



PEDDLER FREIGHT

Division 1 - MCR - NMRA

Akron - Canton - Youngstown Division

Serving Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Mahoning, Portage, Stark,
Summit, Trumbull, Tuscarawas and Wayne Counties

www.div1-mcr-nmra.org

Volume 33 - Issue 4

January 2026

Superintendent's Bulletin

This issue of the Pedder Freight kicks off the new year with reflections of 2025 and anticipation toward events in 2026.

Division 1 had its last official event of 2025 at the "Age of Steam Roundhouse" in Sugarcreek. The division was again asked to display the HO T-TRAK modules during the Age of Steam's annual *Santa Comes to the Roundhouse*. With the space limited, only eight single equivalent straight modules and the corners were displayed. As this event sells out, there is always a good crowd of kids and adults alike who visit the layout while waiting for their opportunity to ride the steam train and visit with Santa.

This annual event allows Division 1 members to showcase model railroading to a diverse group of people. Members ran model trains on the modules but also checked out the real trains after Santa left for the day. A private tour of the roundhouse was led by Dan Condo of the Age of Steam.

With 2026 upon us Division 1 will elect a new leader as present superintendent Jim DiPaola is term limited after serving two consecutive terms. Assistant Superintendent Sam Eisele is also finishing up his second term. Elections will take place this spring.

With this issue Sam Eisele will kick off a series on his reluctant foray into the HO T-TRAK world. Sam acquired an HO single module when Division 1 moved to T-TRAK as its format for portable modules back in 2023. As part of a member retention initiative through the NMRA any member can receive an HO or N scale T-TRAK module with track and wiring included. Sam glued together his module and promptly placed it in the corner of his basement. Now in 2026, follow along, as Sam transforms his blank slate of T-TRAK into a functioning module.

Another new feature for the new year will be "Master Model Railroader Humor" as told by, well, our resident MMR Steve Zapytowski. See page 7 for Steve's first installment. On page 6 your editor has revived a column that the late N scaler Don Bonk had consistently written - *N Scale Report*.

If you're wondering why your Peddler Freight editor is writing the superintendent's column this month, Jim DiPaola is helping his wife Doris through some health issues. Please keep Doris, Jim and their family in your thoughts as the new year begins.

Happy New Year Division 1!

Bruce Hukill, PF Editor

Module Report



Down low and in close, that's how trains are meant to be viewed. If one photo could sum up the annual display of the HO T-TRAK modules at the "Age of Steam Roundhouse" for its annual *Santa Comes to the Roundhouse*, Div. 1 member Jerry Kruse captured that moment with the above image.

2026 Division 1 Events

January 18, 2026 - Kent Free Library
February 22 - TBA
March 15 - TBA
April 19 - TBA
May 17 - Glenn Yoder
June - Date and location TBA

Division 1, MCR, NMRA
Meeting Minutes
November 22, 2025

1. Welcome:

- ~ Call to order: 2:05 PM.
- ~ By: Jim DiPaola, Superintendent.
- ~ Participants: 26.
- ~ Location: Wooster Public Library.

2. Clerk: Jeff Stone:

- ~ Previous meeting minutes published in Peddler freight.
- ~ Motion carried to approve minutes (Bob Gurdak / Lloyd Horst.)

3. Treasurer: Mike Bradley:

- ~ Report presented by treasurer. Available on request.
- ~ Expense: 0.
- ~ Income: \$131.
- ~ Motion carried to approve treasurer report (Steve Zapytowski / Lloyd Horst).

4. Superintendent: Jim DiPaola:

- ~ The December meeting is the traditional lunch, but due to unforeseen circumstances and inability of the Hartville Kitchen to keep our reservation, it will be Friday December 5th, at noon.

4a. Assistant Superintendent: Sam Eisele: No comments.

5. Peddler Freight Committee: Bruce Hukill:

- ~ Discussed a member with an email account wanting the Peddler mailed. Consensus of the members is to charge for postage, etc, and discourage mailing: although for special situations.

