



MINI-BUNCH NEWSLETTER

The Mini-Bunch newsletter is usually published 4 times a year on an irregular schedule. Membership and a subscription to the Newsletter are \$8.00 for 3 years or with Registration at a recent Mini-Bunch meeting. Website: <http://www.narrowtracks.com/minibunch>

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Revenge of the Snipe

Well, it's about time for the annual Midwest Narrow Gauge Show 2011 hosted by Gary Kohler and his crew. This year's event has a new venue and I, for one, am looking forward to seeing it.

This is the biggest narrow gauge event in this area and has been running for a number of years. It is always great to see the models on display and the various narrow gauge layouts in a variety of scales. There is some terrific modeling to be seen that will inspire even armchair modelers, like myself, to get busy and do something. Not only is the modeling worth seeing, but also for many of us we can enjoy this event with friends that we only see once a year. I have often thought that the best part of model railroading is the friends you meet and with whom you enjoy the hobby. Many thanks to Gary for including the Mini-Bunch in his show each year.

It has been a long cold winter and I look forward to the warmer temperatures of spring. Early spring, before the leaves come out, is a great time to view old Rights of Way. So if you have ever had an urge to follow the

OR&W, for example, it would be a great time to do so. Maybe the old DT&I between Springfield and Jackson would be of interest. It started as the narrow gauge Springfield, Jackson, and Pomeroy. Or how about the Connotton Valley between Cleveland and Coshocton? The Cincinnati, Lebanon, and Northern Railway was written up in a wonderful article in the Sept 2008 issue of *Model Railroader*. Many of these lines were later standard gauged and some lines still have tracks. Of course many of you are planning to head west to Colorado or east to Maine. Enjoy!

The Fall Mini-Bunch meet will be held in the Columbus area this coming November. Several of my disloyal subjects, Sirs Ruisinger, Sage, and Baron Yoakam are hard at work planning this event. They will be including some preliminary information with this issue. (I hope).

See you at the Midwest Narrow Gauge Show!

Jim Kehn

King Snipe

prrfreak@aol.com

NMRA Div 5 Kirtland Railfest

Lakeland Community College

Kirtland, Ohio

March 19 and 20 – 10 AM to 4 PM

Admission \$7.00

Exit 193 on I-90 at State Route 306

(SJS Open House 1 PM to 5PM on Saturday)

2011 Spring Meet

The Midwest Narrow Gauge Meet will return to Greenford in March 2011. The meet will be held at the former South Range School, which is located about ½ mile south and west of the old site at the church hall. The address is 7600 W. South Range Road, which is Ohio 165. The meet will be held on Thursday evening through Saturday.

A Registration form is at the back of the newsletter.

<http://www.maine2footquarterly.com/midwest.htm>

Show schedule as of Feb 25:

Thursday: open 5 PM to 9 PM for vendor set up only

Friday: open for vendors at 8:30 AM.

Show opens at 9 AM and closes at 1 PM,

Then reopens at 5 PM and closes at 9 PM

Saturday: open for vendors at 8:30 AM.

Show opens at 9 AM and will be open to 5 PM

Clinics start at 10 AM

Mini-Bunch meet at 2 PM

The Sn2 and HOn30 layouts will be in the gym. The HOn3 layout is on the stage along with six vendor tables. The model contest and displays will be in a room off the gym.

There are 41 vendor tables, three huge layouts, and several smaller ones.

Mini-Bunch: The registration and raffle table will be in the lobby next to the show registration table.

Saturday Clinic Schedule

10:00: Open

11:00: Modeling Mount Union by Lee Rainey.

"The Standard Railroad of the World" meets "The Most Modern Narrow Gauge"! It happened -in Mount Union, Pennsylvania, and with a bit of two-foot gauge thrown in for good measure! For many years, Mount Union was the largest shipping point on the Pennsylvania Railroad's fabled Middle Division, due on no small measure to the traffic generated by the East Broad Top Railroad. Coal, brick, in this clinic. You'll also see the track plan for the Mount Union S/Sn3 switching layout now under construction in my basement. And the two-foot gauge? Come to the clinic to find out!

12:00: Maine-ing Bachmann On30". An interesting contrast between On30 and HOn30 is that while HOn30 has always been primarily focused on modeling the Maine two-footers, most On30 is three-foot gauge prototype.

