

# *HUB Headlight*

*HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association - Volume 22 Number 5, May-June 2006*

<http://www.hubdiv.org>

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## *RAILFUN TIMETABLE*

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### **USE OF A VOLTMETER FOR ELECTRICAL PROBLEMS**

By James VanBokkelen  
8 p.m., Friday, May 19, 2006  
Cambridge School of Weston

James will present the basic measurement functions of a voltmeter and demonstrate how to isolate and diagnose some common electrical problems.

A voltmeter, also known as a Volt-Ohm-Milliammeter (VOM) or Multitester, is a hand-held tool for measuring electrical voltage, resistance and current. A VOM is a very helpful tool for testing and debugging model railroad electrical connections and wiring, including locomotives, power supplies, switch machines, lighting and DCC. James Van Bokkelen will explain what a VOM is, how it works, how to use it safely, and how to solve problems with it. Bring your own analog or digital VOM (make sure yours has a good battery or it won't give reliable results) or learn on one of the instruments we will provide.

This is a hands-on clinic and should be a lot of fun for both beginners and old timers. Mischievous Mark will supply a module with a few common electrical problems and you can test your own skill at finding the problems.

*A map to Cambridge School of Weston, where Railfun meetings are held, is provided on page 8.*

### **MASTER MODELER IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK**

By Don Howd  
8 p.m., Friday, June 16, 2006  
Cambridge School of Weston

Don Howd, the HUB Division's most recent recipient of the prestigious Master Modeler Railroader Award (#364) from the NMRA will describe how the Achievement Program works and what its aims are. During the discussion, he will also regale us with tales of his personal 30 year journey to MMR and, hopefully, generate some interest and provide tips to the group on how to proceed. He plans to bring some of the models he built for the requirements. Don will discuss how the AP provides an incentive to better modeling and enjoyment of the hobby as well as serving as mileposts for people regardless of their experience, or lack thereof, in model railroading. He will also cover how the AP uses its requirements for the modeler to show an increasing level of skill in the several aspects of model railroading.

Don began his journey to MMR in 1976 and has been active as both an NER Model Contest Chairman and the HUB Division's Achievement Program Manager. Come help us celebrate Don's achievement. Your Master Modeler award may be closer than you think if you are willing to fill out the required paperwork.

### **NEW TOOLS FOR EASY HANDLAID TURNOUTS**

Dick Johannes and Ken Belovaric  
8 p.m., Friday, Sept. 15, 2006  
Cambridge School of Weston

Our track experts will show you some handy new products to take the work and frustration out of hand-laying turnout. While both have some experience in hand laid track work, they both, while surfing the web, hit upon some useful items to make the job much easier.

They will show how to make turnouts using the turnout tools and jigs available from FastTracks. This is a family of products that revolutionizes hand-laid turnout construction by making it fast and precise. This includes making frogs and switch points, using a turnout form, precut ties, soldering to PC ties to hold everything together in the form, and general tips for using the tools. It will not be possible to do this as a hands-on clinic, since the tools are limited, but they will cover the most important steps with a series of demonstrations. Those of you who did some hand-laid track work with Dick for your dioramas a couple years back will find this a pleasant addition to covering the more complex topic of turnout construction.

Even if you don't do your own hand-laid track please come and join in the fun. It will be our first meeting of a new model railroading season.

## Shanty Talk

By Rudy Slovacek

It's a whole new ballgame and I don't mean the Red Sox. As I slip into the shanty for a cup of Joe on this cool spring day there is a lot to reflect on. In our spring elections Jack Alexander was reelected to the board of directors and if I understood him correctly, when he serves his term out he will have been on the board or in an elected office for over fifty years in the HUB. Now that is dedication and an achievement in itself. Congratulations Jack. You've made a lot of friends in the hobby and continue to give back.

We also have two newcomers to the scene, Curtis Nutt and Bill Roach who I hope will bring their new ideas and energy to the Board. Neither has served in this capacity before so it will be both a learning experience for them and a great opportunity to give something back to the hobby. Good luck Gentlemen.

