NMRA

Waybill

MIDWEST REGION

Fall 2026

ON THE COVER
I love an interlocking scene, and a double track crossing another double track makes for interesting railroading. Photo by Ben Fehr from the Chattanooga train Show.

The *WAYBILL*

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In this issue

Editor's Musings

We have a supersized issue this quarter. I hope you enjoy it.

Consider writing an article for the Waybill. You get author points towards your AP certificate and you might find that you enjoy it. If you get proficient, the hobby magazines pay for articles.

I am always looking for articles on modeling or what is happening in your division. Even just photos can be made into an article. A good example is Ben Fehr. He sent some photos, never expecting to be on the Waybill cover. Although I prefer vertical, horizontal will work. Just make sure they are sharp and in the .tiff or .jpeg format, separate from any text.

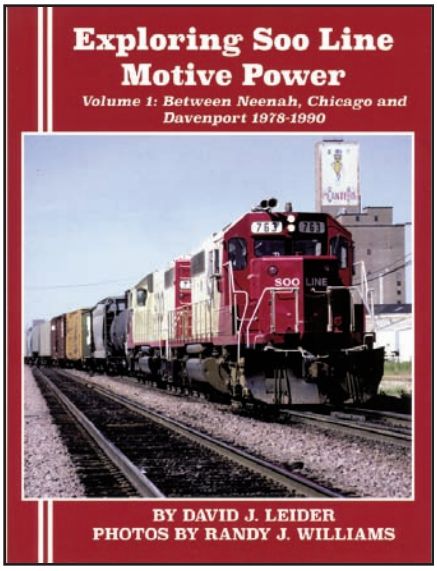
An excellent way to get involved in the region or division is to volunteer. You might feel shy or think your help is not needed, but do not let that stop you. Volunteering helps you meet lots of new people and contribute to the success of the NMRA.

There are a lot of conventions coming up, and they will need a lot of volunteers. It is not only fun, but rewarding. Get Involved! I belong to a number of organizations, not all train related, and am always willing to help with what needs to be done.

I have another book under my belt- **Exploring Soo Line Motive Power, Volume 1, Between Neenah, Chicago and Davenport.**

I wrote it for Silverlake Images and it is being distributed through Ron's Books. Part 2 will be coming out in a few months.

I was given two slide tray boxes filled with slides to choose the best ones for the books. I wrote the text and Scott Rosenberg laid the books out. It is part of a series of books from photographer Randy Williams. There are similar books on the C&NW, Milwaukee and other Midwest railroads.



President's Report (John's Junction)
John Coy MMR president, MWR 730

Summer has us in it's heat! The Big Boy has come and gone as part of a celebration to commemorate the 250th anniversary of our independence. I never dreamed that I would ever see a BIG BOY loco operating under it's own power, let alone seeing it in the state of Indiana!

There were a HUGE number of MWR Members for another one (Number 3!) of our REGIONAL FIELD TRIPS! I couldn't believe the crowd size. The world is full of FOAMERS, who aren't NMRA Members, but should be!

Exciting news! NMRA President Gordy Robinson had reached out to former CID Superintendent Dan Banks and myself requesting and imploring us to put together a proposal to hold the 2029 NMRA National Convention in Indianapolis! In the CID, we are very fortunate indeed to have a member, John Poray, who has years of professional experience in putting on conventions.

In June, John Poray was asked to put together a package to present to the NMRA National Board. July 27, 2026, was the day the Board decided whether or not to accept Indianapolis as the 2029 location. John had very limited time to put this together. As usual, John OVER-achieved! He is a highly detailed, well thought and organized person.

On Friday, June 12, via Zoom, John showed his work to Eric Smith, CID Superintendent, Dan Banks, CID Past Superintendent, and myself. We were astounded by John's presentation. I shouldn't have been surprised after seeing his detailed work in putting on a train show. The NMRA is very fortunate to have a knowledgeable professional like John.

The convention location for 2029 HAS BEEN FORMALLY APPROVED for Indianapolis to host the 2029 NMRA national convention!!!

BIG NEWS!!! NMRA President Gordy Robinson awarded the NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division to both Precilla and Michael Roderick! For those who may not know, Precilla and Michael Roderick have for years, and I mean about seven to eight years, attended a multi-

Bob Perry and John Coy MMR manning the NMRA booth at the Evansville Train Show.

tude of train shows far and wide to promote the NMRA in an effort to gain new members. They have traveled far and wide and too many occasions to count to attend model railroad shows to promote the entire NMRA as a whole. They used their own time, resources, money and talent to do this; never once asking to be reimbursed, recognized or rewarded.

Precilla and Michael are "the face" of the NMRA to many people. This is due to their putting on train shows, vendors from across the country know who they are and participate in the train shows managed by Michael and Precilla. In addition, Precilla and Michael are the first to volunteer to help with the needs of the NMRA. Every Division would be darn lucky to have even one person like these two!

Dan Banks and I (John Coy) had the honor of presenting these awards to the Roderick's, on behalf of Gordy Robinson, at our supposedly social night at MCL Cafeteria on the southside of Indianapolis. The "social night" event was a "smoke screen" cover to get the Roderick's there to surprise them.

Everyone in attendance had a good time with food, fellowship and this surprise presentation. The next time that you see either Precilla or

Michael, be certain to say: CONGRATULATIONS!

Receiving such a high accolade from the NMRA President is something few will ever realize. It is easier to become a Master Model Railroader which is a grand challenge and typically years of work. We are blessed and fortunate to have the Rodericks in our Region!

SAD NEWS: James F. Wise, age 100, passed away on February 27, 2026. Unverified, but the belief is James a CHARTER MEMBER of the Illinois Valley Division. James was also MMR #394!

As usual, bear in mind my constant reminder that I have put into each one of my articles since May 2025, If you are contacted via email or text supposedly by me, or any other Board Member, asking you for money, gift cards, electronic transfer of funds, etc., there is a 100% chance it is fraudulent scheme. This is a common occurrence and not just for the MWR / NMRA.

MWR Convention Coordinator Dan Banks and I are aiming for a Regional Convention in Carmel, Indiana in 2027! The NMRA national convention will be far away in the Pacific Northwest and therefore, we will not be "stepping on anyone's toes." Dan is targeting September of 2027 as the date for our Regional convention.

I want to publicly commend and thank the MWR Audit Committee. These folks: Rod Weinschenk, Chairman, Brian Chapman, Richard Smith, Precilla Roderick, Alan Dunbar and Ron Phillips have just recently (June 2026) completed three audits! Two were for the MWR and one was for the CID. I really appreciate all of their efforts for keeping us in compliance with our By-Laws.

Jim will instruct you as to what you need to submit specifically.

I want to THANK all 13 candidates running for DAL slots last election. In recent years, it has been difficult to even get enough people to fill open slots. LAST TIME, the slate was OVER-WHELMED, which is wonderful. I hope to see that again! I personally like to see our Regional Board having members from as many of our Divisions as possible. Nobody knows the challenges facing your Division better than you! In addition, I like seeing choices in elections versus foregone conclusions when people are running unopposed.

Please consider running. The "requirement" nowadays is two Board meetings per year: May and November. These meetings are done via ZOOM! It's not like the old days when a person had to drive multiple hours for one Board Meeting. You can "meet" the Board, via ZOOM, from the comfort of your own residence.

THE NMRA "REGULAR" Membership dues has been REDUCED to $50.00!!! This is the FIRST time in NMRA history that the membership dues have been reduced!!!

A brand new certificate has been added to the AP, This is a first in 40 years. It involves building a series of modules, Check out the complete information on NMRA.ORG under the AP.

In closing, PLEASE ask at least one person to join the NMRA this year. There are multiple opportunities for friendship and fun with people from all around the world!

Yesterday, at the National Train Show, I worked the NMRA booth all day and got a dozen people to join! If you interact one on one and build some rapport, it does wonders!

The convention broke a ten year record have over 1400 attendees! That's wonderful, and we need to aim higher for Indianapolis 2029!

Region News

Midwest Region Achievement Program Report
by Jim Landwehr- MWR AP Manager

I am happy to report that there has been a lot of activity from our members. They continue to take part in the Achievement Program all over the Midwest Region.
The following members received awards:

Larry Nelson	Canton, IL	Cars
Gary Baker	Pekin, IL	Dispatcher

As always, work with your division Achievement Program Manager first, and if there is a problem, feel free to contact me.

Thanks,
Jim

America's Love Affair with Trains Continues!

By John Coy MWR 730

I love the sound of a Whistle! And, I'm certainly not the only one. The Big Boy's continental excursion crossed into our very own NMRA Midwest Region! The purpose of this excursion is to celebrate 250 years for our United States.

I shouldn't have been, but I was struck by the HUGE number of people that descended on Argos, Indiana (population 1,400) to see the Big Boy make a brief stop on Friday, June 5th, 2026. Another surprise was that the train was actually a few minutes early!

I had announced the BIG BOY excursion as a FIELD TRIP for our Midwest Region members. There were a large number of NMRA members there that day! The excitement generated by this cross-country excursion cannot be understated.

Honestly, I was amazed at the number of people young and old, men and women, small children and babies, all who were out along the tracks that day to see the world's largest steam locomotive powering itself, pulling a consist, through the tiny town of Argos. There are many more “foamers” in the word than just us!

The number of videos, images, and commentary overwhelmed my personal Facebook feed! I really enjoyed the overhead drone video, but the crew of the BIG BOY have been unhappy with the drone usage; as several have actually struck BIG BOY.

In addition, the over-exuberance of way too many people created unsafe conditions as many of these folks got way too close to BIG BOY as it roared by my location—estimating 30 MPH. The UP requested that people stay at least 25 feet away from the tracks and that was hard to do at my location. In fact, people were standing on the roadway and drivers were yelling for people to get off the road so they could pass. These wanting to drive through were the few that obviously didn't care about this historic moment in time.

When the BIG BOY had passed, everyone returned to their respective vehicles and needless to say, it was a gigantic mess. Patience was not a virtue but an absolute necessity. Everybody was trying to either go farther east to where the BIG BOY stopped or were trying to go home and get away from the maddening crowd.

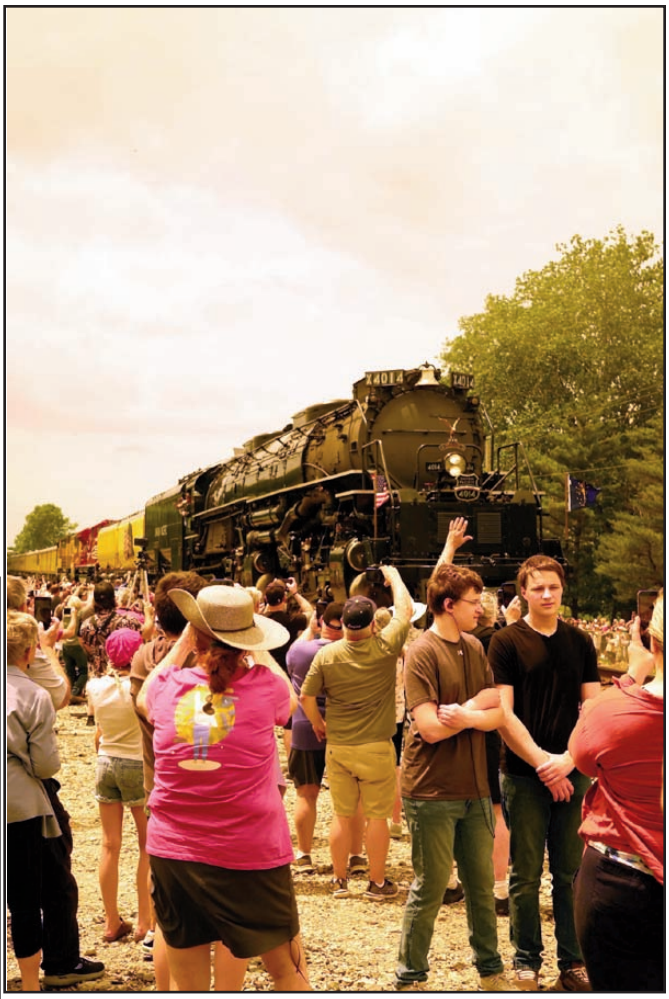
It was quite a site to see a prototype BIG BOY moving under its own power through the state of Indiana. Honestly, I never though the day would come a BIG BOY would be moving on rails in the state of Indiana. The good news is that in the future when people look at your Indiana layout that has a BIG BOY model on it, you can honestly say: I'm modeling June 5th, 2026!