1:00: Jerry DeVos, Maine 2-foot non-revenue equipment

2:00: Mini-Bunch Meeting

Building Bear Creek



By Bill Brubach

We wuz framed! In the earliest discussions on building a modular display layout, we all agreed that a welded steel framework on folding steel legs had the right combination of strength, simplicity and light weight. It would also allow for an integral backdrop and overhead valence. Our goal was a "shadowbox" display as made popular by our heroes, the Aussies. 3/4" square 1/16" wall tubing was selected for the material. The modules were to be six feet long, 2 feet deep and 30 inches high including the base valence and the seven-inch lighting valence. A pair of 48-inch high a-frame legs would provide support.



With the preliminary engineering done, we cheerfully sent Terry Hansley out to procure the steel and have it welded. Our merry little band had all agreed to chip in on the costs. Several days and \$345 later, the first module frame and legs were done. Terry just smiled and said "Hey, guys, guess what it would have cost if we had used aluminum?" After the sticker-shock, we realized how beautiful the workmanship was and how perfectly the frame met our requirements. We also realized how small 12 square feet of O-scale module really was and how large the dreams of empire were in our minds. We needed one or two more frames at \$345 a pop, not counting wood, Homasote, rail, etc., etc.



But, honey, we can use it again! At this point we had an “attitude adjustment”. The frames were not an expense; they were an investment. Anyone not married to a model railroader could plainly see that. By making the layout base simply sit in the frames, we could use the frames over and over again. This year it’s Bear Creek. Next year, remove Bear Creek without damaging anything, and insert Wiscasset, ME; Orbisonia, PA; Durango, CO or (insert your narrow-gauge nirvana here). Viewing it as a multi-year investment, our spirits soared even as our wallets flattened.



The layout base and valences are composed of 1/4” and 1/8” MDF board, Homasote and pink-board foam. Bonding the three materials to each other is not easy and future construction will probably eliminate the foam.



Visit our website to see our progress and Michael Yoakam’s fantastic trackwork. Much of it was laid on Christmas day. Talk about dedication! The three-rail is not Lionel, in spite of what the King Snipe might say. On30, even with Proto48 standard gauge is hard to make as a convincing third rail. We are committed to making the rest of the layout so outstanding that no one will notice. You will have to come to Hickory to see if we succeeded.



In the meantime, see the work in progress at Greenford in March.

http://www.hammriver.com/hamm_river_model_products/bear_creek.html

(Ed note: Note they are continuing to exploit under-age labor on this project.)

Viking Car Ferry on the Ann Arbor RR

Al Blaser built a 6’ module of some Gilpin Tramway ROW several years ago. Now he has restarted his nautical

interests and combined them with his RR interests. The result is this Lake Michigan car ferry:



Al writes: "After much research and some good luck I have gotten enough info to build this Ann Arbor RR car ferry. It was launched in the 20's and mothballed in the 90's. In spite of its length of 360' these were referred to as "boats" and the ferry docks as "boat landings". In 1959 upon graduating from the U of Michigan I drove to Frankfort, MI and took this ferry across Lake Michigan to

Menominee, a four-hour trip. By some good fortune the Mate asked me to come to the wheelhouse to meet the Captain. What followed was a thrilling talk-through as we negotiated the Sturgeon Bay ship canal and moored at Menominee. I was not aware that my auto was below decks with freight cars as it was dark when I drove onto the dock. Since that day I have wanted to model the Viking. "

Fall 2011 Mini-Bunch Meet

November 12 and 13, 2011 (Saturday and Sunday)

New Life Church in Gahanna, Ohio (suburb on the east side of Columbus, not far from Port Columbus International Airport.)

Saturday activities at the church will include the usual items: registration in the morning, clinics, contests, door prizes, etc. We have room for some vendors and layouts—just let us know what you're going to bring so that we can make sure we've got the space. An evening meal is being planned by some of the church ladies at a nominal cost. After dinner activities are still in the works, maybe a speaker, maybe a live auction, maybe a movie.....we'll figure it out and keep everyone posted.

There are a number of hotels and motels ranging from reasonable to expensive within a 15 to 20 minute drive for those needing accommodations. We'll provide a list, then it's up to you where you want to stay.... (FYI, Ohio State plays away that weekend so you won't have to compete for hotel rooms). Of course that doesn't mean you won't have to hear a bunch of Buckeye fans yelling O-H..... I-O, every once-in-a- while as we get game updates.....