Spring, it's a time of renewal with the flowering bushes in full bloom and the trees barely covered with a green leafy fuzz which allows us to peek through the woods and see where those old road beds or rusty rails go. As I visited a relative in upstate New York a couple weeks



ago I discovered they now live in an apartment building which once served as a mill and later as power station for a now forgotten trolley line. I went to the website at (<http://docs.unh.edu/nhtopos/nhtopos.htm>). If you're not familiar with it you may find it interesting because it shows the rail lines in the late 1890s, the 1930s and the late 1940s. One of the trolley lines from the area was there in the late 1890s but gone by the 1930's. I plan to hike a

portion of the old line when I return to the area for my daughter's college graduation. My old Boy Scout camp is even depicted in the 1930's map! Spring has sprung so get out and smell the blossoms trackside on some of those old rail lines. Some are now pleasant walking trails. Who know you might find a railroad type structure you've just got to model. At the very least it will be some pleasant exercise. Oops got to go, my crew is calling for me.

## Storage Tips

By Rich Pitter

Most model railroaders have more locos and cars than can fit on their layouts. I use old trunks from kids' summer camps to hold model railroad items, although the newer plastic crates with their flipflop tops also work.

A few years ago I installed some mini-blinds and found that their plastic containers were useful for holding strip wood. Some hold 24-

inch pieces and some hold 36-inch pieces of wood. I also have a sturdy cardboard mailing tube to hold wire and brass tubing.

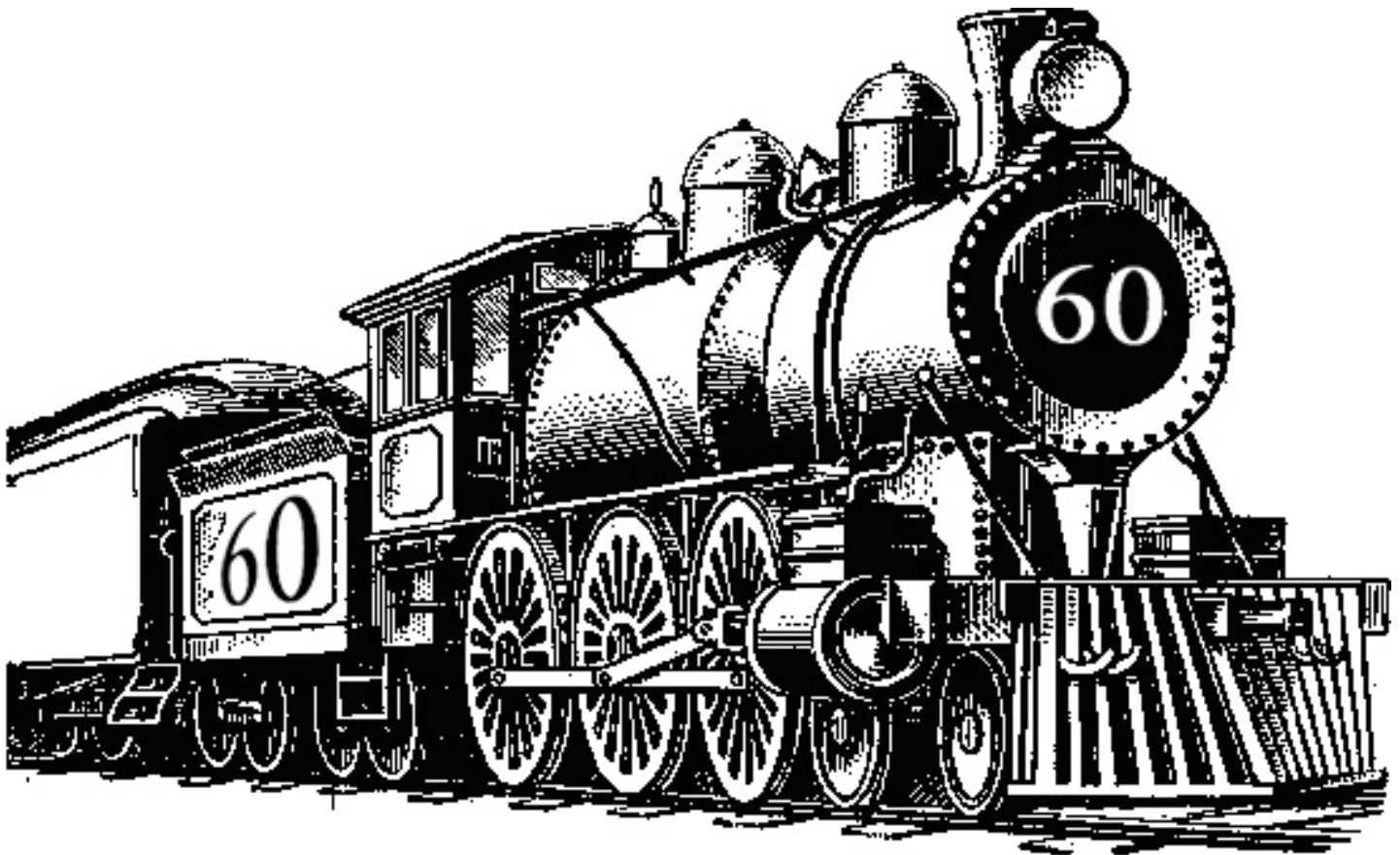
Craft Shops (e.g. Michaels and A.C. Moore) sell plastic boxes. I sort scratch-building castings by use (structural details, car details, etc.) and store them in those boxes until I need them on a project. I also use shoe boxes for this purpose.