I know many of our Midwest Region Members have seen the BIG BOY in Illinois and Indiana as it heads toward Philadelphia and is scheduled to be there on July the 4th. Numerous MWR members have posted videos, images and commentary in early June.

This event provided the MWR with a golden and unique opportunity for a FIELD TRIP, unlike anything before in the history of our Region! This cross-country excursion of BIG BOY is a once-in-a-lifetime event!

THANK YOU UNION PACIFIC AND TO ALL STAFF & VOLUNTEERS!

Seated in lawn chairs left to right:
Chris Toncheff, CID Member, Robert Perry, MWR VP, John Coy, MWR President and Gregg Burks, CID Member. We were all expecting a long wait for the BIG BOY and it came a few minutes early.



Additional photos of the Big Boy's trip through Argos, Indiana.

NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division to Precilla and Michael Roderick

By John Coy MWR 730

Saturday, June 13th, 2026 was announced as a "social night" for our Division Members. Dan Banks (Immediate Past Superintendent of the CID) and I, John Coy (MWR President) want to apologize to the membership for NOT telling the real story in advance.

We both wanted this to be a surprise for the Roderick's. It is not everyday that the number 1 President of the entire NMRA, Gordy Robinson, bestows such a prestigious honor upon anyone.

In this case, it was two people! NMRA President Gordy Robinson awarded the NMRA President's Award for Service to the Division to both Precilla and Michael Roderick!

For those who may not know, Precilla and Michael Roderick have for years, and I mean about seven to eight years, attended a multitude of train shows far and wide to promote the NMRA in an effort to gain new members.

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Precilla and Michael are "the face" of the

Precilla and Michael Roderick.
Photos by Greg Burke.

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Presenting a Clinic for the NMRA
By John Robert Coy, MWR President

Just like designing a model railroad, your model railroad related clinic (presentation) needs to be a well crafted, very organized, and delivered in an engaging manner.

You may have the most interesting topic of all time, but if it is not thought out, not well organized or clearly delivered, It will not be well received. A professional guitar player can make the cheapest guitar sound great, and a il-prepared player can make the highest grade guitar sound horrible. It's all about the preparation, practice, organization and delivery. It is ironic, for years and years, that the lecture method is the least effective means of engaging an audience, yet by far, it is the most widely used. It would be very wise and recommended to not talk for 45 solid minutes. If at all possible, engage the audience during the presentation in order to keep them involved and alert.

A model railroad parallel example: Which would be better? Expecting an audience to observe a train circling the same circle of track for 45 minutes, or operate a switching puzzle layout and ask

the audience to suggest the most efficient moves. Which would be more engaging?

The following is a very basic outline for any presentation. The three main points should be your "target" and are likely the maximum amount of information your audience may retain. Attempting to cover absolutely everything in great detail will likely result in losing the audience's attention.

Basic Outline for a Presentation

Title

The name may be catchy, clever and/or cute; or it may be straight forward.

Synopsis

This is a basic outline of what the Presenter will be discussing. This will be shared with the potential audience prior to the presentation.

Three Points

In an approximate 45 to no longer than 50 minute time allotment, three main points are recommended for lecture and discussion.

Narrative

Begin with a "hook." Examples suggested incudes use a short story, question or fact to grab your audience's attention. Next, share with your audience, in brief, what you are going to tell them; including your main three points. Then, tell them (this is the main body of your presentation),

Summary

Finally, tell your audience what you just told them.

Questions

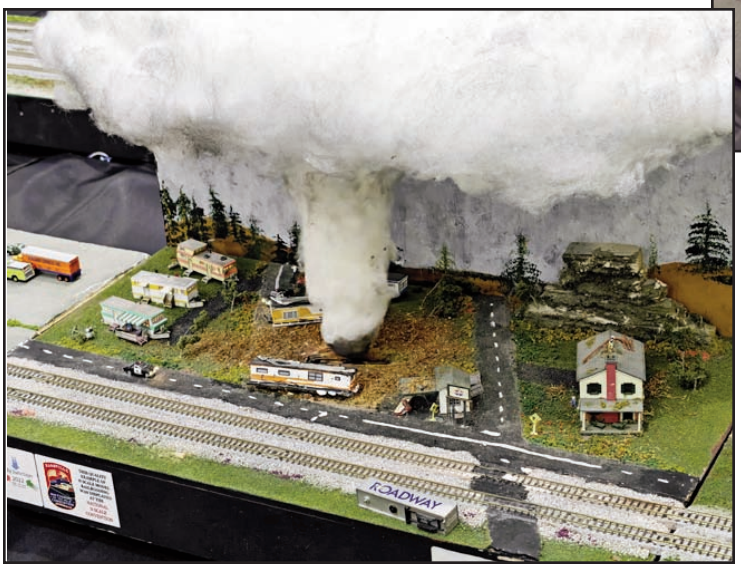
Always allow for about ten to fifteen minutes of questions after the summary.

T-track layout at the Chattanooga Train Show

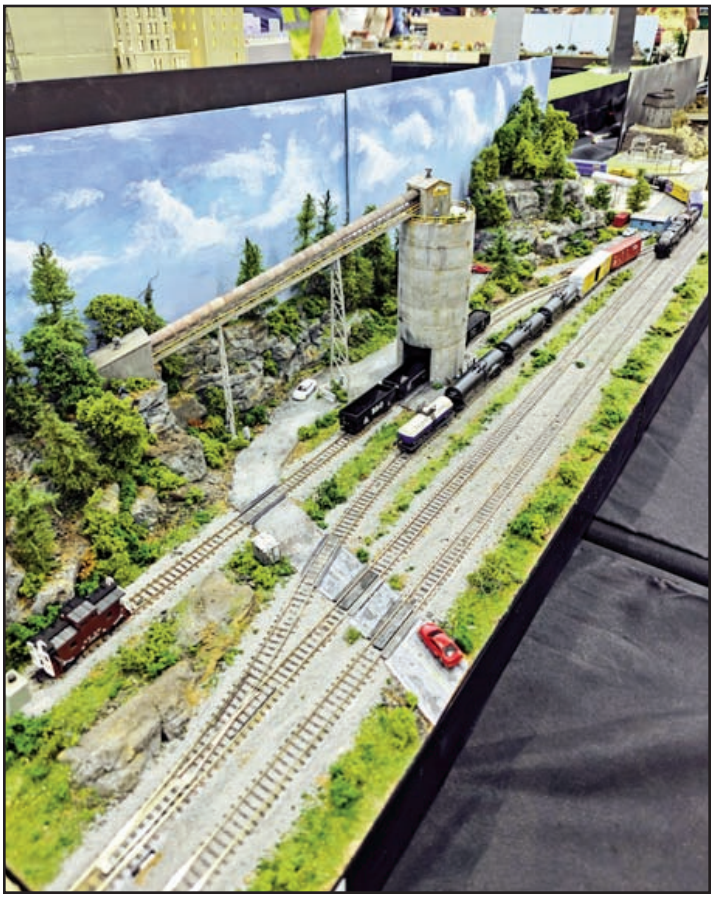
By Ben Fehr

Ben is the Section 2 Trainmaster from the Illinois Valley Division. He attended the NMRA convention and shared some photos he took of the Ttrack layout

He writes: this was a pretty remarkable layout. It was in N scale and consisted of 715 connected modules, equivalent to 1,511 single modules. It measured 93.47 feet, equivalent to 3,084,51 real word feet. There were more than



100 trains operating at one time. According to social media reports, it took two hours for a train to run the entire length. Ben took the photos with a "OnePlus 13: Android cell phone.



Superdetailing a Mantua 4-6-2 Pacific into a CNW 4-6-2 E-2A Pacific part 1

By Dave Poquette

In a previous article, I've mentioned that my new layout is a hostler layout and modeled after the CNW Lakefront engine facility in Milwaukee, 1938. This facility was located just south of where the CNW depot was. This required many more steam locomotives, particularly Pacifics, than what I had. I've always had a soft spot for Mantua Pacifics. They take some TLC to get them to run well but when they did run, they could pull a lot! Luckily, I was able to purchase a couple Mantua Pacifics and a Mikado from Dave Nelson. I originally wanted to just add a few basic super detail parts to make it look better. After talking to another friend, I realized that I could try my hand at super detailing a Mantua Pacific in to an acceptable representation of a CNW 4-6-2 E-2A Pacific. So down the rabbit hole I went!

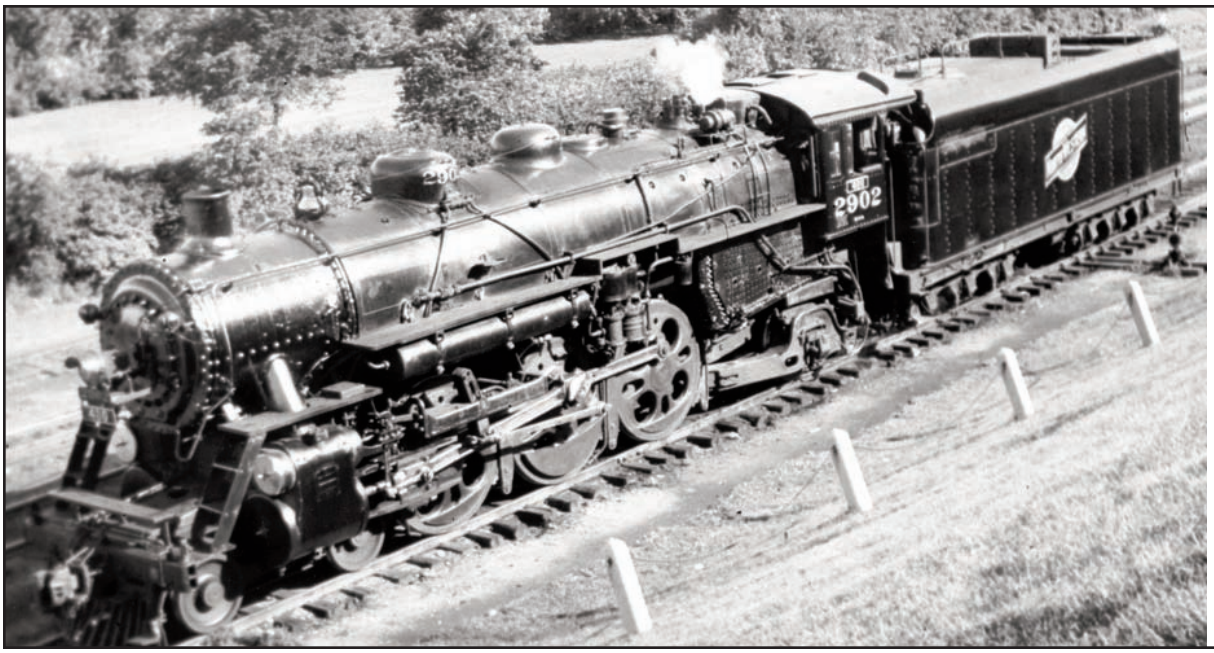
For reference purposes, I used Linn Westcott's Locomotive Cylcopedia – Vol 1 – Steam Locomotives and various photos of 2902. For any areas of 2902 that I could not view, I used photos from the other E2-As that were used on the 400 (2903, 2907 & 2908).

