

# HUB Headlight

HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association - www.hubdiv.org  
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## ONLINE RAILFUN TIMETABLE

*Editor: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the HUB is using the Zoom online meeting software. Meeting info will be sent out in advance of each RAILFUN via the Google email list and Constant Contact. Contact Online Activities Coordinator Erich Whitney, [onlinecoordinator@hubdiv.org](mailto:onlinecoordinator@hubdiv.org).*

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### Designing and Manufacturing Model Trains in China - the "Rapido Way"

By Bill Schneider and John Sheridan

8 PM Friday, March 19, 2021

**B**ill Schneider and John Sheridan, two of the project managers at Rapido, will discuss how Rapido brings products to market. We'll get a rundown of the early research and design phases, tooling, samples, the production phase, and the delivery of the finished models. They will show us detailed behind-the-scenes photos of their manufacturing plants in China. Time will be available for a question-and-answer session afterwards.

While Rapido is based in Canada, it manufactures a wide variety of Canadian, American and British prototype railroad and vehicle models. They also have an impressive line of New Haven products.

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### Old Colony Model Railroad Club and the Lehigh Valley Layout

By Jeff Padell

8PM Friday, April 16, 2021

**T**he Old Colony Model Railroad Club was founded in Raynham in 1997. Jeff will discuss the history of the club and its New Haven-themed HO-scale layout. The club's layout features a double-track mainline between New Haven and Providence. It also has a lengthy branch modeled after the Air Line in Connecticut and dedicated to John Allen.

Jeff based his home layout on Lehigh Valley, because his great grandfather and his grand uncle worked for the railroad in the early 1900s. Jeff will discuss his layout and modeling techniques.

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### Double-header: Building "Two Johns" Brewery and The "DCC Toolbox"

By John Sacerdote and Russ Berry

8PM Friday, May 21, 2021

**P**icture a spur with a loading dock that has room / spots for three boxcars or reefers. How do you remove a loaded car without disturbing the other cars that are in the middle of being loaded? It's easy! With transfer tables, of course. Our brewery is modeled after the Coors Plant in Golden, Colorado, and we'll show you how we did it.

Russ developed a "DCC Toolbox" to easily transport all the electronics he needs to test and program any brand of DCC decoder. Along with a laptop computer, he is able to use either JMRI or the ESU Lokprogrammer software to test, program, load sound files or update firmware in all brands of DCC decoders. Russ will explain all the features and decoder programming hardware contained in the DCC Toolbox and answer any questions you might have during this clinic presentation.

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### The Whitman-Southern Coal Tipple

By Mike Dolan

**A** couple of years ago I designed what I wanted for a coal facility – not a complete colliery but a segment that fit the area I had available. Things changed as I built out the area and then mocked-up the tipple. It wasn't working as I planned so I had to make some modifications.

I had the track plan as I wanted it, but the structure just didn't fit correctly. I must have had a premonition this was going to be the situation.

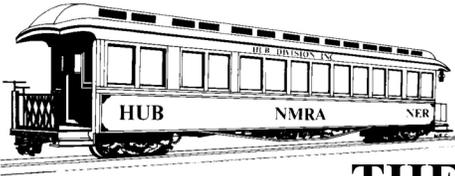
When they had it on sale, I purchased a Walther's New River Mining Company kit with the intention to build it as-is. At a train show prior to COVID, I saw another New River kit for sale at a reasonable price, so I bought it thinking I may need some additional parts. Good thing I did, due to what I discovered when it came time to assemble it.

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## THE PRESIDENT'S CAR

By James VanBokkelen

**H**ello, members of the HUB Division and readers outside our group.

Given the number of COVID-19 cases in New England and progress on vaccination to date, in-person public events are unlikely this Spring. I hope train shows and other model railroad events will resume by September. The HUB continues planning for our June Murder Mystery Dinner Train, our October Northeastern Region Convention in Westford, MA, and our December New England Model Train Expo, but nothing can be definite even six months out. We haven't talked about the HUB Cookout yet. I expect we'll try to hold it, but Waushakum's policies govern.

Some area museums and tourist railroads worked out ways to open and operate trips last year in compliance with state guidelines. Others just shut their doors and hunkered down. I know the WW&F, Shore Line, Seashore and Conway Scenic plan to be open; you'll need to check the web sites of others for plans and policies.

The HUB's Museum of Science event was interrupted, but it was restarted for three weeks ending February 28 and torn down on March 1 and 3. I volunteered a couple of days in December; there was a steady stream of visitors, mostly parents or child-care people and their little charges. But nothing like the crowds in previous years.

On the remote front, the HUB's RAILFUN continues on the Zoom online platform as a regular monthly event. Members of our Google Group, [hubdiv@google.com](mailto:hubdiv@google.com), see notices about the Nutmeg Division's events. The Seacoast Division shows theirs on [www.seacoastnmra.org](http://www.seacoastnmra.org), the Hudson-Berkshire Div. at [www.hudson-berkshire.org](http://www.hudson-berkshire.org).

The Northeastern Region is planning a second NERx online convention for April 10-11, 2021. We're looking for clinicians, layout tours or cab rides, and people who can discuss a model railroad subject with an audience in real time, possibly while showing techniques. Contact Dave Insley, Pete Watson, Gerry Covino or me if you have content you'd like to provide for this event. The online viewing arrangements are expected to be the same as in December; look for email announcements.

Erich Whitney is our Online Activities Coordinator. This includes organizing a calendar showing when our Zoom account will be used. If you have a HUB-related activity you'd like to conduct using our account, let Eric know and he'll see about scheduling it.

We'll continue to experiment with Internet tools to see which has the best combination of function and popularity for particular types of events. Some other Divisions in the NER are using FreeConference-Call's product. Look for notices about trials on [hubdiv@google.com](mailto:hubdiv@google.com).

At the national level, the NMRA's online election of President, VP and Directors is in progress. If the NMRA has your email, you should have gotten an invitation to vote electronically. You can read the candidates' statements while voting, or you can access them in the members-only section of the NMRA website. The Santa Clara, CA, NMRA convention has been canceled, but they have confirmed St. Louis for 2022. I'm looking forward to seeing more of the city and its model RR community.

The NMRA Achievement Program is working around the virus. It's straightforward to earn Author, Volunteer or Association Official, and I'm starting to see some new Certificates come through. Chief Dispatcher can be earned in self-isolation, but you'll need technology to participate in op-sessions remotely; one of our members has acted as Dispatcher over an Internet link. The NMRA is doing remote evaluation for Civil and Electrical certificates. But Cars, Locomotives, Structures and Prototype Modeling rely on in-person inspection. Contact AP Chair Pete Watson if you have a model that's ready for evaluation.