Over the years I collected many plastic 35-mm film canister holders. Most are black, but some are

transparent plastic. They are good for things like track spikes, push pins, hobby knife blades, and other little things that have sharp points.

Plastic re-sealable bags come in a variety of sizes. We're familiar with quart and sandwich sizes, but recently I found even smaller snack bags (6 1/2 x 3 1/4 inches) in the market, good for holding carrots or celery--or model parts.

I put the paint jars that I'm using for a project in a Clementine box so I can find them easily as I work.



**"Thrifty Sixt" NER Spring Convention  
June 1-4, 2006, Holiday Inn, 500 Lincoln St., Worcester, MA  
HOSTED BY HUB DIVISION**

**June 1 - "Operating Sessions Day"**

**June 2 - "Clinics Day"**

**June 3 - "Prototype Visit Day"**

**June 4 - "Awards Day"**

**For information and registration form, go to:  
[www.hubddiv.org/Worcester%20Convention%202006/Convention\\_Home\\_Page.htm](http://www.hubddiv.org/Worcester%20Convention%202006/Convention_Home_Page.htm)**

**HUB Division Upcoming Events**

May 19, 2006	<b>RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston</b>
June 1-4, 2006	<b>NER Spring Convention, Worcester, MA</b>
June 16, 2006	<b>RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston</b>
Sept. 15, 2006	<b>RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston</b>
Dec. 2-3, 2006	<b>HUB FALL SHOW, Marlborough, MA</b>
April 7, 2007	<b>HUB SPRING SHOW, Woburn, MA</b>



## OPERATIONAL PLANNING

By Jack Alexander

I have spoken with many modelers who have layouts that grew, without any preconceived plan. This was apt to result in an operational nightmare. It's so much wiser to lay out your layout plan on paper ahead of the time when you commence to lay track. It's so much easier to make adjustments at that stage, with an eraser.

One needs to consider a yard plan with sufficient track space to hold cars for local industries, peddler freights, through freights and arrivals to be classified. Also, if you model a pre-1980's operation, you need a caboose track. You might want to consider a storage track of way cars, such as snow plows, bunk cars, big hooks, wheel cars and supply cars, as well as for passenger car storage.

Most major yards also provide for engine service. This of course will be influenced by your operational time period. Steamers required much more space for service with some form of coaling stage, water spout, ash removal and sanding facility, including storage of raw sand and drying same. With diesels it's just fuel, water and sand, but both eras call for maintenance buildings which often includes a service pit. It was pretty universal in the steam era to provide a turntable and roundhouse, although wyes and balloon tracks sometimes filled the bill. I can think of Chama, New Mexico, where a straight tracked engine house sufficed for service of locos, and still survives.

