



# The Lantern



Volume 2 Issue 3

Division 10, Mid Central Region

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**National  
Model  
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Association**

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## Message From The Superintendent



## Message From The Superintendent

# Witless vs Clueless

*Rivets O'Reilly and Larry Loungecar*

Larry: Hey, Rivets, good to see ya again! Whatcha been doin' lately?

Rivets: Hi, Larry; good to see you, too. I'm glad you asked. You know how in business they do skills assessments? Well, I've been thinkin' about my modelin' skills like that - you know, trying to figure out where I need improvement.

Larry: Gee, Rivets, you could'a just asked ME!

Rivets: Yeah, right! Thanks a LOT, Larry.

Larry: Aw, c'mon, Rivets - I was just jokin'- what'd you come up with?

Rivets: Well, I could use some improvement in lots of areas, Larry - paintin', decalin', weatherin', structure and rollin' stock buildin' - I'd like to improve my knowledge in electricity, etc. - lotsa stuff, Larry. But I decided where I need to concentrate most is in lyin'.

Larry: You mean, like lyin' on your back workin' on the layout from underneath, or lyin' in bed thinkin' about what you're gonna do next?

Rivets: No, I mean lyin' through your teeth, Larry. Think about it. Rosie doesn't believe any of my lies about how much money or time I spend on the layout any more. I need some

creative ideas here.

Larry: Yeah, Rivets, I see what you mean.

Rivets: And that's only for starters - take scenery: it's supposed to be a believable lie about the time and place of this railroad, ain't it? But how believable is it? Or the sound system, or the lighting - it's all lies, one way or the other, Larry. You see what I mean? Our whole purpose is to lie about everything.

Larry: Gosh, Rivets, I never thought about it that way. I've been to lots of clinics at some of the shows and conventions, and even here at the Division meetings, but I never heard of a clinic on lyin' before.

Rivets: Neither have I, Larry; it's a real tough one. Where is the help we really need from this organization? I don't know what to do about it, either, but *some*thin' needs to be done.

Larry: Well, In know what *I'm* gonna do, Rivets.

Rivets: You do? What's that, Larry?

Larry: I'm goin' fishin'. Most of those guys can lie like crazy. Maybe I'll learn some new techniques. See ya around, Rivets.

Rivets: Hey, wait for me!

**SEE OUR WEBSITE AT:**

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David Mikulec, Web Chair

## PRODUCT REVIEW

**PRODUCT:** *Roadmaster* Digital Block Control System

**MANUFACTURER:**

Signal Research  
PO Box 7073  
Huntsville, AL 35807  
256 650 5311 (Voice/Fax)  
<http://www.signalresearch.com/>  
E-mail SigResrch@aol.com

**PRICING:** MSRP \$600 for 8-block system, \$300 each additional 8 blocks, \$87.50 for optional 3-light signal driver (2 per block for each 8 blocks), plus signals (from other manufacturers)

**CONCEPT:** The system digitizes and controls through software the progressive block control concept - that is, it advances block control ahead of each train, setting voltage and polarity in the next block to agree with their settings in the current block. It uses current flow for train detection, protecting occupied blocks bi-directionally from on-coming or following trains by slowing or stopping them, based on the setup.

**INSTALLATION:** Installation is relatively simple, especially for layouts already wired for manual block control. Two wires per block (each block must be double-gapped) go to the master unit, plus a turnout position wire for turnouts which control block routes. Optionally, output wires for signal control can be installed, four per signal.

**SETUP:** This requires a little more brain power, calling for creation first of a bi-directional table of block relationships (which blocks lead to which others, including the appropriate turnout positions.) The table is then used to program the system, using a setup menu the system provides.

**OPERATION:** Each train can have its own identifying number

(e.g., the number of the lead engine). By selecting the train number, the operator can then control all normal functions manually through the master unit - speed, direction, braking. Each train can have its own momentum, braking rate, starting voltage, etc. In addition, all the other trains can continue to run unattended - it's quite a sight to see, as they slow for yellow signals, stop for red, and slowly start up again as the blocks ahead clear and the signals automatically advance to green again.

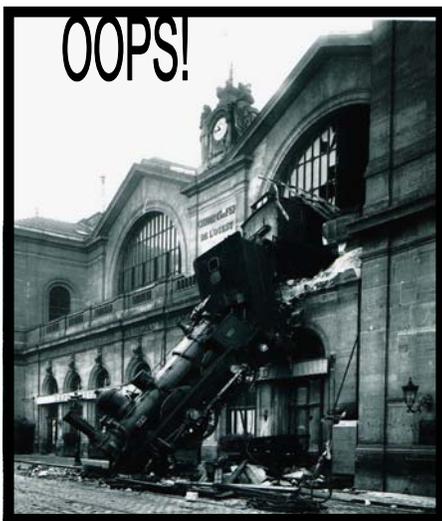
**POSITION IN MARKET:** It's impossible not to compare this to DCC, even though it's an entirely different principle. It probably has more benefits for the smaller scales, N and Z, where DCC receivers are not quite as prevalent, require frame milling for retrofit, etc. Also, a sound interface being designed may offer the only hope for realistic sound for these scales. But it works well in any scale.