6. Membership Committee: Jim Peters:

- ~ Current membership 79.

7. Clinic Committee: Jim DiPaola: No report.

8. Achievement Committee: Lloyd Horst: No report.

9. Module Committee N: Lloyd Horst:

- ~ Reminder, need 8 singles and the corners for Age of Steam on December 13. Set up at 7:00 AM, doors open at 9:00. Several hundred saw the layout last year, "AoS" anxious to have us there this year.

9. Module Committee HO: Bob Gurdak:

- ~ Needs help with transporting corner modules due to size of the mountain scene.

10. Facebook Committee: Trev Smith:

- ~ Layout features welcome.

11. Website Committee: Steve Zapytowski: No report.

12. Old Business: None.

13. New Business: Bruce Hukill made motion (Bob Gurdak second) to change November meeting to Saturday November 22, 1:00PM at the Wayne County Library in Wooster, in conjunction with the module display. Motion carried.

14. Bring and Brag:

- ~ A whole bunch of modules!

15. Good of the Order/Announcements:

- ~ Jerry Kruse: Still has various rolling stock and digital controllers from a friend, available for a donation to the module fund.
- ~ Jerry Krueger: Berea show was successful, attendance same as last year. Looking to use different avenues of advertising and publicity.
- ~ John Spinks: Hilltop Hobby acquired unit next door to use as museum and youth oriented activities.
- ~ Gary Kohler: Announced he'll be hosting 1st Annual Module Meet next fall in Salem. Has corporate sponsors lined up. Concept will be to rotate locations each year. Cater to all scales and gauges. Clinics, vendors,
- ~ Howard Crawford: Encouraged people to try various types of weathering, to find what works for them. Options included clear Elmer's Glue with cayenne pepper.
- ~ Frank Trocchia invited to speak on behalf of Region: Discussion centered on new logos and guidance using logos etc. at Division level.

16. Adjournment: At 2:10 motion carried to adjourn meeting (Steve Zapytowski / Gary Kohler)

Respectfully submitted, Jeff Stone, Clerk, Division 1.