The larger your railroad and longer your mainline, the more important is a plan for passing sidings, unless you envision a



double-track main. This feature was and is very much in the minority except in areas of exceptionally heavy traffic volume. My railroad, The Intermountain Pacific, has 140 feet of mainline with 3 passing sidings. Two of them will handle 22-car trains plus 2 articulated or 4 diesel units. I model 1959, which is about as late as I can rationalize running steamers. The third passing siding is relatively short and is sited just over the summit of the railroad's ruling grade of 2 1/2 percent. This one is designed primarily for cutting off helper engines that were added at the appropriately named town of Helper, Wyoming. It can also provide for short passenger consists.

My railroad features a mining operation with a deep shaft copper mine, an ore concentrator, to remove surplus waste, an electrolytic refinery, where copper anodes are loaded on special flat cars and shipped to a fourth location at Silver

Gate, Montana, to a wire mill that provides for marketing the product. There are over 50 ore cars lettered for Treasure State Metals, which provide ore transport. Special operations such as this require extra planning to handle the car sorting and train movement.

I also have many other industries online with a total of 35 different spurs for spotting freight cars. These vary from one car length to 10 car lengths. Such businesses include a produce packer, a cannery, an icing stage for reefers, a saw mill, a pallet maker, a box and barrel maker, a grain elevator, a flour mill, a scrap yard, a freight forwarder for LCL service, and a coal mine. There are three separate interchanges: one with Northern Pacific at Red Lodge, MT, one with CB&Q at Cooke City, MT, and one with the Colorado and Wyoming RR at C&W Junction, WY.

I have managed to fit all this into

a 12x20 foot room as a walk-in plan having a lift bridge at a 56-inch height across the doorway for continuous running, as an alternative to point-to-point operation. I often visit layouts with one major yard terminal that serves as both a departure and arrival site for the same train. I feel that this style can compromise the reality of operation and I was able to provide two terminals for a true point-to-point run for more realistic train operation. Each terminal has 5 yard freight tracks with a runaround to enable sorting and blocking of cars, plus the normal engine servicing, caboose track and an extra storage spur for passenger car layover or maintenance of way equipment. One yard has both a turntable and a balloon track. The other terminal has a wye to turn engines and passenger cars.