Another factor, regardless of scale, is the number of engines involved. This system fares better than DCC in cost terms the more engines you have (no conversion needed with this system), and the fewer blocks you need (generally, smaller or less complex layouts). So if you have just a few engines and a big layout, DCC may be cheaper, but with lots of engines and smaller layouts (most of us?) this might be a better choice.

**SUMMARY:**

**POSITIVE** - Lots of action, realistic, high-density operations with little or no intervention needed, but complete operator control to the extent desired.

**NEGATIVE** - No walk-around (tethered or untethered) as yet, although a tethered control is planned later this year.



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OVERLAND SUPERLINER SET ... 1299.95	KATO ALCO RS-2..... 59.95	WALTHERS SUPERIOR PAPER CO ... 48.95
KEY UP and SP 2-8-0..... 414.95	KATO ALCO RSC-2..... 62.95	TORTOISE SWITCH MACHINES... 104.95/10
KEY USRA 2-6-6-2..... 529.95	KATO EMD SD40-2..... CALL	µ-ENG CODE 55 & 70 TURNOUTS... 10.95
OVERLAND GE C-60AC..... 364.95	LIFE-LIKE EMD GP-20 (2nd).... 37.95	CON-COR GE GAS TURBINE..... 109.95
OVERLAND SD-70M / 75M..... 359.95	LIFE-LIKE EMD SW-9/1200 (3rd).... 37.95	DELUXE DOUBLE STACK SET..... 49.95
OVERLAND EMD FT A&B SET..... 619.95	FINE N-SCALE BURL ZEPHYR..... 144.95	AMB PASSENGER CAR KITS..... 6.95
OVERLAND OHIO CRANES..... 199.95	RED CABOOSE 62' BEERCAR 3-PKS. 37.50	NE SAM CAHOON'S FISH PIER..... 42.50

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# CLINIC SURVEY

TELL US WHAT KIND OF CLINIC YOU'D LIKE TO SEE OR CAN GIVE.

CHECK OFF THE FORM AND MAIL OR BRING TO NEXT MEETING

LIKE CAN  
TO GIVE  
SEE IT

- Model Freight Car Rosters
- Beginners Question & Answer
- Entering Contests
- Large Scale Outdoor Railroads
- Tin-plate Models
- Narrow Gauge Railroads
- Building Modules
- Prototype Research
- Model Photography
- Prototype Photography
- Soldering**
- Painting Techniques
- Decals/ Dry Transfers**
- Weathering Techniques
- Layout Design/Trackplanning
- Laying Track
- Yard Operation
- Passenger Trains
- Modeling Types of Freight Cars  
(Box, Stack, etc) \_\_\_\_\_
- MOW Equipment
- Steam Locomotives
- Electric Locomotives/Traction
- Diesel Locomotives
- Cabooses
- Trucks (RR)/Wheels
- Couplers
- Open Loads
- Automobiles and Trucks

SEE IT

- Lineside Structures
- Offline Structures
- Steel Industry
- Mining Industry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Industry
- Scenery Construction**
- Making Trees
- Backdrop Painting**
- Basic Wiring
- Digital Command Control (DCC)
- Layout Lighting
- Signals
- Communication Equipment
- Operations & Dispatching
- Improving Inexpensive Freightcars
- Building Resin Kits
- Building Wood Structure Kits
- Locomotive Motor Replacement
- Video/Slide Shows on Local Prototype RR
- Video/Slide Shows on other Prototype RR
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Items in **bold** are done or planned already...

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

LIKE CAN  
TO GIVE

# News, Events & Announcements

February Meeting Notes:

**Pete Birdsong** conducted the meeting in the absence of Superintendent **Fred Plymale**, who was in Florida, as was Treasurer **Mike Armstrong**. Way to go, guys - hope you were having fun in the sun while I was carrying the whole load back here in the snow and cold!

We had 24in attendance, just counting those who signed the register, or whom I remember being there, and including two guests, **Stan Enerlich** and **Alan Brock**. Hope you both enjoyed the meeting and will come back for more, 'cause it's just going to get better, especially when you look at the activities planned for the next few months.

**Mike Baskette** gave a great clinic on decaling, providing all the background material (complete with handouts) we'll need for Part II coming up in June, the hands-on part. Mike arrived a little late, scaring me a little, but it was a great clinic, Mike, and worth the wait. Thanks a lot.

Mike's clinic concluded the meeting, since there were no awards this time. **David Greer**, you better drum up some business here!