However the NMRA's efforts to adapt play out, many of us are building models or working on layouts in this unexpected free time. Keep the necessary paperwork on the To-Do list as well. I hope we'll see a lot of new AP certificates in 2021.

Mill City 2021 is scheduled for October 8-11 (still Columbus Day Weekend). As before, it's at the Westford Regency Hotel in Westford, MA. We'll carry over many of the 2020 arrangements, including schedule, layouts, and clinics. We'll keep the focus on model railroad operations. Inevitably there will be a few changes. If you have a new presentation, or a layout that would make a nice tour or operating session, get in touch. We also need volunteers for the Convention site and activities, so consider getting involved as things come into focus.

Speaking of volunteers, the HUB is looking for more: You see the five candidates for Board Member in the upcoming election, but we still need help in member outreach. As the crisis tapers off, we'll also need show management, RAILFUN events for members who can't get to Weston on a Friday evening, and model railroad operations for members. Talk to me or another Board Member or Officer to get involved!

Personally, since my last column and once we got Seashore's track job put to bed for the Winter, I did a little modeling and too much reading news and worrying. I've found focus in the past few weeks working on long-stalled projects on my B&M Eastern Route. I've finished a Tichy boxcar, built sidewalks, paved a street and worked on four different structures. There's lots more to do, but I'm also getting reminded that I haven't made any AP progress since I got my Golden Spike in 2017. I'm closest to Structures but need either Cars or Motive power to become an MMR.

If there's something on your mind about the HUB or its activities, email me at [president@hubdiv.org](mailto:president@hubdiv.org), call me at (603) 394-7832 or catch me at a HUB online event.

Until next time, High Green!



## Shanty Talk: Get Out the Plows II

By Rudy Slovacek

As I write this column, two major winter storms are predicted. That makes it a good time to hunker down in my basement, turn on the electric space heater and do some modeling. After consulting with a member of the D&H Bridge Line Historical Society, I got some additional information needed to model an earlier version of the D&H depressed center flat 16159, which I pictured in the last edition. Instead of the bright red version, it will be black with white lettering. It should be more appropriate for the late 50's when it was built, in Oneonta, and through the 60's when the D&H was almost exclusively an ALCO powered road.

I sometimes like to operate trains from different eras of the D&H, so I have already applied the black paint coat over the gray primer on the second car and it's in the process of drying and curing for the addition of decals. In the meantime, I've finished adding the roof vents to the Saratoga Yard engine house. It just remains for me to paint the trim brown and find a suitable roof covering material. Hopefully, I can find an aerial view that gives an indication of the roofing material; was it corrugated panels or something similar?

To give a bit more credibility to my Saratoga scene, I'm also working on the bottling plant sign for the Saratoga Springwater Co. While perusing the website for the spring water company, I found some early photos of the product being loaded on trailer trucks in the late 1940s. A pair of 1948 Mack JL tractors were connected to what appear to be Aerovan trailers with Vichy Water advertising on the sides. Mini Metals makes a nice set of these 32-foot trailers and I purchased a couple of the Mack tractor kits from Don Mills Models years ago, but have never gotten around to putting them together. I also found an SS Ltd. / Alloy Form white metal kit for a 1932 BM / BQ tractor kit in my to-do bin. I figure there was no time like

the present to try my hand at building these interesting kits.

One modeling tip in assembling the white metal kits is my method for improving the look of the headlights. Using an appropriate size drill, I hollow out a concave dimple in the headlamp. If not a bright reflective metal surface, I put a dab of silver in and cover it over with epoxy. The same can be done with the white metal mirrors if they are filed smooth and shiny first. I have extended this technique to marker lamps by putting a reflective silver dab in the lamp dimples and adding a drop of epoxy to form the lens for sunlight lamps. I have not tried it, but I'm guessing that adding a bit of color to the dimple before making the epoxy lens may give the impression of the colored glass used in such lanterns instead of using jewels. Likewise, to make taillights in cars and trucks really pop, I use a bright red paint then cover it with a shiny gloss-cote.

Now back to my signage efforts. Some of you may have noticed the Curtis Lumber and Stewart's signs on my Ballston Spa modules, which I run with the Coastal Mountain display at Springfield. Stewart's, which started as an ice cream store in Saratoga Springs, has expanded over the years to blanket the upstate New York area with convenience-like stores also selling limited groceries and gasoline. Curtis lumber was started as a lumber and hardware store begun by the Curtis family and has likewise expanded over the region. My mother went to school with one of the Curtis brothers in the 30's and 40's.

One of the industrial sidings, from Saratoga Yard, leads to a rail-served Quad Graphics printing company, which I have also indicated with the computer-generated logo on signage for my module. The company has done a lot of printing of magazines and catalogues and the D&H used to send strings of baggage cars southward over the Albany and Susquehanna division toward Binghamton for publication distribution. This was especially true prior to the Christmas season. Although I don't plan to model the facility, the siding could take boxcars for paper, covered hoppers for dry inks and coatings, and tank cars for solvents and cleaners.

As mentioned in the past two issues, I am trying to give greater plausibility and recognition to my modeling efforts in capturing upstate New York in my era of choice. The use of signage for businesses and vehicles helps to achieve that even if the area and structures are not completely modeled or even present. Hopefully, I can have several vehicles completed before the next issue, so I can give you an idea of where I am headed with pictures.

Some years ago, I gave a hands-on clinic for setting an era with A&W Root Beer signs from materials I found on the web. The website contained distinct logos and advertising pictures from the inception of a cold refreshing drink for soldiers returning from WWI up through the modern day period. Perhaps I can work up something in a similar fashion for some of the localized industries prevalent in upstate New York while I'm sequestered away, awaiting my turn for a vaccination. Until the next time, stay safe, keep up your modeling and remember to wear a mask during this pandemic. Don't over-do it when shoveling snow!