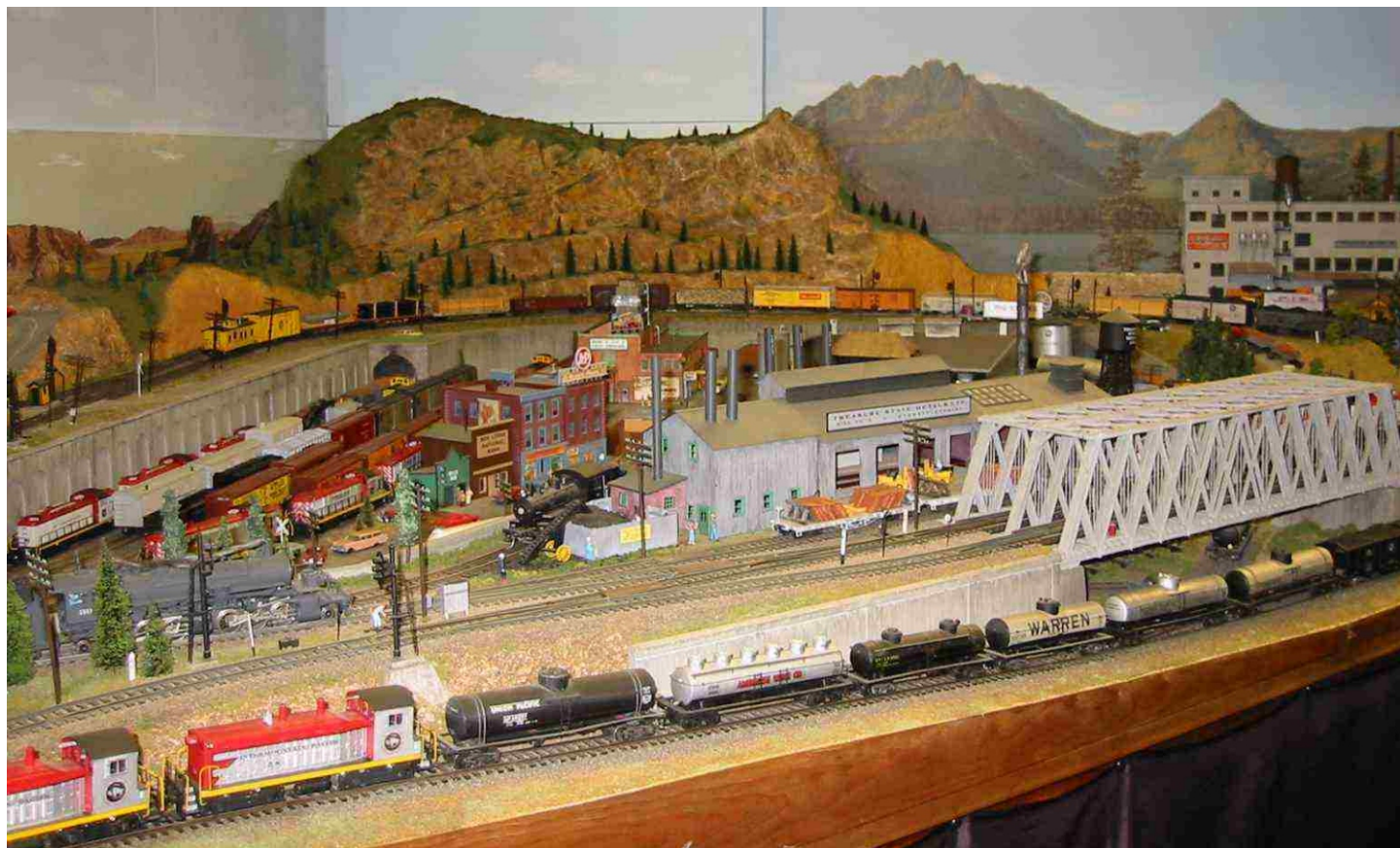
I run 9 car streamliner to bring patrons to Silver Gate, MT, the

incomparable northeast entrance to Yellowstone National Park. For local service, the IPR provides a gas electric and a Budd car, as there are intermediate stations at Rock Creek, Beartooth, Wyomont, Bones, Pipestone, Helper, and Lodgepole.

My original plan was followed carefully in order to achieve the maximum amount of railroad in the space available. The IPR is a mountain railroad and as such, only about 10 feet of the main line is level, plus the two terminal yard areas. In operation, this results in switching cars on numerous grades, mostly at less than 1 percent. Back when I began building the layout in 1964, the under track magnets for Kadee couplers were not yet developed. In subsequent years as the railroad was completed, I placed between-rail magnets on the mainline where it would facilitate setting out cars on industrial spurs. As undoubtedly many modelers

have discovered, such magnet placement can often cause false uncoupling and the likelihood of such an event is significantly increased in areas where the track is on a grade. Most of my problems in this area occurred with cabooses being dropped on downgrade runs. I have managed to overcome this problem by placing a brass shim piece under the front truck screw with an extension to the shim piece wrapped over one axle to provide a slight drag. This helps prevent slack being taken in the coupler by a free rolling truck, and it does the job.

No doubt there are many modelers who began layout construction without an operational plan and therefore resorted to between the rail magnets or else hand uncoupling which tends to defeat the advantages of Kadee style uncouplers. I hope that this idea may help someone to get greater joy out of operations.