Courtesy Denver Public Library

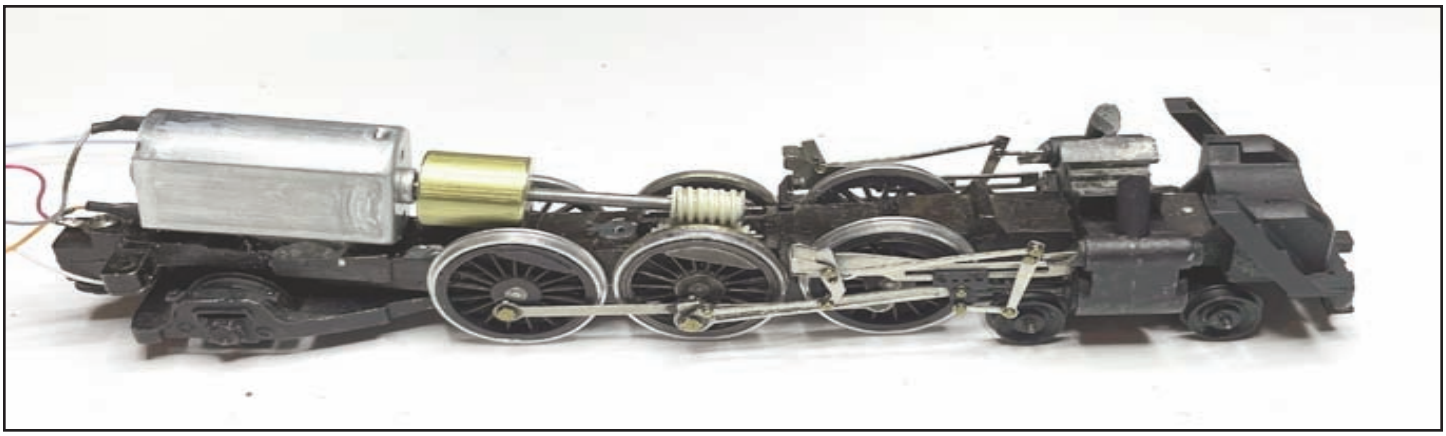
Care was taken to make sure the model was as close as possible to the prototype. However, some "good enough" detail parts had to be substituted. This was due to a variety of reasons (limited selection of related parts and vendors that went out of business).

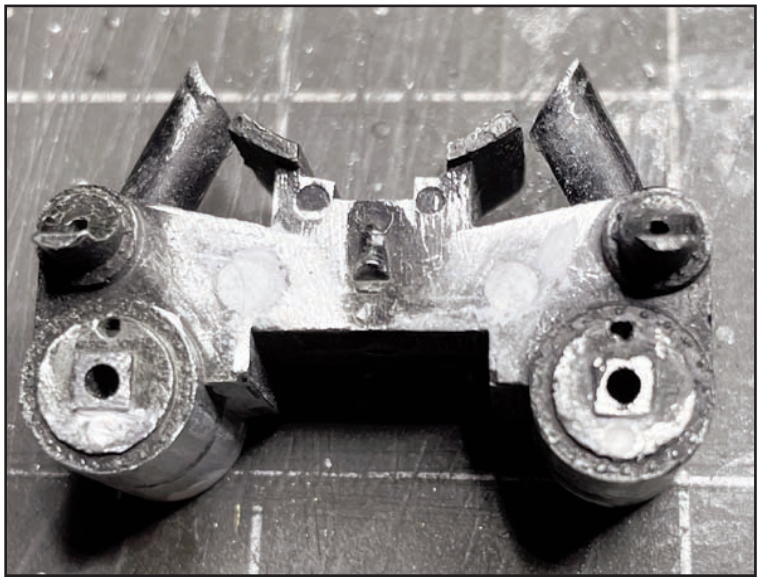
I used CA (both gel and thin) and Gorilla Construction Adhesive to attach brass and plastic details to the cast metal boiler.

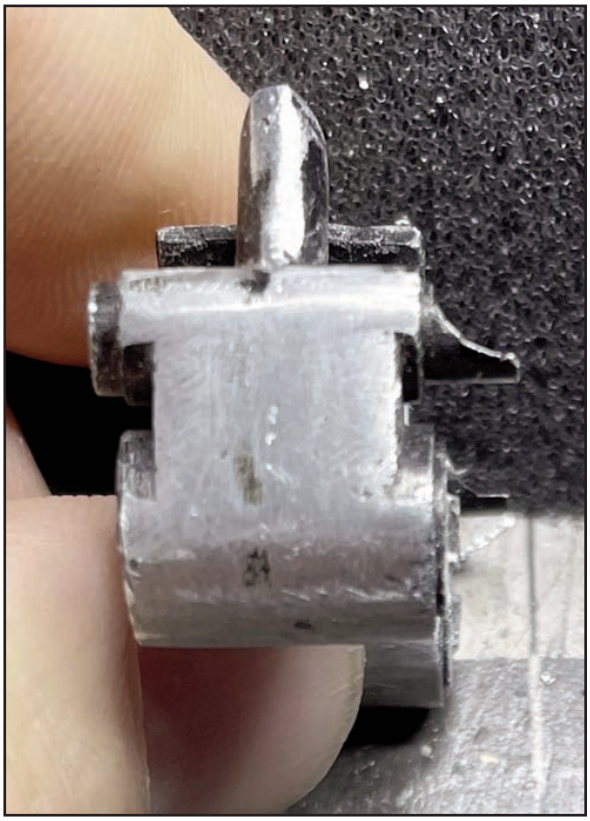
I started this project by stripping off the paint off of the boiler and tender. I also purchased any missing items like pilot, driver wheels and rivets from eBay.



CNW 2902 in Milwaukee





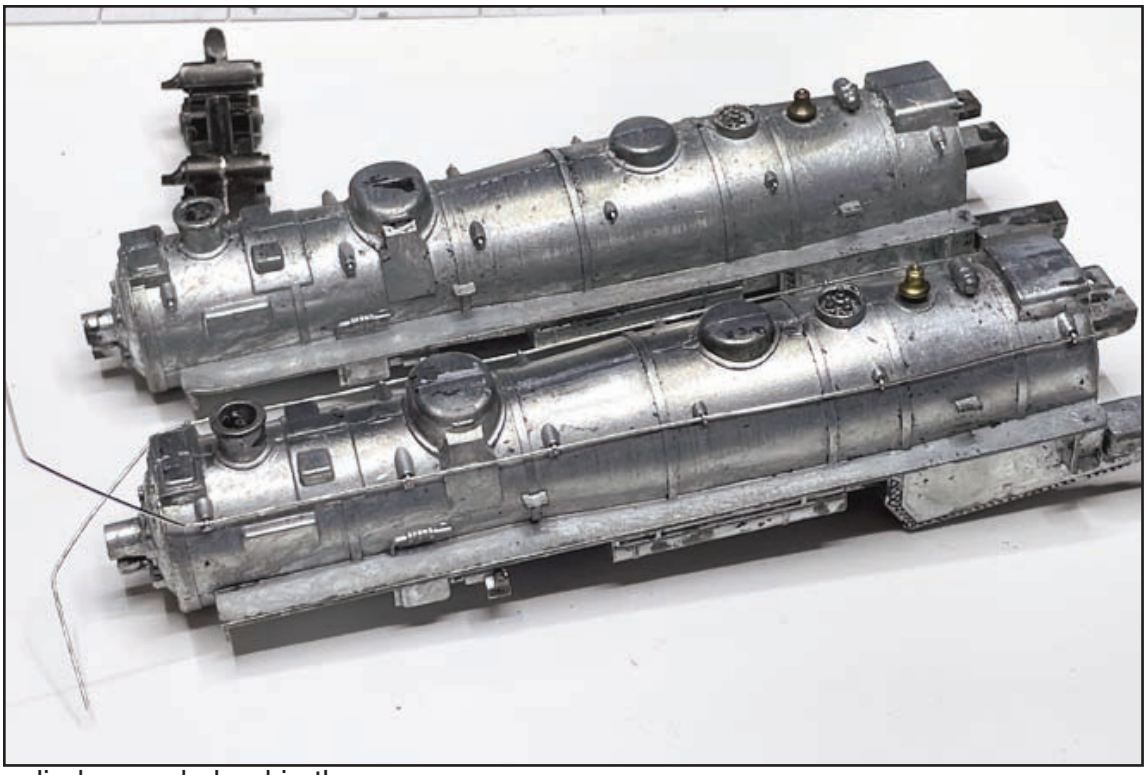


Frame:

I replaced the open frame motor with a can motor and flywheel from Chino Backshops. The motor, shafts, flywheel, & worm gear were assembled as per the instructions. The entire assembly was glued to the frame with Gorilla Construction adhesive. After the glue had set, I removed the driver wheels and cylinders. I used a wire brush attachment on my Dremel to clean out the area on the frame where the driver axles sat and applied graphite powder to the area.

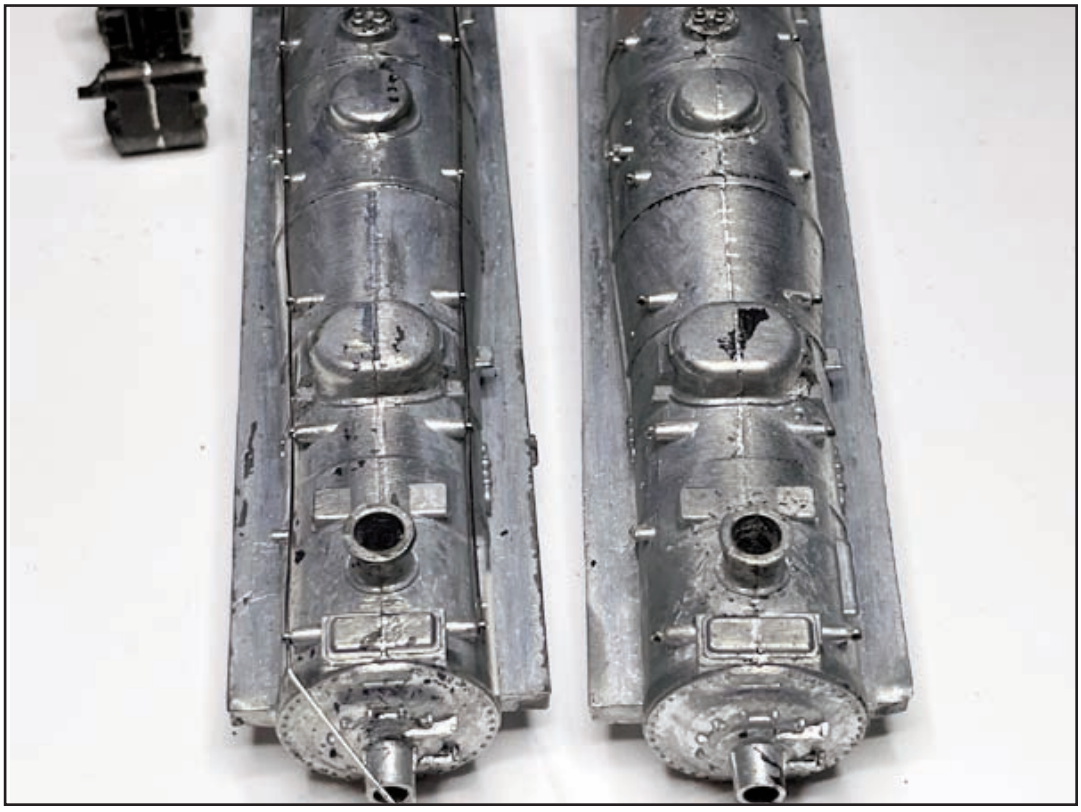
I decided to use a 6-pin JST connector between the engine and the tender. Using the male connector for the engine, I soldered the blue and white wires to a 2-pin micro connector for the lights. This allowed me to completely separate the boiler from the frame so that it can be worked on if necessary. The grey and orange wires were soldered to the motor. A hole was drilled into the frame just behind the motor for a self-tapping screw. The red wire from the connector was soldered to the screw. The black wire from the JST connector was removed because the left side pick-up would be done from the tender and the decoder would be stored inside the tender.

