fortunately, I had some pictures of Charlie’s so we were able to figure out what things should look like after they are moved.





May 18-22, 2022



Four Full Days
Three NMRA Regions
and the RPM Conference
Three Day Train Show
One Convention

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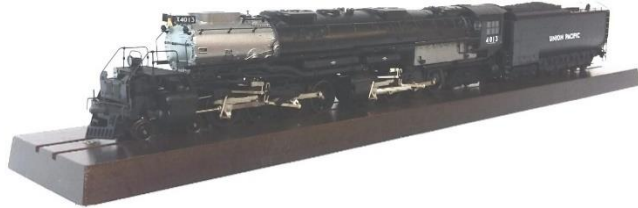
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RPM
CONFERENCE



For Sale



You, too, can own an HO scale model of the iconic Union Pacific class 4000 4-8-8-4 "Big Boy" so named when a worker at the Alco factory chalked those enduring words across the smokebox front. Arguably the most powerful steam locomotive type in the world, they were originally built with one purpose in mind - to roam the Wasatch range with ease. This gently used Trix model of UP 4013 in its magnificent wooden presentation case is equipped with DCC and sound. It is ready to roam your HO railroad, too.

The sale of this locomotive is the result of the generosity of Steve Faivre and all proceeds of the sale go to the Rock River Valley Division. Contact Ken Mosny, uiop999@comcast.net or 815-566-0595.

\$550.00

(offers considered)

For Sale



Offered is a Lionel catalog number 6-18203 Canadian Pacific SD-40-2 diesel locomotive with dual motors, Magne-Traction, AC drive, lights, and horn. I believe it was first cataloged in 1989 and appears on the cover of that catalog. It appears to be in as new cosmetic condition, intact with instructions and original box. It has just been serviced with new lubricants and look only in test run condition.

All proceeds of the sale go to the Rock River Valley Division-NMRA. Contact Ken Mosny, uiop999@comcast.net or 815-566-0595

\$175.00

(offers considered)