T-TRAK at Age of Steam



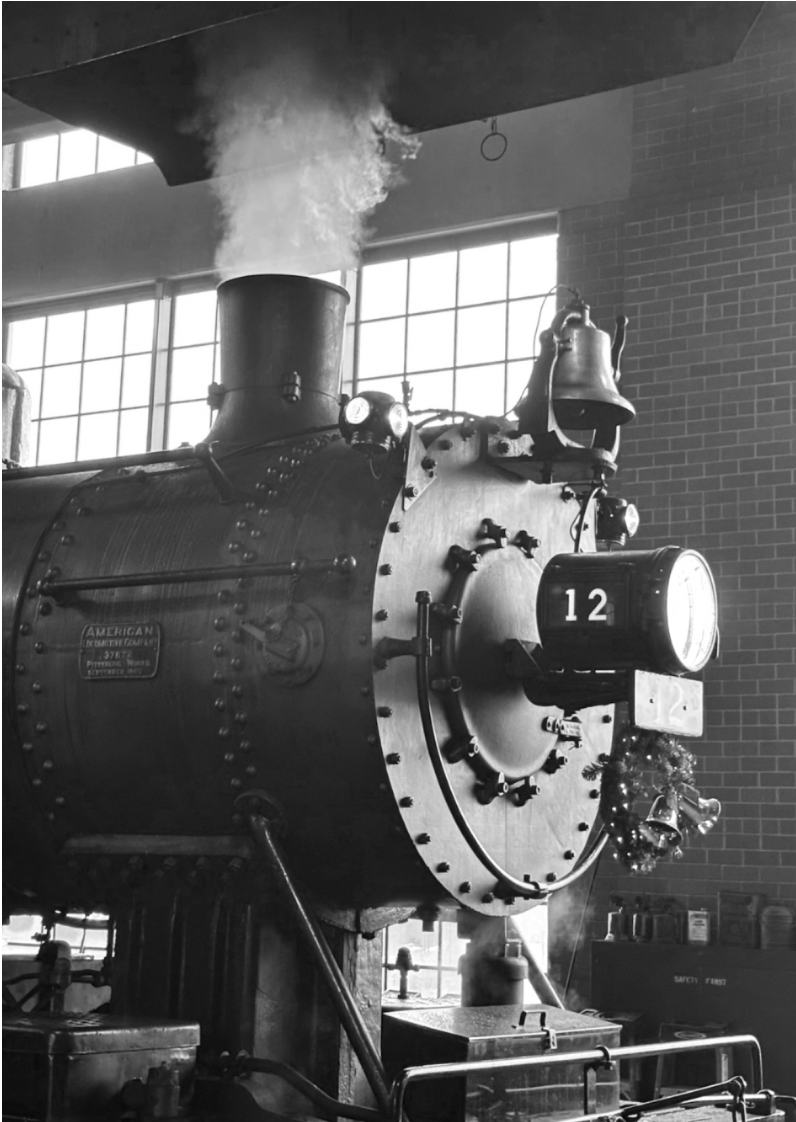
above photo by Lloyd Horst

Division 1 was again invited by the "Age of Steam Roundhouse" to set up the HO T-TRAK modules at the annual *Santa Comes to the Roundhouse* December 12. As evidenced by the photos the T-TRAK layout was again a hit with visitors young and old.

Photos by Jerry Kruse unless noted.

Age of Steam 'Santa Comes to the Roundhouse'

Div. 1 T-TRAK Crew Tours Roundhouse



(clockwise from above) Number 12, a 1905 American Locomotive Co. 0-6-0 rests after finishing its Santa Train duties. John Spinks stands in front of aptly decorated #9, a 1901 Baldwin built 2-6-2 Prairie during the roundhouse tour. Number 12 receives a final headlight cleaning. Santa Comes to the Roundhouse passengers board.



All photos this page by Jerry Kruse

To Build a T-TRAK Module?

Sam Eisele considers an HO module

Do I want to build a module in the first place? NOT REALLY - I have no real interest, but I was one of the guys that came with the idea to give everyone a module in an attempt to get guys to build something. Good idea in theory... Came at a good time as the original dinosaurs (old modules) were becoming too much to handle and this would be a way to help the module group jump-start a new beginning and maybe attract a new member or two.

I had the stuff to build a base module, but didn't plan on using it. I figured I'd give it to someone who wanted an extra or a new person who joined after the initial program was over. Per usual, I left it in a corner of my train room (taking up valuable real estate) because I'm finally ready to get go going on my layout. (Famous last words)

Bruce Hukill approached me about building my module with a Tropicana theme. Right up my alley, but still not interested in becoming a module group member. Disclaimer: I have nothing against the module group - they have my full support - just not my thing. (yet?) Remember - "I have a layout to build."

I got to thinking, I have a bunch of buildings that I probably won't use on my layout (whenever that is) and I could "throw something on the box." That way, the module would get used and I'd have more room on my layout. So I started... every building I tried to put on the module didn't fit. I was ready to put the module back in the corner and get on with my layout build. (yeah right)

In October, I had two friends spend the weekend at my house who were in town to be vendors at the Berea Train Show. We had a great time, talking trains, layouts, etc... Included was a trip to Mike Bradley's to see his layout and talk about all things trains including maintenance-of-way trucks and trucks in general. I finally had to pull the plug and tell these guys - "the sun is due to come up in a couple of hours..." I want to take a second to thank Mike for opening up his home to us.

One of the guys (Joe) said his layout is pretty much finished - (I called "liar" - nobody's layout is finished.) Anyway, Joe says that he had a box full of building parts and he'd be glad to send them to me if I wanted them. DUH! Like a kid in a candy store - "Sure" I said.