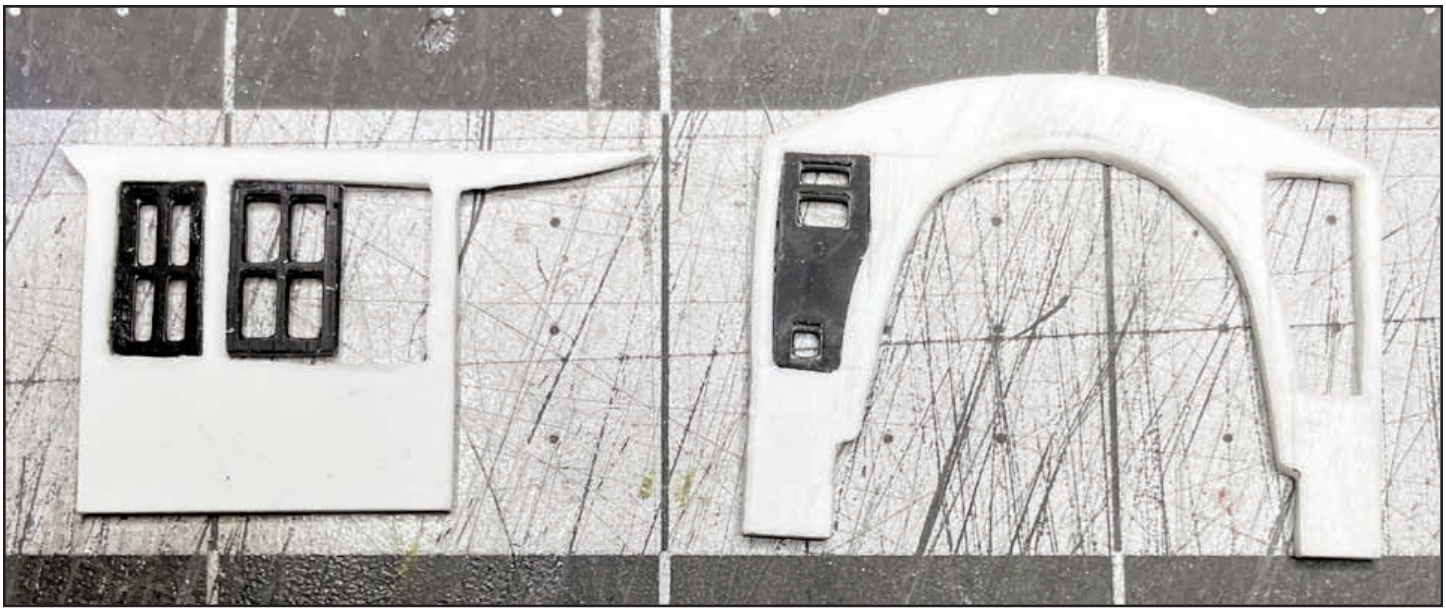
Next, I turned my attention to the cylinder. The Mantua Pacifics are capable of running on a 14" radius. To do that, Mantua carved a notch in the cylinder so that the front pilot trucks can have room to turn. Since I don't have that tight of radius, I decided to fill in the notches and any divots with Tamyia Modeler Putty. I also filed out any existing mold lines. I drilled out holes under the



cylinders and glued in the cylinder cocks.

The flanges of the pilot truck wheels look like pizza cutters. I just happen to have a set of .100" metal wheels with a 1/16" axle in my stash. I had to use a wheel puller to remove one wheel on the old set and slide the axle through. The pointed ends of the new axles were ground down to the wheel. The new wheelsets were reinstalled with the insulated wheel on the fireman's side.





Cab Subassembly:

The cab sides were cut from .040” styrene using the cyclopedia reference book as a guide. Then the sides were glued together.

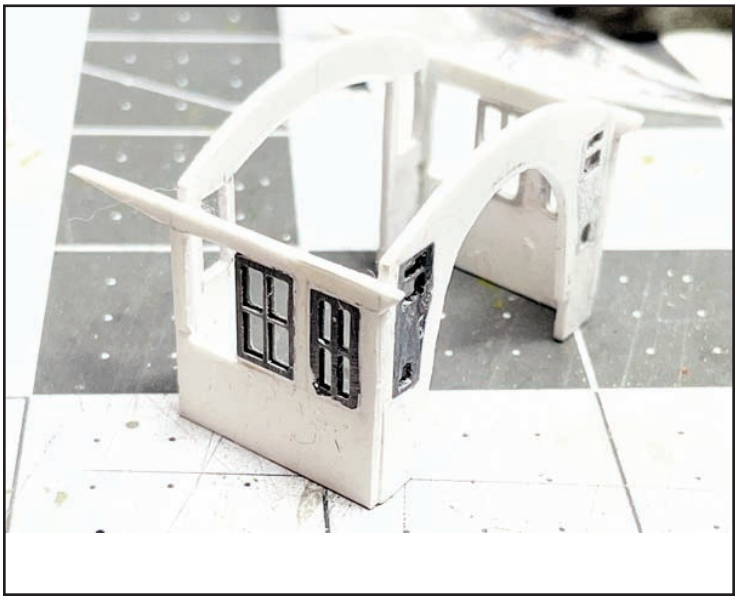
I designed and printed the windows using 3D printing technology. The windows were fitted and modeling putty was applied as needed.

The roof was cut from .020” styrene to the dimensions and placed into a pot of boiling water to soften. After 30-45 seconds, it was placed inside a 1 5/16” ID plastic plumbing pipe to form the bend. After an hour, the roof was glued to the sides. The bottom of the boiler head was trimmed to fit the boiler. The inside of the cab was painted green. Rain gutters were cut from .022” brass wire and glued to the roof. The roof vent was created using .015” brass wire for the rails and .020” styrene for the vent covers.

The wind defectors were created from .030” x.080” styrene. The bottom edge was filed on a 45-degree angle and the top corners were rounded.

The hand rails were created from .015” brass wire. The arm rests were created using .010” x .060” styrene,

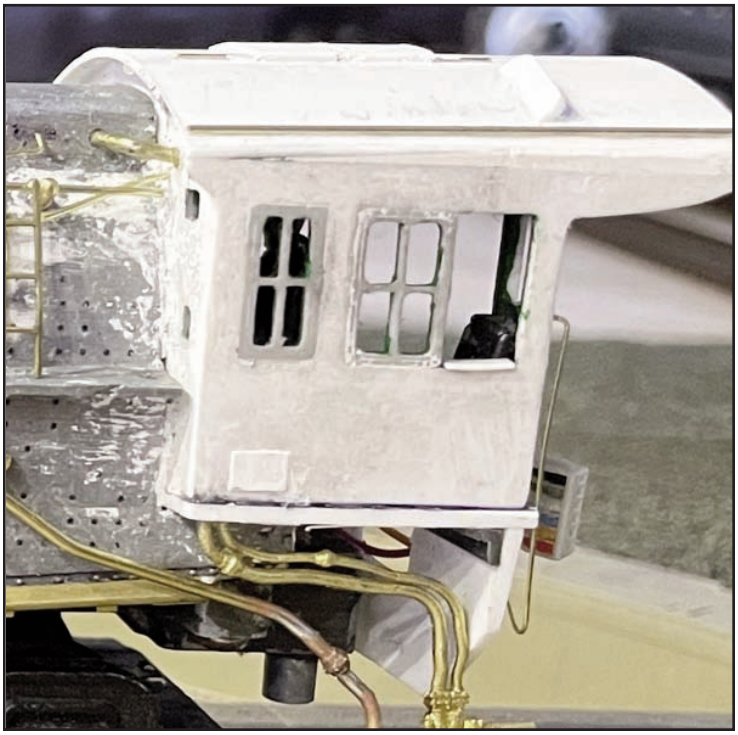
The backhead was trimmed to fit the boiler and it was fitted and glued to the front of the cab, making sure it was flush with the front. I painted the backhead grimy black with white gauges and

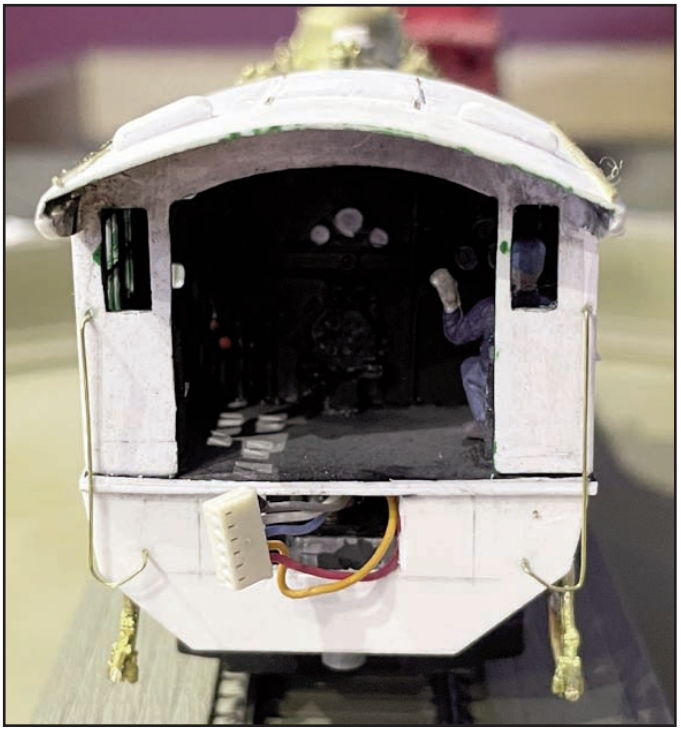


red valves. After the paint dried, it was glued to the cab.

The floor of the cab was not created as per the original E-2A specs due to the way the boiler was created and how it connected to the tender. Therefore, I created a flat floor from .040" styrene. It sticks out from the cab by about 2" as per the specifications. I added seats and a figure to the floor and painted the floor grimy black. The entire floor was glued to the cab.

The plate located under the floor at the rear of the cab was created using .020" styrene. The plate was glued to the bottom of the cab using 3/32" L angle ABS glued on the inside.