## Member in the News

The New England Railroad Club ([nerailroadclub.com](http://nerailroadclub.com)), an organization of New England prototype railroads dating back to 1883, has recognized our own Dick Towle. The club's January 2021 Member Spotlight is all about Dick's history, his involvement with the railroads and the safety training he conducted for the Federal Railway Administration. You can read more at: [www.nerailroadclub.com/member-spotlight-january-2021-richard-eliot-dick-towle/](http://www.nerailroadclub.com/member-spotlight-january-2021-richard-eliot-dick-towle/)



*The HUB Division Annual Meeting will be held on Zoom at 7:30 PM on April 16, 2021*

## Candidates for The HUB Division Board of Directors

(Refer to Page 5 for Voting Information)

### Erich Whitney

Hello! Although I am new to the HUB Division, I have 10 years of previous NMRA division experience as past board member, vice president, president, and convention chairman (2013) for the Seacoast Division NMRA. I joined the HUB Division because I believe that my interests are aligned with so much of what the HUB Division is about; active participation in division events, education, youth outreach, and the HUB Modular Railroad Group.

The module group was a big part of why I joined the NMRA and I've been actively working behind the scenes to produce a major module standard update while continuing to develop the module signaling system. I'm a regular contributor to the HUB *Headlight* with my, "Erich's Electronics Notebook" column, and I recently volunteered to be the HUB Division's Online Meeting (Zoom) Coordinator.

At the NMRA National level, I'm an active member of the NMRA DCC Working Group working to revive the DCC Command Station Conformance program. I have presented clinics at national and regional conventions as well as division events for several years.

I will bring perspective, relevant experience, and leadership to the board. I would appreciate your support. Please reach out if you have any questions.

### Jim Joubert

I joined the NMRA in 1974 when I became a charter member of the Down East Model Railroad Club. As a founder and leader of the club, I learned about the rich diversity of members' interests and the unlimited opportunities in model railroading.

As a candidate for the HUB Board of Directors, I plan to build on my experience to expand membership through introducing more young people to the hobby. I will work with our Board to find more opportunities, including our program with the Museum of Science, to introduce the next-generation to model railroading.

I will also work with the Board to expand our educational programs to the north and west of Boston, building on our current ventures on the Cape.

I have leadership experience with many groups, including the Boy Scouts, Carpenter's Union apprenticeship and mentoring programs and the Knights of Columbus. I currently serve as the president of the Sand Dune Central Model Railroad Club on the Cape.

Please consider me in your vote for the Board of Directors.

### Manny Escobar

Well, "I am Back" ...

Even after nine years of participation as your Board Member, and President for four years, I cannot get enough of this organization. Our traditions and legacy of The HUB Division, especially our members, continue to amaze me. I am in awe of the body of knowledge that I have acquired by becoming involved with our members and participating in activities in our marvelous hobby.

The HUB's activity in the past years has been tremendous; and now, with the current situations that we face, I want to bring a stronger focus on goals to continue the HUB's legacy.

I have been involved in the Spring *TRAINing* Show, New England Model Train Expo, NER Convention and many other activities. Our finances are in the black and slow but steady growth. I believe in promoting even more activities aimed at making the public aware and educating them. They are the future of our hobby.

I currently model Florida East Coast and Pan Am Railways.

I would like to say that it is my pleasure and honor serving you and our organization. I am asking for your vote to serve as your member of the Board of Directors. I am grateful for your consideration.

### James VanBokkelen

I grew up in Boston and Newburyport, MA and took an early interest in trains, trolleys and history. I started with O-gauge tinplate, but switched to HO in 1968 because I wanted more accurate models of what I saw and rode. I'm still playing with model trains, working on my home layout and with the HUB Modular Group.

I attended MIT, leading to a 30-year career in the computer industry as a programmer, salesman, manager, executive and entrepreneur. I've volunteered in town government for 31 years, including as Selectman. I also volunteer at Seashore Trolley Museum and Lowell National Historic Park, operating trolleys and maintaining track at Seashore.

I've been a life member of the HUB Division for 30 years. I have many friends among our members and in the broader modeling and historic preservation community. If re-elected, I'll continue to look for new and effective ways to serve our members and promote our activities and the hobby in general.

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## Candidates for The HUB Division Board of Directors

(Continued from Page 4)

### Peter Higgins

Although the past year has been extremely hard on our hobby with so many cancelations and postponements, we're still on-track and committed to growing our hobby reaching out to as many members as we can electronically via Zoom and other similar methods, all of which I have supported as a Board Member and will continue to do so.

Hopefully you've participated in one of Andy Reynolds' RAILFUN Zoom Meetings, an NER-X or NMRA-X clinic from half-way around the world electronically, and from some very established modelers.

I've been a HUB Member since 1986 and became active after my retirement. Many of us first met at the Membership Table where I have continued to serve as the Membership Chairman since 2011 recruiting and promoting the HUB Division. I believe in being an active member and have served as the Regional Conventions' Raffle Donations Chairman since 2016

Once again, I hope for your continued support to return me to the HUB Board of Directors, where my goal still remains giving all members a voice at HUB Board Meetings. Although things seem distant I'm still only as far away as a phone call or email.

## HUB Division Calendar of Events (Subject to Change)

### 2021

Mar 19 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Zoom Meeting, 8 PM
Apr 1 (Thu)	Submissions deadline for the HUB <i>Headlight</i> May-Jun issue
Apr 16 (Fri)	HUB Annual Meeting and Election Zoom Meeting, 7:30 PM
Apr 16 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Zoom Meeting, 8 PM
May 21 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Zoom Meeting, 8 PM
Jun 18 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Zoom Meeting, 8 PM
Jul 4-11 (Sun-Sun)	(Canceled) Rails By the Bay NMRA Convention, Santa Clara, CA, <a href="http://www.nmra2021.com">www.nmra2021.com</a>
Jul 15 (Thu)	Submissions deadline for the HUB <i>Headlight</i> Sep-Oct issue
Sep 17 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Meeting, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA (Subject to school approval)
Oct 8-11 (Fri-Mon)	HUB-Sponsored NER Convention, Mill City 21, Westford, MA, <a href="http://www.millcity21.org">www.millcity21.org</a>

## New Voting Procedures for the Board of Directors Election

**T**he HUB Division will use the Election Buddy electronic voting system. The Division is implementing this change to make voting easier for our members.

The HUB Division will **NOT** be conducting an in-person Annual Meeting again this year due to COVID-19. The Annual Meeting will be held using Zoom on Friday, April 16, 2021 in conjunction with the scheduled Railfun meeting. During the meeting, the Clerk will announce the results of the election.

**All members who have provided the HUB Division or the NMRA with an email address will receive an email directly from Election Buddy with your unique voting code and instructions for submitting your ballot. Emails from Election Buddy will arrive around March 1, 2021.** If you do not receive an email, or if you do not have an email address, please contact the HUB Division Clerk by telephone, (508) 378-3582, and ask for Peter Watson. Peter will take your information and will mail you a ballot with instructions for returning it to him. In order for Peter to count your ballot, he must receive it by the deadline date he provides.