*Hub Division is hosting the NER Spring Convention on June 1-4, 2005 at the Holiday Inn, 500 Lincoln Street, Worcester. The following clinics are planned for Friday, June 2. Attendance to the clinics requires registration.*

**"Thrifty Sixty"  
NER Spring Convention 2006  
Worcester, MA**

The following clinics will be presented at the NMRA NER Spring Convention on June 1-4, in Worcester, MA. This is an excellent opportunity for HUB Division members.

***"Design and Construction of  
Prototype Buildings for Model  
Railroaders"***

**Bill Barry, PE**

This clinic will draw on the clinician's 10+ years of experience designing new buildings and retrofitting existing buildings to provide an insight into how and why prototype buildings are built the way they are. The clinic will briefly introduce the general engineering concepts used in the design of buildings. A survey of the various materials common in building construction will be discussed, including how their use has changed over time and is influenced by geography. The basic parts that make up buildings from roofs to columns will be discussed. Finally, various prototype examples will be reviewed to explore how the buildings are built and how their structure influences their outward appearance.

***"Photographing Layouts for  
Model Railroader Magazine"***

**Paul Dolkos**

Over the years Paul has photographed numerous model

railroads for Model Railroader Magazine. This clinic features a compilation of photos, published and unpublished, from these assignments as well as the stories and challenges that came with the photo efforts.

***"The Last Two Inches:  
Developing Backgrounds, Flats,  
and Partial Buildings"***

**Jack Ellis**

Jack will share ideas and techniques for making optimum use of the last two inches of space that surround your layout to make the scene appear larger than life. This will cover both urban and rural scenes. Coverage includes spray painting clouds and ski; how to handle blending streets and commercial backgrounds, building flats, and partial buildings; and using mirrors to create believable depth of field in your modeling efforts.

***"Kit Bashing Buildings and  
Making Your Own Resin  
Castings"***

**Jack Ellis**

Kitbashing is one of the more creative parts of this hobby because you can take a model that nearly everybody recognizes and turn it into something unique, even if it is still recognized by a few people Jack will discuss kitbashing in general and lead you through a technique to further disguise kits by enlarging them economically. Consider this one an idea factory

***"Digital Photography Tricks &  
Tips"***

**Art Fahey**

The world of photography has changed considerably over the past few years. The new digital cameras and related software programs allow us to manipulate photos as we never have been able to before. In this clinic, Art will take a look at some of

the things you can do with your digital camera and a computer using a new program called Helicon Focus.

***"Rock Molds & Other Castings"***

**Jim Harter**

Jim will show how to make rock castings from binary foam (Geo Foam). He will also show how to make molds and castings for other modeling projects.

***"Certified Pre-Owned Box Cars"*  
**Dick Johannes****

This clinic is focused upon the modern railroad boxcar fleet but many of the ideas and techniques can be generalized to other periods. The heart of this clinic will be the litany of the so-called "per diem" boxcar. These cars sprung into being in the fall of 1970 in response to a national boxcar shortage. Raritan River, East Highland & Camden, the Pickens Lines and others had very colorful paint schemes. The model railroad manufacturers followed suit and Athearn, MDC, Accurail, LBF and Branchline all produce or produced copies of many of these cars.

The modeler can model these cars using quite simple techniques. The use of sheets of solid color decal film called "trim decals" by MicroScale, alphabet sets and a few specialized decals such as door details, wheel dots, consolidated lube plates and graffiti and you are on your way.

***"Modeling Realistic Saltwater"*  
**John Pryke****

This clinic will show the viewer how to model saltwater complete with waves, shoals, a dock and a breakwater. The majority of the clinic is shown on 35mm slides; and the Author will bring the model described in the slides.

***“A Visit to a Railroad Tie Treatment Plant”***

**Bill Schaumberg**

This presentation covers a bit of the history of railroad tie treatment, looks at a few sample plants and visits a modern tie treating plant.