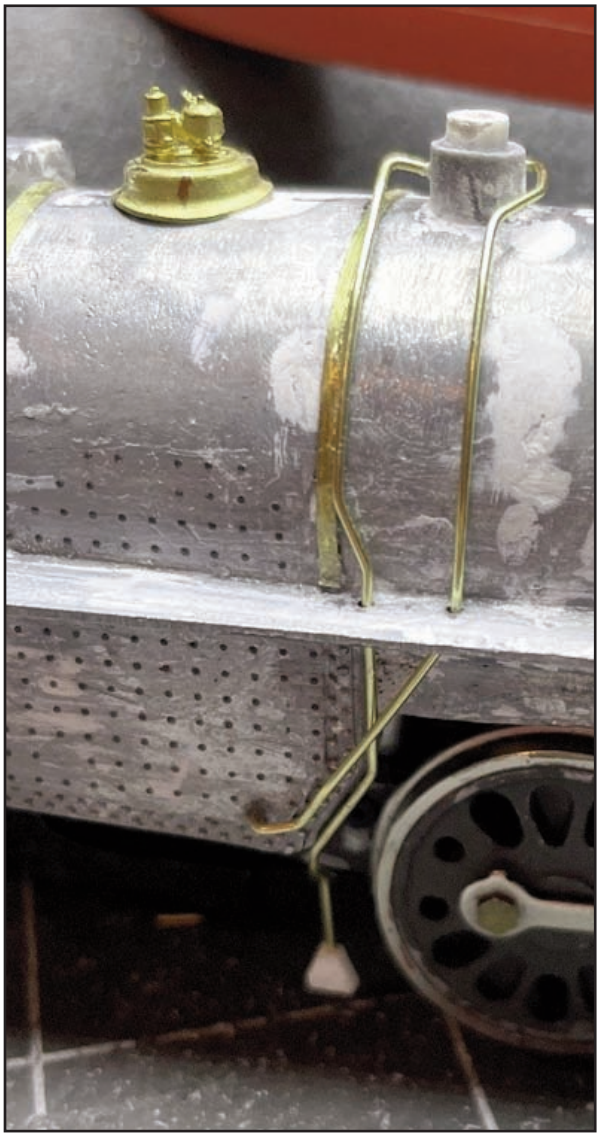


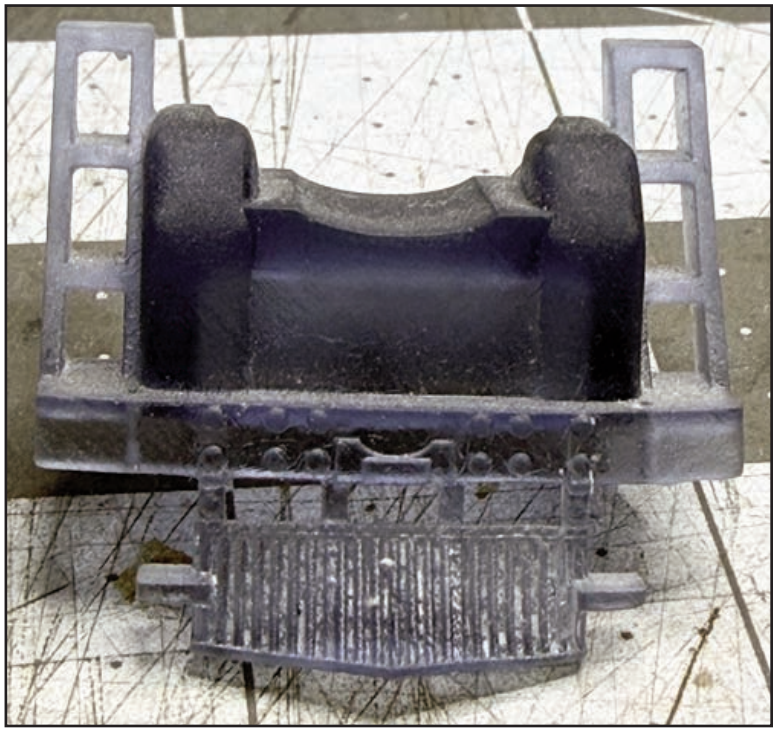
Centrifuge Subassembly:

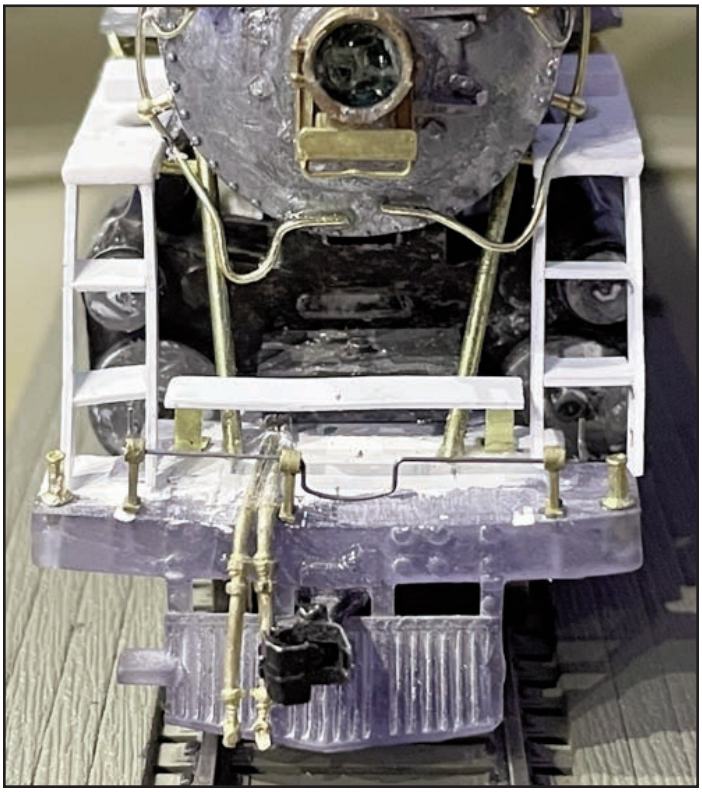
The centrifuge is made from 1/8" styrene tubing glued on top of an old sprue. The bottom of the centrifuge was filed down to match the curvature of the boiler. The blowdown spout is made of .040" styrene.

and .015" x .060" brass flat bar. The boiler support rods were made from 3/64" brass wire and bent to a 40-degree angle.

Unfortunately, the pilot steps that were molded onto the pilot seemed too thick, so I cut them off and recreated them from .020" styrene. At







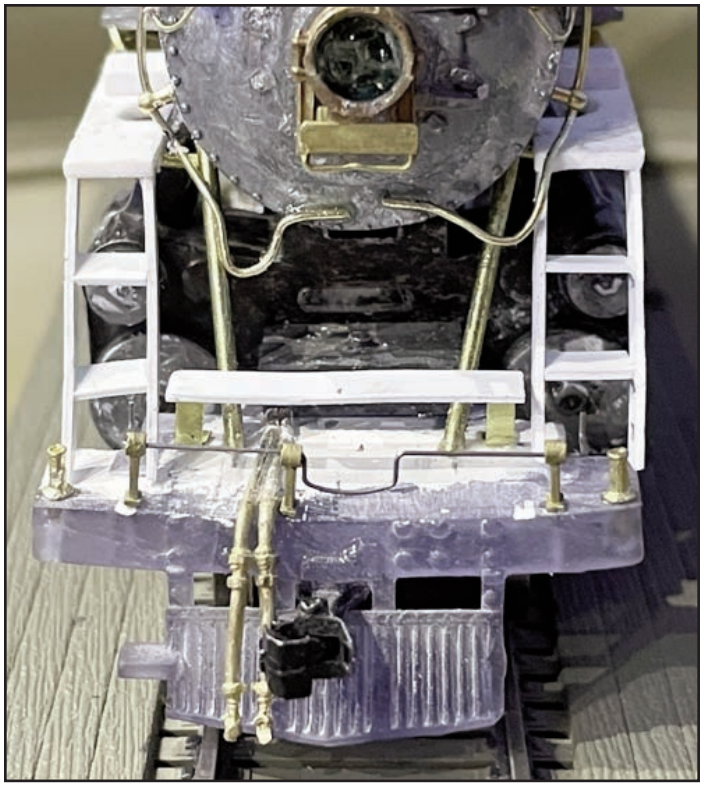
Pilot Subassembly:

The original pilot was not available so I purchased a reproduction pilot for the Mantua Pacific. I trimmed off the hoods for the air pumps. When I removed the molded hoods, a hole in the pilot floor was left. I filled in the hole with .040" styrene and molding putty was used to smooth out the floor.

I carved out a hole in the front of the cow catcher for a dummy coupler with coupler pocket. The smokebox stand was made from .020" styrene

first, I glued the steps to the running boards, but over time this proved to be a big mistake as they kept being bumped and breaking off. Therefore, I glued them to the pilot instead. Finally, the air hoses were added.

The coupler lift bar was formed from .019" wire and a piece of .010 x .030 flat bar stock.



Generator Subassembly:

The platform for the generator was created from .005" brass sheet soldered to a .031" wire.

Boiler:

Using my Dremel with various grinding bits, I removed all of the molded parts from the boiler with the exception of the running board and turret. I removed the running board from the smoke box and where the air pump would be installed. The tab that held the cab to the boiler was removed as well. After all mold lines and grinding lines were filed out, modeling putty was used to fill in any divots and holes. It was sanded smooth and additional putty was applied if necessary.

Final Assembly:

I started with the inner most detail first. The boiler bands were cut from .005" brass sheet and glued in place. The following detail items were added next (in order): pop valves, steam domes, smoke stack (actually this was added much later but it should be done here), smoke box cleanouts, washout plugs, low water alarm, and cab subassembly.

The ash pan was cut to length and glued in place. The centrifuge subassembly was added next. .022" brass wire was bent to form the piping for the centrifuge. A hole was drilled into the running board and the centrifuge check valve and globe valve were soldered to the piping and inserted and glued in place. The blowoff funnel was formed from .040" styrene.

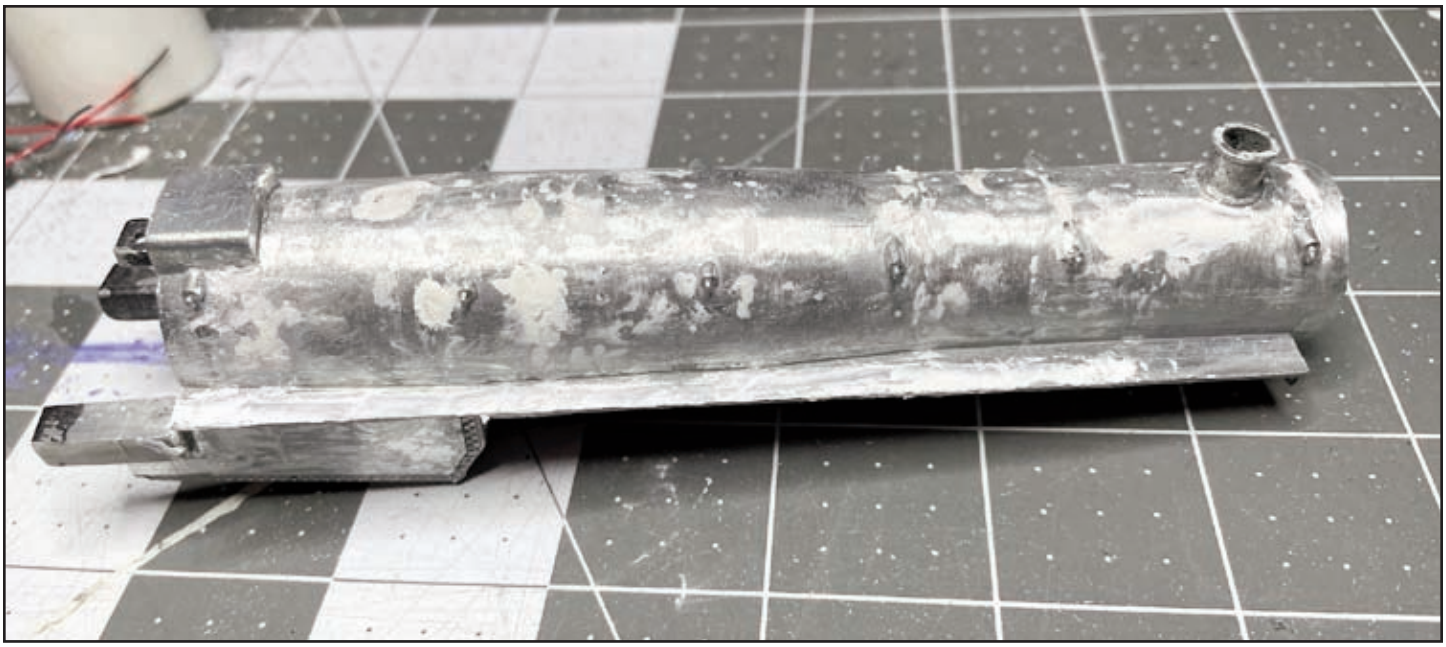
Next, I added the sand dome and related piping. The piping was formed with .022" brass wire. Holes were drilled into the running board and soldered to the dome.