Like the NMRA, the HUB Division plans to continue using this online method to conduct elections. The HUB Division also routinely sends information to members using the [hubdiv@googlegroups.com](mailto:hubdiv@googlegroups.com) email list and the online Constant Contact system. If you have not provided the HUB Division or the NMRA with your email address, you should provide it to Peter so you are informed about the Division activities. You can send an email to Peter at: [OfficeManager@hubdiv.org](mailto:OfficeManager@hubdiv.org) to request he include your email address in our notification system(s). You should also provide your email address to the NMRA.

COVID-19 has provided new opportunities to stay connected with happenings in the model train hobby. Email notifications are the primary method of communication so it is important to keep this information up-to-date at the local and national levels.

## Achievement



James Joubert Receives Golden Spike Award

Despite the ongoing pandemic, James Joubert (right) is shown receiving his Golden Spike Award from HUB Board Director Michael Tylick, MMR. Aside from working on the Golden Spike, James has put his "in place" time to good use working on his HO-scale Penobscot, Boston, and Jamesport railroad. The PB&J is heavy on operation that features service from the potato farms of Aroostook County to the processing and distribution centers of Boston.

Photo by Paul St. Martin

## Treasurer's Report

By Gerald Covino, Treasurer

Stated below is our financial position as of December 31, 2020, the mid-point in our fiscal year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

Your Board of Directors (BOD), in compliance with the COVID-19 orders issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, had to cancel this year's New England Model Train EXPO (NEMTE). As most are aware, the NEMTE is the primary source of revenue that funds programs offered by your Division.

The BOD limited expenditures of Division funds to items essential to the operations of the Division and to offer online programming to help members continue learning about the hobby. I want to thank Andy Reynolds for his commitment to host RAILFUN meetings on Zoom. With this new media, we have been able to reach out to you with topics of interest. We will continue with this outreach through June of this year.

Even with the Pandemic, the Division completed its third year of partnership with the Museum of Science. Our Museum Exhibit Chairperson, David "Shack" Haralambou, along with countless hours contributed by our dedicated volunteers, managed to staff the exhibit. The Museum had to shut down operations as the pandemic conditions worsened, but the Museum did request we reopen the exhibit February 8th and maintain it through February 28th. This project has provided revenue to the Division that helps cover costs, both fixed and new, without requiring the Division to dig deeply into its financial reserves. We thank all those members who did volunteer at great risk, in staffing the museum exhibit that allowed us to fulfill our program commitment.

The BOD hopes members have taken full advantage and enjoyed the programs we have been able to provide in these difficult times. I know the BOD and myself are looking forward to returning to the more routine events with the in-person socialization that truly adds value to this hobby.

One last note: We are in the process of planning for the NEMTE in December and, of course, we are hosting the NER Convention in Westford this October.

Continue modeling and keep safe.

Mid-Year Account Balances	
Checkbook	\$ 2,935.01
General Savings Account	538.39
Reserve-Life & Restricted Savings Accounts	54,818.44
Program Checking Account	539.15
PayPal Account	1,076.11
USPS Permit Account	0.95
Total Funds Available	\$ 59,908.05

## Rail Bending at Seashore Trolley Museum



Seashore track workers using a manual rail bender on 85 pound-per-yard rail. The handle operates a mechanical jack, forcing the rail against the hook sitting atop the rail. Bends are usually about a foot apart. Each bend pushes the rail past its elastic limit and each time the bender is moved the rail relaxes, so judging the depth of each bend requires experience

## The Whitman-Southern Coal Tipple

(Continued from Page 1)



Front View of the Tipple

Because the area for the Tipple was larger, I needed to increase the size. The only option, kit-bash the two kits and make a better facility. Looking at the front view of the structure, the right side was the first modification. I rearranged and added the structure on stilts for individual car loading of specific grades of coal. The original opening for the chute is under the New River Sign. The chute for the opening shown carries product to another remote building for distribution. A second chute will mount to the right on the back building. This chute leads to an overhead mine track and is supported by a steel truss. I added some additional details to increase the interest in the building, namely the vents, ladders and walkway.

The structure encompassing the first three-tracks is basically stock from the front-to-the-back. The left two loading spaces were what was added from the additional kit. Parts were cut and



Left Portion of Tipple Showing Various Rooflines

assembled to fit the area. The center chute is a lower level chute to facilitate small truck loading for local deliveries.

The stock roof was cut to fit the opening. The rear roof had to be fabricated and covered with Tar Paper. Not many parts were left when I got to this point. The roof makes it look like an expanded structure that may have been required at that time.

Overall, I'm satisfied with the final product. Because I'm getting over a double-hernia operation, progress on the final area has been slow this past month. My goal in the next month is to get the surrounding area scenery finished and the structure mounted in it's final position. Look for a follow-up in the next issue showing the tipple in place with completed scenery.

## HUB New Member Show Special

By Peter Higgins, Membership Chairman

Do you have that friend who enjoys model trains but never seemed to make the jump to join the NMRA? Right now there are some pretty good reasons to join and become a HUB Division member. During the pandemic, that has pretty much canceled all of our in-person events, the HUB Division's BOD has extended our HUB Show Special Membership Price through our Website online. Previously, these prices were only available at the Membership Table at the various shows the HUB attended.

A new member gets the NMRA, NER & HUB Division membership including print copies of the NMRA Magazine and HUB *Headlight* for only \$50. That is a savings of \$32 for 12 months and if that's not enough, the HUB Division will additionally offer a Rail Pass for the original price of \$9.95, saving another \$10 and extending the membership to 21 months. With everything included, when added to the Regular Membership, that is \$42 off!!!

This offer won't last forever, so if you know one of the "on the fence" model railroaders, now's the time to convince them to make the jump and join. You can also contact us at: [membershipchairman@hubdiv.org](mailto:membershipchairman@hubdiv.org)

## HUB Communications

The HUB Division has two ways it communicates directly with it's members: via the [hubdiv@googlegroups.com](mailto:hubdiv@googlegroups.com) email list and the online Constant Contact system.

The Google Groups email list can be used by anyone already on the list to email everyone else on the list about division, model or prototype related topics. For example, you can ask for modeling tips or advice from fellow members, or see if someone has a copy of that MR you've been trying to track down. It's definitely an underutilized member benefit.

The Constant Contact system is just for notifications from the Division to the Members.