***“Animate Your Railroad - Operate it as the Prototype Does”***

**Keith Shoneman**

This clinic will discuss the basics of railroad operation beginning with a discussion of customers and how prototype railroads service them. You will learn how any model railroad including even the smallest railroad, module or 2 x 8, can become a vital link in our national rail system. Next we'll explore the three, easy to create, key features that your railroad will need to become operational and what steps you can take to get started now. Getting started requires only a basic understanding and the development of several tools, the simpler the better. Now you're ready to invite your fellow railroader in for some fun. Soon, a smile will cross your face as you see your railroad jump to life. We'll close with a discussion of how you can evolve your system, increase your learning, and build a network of folks interested in this exciting and growing facet of model railroading. Throughout, we'll start with the simplest concept or tool and discuss its evolution and application to more complex railroads using examples from my Boston and Maine Transportation System.

***“The Modeling of Mystic 1925”***

**Earl Smallshaw**

Mystic is a small town on my model RR, Middletown & Mystic & Mines. It was built in a small corner of my layout and I encountered all the problems in developing a town on any layout. The clinic gets into the planning of the town, including

roads, structure placement, and forced perspective. I use mostly commercial structures, so that anyone can duplicate my efforts. Most structures, however, were changed to suit my town and make each commercial structure unique. I'll discuss these changes in detail.

In addition, I'll discuss lighting, signs, background trees and foliage, and some interior details. There will be a number of “fool-the-eye” techniques used in the town development.

***“Radios in Railroading”***

**Rick Towle**

In this clinic various aspects of railroad communications will be discussed. We will see how the dispatcher uses voice communicates with field personnel and trains. We will look at the various radio systems available and discuss the American Association of Railroad (AAR) frequency plan.

We will also see what ideas can be shared to improve reception for railfans that are interested in listening to railroad radio communications. This will be a clinic that anyone who is a railfan should attend. Rick is a the lead radio maintainer for the MBCR.

***“Railfanning in Worcester Area”***

**Jeff Turner**

Jeff will share some of his favorite photography spots and specifics of how to get to them safely and without intruding on RR property. He lives in the Worcester area and has located a number of good observation spots which are publicly available and which provide some great picture taking opportunities. There several railroads in the area including the CSX, P&W Amtrak and the MBTA which provide a lot of railroad activity.

***“Scenery In Tight Places”***

**Mike Tylic**

Scenery design in tight spaces, which in reality is every model railroad. It was felt that hiding tight space in urban scenery is not too hard, but difficult to do the same in the country. While assembling the clinic, I found the same devices will work in both. I've tried to include every trick I could think of, and much mention is made of what is popularly known as “forced perspective” This clinic makes use of prototype photos.

***“Chinese Steam in 1995 and 2005”***

**James Van Bokkelen**

In 1995, while Chinese steam was still plentiful, presenter James Van Bokkelen photographed off-the-beaten path mainline and narrow gauge steam operations in Manchuria. In 2005 he returned to China, visiting the twilight of steam on the JiTong railway in Inner Mongolia, and standard and narrow-gauge industrial lines in central China.