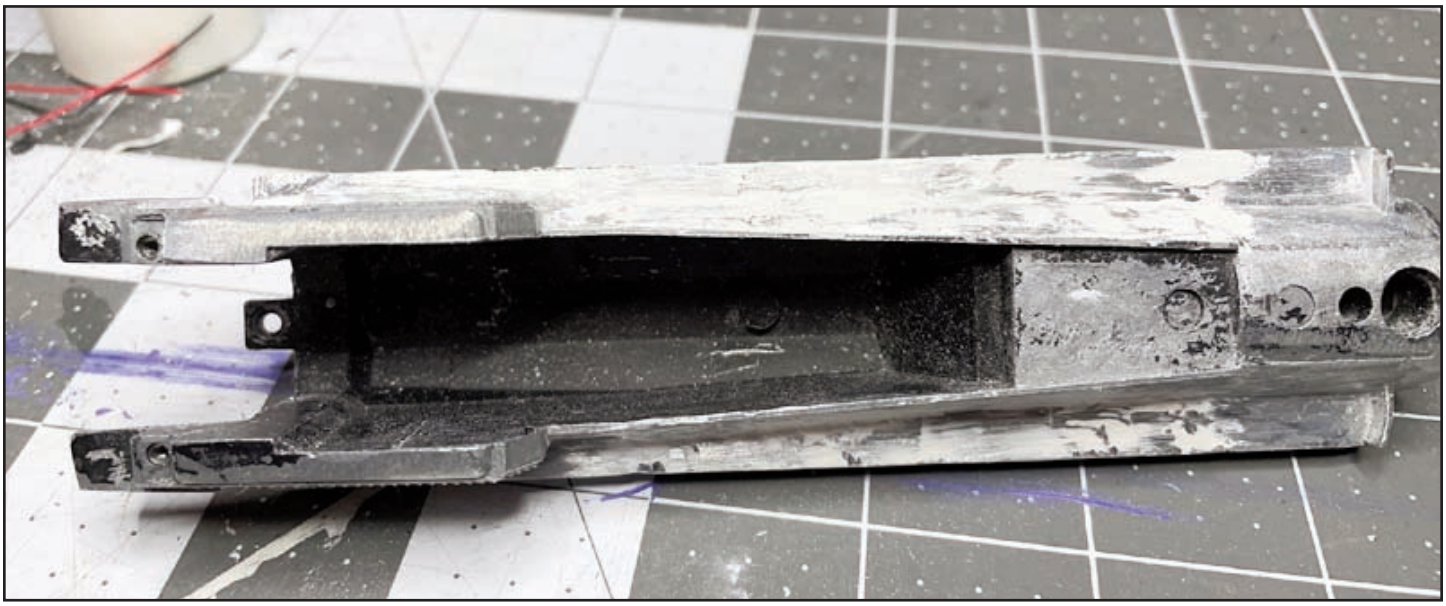
The original hole for the headlight was filled in with modeling putty and a new smaller hole was drilled for the new PFM 1.5v micro bulb. A hole was drilled into the headlight and the wires were threaded through the holes. The headlight was glued to the bracket which was glued to the smokebox.

The classification lights were added next along with the whistle, bell, and boiler steps. The power reverser and linkage for the power reverser were added along with the linkage which was created using .015" brass wire.

I trimmed off the injectors and bent the wires as per the reference book. #63 & #72 holes were drilled in the cab floor near the front of the cab. The injectors were inserted and glued in place. Holes for the pillow blocks were added to the fire box. .040" brass wire was cut and bent. Holes were drilled in the running board so that the .040" wire would fit at an angle as per the prototype. The check valve was soldered to the piping and threaded through the holes and pillow blocks added. I added a union to one of the injector pipes to simulate that a temporary repair was performed.

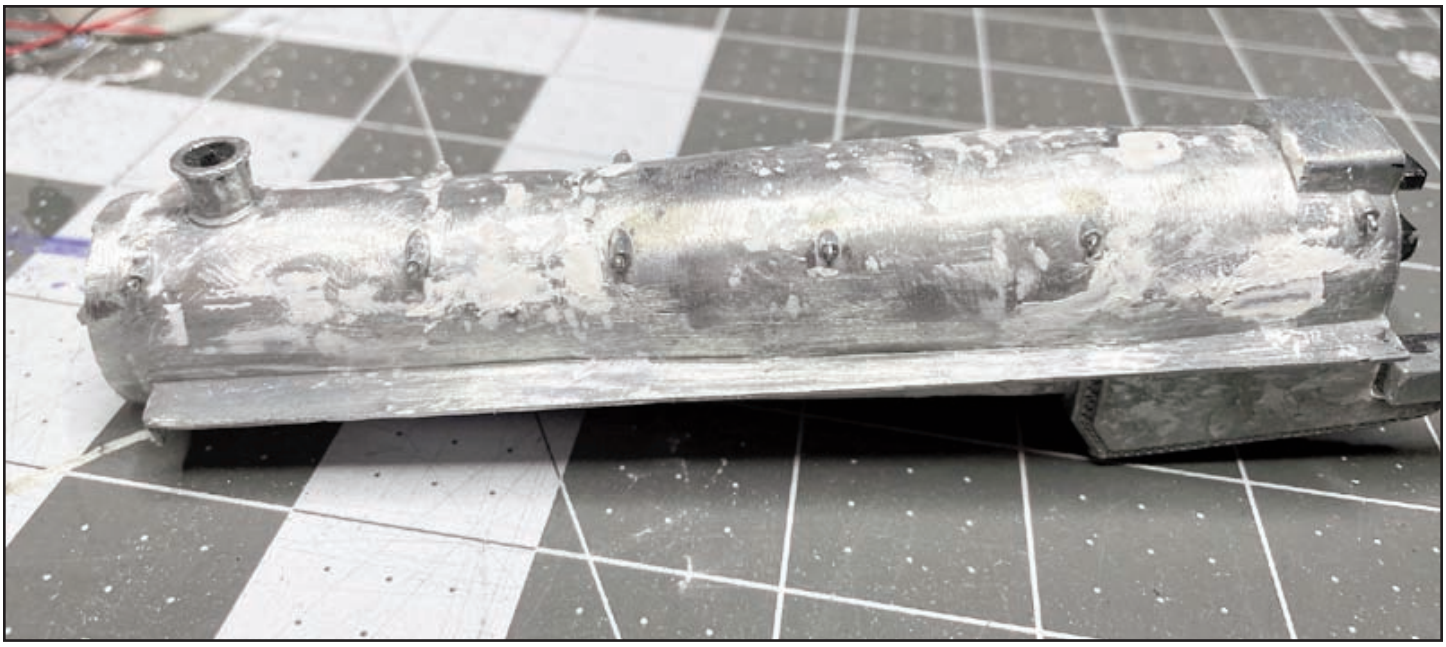
For the ash pan lever, I drilled a #80 hole into the end of a 9" length of .015" x .024" flat bar. Cut a 1' length of .012" brass wire and thread it through the hole and solder. I drilled a #80 hole into the cab. I inserted a 12' long .012" brass wire

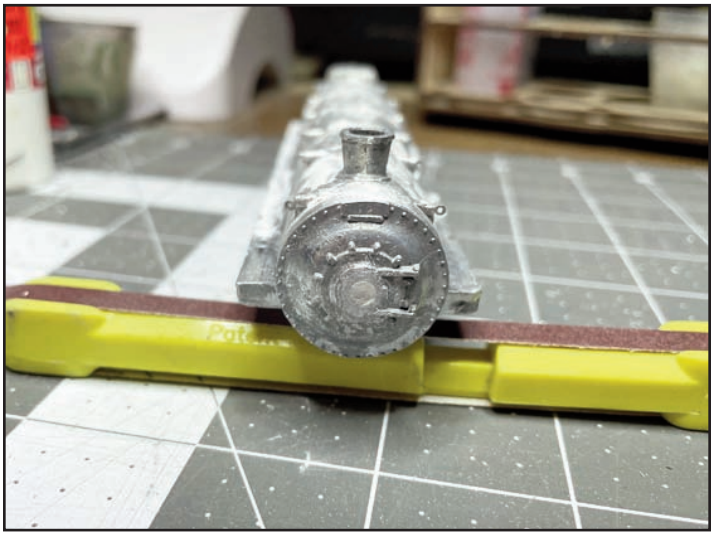




into the hole and soldered the end on the brass flat bar. A hole was drilled into the firebox and the assembly was glued.

The air tanks were built to the specifications. The straps around the tanks were made from .010" x .030" styrene dipped in boiling water to bend the styrene and glued. The drain cock was attached. After the tanks were built and attached, the air pipes were created using .022" brass wire. A distribution air tank is located under the rear of the cab on the engineer's side. A hole was drilled on the fireman's side for the air pump and it was glued to the side of the boiler. The piping was run from the distribution tank to the engineer's air tank over the boiler to the fireman's air tank and then to the air pump. The exhaust pipe was added from the air pump to the smokebox. Pillow blocks were used to hold the pipe on as per the prototype. The piping for the air pump governor should be .022", but I could only get a .012" governor so I used .012" for the governor piping. A new running board cover was from .020" styrene. A #76 hole was drilled into the new running board cover and the governor piping was attached to the air pump and to the turret. A .019" brass wire was used between the turret and the cab.

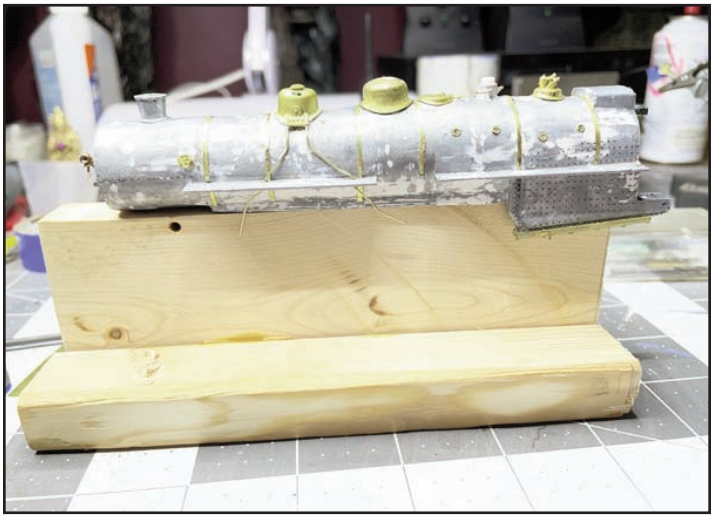


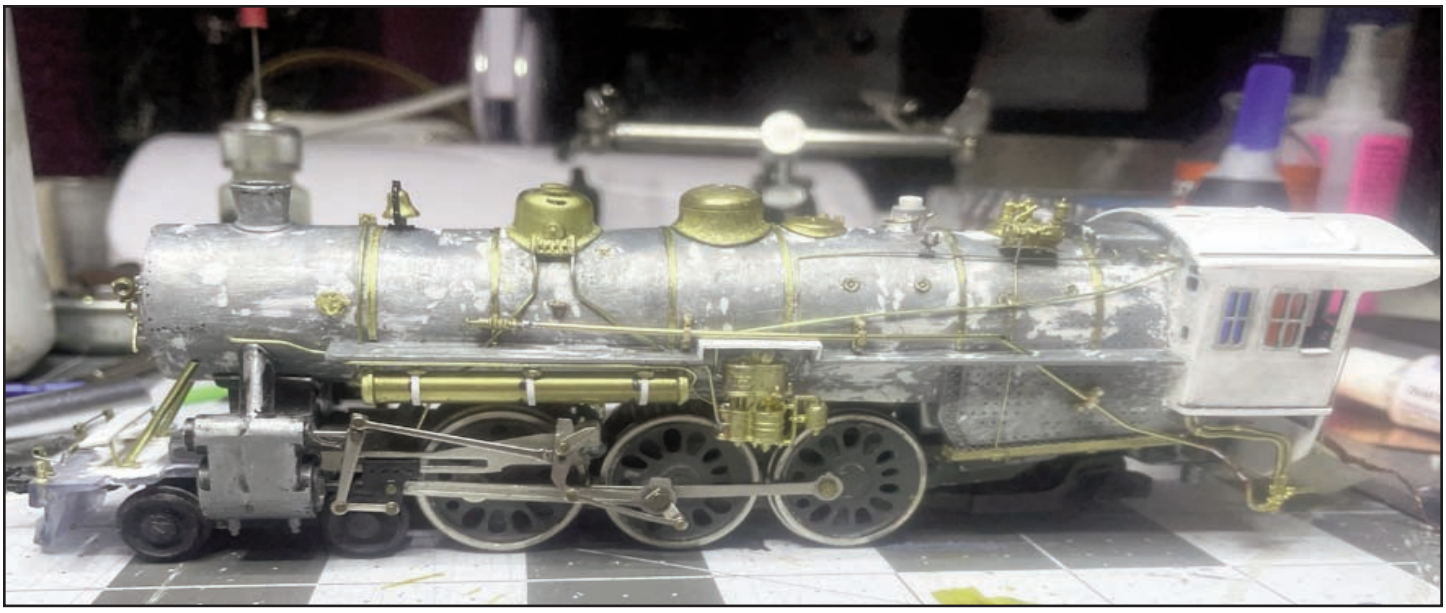


The generator subassembly was attached to the boiler and a .019” brass wire was run from the generator to the ash pan per the prototype. Another .019” brass wire was run from the generator along the top of boiler to the front and into a small piece of 9”x9” styrene that was used for the electrical box. A .012” wire was used between the classification lights. Pipe brackets were used to hold the wire as per the prototype.