To get on the [hubdiv@googlegroups.com](mailto:hubdiv@googlegroups.com) email list, please email Peter Watson at: [OfficeManager@hubdiv.org](mailto:OfficeManager@hubdiv.org) to request he include your email address on the list. Peter will also make sure that you are added to our Constant Contact list. You should also provide your email address to the NMRA and NER so that you receive communications from the national and regional levels.



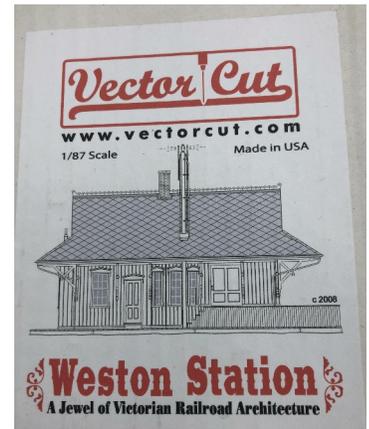
## Weston Station

By Bill Harley

The Weston Station was built from a “Vector Cut” Laser Kit by David Krakow. Unfortunately, David and his company appear to have gone silent as the kit and other fine products that Vector Cut produced are no longer available.

The station was painted as per the B&W photo (circa 1930) in *The Central Mass.* published by Marker Press in cooperation with the Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society.

The colors are the result of consultation with Robert Willoughby Jones, members of the B&MRRHS and Shawn Cavaretta at Scale Coat Paint.



Left Front View



Right Front View



Rear View

## In Memoriam Samuel Berliner III

February 15, 1934 – December 29, 2020

HUB Member Samuel “Sam” Berliner III passed away at the end of December.

From his March 21, 2014 RAILFUN write-up, Sam described himself:

*Sam Berliner, III, [was] a member of the HUB Division, NMRA, NRHS, PRRT&HS, and Mass Bay RRE. He was the convener of the Long Island Motor Parkway Panel, a group dedicated to preserving the 1908-1938 Long Island Motor Parkway in situ, in minds, and in museums. Sam [was] also a bit of a historian of other forms of transportation, especially the first diesels, heavy rail equipment, Long Island Rail Road and other railroads on Long Island in particular.*

Sam gave a number of RAILFUN and NER Convention clinics over the years. He had an extensive website ([www.sbiii.com](http://www.sbiii.com)) of information on various topics. The family has indicated that this will be maintained as long as possible.



**Support Your  
Division!**

## Kitchen Table Projects

By Rich Pitter

I discovered *Model Railroader* as a teenager in the early 1960's, when a friend gave me some old copies of the magazine. I've passed them on to others since then, but there was a regular department in those issues, "Kitchen Table Projects." The articles involved one-evening projects that could be assembled on a kitchen table. I remember my family's kitchen table from the 1950's, with chrome-plated legs and frame and a hard, red plastic tabletop. I don't recall specific projects from those articles, but I suppose the table must have needed protection somehow, perhaps a towel under plywood or a scrap of board to serve as a workbench surface.

Some of us have workshops for model railroading work. I use temporary workstations. At one time, I used a glass-top kitchen table for model building. Now, I often construct model kits on a sturdy TV tray. I sometimes add a second or third TV tray for tools and supplies that I need for the project. I have some power tools in the garage that I also use, but most of the time I tinker and dinker with models using TV trays or a glass-top craft table.

I also have several fishing tackle boxes that I use, especially when I'm on the go. The first one I used was a small box with one tray. I only added tools and supplies that I needed for the project, and that fit in the toolbox. The model was carried in a

separate box. That took some planning, but it worked out well. I cut a piece of Masonite to fit flat in the bottom of the box. That was my working surface. I built small models in motels or when I visited relatives, but the concept also works for modeling at home.



Figure 1: A fishing tackle box stores tools and hobby materials for modeling away from home.

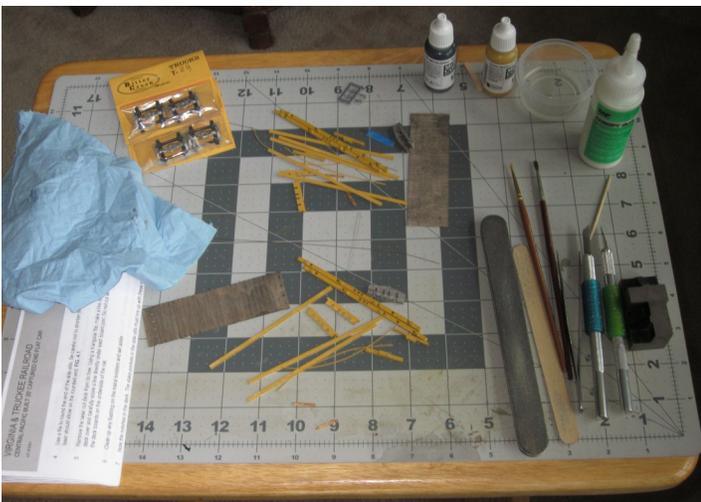


Figure 2: A sturdy TV tray provides a good work surface for building small models. A second tray may be added for tools, paint, and glue.

## SDC Club Car

By James G. Kerkam

HUB President James VanBokkelen's recent article concerning model railroad clubs reminded me of the operations club on Cape Cod. The Sand Dune Central Model Railroad Club consists of 16 to 20 members operating on each other's layouts. The club stopped operations the first week of March 2020 to comply with the Commonwealth's COVID-19 restrictions. Since then, we have kept in contact through a weekly email about members' activities. Some members belong to the HUB, and have spent the year working to complete requirements for the NMRA Achievement Program.

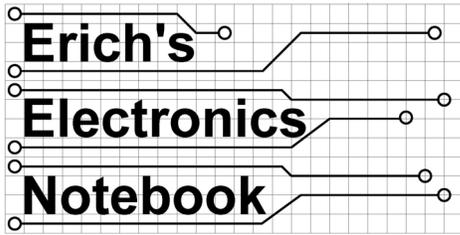
One club activity was to design and produce a Sand Dune Central club car. Mike Tylick, MMR, of Rail Design Services developed the herald and had the decals printed.

Because my layout models the year 1918, I used an Accurail, Data-Only, 36-foot boxcar for my club car. As shown on my work table, the boxcar also includes Kadee arch bar trucks and standard #5 couplers.

Decaling the club car was a quick and fun project. I am not sure what load Sand Dune Central Lines #821 will carry from Cape Cod, MA, to the Manassas, VA, area I model. Perhaps, it will be glassware from Sandwich, MA. Regardless of the load, #821 is a proud new addition to the rolling stock on my Manassas Gap Railroad.