That's where the plot thickens! I'll be back next month with 'the rest of the story' as Paul Harvey used to say. Stay tuned for the thrilling story next month or maybe more of my boring ramblings, your choice or not...



(top) A view of workers sorting oranges on Sam Eisele's possible HO T-TRAK module. (above) The main building for Sam's module idea takes shape.

N Scale Report

by Bruce Hukill

Micro-Trains sold to Atlas

As an N scale model railroader in an HO dominated hobby I'm used to the friendly ribbing one receives for modeling in 'N'. Where's the train? Let me get my magnifying glass. Give those boxcars some vitamins so they can grow up. To counter the jokes, and sometimes criticisms, I always was proud to retort with the fact that one of the major players in N scale did its manufacturing in the United States. I can no longer say that as *Micro-Trains Line* of Talent, Oregon announced it is selling everything to *Atlas Model Railroad Company, Inc.*

What does this mean for the N scale community? The Micro-Trains name not only stood for 'Made in the USA' but also high quality products. It's Magne-Matic couplers greatly improved the appearance and operation of N scale when they were introduced in the 1970's. MTL boxcars have doors that open, hopper cars have bottom opening doors, and gondolas come with drop ends. Will the quality continue under Atlas? Will the manufacturing continue in the United States?

But more importantly, what will happen to the employees of Micro-Trains? The following appeared in an online article from the Rogue Valley Times, a newspaper published in Medford, Oregon:

Talent-based Micro-Trains Line Co. announced Wednesday that it will cease operations at its Southern Oregon warehouse after being acquired Nov. 17 by global Atlas Model Railroad Co. The Talent-based model train and train parts manufacturing company, which traces its roots back to the early 1940s, called an employee meeting Wednesday morning and announced the sale and job loss for its 20-plus employees, according to workers who spoke to the Rogue Valley Times.

Pollock, Buffy. "Micro-Trains Line Co. warehouse is closing in Talent." Rogue Valley Times, 20 Nov. 2025, rv-times.com

The entire article can be read at: <https://rv-times.com/2025/11/20/micro-trains-line-co-warehouse-is-closing-in-talent/>

The question of manufacturing continuing in the United States was addressed on the Atlas Model Railroad Facebook site on November 25. Here is an excerpt:

On a question we've seen come up often: None of the U.S.-based tooling is being moved to China. Micro-Trains had some limited production in China in recent years using the same factories Atlas uses today, but all U.S.-based tooling remains stateside at the moment. As part of the long-term production plan, molds will currently be transferred to trusted suppliers in Vietnam, where quality, cost stability, and production capacity are strongest. After careful review, this is the best path to ensure Micro-Trains continues into 2026 and well beyond.

Without this step, the brand's future would have been uncertain at best.

Atlas Model Railroad Company, Inc. (2025, November 25). Atlas/Micro-Trains Sale Explanation. We know the past week has brought a lot of emotion for the Micro-Trains team... Facebook. www.facebook.com.

On a personal level, my relationship with Micro-Trains products began with my first purchase of a Stark Trees boxcar equipped with Magne-Matic couplers. At the time MT rolling stock came with the Magne-Matic or Rapido-Type couplers. I bought the car, probably in 1973 as it has a 12-72 release date, at a hobby shop in Summit Mall in Fairlawn. The list price was \$3.95. Initially I was unable to run the car on my small layout as all my locomotives and rolling stock were equipped with the clunky Rapido style couplers. But it sure looked nice just sitting there with its open door.

I recently purchased my last new Talent, OR manufactured Micro-Trains Line car, also a boxcar, and interestingly an AC & Y heavily weathered boxcar. Micro-Trains embraced factory weathered rolling stock as well as cars with graffiti already applied. The list price was \$29.95 and

I bought the car from an online vendor, something unheard of in 1973. Division 1 also has a

Micro-Trains connection. MTL produced two AC&Y 50 foot boxcars as a fundraiser, with a total

of 75 sets made. The late Don Bonk spearheaded the project.