The boiler hand rail was formed from .022” brass wire. Holes for the stanchion brackets were drilled and the brackets were threaded onto the rail and glued in place. Rivet detail was added afterwards.

This concludes Part 1. Part 2 will be in the next issue

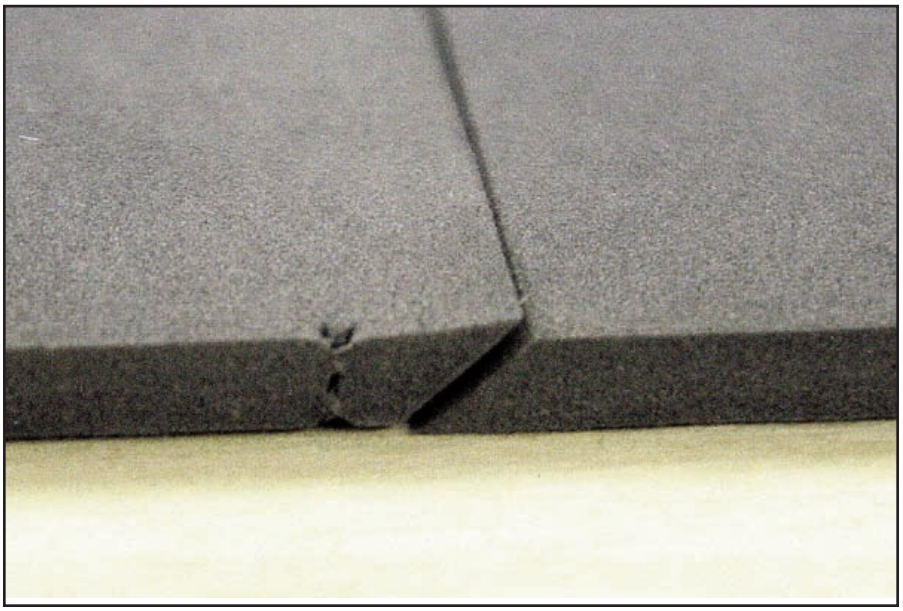




The Frugal Modeler
By Dave Nelson

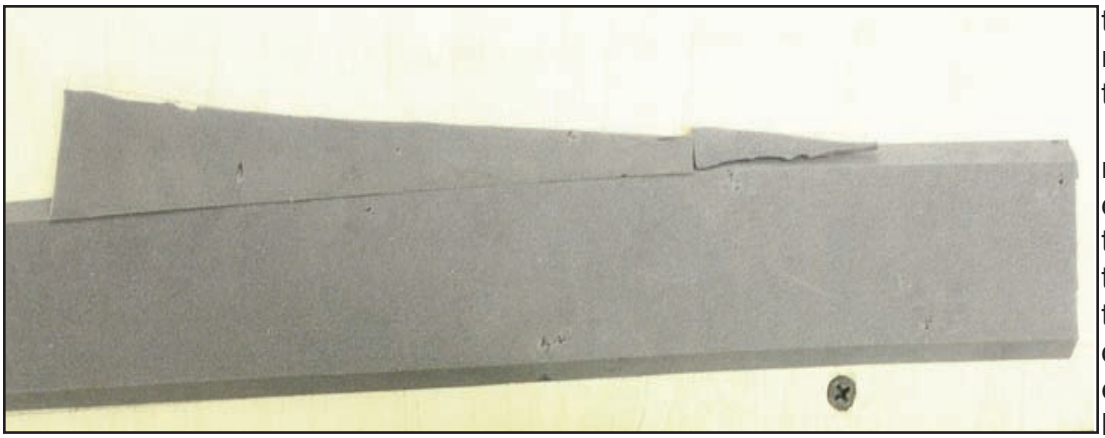
My Frugal Modeler column in the Summer 2026 issue of the Waybill concerned the on-going shortage of traditional two-part HO cork roadbed from Midwest Products and the new one-piece foam roadbed product from Walthers which many modelers are now probably using out of necessity. A recent email from Green River Hobbies in Geneseo, IL (an excellent hobby shop by the way, not far from the Quad Cities) indicates that Midwest Products is still unable to find a reliable source for its proprietary cork/rubber mix for roadbed, so this situation is likely to exist for some time. That prior article dealt with ways to modify the foam roadbed to make it more practical for curves. Now I will consider how one handles roadbed under turnouts and crossings and how the Walthers foam product compares to cork in these special (but very common) situations.

On my layouts I typically ran a piece of the two-part cork roadbed through the straight portion of a turnout (or through one track of a crossing), and then used scrap pieces of cork to fabricate roadbed under the diverging route of a turnout, or for the other track of a crossing. The beveled edge of the roadbed was, where necessary, either sliced off or, more commonly, I'd turn a scrap piece of roadbed upside down so the two bevels would match up neatly. A photo shows how this "bevel-matching" looks using the foam roadbed. Doing that of course leaves a vertical edge to one side but that is OK because the actual angle of repose for ballast is different than the bevel angle.



Note how the beveled edges match-up.

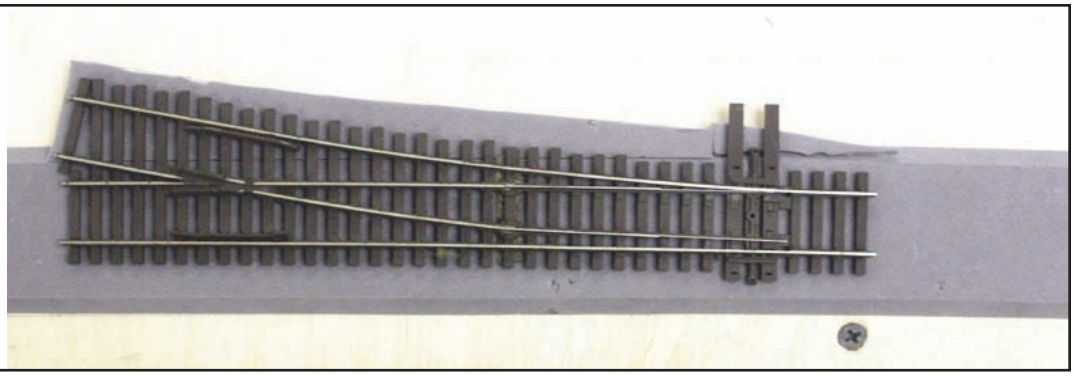
Laying the Walthers foam roadbed

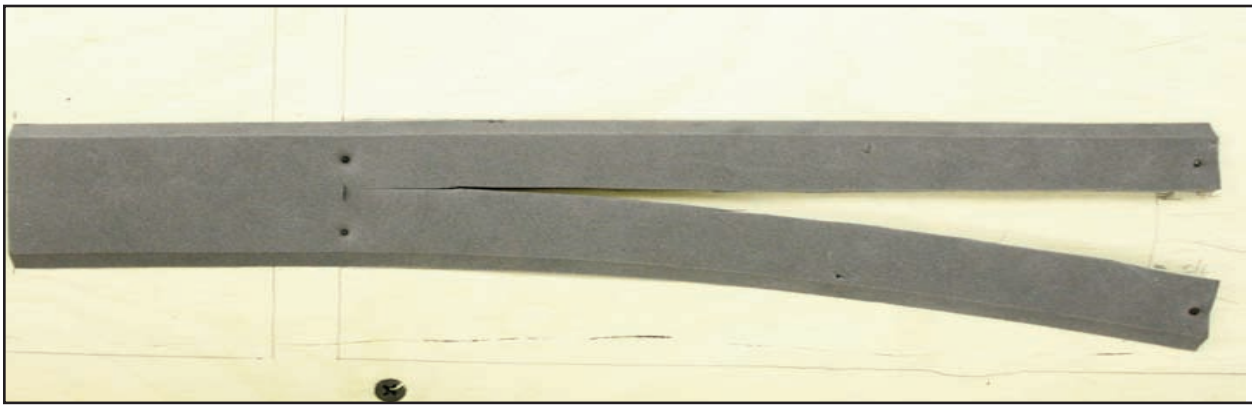


turnout placed on the roadbed to help convey the goal.

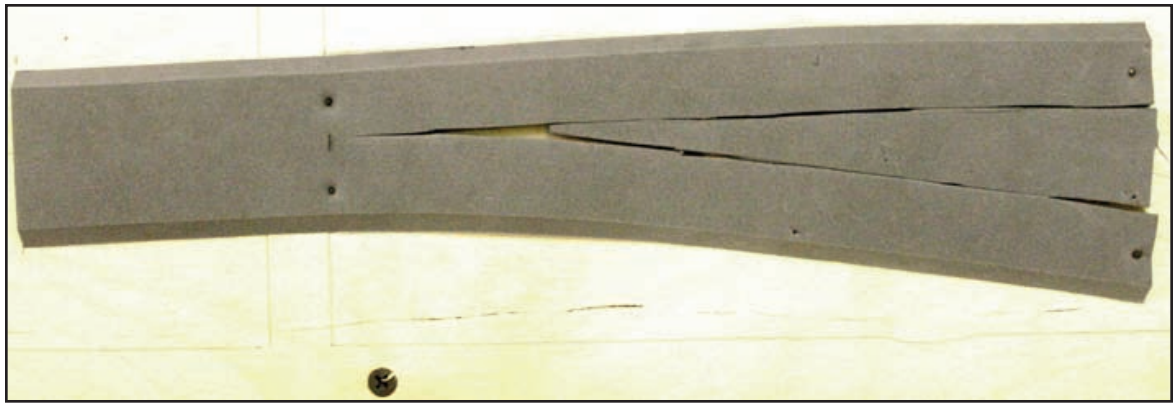
Another idea struck me, so I gave it a try. I could also have done this with cork but never tried it. Recall that I had to cut the foam roadbed down the middle (so it ended up looking just like the traditional two-

Above: One piece of foam roadbed for the straight route, scrap pieces for the diverging route.
Right: How a Peco turnout looks on the Fabricated turnout roadbed.
Below: Splitting the one-piece roadbed for straight and diverging routes.