Figure 3: This 44" x 24" glass-top craft table was found in an art supply store.



By Erich Whitney and Jeff Gerow

## Turnout Control with Signal LCC - Part 1

This article is a follow-on to “Turnout Control” from *HUB Headlight, Volume 37, Number 3, Jan-Feb 2021*. Jeff Gerow and Dave Insley have been leading the way with delving into LCC. Their work inspired me to take a closer look at LCC. Jeff and Dave used the *RR-CirKits Tower LCC 16-line input/output node* combined with the *RR-CirKits SMD-8 8-channel stall motor driver* board to control turnouts. In Jeff’s NMRAx video, he introduced the *RR-CirKits Tortoise Quik-Link* board, which plugs onto the edge connector of the Tortoise and controls that turnout. The Quik-Link connects to the LCC system via the RR-CirKits standard 10-pin ribbon cable so up to eight Tortoises can be linked onto one I/O jack. I decided to use a Tortoise Quik-Link with the *RR-CirKits Signal LCC 16-LED Drivers plus 8-line input/output node* to set up a single LCC node that integrates turnout control functions with signal control.

This is a good time to explain the fundamental architectural differences between LCC and other layout control systems. LCC’s CAN bus-based network is designed to be completely distributed. This means that any node can communicate directly with any other node without the intervention of a central controller, or system “brain.” Contrast this with C/MRI, for example, which uses a single central “leader” (PC) to direct all of the “follower” nodes — this means that the central leader is doing all the work and the nodes just interface to the layout signals, occupancy detectors, etc. Not only CMRI, but other products are available allowing such control, some use the throttle or CAB bus, sadly proprietary – or the DCC signal itself – but with a lot of operators the DCC bus can get pretty busy, so it seemed like something completely new was necessary. The NMRA found the software being developed by the Open LCB (Open Layout Control Bus) group would be perfect; and Bosch’s CAN bus – developed for networking electronically noisy cars – would be the optimum way to interconnect the nodes.

So NMRA LCC - Layout Command Control - was born:

- 1) LCC is designed to work alongside DCC but without taking away any of the available DCC system’s ability to run trains. LCC can be implemented completely independent of the DCC command station or it can be integrated with it. It could even be used with DC trains.
- 2) LCC is distributed, which means that each node can function on its own – without the need for a dedicated computer. In fact, a computer is just another node in the system.

- 3) LCC is designed to provide significantly more communication bandwidth than DCC. DCC operates at about 9 kilobits per second whereas LCC operates at 125 kilobits per second. So, a lot more space for everything other than driving the trains. Also, LCC is not explicitly tied to the CAN bus. LCC can travel over other networks such as WiFi or Ethernet.
- 4) LCC nodes can independently implement logic in addition to interfacing to the layout; so things like ABS signaling can be performed within the nodes.
- 5) The LCC architecture is built on what is known as a producer-consumer model. This allows any device that detects an event such as a pushbutton switch, a train entering a block, or a turnout point closure, to produce a message that any device listening can consume and thus take some action such as change the aspect displayed on a signal.

With added flexibility, LCC is more complex and does have a learning curve, but we think that by working together we can sort out the complexity and help each other. If you haven’t done so already, we’d recommend viewing Jeff’s NMRA clinic, [youtu.be/5GcjrLOH1ds](https://youtu.be/5GcjrLOH1ds), and Dave Insley’s Headlight LCC articles (Volume 37, Numbers 2 and 3) — they did a great job explaining a lot of the key information needed to get started. We would also refer you to the RR-CirKits website which has quite a number of presentations on the subject: [www.rr-cirkit.com/Clinics/Clinics.html](http://www.rr-cirkit.com/Clinics/Clinics.html).

### The RR-CirKits Signal LCC 16-LED plus 8-line input/output node

This node is available in two variations. Both have the RR-Circuits standard 10-pin I/O Jack – a user-programmable jack used for input or output functions – and 16 LED signal outputs. The difference is the Signal LCC-P uses two 10-pin plugs to connect to the signals and the Signal LCC-S variant uses screw terminals.

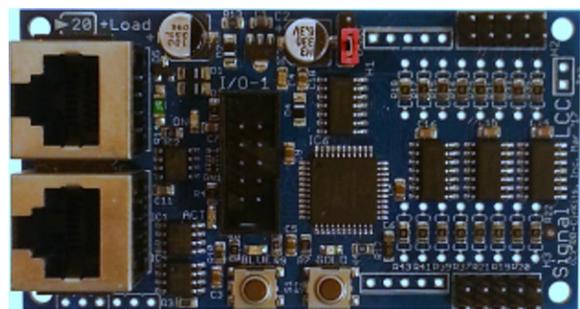


Figure 1 RR-CirKits Signal LCC-P

This is truly set up to deal with signals – the signal heads connect directly to the screw terminals or pins. The series resistors for the LEDs are built in and there’s a ‘common’ pin for each head. Also, there’s even a jumper that allows you to configure the Signal LCC for common-anode (CA), or common-cathode (CC) LED configurations. Common anode is by far the more common choice for model railroads. In this configuration, all of the

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# Erich's Electronic Notebook

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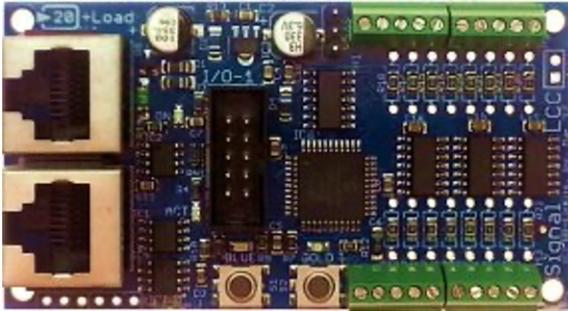


Figure 2 RR-CirKits Signal LCC-S

LED's positive (anode) pins are tied to a positive voltage and the LED is turned on by grounding the cathode side using an output pin from a controller. This can be confusing because it seems backwards: turning the output off turns the LED on, and turning the output on turns the LED off. The connections are set up so that there's four LED outputs to one common pin and they're marked R (red), Y (yellow), G (green), and L (lunar). You can connect whatever color LED you want, but this makes it convenient for connecting up signal heads.