As we all know one of the givens in life is - change is inevitable. Will the acquisition of Micro-Trains Line by Atlas Model Railroad Co. be a positive thing for the model railroading hobby in general and N scalers in particular? Only time will tell.

But one change guaranteed is that the paper insert found in every clear jewel box will need to be revised.

The MADE IN AMERICA statement inside the flapping American flag will sadly be going away.



MMR Humor

With Steve Zapytowski, Master Model Railroader #612



AI image created by Steve Zapytowski

If you run out of solder, hot glue with lots of glitter is an acceptable substitute.

November Meeting at Wooster Library

N and HO T-TRAK Modules Displayed



(left) Visitors to the HO T-TRAK modules.
(center) Jim Peters mans the Division 1 information table.
(right) The N scale modules now have corners so trains can run.

THIS MONTH'S MEETING
Sunday, January 18, 2026

Kent Free Library
312 West Main Street
Kent, OH 44240

Bring a snack to share and a drink of your own.

Please bring your Bring-N-Brag items to share.

Meeting begins at 2 PM

13th Year



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Northwestern Oregon Circa 1912 — HO and HO3



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Jim Peters
Interested in operation send email:
jpeters711@yahoo.com

Train Shows and Open Houses

Snow Dog Train Show January 3, 2026

Emidio & Sons Expo Center
48 E. Bath Rd., Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223
Admission: \$6.00 9 AM - 3 PM

Youngstown Model RR Assn. January 4 Toy/Train Flea Market

Parish Center, 4490 Norquest, Austintown 44515
Admission: \$7.00 10 AM - 3:30 PM

TCA Winter Train Meet January 24

Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds
164 Eastland Rd., Middleburg Heights 44017
Admission: \$8.00 9 AM - 3 PM

Medina Train and Toy Show February 1

Medina County Fairgrounds, Medina, OH 44256
164 Eastland Rd., Middleburg Heights 44017
Admission: \$8.00 10 AM - 3 PM

Iron and Steel Winter Blizzard February 7 Train Show and Expo

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center
356 S. Belle Vista Ave., Youngstown 44509
Admission: \$7.00, under 16 free 9 AM - 2 PM

Canfield Toy and Train Show February 14

Canfield Fairgrounds, 7265 Columbiana, Canfield 44406
Admission: \$8.00, 10 AM - 3 PM

Wooster Train and Toy Show March 14

Wayne County Fairgrounds, Wooster
Admission: \$8.00 10 AM - 3 PM

Akron Train and Toy Show March 15

Emidio's & Sons Expo Center, 48 E. Bath Rd.
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223
Admission: \$5.00 9 AM - 3 PM

Wooster Train and Toy Show March 14

Wayne County Fairgrounds, Wooster
Admission: \$8.00 10 AM - 3 PM

Div. 5 Railfest March 21 - 22

Lakeland Community College
7700 Clocktower Dr., Kirtland 44094
Admission: \$9.00, Family \$16.00 10 AM - 4 PM

TCA Spring Train Show March 28

Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds
164 Eastland Rd., Middleburg Heights 44017
Admission: \$8.00 9 AM - 3 PM

Youngstown Model RR Assoc. April 12 Toy and Train Flea Market

Parish Center, 4490 Norquest, Austintown 44515
Admission: \$7.00 10 AM - 3:30 PM

PEDDLER FREIGHT SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Division 1 has moved to email publishing of the Peddler Freight. There is no cost for the email Peddler Freight.

However, your support for Division 1 would be appreciated.

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Publication of Division 1 - MCR - NMRA
The Akron, Canton, Youngstown Division

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Social Media	- Trev Smith	
Christmas Dinner	- Jim DiPaola	330-297-5571
Clinics	- Jim DiPaola	330-297-5571
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and the NMRA****Mid-Central Region**

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The **Peddler Freight** is published each month September through November and January through June. Opinions expressed in this issue may not represent the opinions of the Peddler Freight Editor, Division 1, MCR or the NMRA.