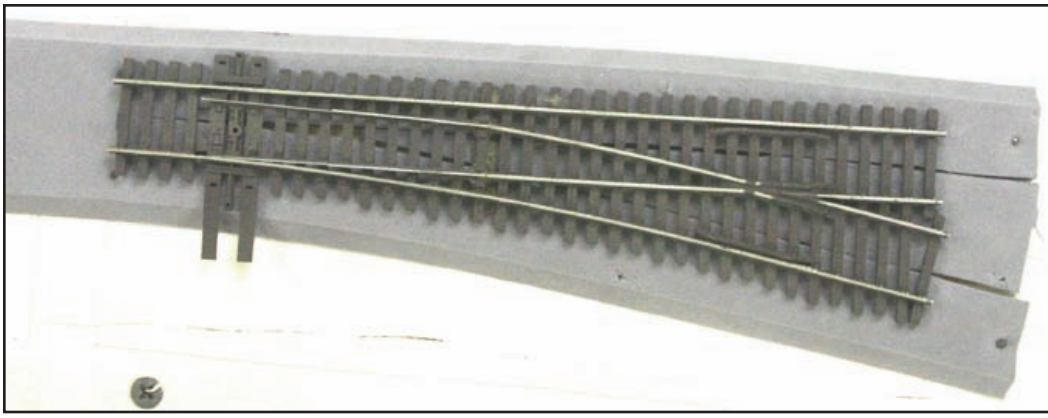




Below: A wedge shaped piece of scrap roadbed fills the gap between the two routes.



that very same way (laying the roadbed right through the straight route of a turnout or one track of a crossing, and then using scrap pieces to fabricate roadbed for the diverging route or the other track of a crossing) makes sense, works well, and I show photos of how I did it, with a Peco part cork product) to make it possible to form curves without puckering. I cut just part of a piece of the foam roadbed down the middle and used



Left: How it looks with a Peco turnout on it.

Below: A turnout on the UP/CNW mainline Adams Sub in Wisconsin. Note the shape of the roadbed.

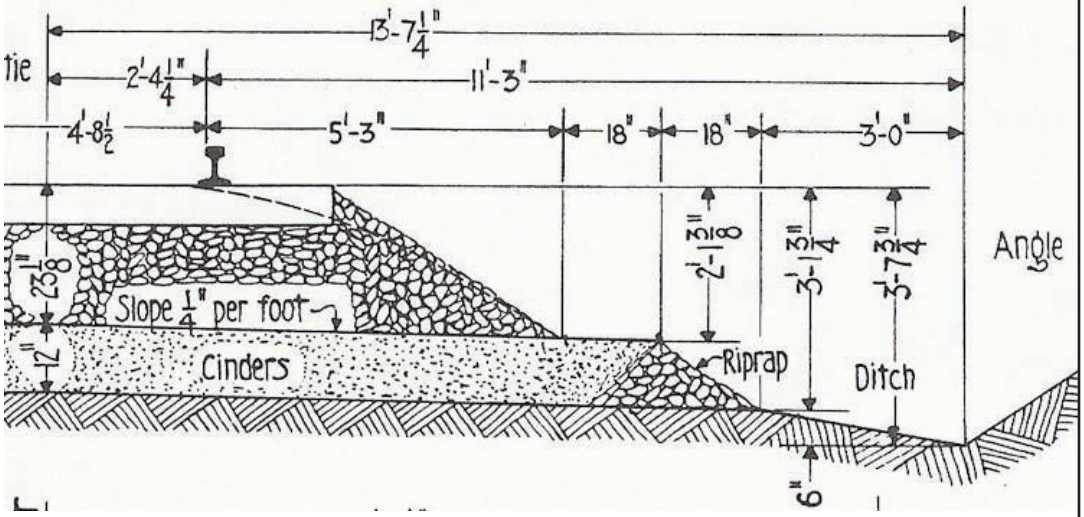
one half for the straight route, the other half for the diverging route. I then created a wedge-shaped piece from scrap roadbed to fill in what was needed for the rest of the straight route and diverging route. Fortunately, the foam roadbed product cuts easily with good scissors. While this idea works, you'd need to build up a decent collection of large scrap pieces of foam roadbed for it to be practical.

I see now that -- oops -- in neither case did I include roadbed support for the headblock ties.

While the beveled edges of both cork and foam roadbed resemble what one sees on slightly elevated right-of-way (except for the angle of the bevel, but good ballasting takes care of that). For turnouts and crossings the look can be very different and how you ballast and scenic the area needs more thought. See the two prototype photos for guidance. A portion of a Pennsylvania Railroad track profile might give some additional ideas about prototype appearances for the angle of repose of actual ballast.

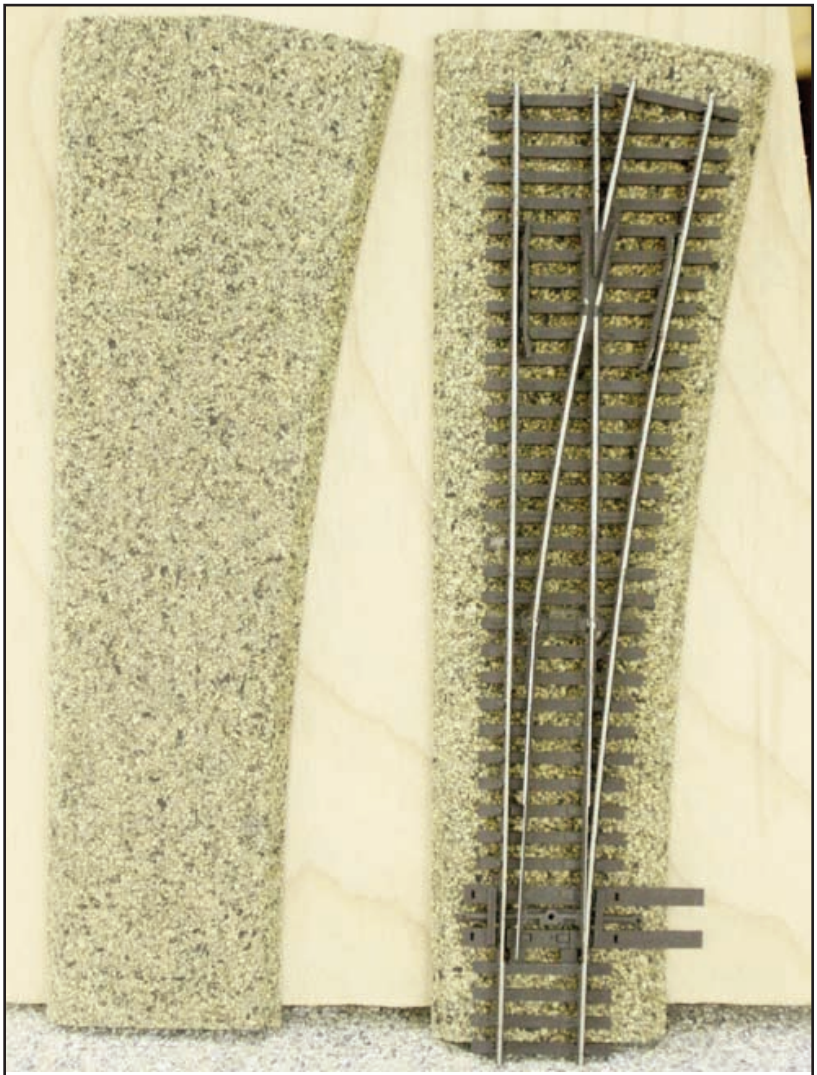
The crossing at Davis Junction, Illinois. Note the roadbed.

Both Midwest Products and (years ago) I-B-L (Itty Bitty Lines) made precut cork roadbed sections especially for popular sizes of turnouts (right, left, and wye) and I-B-L even offered precut cork roadbed



The Pennsylvania Railroad standards for ballast and roadbed angles.

for curved turnouts and common crossing angles. See photo of two examples, one with that same Peco turnout. Walthers does not yet offer precuts in foam. I always preferred to fabricate my own in cork and would do the same with foam. But Midwest Products and I-B-L also offered sheet cork the same thickness as their roadbed, and that was very useful not just for yards but also for fabricating your own turnout and crossing roadbed and other special situations. Walthers does not offer sheets of foam, but until they do, the double track roadbed that they do offer could be adapted for most of the same uses as the sheet cork.


Precut cork roadbed for turnouts, with a Peco turnout.

The next MWR BoD meeting will be held via the on-line Zoom application on Saturday, November 14 2026 at 10:00 am EDT. The meeting log-in credentials will be distributed by email to the BoD members approximately 1 week before the meeting. If you wish to participate as a guest, please contact the MWR Webmaster at: mwr.nmra.webmaster@gmail.com with your request.

The
Central Indiana Division
of the
National Model Railroad Association
Presents the 19th Annual

NMRA
CID
MIDWEST REGION

Danville Train Show

Saturday - November 21, 2026
10 AM to 3PM

At the Hendricks County Fair Grounds
1900 E Main St. Danville, IN

Admission
$5.00 per Person
Under 16 free with parent

NMRA Members Only Admission at 9am with your card!

Show Features
Over 29,000 Sq. Feet With:

- Operating Layouts
- 200+ Dealer Tables
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2 Expo Halls - 8 Foot Vendor Tables $16 each
Setup Fri. 3-6 pm; Sat. 7-10:00 am
Vendor table rental forms at https://www.cidnmra.org
Contact Dave at danvilletrainshow@gmail.com for more information

The Next CID Train Show Will Be at Lebanon, IN on January 24, 2027
See the CID NMRA website for more information: http://www.cidnmra.org

BAPTISM BY FIRE: A Day at the NMRA Booth (2026)

by John Robert Coy

I had a one-of-a-kind “precious learning experience” (as my wife Connie Coy used to say) at the NMRA's National Train Show on Saturday, August 1st, 2026.

My plan was simple and brilliant! Since Indianapolis will be the site of the 2029 NMRA National Convention, I decided to spend my day at the National Train Show volunteering at the NMRA booth.

I would observe precisely what “they” did; so I would be better prepared and know what to expect for 2029. That way I could prepare all of you in case you would volunteer to cover the NMRA national booth.

SURPRISE! SURPRISE! SURPRISE! Just like Gomer Pyle said. I arrived at the booth at about 8:30 A.M. that morning. I was certain that someone(s) would show up soon. At 8:45, an announcement was made that the doors would open fifteen minutes early. I laughed to myself thinking: Well, I'll hold down the fort as best as I can until someone who knows what they are doing (hopefully) shows up.

9:00 A.M., well here I am and a “flood” of people are coming in! Here, I am, still all by my lonesome. So, I do what I do best, I start talking NMRA to anybody who dares to come past the NMRA booth.

At about 9:15 A.M., a Member from the Sunshine Region, Bruce Metcalf, came up to me and I shared my “abandonment” story with him.

Bruce laughed and asked if I wanted him to “hang around” with me? CERTAINLY!!! (like the 3 Stooges) I said.

Am I ever glad that I did. We had more people than you can imagine stop by the booth. There has NEVER been a national convention in Chattanooga. All kinds of people were asking all kinds of questions. I could talk to everybody. Thank goodness for Bruce. We could have used a couple more people.

In the morning alone, just me, I had 12 to 15 people who wanted to join the NMRA prior to lunch. I don't know how many Bruce may have had. We were busy and that was the understatement of the year!

At about 10:15 A.M., an unknown female walked into our booth space where Bruce and I were and looked at the sealed cardboard boxes on our tables, all around our booth. She looks at me and asked: “Why didn't you open these boxes?”

I said to her: “Because I'm NOT even supposed to be here.” Further, I informed her that I was hoping to be trained into whatever it is that people at the NMRA national booth are supposed to do. She left shortly afterwards, and I never saw her again. Oh well, now Bruce and I had free trinkets to pass out.

At about noon, Bruce had to take care of his business. I was hungry and alone, again. I already said that I had like 15 people wanting to join and another dozen wanting to renew. (I told them to call the main NMRA HQ office come Monday.)

I didn't want to leave the booth unstaffed, therefore, I called Dan Banks, who is a one-man public relations machine. Dan covered for me while I went to get lunch, and I returned in about twenty minutes. Dan stayed for another two hours. Bruce had already returned as well by the time I came back.

I “closed-up” shop that day about 4:15, which is ten minutes after the show officially closed Saturday. I was talked-out, which is a rarity for me. I got what I came for via BAPTISM BY FIRE: A Day at the NMRA Booth, and now know what I'm doing, because I trained myself.

The NMRA Booth is a gold mine for harvesting new members! We need to be well-prepared and staffed for 2029.

MMR’s posing for a photo at the NMRA convention.