## The RR-CirKits Tortoise Quik-Link board

The other module we'll be using is this Tortoise Quik-Link. This card plugs directly onto the Tortoise's edge connector. The black 10-pin jacks are designed to connect directly to the 10-pin I/O headers on either a Signal LCC or Tower LCC using a ribbon cable with 10-pin plugs crimped on. Since there are eight I/O lines available, and you only need one to control a Tortoise, there's an 8-position jumper on the Quik-Link that lets you select which line to use. If you have more than one turnout to control, you can use the second I/O header to connect another Quik-Link and daisy-chain up to 8 of them on one node I/O jack. The LCC node "knows" the state of its outputs so you can get direct feedback of the state of the turnout without needing to use a second pin to add this functionality. Note the 3-pin screw-terminal block on the upper left on the Quik-Link. This is provided to make it easy to access the internal Tortoise switch used to change the frog polarity. The 3-pin header just below the 3-pin screw-terminal is designed to connect directly to a



Figure 3 RR-CirKits Quik-Link

Berrett Hill Touch Trigger switch for fascia control. At the lower left corner of the board there's a solder jumper that you can use to change the behavior of this 3-pin header to provide local turnout position feedback if you don't want to use a Touch Trigger. As of the time we wrote this, there is not yet a user manual available for the Quik-Link board, nor is it listed on the RR-CirKits website. If you email or call them, you can place an order. Our description of this product is based on email exchanges we have had with Dick Bronson, the owner of RR-CirKits.

## LCC Test Network

Figure 4 (below) shows our Test Network board with a simple LCC network consisting of:

- A. The RR-CirKits LCC Buffer USB that connects to a computer running JMRI
- B. The RR-CirKits LCC Power-Point (upper left) that provide the LCC bus power,
- C. The RR-CirKits Tower LCC node to which I've wired some switches and LEDs,
- D. The RR-CirKits Signal LCC node connected to five signal heads
- E. One RR-CirKits Quik-Link that is plugged into a Tortoise switch machine,
- F. The Berrett Hill Touch Trigger (lower right) that plugs into the Quik-Link board as previously noted.

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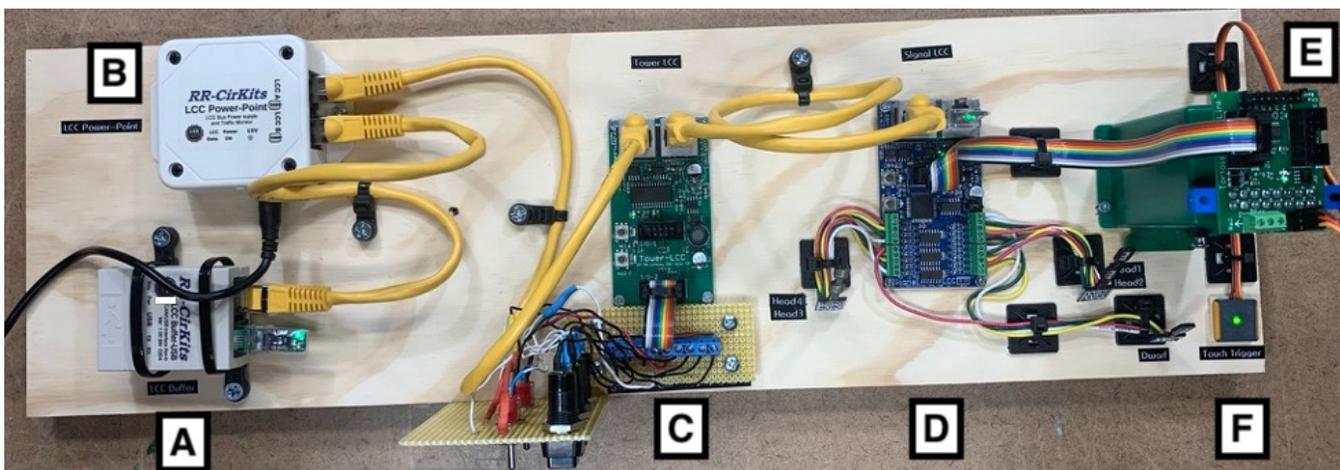


Figure 4 LCC Test Network

## Greetings from the South Shore!

By Robert Manna

I have made a bit of progress here and there. My major focus continues to be on finishing my basement walls so that significant layout construction can begin (and it will be easier to keep the basement warm). The main wall is about two-thirds done with insulation, drywall, mud, and primer. With some luck, I will get that completed by the end of winter.



20' more of concrete to go on this wall!

In the meantime, I have undertaken a few small modeling projects here and there to keep myself entertained. I have not done any "real" modeling in 20 years!

First up was making it possible for some containers to "stick" to each other while stacked in well cars. My children have received Con-Cor's Christmas cars for the last eight years or so (from their grandfather), however this year Con-Cor produced a pair of 53' containers. So, they also received well cars to carry said containers! Some searching on the Internet revealed a technique using pairs of small magnets with 4" strips of paper sandwiched



58' unit well car (one of two), not quite my era focus, but oh well...



Look ma! No glue required!

between each pair at each end of the strip. You pop the strips into the containers and viola! Your containers stick to each other and you can stack and restack to your heart's content!

Next up were some modifications to my son's Thomas engine (HO scale, DCC equipped with sound and keep-alive!). I was tired of the fact that Thomas could not pull cars from the front as it does not come equipped with a front coupler.



Just a little front-end work on DCC sound equipped Thomas.

Taking a hard look, I decided that one way or another I should be able to modify it to attach a coupler. Some time spent with a Dremel and an Exacto, along with careful checking of my work, has now resulted in Thomas having a front coupler. I had to cut a small styrene plate to glue the coupler to, and then glue the plate to the engine, as there was not really a good place to attach screws. Since it's not very visible, the plate just needed something so that it would not be styrene white. At first, I was thinking I needed to get a hold of some model paint, but then I decided to take a page from MRR's book, looked at my spray paint stash in the garage, and found some grey. Using the alligator clip from a clip lead that had gone bad I fashioned a painting stick to hold my tiny plate for painting purposes. Now Thomas can happily pull or push in either direction just like a shunting engine should!

Next was the fact that Thomas has been limited to only Thomas cars. I'd always thought that I should be able to build a "conversion" car to transfer from the Bachman hook & loop to Kadees. Once again, the Internet came to my rescue, and it turned out this was a relatively simple modification, needing only to cut off the center pin that helps to support the hook and loop coupler. I had purchased some "non-descript" cars to go with Thomas, so picking one of the open-top wagons, I clipped the pin with my sprue/flush cutter and attached a Kadee #5 using Kadee's generic gear box. Its not the prettiest, but it gets the job done and now Thomas can pull the unit well car mentioned earlier (and he really can, though I am not sure he would handle much of a grade with the cars properly weighted to NMRA standards...).