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## HUB Headlight

### Volume 22, Number 5, May-June 2006

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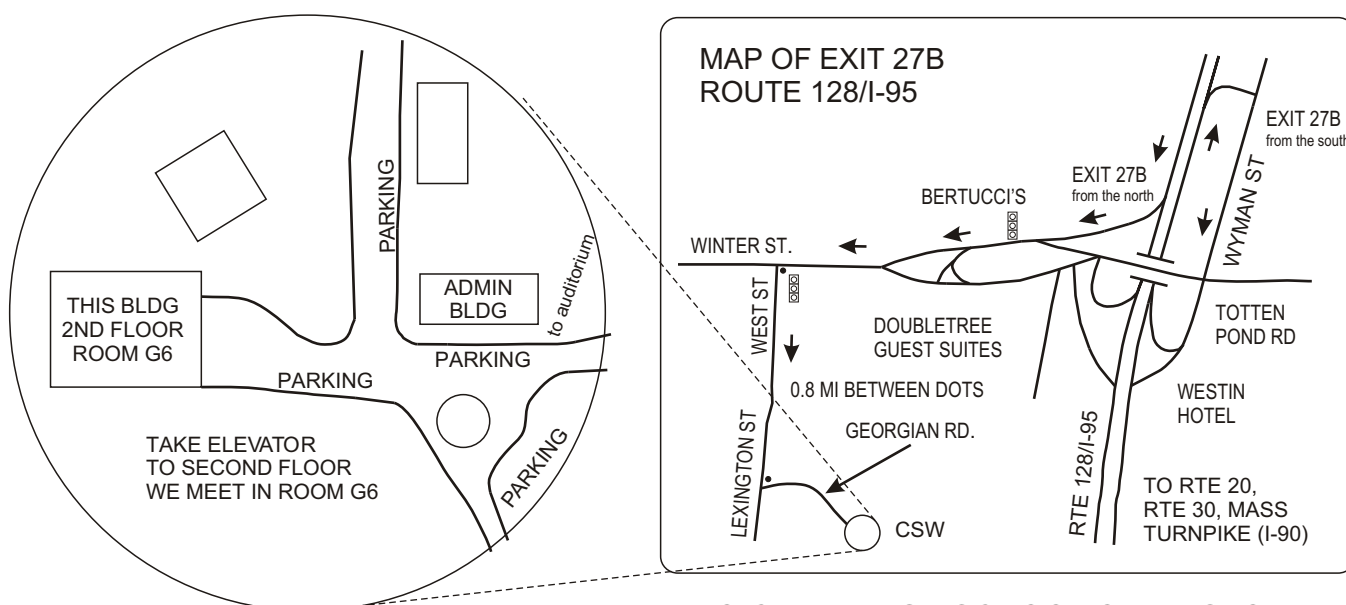
Harvey Humphrey

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## MAP TO RAILFUN MEETINGS



MAP TO CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF WESTON



## NER 60th Anniversary Kit

**T**o commemorate NER's 60th Anniversary, Bar Mills Scale Models will be producing a building Kit. The New England icon, Motif #1 (fisherman's shack) located in Rockport, MA. This is a craftsman type kit and the building which now stands in Rockport Harbor, is used by local fishermen for storage of supplies, but because of it's rustic nature could also be used on your layout for other purposes.

This kit will be available through the HUB Division. Joe Derouin of Trackside Sales will act as the distributor for the HUB Division for this limited run kit. Trackside Sales will accept cash, checks or credit cards (Visa or MasterCard). The price will be \$89.95 plus 5% sales tax delivered at the Convention. You may order using this form or directly through the Trackside Sales web site ([www.tracksidesales.com](http://www.tracksidesales.com)).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Kits \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$89.95 plus \$4.50 tax per kit      Total \_\_\_\_\_

Form of payment (circle one) Cash    Check    Credit Card

Visa    Mastercard    Number \_\_\_\_\_      Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Trackside Sales 31 Pleasant St. Attleboro, MA 02703 **DEADLINE MAY 15.**

## Order Form - Hub Division Apparel

### Short Sleeve Shirts (\$25.00 each)

Wheat color shirt with Hub Division Logo and your name.

Sizes available:      S      M      L      XL      XXL      XXXL

Circle one option:      With pocket    Without pocket

**Name on shirt:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### Long Sleeve Sweatshirts (price depends on weight)

Wheat color sweatshirt with Hub Division Logo.

Sizes available:      S      M      L      XL      XXL      XXXL

7 oz weight @\$20    Size: \_\_\_\_\_    Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_    Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

9 oz weight @\$25    Size: \_\_\_\_\_    Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_    Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

11 oz weight @\$30    Size: \_\_\_\_\_    Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_    Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name on shirt:** \_\_\_\_\_

**If you want it mailed to you, add \$5.95**      S&H: \_\_\_\_\_

Total (Check Payable to The Hub Division, Inc.)      Total: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Phone or email:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Mail to:

**Gerry Covino, Treasurer  
The Hub Division, Inc.**

**P.O. Box 1154**

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You will be contacted if there are any questions with your order and you will be notified when your order arrives. People may pick up their orders at Railfun meetings or shows to avoid the additional mailing costs.

**IF YOU REQUEST MAILING  
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*NO MOTIONS.....*

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