Sunday, we are planning on about a half-dozen or so layouts open starting around 10am till probably 2pm or so. On the list so far, are Jerry Severson's Smokey Inland & Central Kolorado R.R. - (based loosely on the D&RG and RGS) - in HOn3, Dave Brobst's resurrection of Doc Sage's layout (we're hoping he's got it operational, or at least parts of it operational), Jim Ruisinger's Weyerhaeuser Timber Company Woods Railroad (sorry, it's still standard gauge) and Michael Yoakam's On30 Muskingham Valley Central. Plus we're working on a few others.

Clinics clinics, clinics..... If you've got one to present, we want it!!!! Contact our illustrious King Snipe Kehn or one of his loyal (?) minions (Sage, Ruisinger or Yoakam)

More information will be passed along via the group email and Mini-Bunch website as the pieces of the puzzle fall into place, and of course, look for info in upcoming newsletters. Sooooo.... mark your calendars now for November 12 and 13, 2011 for gettin' together in central Ohio.

Jim Ruisinger

Doc's Layout Revived

Michael and Joshua Yoakam, Jim Ruisinger and I spent

Sunday afternoon with Dave Brobst, working on his Chama Sub-Division layout. All of the pieces are now off the floor and the bench work tied together. Next order of business is to re-build (for reliability reasons) and re-install the hidden yard. Also, we are pulling out the old wiring and replacing it with new, which really makes more sense than trying to patch the old wiring back together.



The plan is to have the layout at least operational by the fall Mini-Bunch meet in November. Don't know how much, if any, scenery will be repaired and/or added by then.

If anybody is interested in working on the layout with us, please let either Jim or me know.

Harry "Butch" Sage

On30 Meet in Indiana

Al Askerberg is planning another On30 meet near Columbus, Indiana in April. This year it will be held on April 30 at the Johnson County Park where it has been held in the past.

For more information send an email to Al at aiberg@comcast.net.

A copy of their flyer from the folder AA-01 in the files of the Yahoo On30 Conspiracy group is at the back of this newsletter.

SJS Progress

Finally, the main yard for the SJS is working. Although ballasting has just begun, the 29' yard is fully functional. It was a long struggle. In my naive approach, I used weathered rail with some feeders and installed the 26 turnouts required by the design. BUT, after turning on the power, I quickly realized the entire approach was just wrong. It was a large short circuit.



So, after shutting it down, I moved over to another part of the SJS for 5 years. Then, last year, I tore out a lot of it realizing that the RR would never run until the yard was rebuilt. I started November 2009; by replacing several turnouts with continuous track, eliminating the shorts and adding feeders so the DCC would function. When the grandkids complained that they could not use all the tracks, I isolated the yard and began to install new turnouts, Tortoise machines and control panels. On February 23, the entire yard ran under DCC for the first time.

Before I began the rework, several standards were established: each turnout has three feeders – the frog and each stock rail, all main yard tracks have soldered rail joints between the turnouts, all rail joints, feeders and gaps are documented on track diagrams. The DPDT switches for each turnout controls the frog polarity, the Tortoise and the LEDs on the control panels. Ballasting of the yard has started.

I found some wire nuts at Menards in Milwaukee. These really helped to redo the wiring under the yard. I guess, this style is not new, but I found them really helpful.



The San Juan Southern will be open from 1 PM to 5 PM on Saturday March 19. Call or send me an email if you need directions.

Ted Wiese

Notes from the Editors

HELP NEEDED!!!!

We plan to send out 4 newsletters per year. We are looking for articles on modelbuilding and prototype that will be of interest for the members.

Mini-Bunch

<http://www.narrowtracks.com/minibunch>

Yahoo! Groups – Mini-Bunch

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mini-bunch>

Name Badges Available – Soon, we hope -

Unfortunately, we have lost our nametag vendor again. Hopefully, we will be able to make nametags available again at some future date.

Mini-Bunch Newsletter on Internet

Thanks to David Keith, our Webmaster, you have the chance to see these and additional photos in color. And thanks to Jim Eakin for helping us with the copying.

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Narrow Gauge Timetable

National Narrow Gauge Conventions

31st 2011 - September 7 – 10, Hickory, NC
32nd 2012 – September 12 - 15, Bellevue, WA
33rd 2013 – August 28 - 31, Pasadena, CA
34th 2014 – September 3 - 6, Kansas City, MO
35th 2015 – September, Houston, TX

2011 Mini-Bunch Meets

March 24-26 - Greenford, Ohio
Fall 2011 – Columbus, Ohio



Big Run station for Bear Creek display railroad



'Walsh' house in Animas Forks was scratchbuilt in Sn3 by John Chlebowski