Open-top wagon converted to Kadee rider car.

Last, I have started building a Bowser Conrail caboose kit that came from last year's (2020) Holiday party. So far, I have cut all the pieces from the sprues, cleaned everything up and test fitted it all. I did a little hunting online for photos but came up dry. I would be interested in suggestions for how to improve

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## Greetings from the South Shore

(Continued from Page 12)



Thomas pulling 58' unit well car! Yes its a bit incongruous, but that is why its a hobby, right!

the detailing of this kit (without going overboard). It seems like a nice project to get back into actual model building given my long hiatus from that portion of the hobby.

That is it from down here in the southern suburbs. The pandemic has certainly given me some additional time to work on hobby-related items, while continuing to keep up with all my other activities, work, kids, committees, maintenance, etc. I do need to get back to further track planning and refinement of the next layout. I believe I have a solid overall concept and approach as outlined in a previous issue of the *Headlight*. After further reading, consideration and thought, I want to be able to squeeze in return loops around my intended helix to make continuous running easier, but I also need to be wary of my aisle widths to allow for ease of operations. I continue to go back and forth on target heights for the decks. I'm only 5'-8" so a 60" or 62" top deck is pretty high, particularly with operations in mind. I think if I build raised steps / floor in strategic locations that may be "good enough" (and help keep my feet warm).

### A Minor Side Note

One problem with the unit cars is they exceed the current minimum radius on my return loops; so running ability is currently a bit limited, the good news is the future layout will have a much broader minimum radius on the mainline!



Detailing suggestions welcome. At a minimum the smokejack could likely be improved.



## B&MRRHS High Green Podcast

By James VanBokkelen

The Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society (B&MRRHS) has started a podcast called "High Green"

More than 30-years ago, retired B&M Conductor Mager (sounds like 'major') Greenough was interviewed about his railroad career. He had worked on the B&M lines between Boston, Worcester and Portland from 1941 to 1984. Recently volunteers digitized the 90-minute tape and posted it as the Society's fifth public podcast at: [www.bmrrhs.org/highgreen](http://www.bmrrhs.org/highgreen)

Mr. Greenough soon had seniority to hold jobs convenient to his home in Ipswich, so most of his time was spent on freight and passenger runs between Boston, Lynn, Marblehead, Rockport, Portsmouth, Danvers and Wakefield. His explanation of operations of the era is detailed and complete, with many amusing anecdotes. It is a great source for people interested in B&M operations between 1941 and the 1980s.

Another High Green episode is an interview with a railfan who grew up along the Connecticut River line between Springfield and White River Jct. Later he became an engineer for Pan Am Railways.

Others episodes cover subjects ranging from the history of rail-trails in New Hampshire to the job of putting ex-B&M switcher #1228 back into operating condition for the Milford-Bennington RR.

[Editor: You can also subscribe to the podcast in your favorite podcast app by searching for "High Green"]

### Submissions Wanted

The *Headlight* is always accepting photos and articles relating to model and prototype railroading. Articles about model building or home layouts would be much appreciated. Earn credit towards your Author AP certificate. Please email [editor@hubdiv.org](mailto:editor@hubdiv.org).

**HUB Headlight**

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**Erich's Electronic Notebook***(Continued from Page 11)*

Dick Johannes contributed a Tower LCC, which lets us add some buttons, toggles and LEDs for experimentation. For signal testing, we used Model Railroad Control Systems' low-cost signal masts that are really handy for experimenting with signals without using a more delicate model signal mast. These signal heads use surface-mount LEDs wired in a common-anode configuration. In this example, we used the red, yellow, and green connections for the two dual-head masts. Since each head has only three LEDs, that leaves the "Lunar" outputs free; so, we used these leftover pins to wire up a dwarf signal.

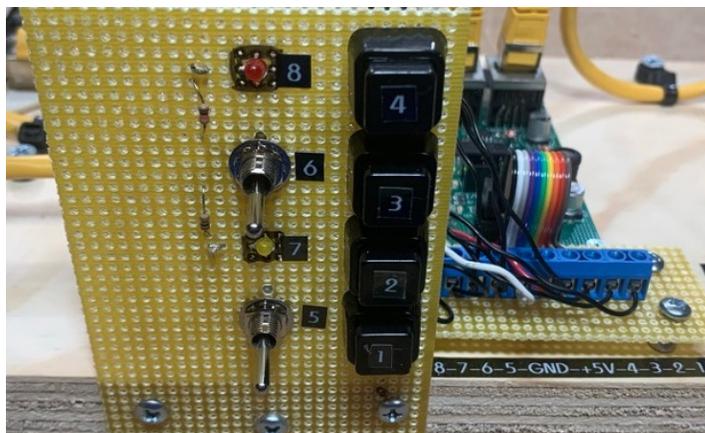


Figure 5 Close-up of the switches and LEDs I added to the Tower LCC Node

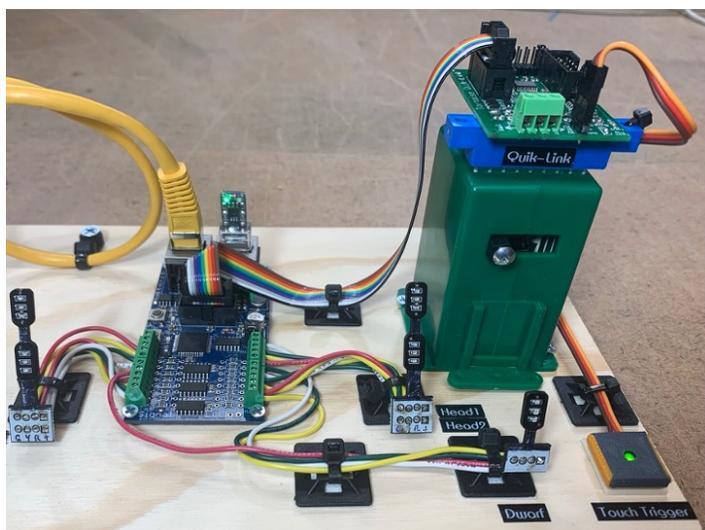


Figure 6 Close-up of the Signal LCC Node with the Quik-Link & Tortoise, MRCS Signals, and Touch Trigger Node

That's it for Part 1. In Part 2, we will cover how to configure the Signal LCC.

Until then, please send in your questions to be answered as future topics in this column.