The tours of **Frank Miller's** collection and **Pete Birdsong's** "Unfinished" N-scale layout followed. It's "unfinished" because half of it is really unfinished, and the parts that's finished needs to be redone! On a personal note, I thoroughly enjoyed all the folks who came by to see my layout. It was really great to get to talk to a lot of new folks, swap stories, etc. I **HIGHLY** recommend opening your layouts or collections up to the tours. It's a great way to get to know some folks. My only regret is not being able to see Frank's collection at the same time. (That's a hint, Frank.)

Survey:

You'll notice a survey on the previous page, trying to get some ideas from you on what you'd like to see in terms of

future clinics, and what **you** might be able to provide in that same area. We'll try to match up interests with the available talent and get you what you want, but we can't do it unless you help with a clinic on something you're interested in (you don't have to be the world's best!)

Welcome

To new members of the Division: **Peter Bourne**, Lexington; **Walter Thompson**, Bronston, and **Richard Crane**, Frankfort. It's gratifying to see the member list growing, and I think there are several more out there considering joining, so hopefully the trend will continue.

Product Reviews:

Got experience with a new (or even an old) product? Share it with the rest of us. Take a look at the one in this issue, and use it for ideas for a review, and send it in.

## The Treasury Report:

<b>01/01/00 Ending Bal.</b>	<b>\$400.26</b>
<b>Income:</b>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Newsletter Copies	<b>10.00</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>02/01/00 Beginning Bal.</b>	<b>\$</b>

# MEMBER PROFILES Wendell Greer

Wendell lives at 212 Southpoint Drive in Lexington with his wife Dotti. He has two children, a son David who is also an active modeler in N scale, and a daughter Robin in New York.

Wendell started in the model railroading hobby in 1959. After high school, he worked as a "block/interlocking operator" for the PRR in northern Indiana. After a couple of years, he joined the Navy, then went back to school after which he worked for IBM for 36 years as an electrical engineer.

The first layout started on a 5x10 table in Madison, WI. with the realization that he might have to move later and planned for a portable situation. Soon after a move to New York occurred. The MRR was christened the Dew Valley and grew another 2 feet with an "L" section at one end. Future expansions included a cantilevered section around the layout perihelial for another main line. After a number of years, he was transferred to Lexington.

The Dew Valley II started in Lexington in 1976 after the basement was finished. This layout is mythically located in West Virginia along the Ohio River between Ashland, Ky and Pittsburgh, Pa. Although Wendell has a strong interest in the Pennsylvania RR, he decided to free lance the railroad to avoid modeling constraints. Several motive power paint schemes have evolved over the years, finally settling around a basic Erie RR freight scheme of black and yellow. The railroad is known as the Gold Finch Route and the slogan is "Our Service Is For the Birds".

The railroad operates with the computer program "ShipIt". Future plans are to computerize the signalling system using Bruce Chubb's methods and to start installing Digitrax and Soundtraxx in the engines.

**AROUND THE BEND....**

**March**

- 1. Lionel Collectors Club of America  
3rd & 4th, Continental Inn on New Circle Rd. in Lexington
- 2. NMRA MCR Div. 10: 12th, Beaumont Center Library;  
Clinic: Betty Plymale - Scenery painting with acrylics  
Tours: David Drake & Fred Plymale
- 3. MCR Div. 7 Swap Meet & Flea Mkt. 11th, Scarlet Oaks, 3254 E. Kemper Rd. Cincinnati, OH
- 4. MCR Div. 8 Train Show & Sale, 11th, VFW Robt. E. Newman Post, 4809 Poplar Level Rd., Louisville, KY

**April**

NMRA MCR Div. 10: **1st (Saturday)**  
Danville, KY;  
Clinic: Ray & Renee Grosser;  
Tours: Bob Lawson, John Bowling, maybe a third

**May**

- 1. NMRA MCR Div. 10: 14th J.O Johnson farm;  
Clinic and tour: J.O. Johnson - **1 1/2" LIVE STEAM!!**
- 2. MCR Div. 4  
New Century Express:  
May18-21, 2000; Medina, OH  
Linda Atherton, Registrar,  
337 University St.,  
Middleburg Ht., OH 44130 -440-234-4176  
(between 5 & 9pm)

**June**

NMRA MCR Div. 10: 3rd, Beaumont Center Library;  
Clinic: Mike Baskette - Decaling Part II  
Tours: To be determined

**See You There!**

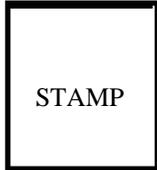
**NEXT MEETING:**

**Sunday, March 12 at 2:00pm**  
in the Beaumont Library on Harrodsburg Rd at New Circle Rd. (Rte 4). in Lexington.  
**Clinic:** Betty Plymale: Scenery Painting with acrylics  
**Tours:** David Drake & Fred

Inside This Issue	
1	Officer Listing Superintendent's Message
2	Witless & Clueless: <i>Skills</i>
3	Product Review: <i>Digital Block Control</i>
4	Survey: Clinics
5	News & Events Treasury Report Member Profile: <i>Wendell Greer</i>
6	Highlights Around the Bend

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