

The Brass Pounder

Newsletter of the
Carolina Southern Division
Mid Eastern Region/ National Model Railroad Association, Inc

Volume 3 Number 2

May 2003

Superintendent's Message

I want to wish each of you a happy Easter.

We are in for an exciting two months. April, while being tax time, will also allow us to attend Rail Days at Spencer. It has been advertised that the Pennsy E-8 are showing up from Asheville on Saturday and will be off using the Winston Salem Southbound rails on Sunday. Although I will not be riding, I do hope to catch the train on the Wye at Salisbury coming off of the "A" Line.

As you are reading, we will have had a committee meeting on the train table fund raising program at Bob Johnson's home. In addition, the planning is going well for our May meeting with the folks from the MER and the A/P judging. Norm Garner, President, Clint Hyde, Vice President, and Roger Cason the A/P chair will be in attendance. The plan will be to judge specific models in the morning and visit home layouts in the afternoon. Fred Miller, A/P chairman, is handling all of the details. Do get in touch with him if you are entertaining entering any models for judging so we can make sure that all of the minimal paperwork is completed. Even if you are not planning to enter any models, I hope that you will be there to support the MER and your fellow division members. Train show planning is proceeding, if you want to help contact Martin Oakes.

Looks like this year will be busy and fun,

Larry Lau

Upcoming Events

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| May 17 | Achievement Program, Waxhaw Firehall and other locations. |
| July 12 | Martin Oakes' home. 11AM – 4PM. Barbecue. Lake sports. Operate the Cascade Pacific. Clinic |
| July 13-20 | NMRA National Convention, Toronto |
| Sept 13 | Jack Parker's home. Barbecue. Report on the Toronto Convention (Martin). |
| Oct 10-13 | MER Convention, Reston, VA |
| Oct 18-19 | Charlotte Model Train Show (tent.) |
| Nov 8 | Fred Miller's home. |
| Jan 17/04 | Annual Meeting, Waxhaw Firehall. |

Building Hints. Trick for attaching small parts to models.

(From the Illinois-Central-Modelers Internet Board, John C. Willis)

Make a super glue holder by gluing a bottle cap (size can vary for different applications) to a base. Place a piece of clear packing tape across the cap to form a cup and put super glue in the depression made by the tape. Use accelerator sized to accommodate the part to be placed on the model at the site where the part is to be placed. Use tweezers to hold the part and dip the part a tiny bit into the super glue. Place the part at the proper place making sure you have the correct angle and orientation. The part will be instantly attached. Practice this some and you will get the hang of it.

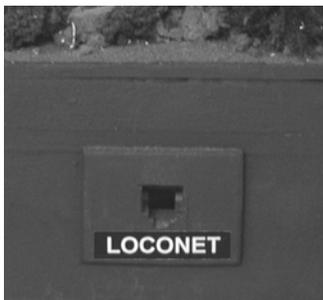
Inexpensive Layout Edge Jacks for Digitrax Throttles By Fred Miller

Would you like to save some money with easily made throttle jacks for your Digitrax LocoNet throttles? Many modelers use the Digitrax UP-5 unit to mount on the edge of their layout. These units provide two jacks on the front to plug in Digitrax throttles and 3 jacks on the back to plug in the connection to the LocoNet.

The Digitrax UP-5s are nice units but unfortunately they typically cost \$16.00. If you are not uncomfortable with doing a little fabrication and soldering, you can make your own layout edge jacks for about \$2.50.

Here's how I do mine.

I buy the basic jacks from an electronic supply house like Digi-Key, (see parts, below). These are plastic squares with 6" wire leads attached. I then make a small



panel about 1½" by 1¼" and fashion a square opening sufficient for slipping in the jack fixture. (If you would like to have two jacks on the same strip, simply make the panel larger and make two holes.) I make my panels from 1/8" styrene so it's easy to fabricate and then plastic-glue the jack in place. A little Squadron Green or White putty can be used to fill any imperfections after the glue dries and then sand the front smooth. I then drill a hole in the fascia strip on the edge of my layout sufficient to clear the back of the jack and wires. The jack assembly is then glued to the fascia strip. I then solder the LocoNet wires (as in a 6 conductor wire telephone cable, see parts below) to the 6 wires at the back of the jack. I generally use a 6 position solder tab strip mounted somewhere behind the layout edge so that I can solder a LocoNet cable "coming" and "going" to the jack wires. This "daisy-chains" the jack assembly in the same way you use the Digitrax UP-5 units.

Note that the jacks come with wire color coding same as cable but check Digitrax standards to be sure.

Parts Details:

- ◆ You can acquire a 6-conductor telephone cable (with plugs mounted on each end of a 25' wire) from Radio Shack - #279-422 @ \$7.99.
- ◆ The 6-6 Mod Jacks with 6" wire leads from Digi-Key #H9015-ND @ \$1.95 (10 for \$16.20) (www.digikey.com)
- ◆ Miscellaneous parts: Styrene (or other material) for mounting jack, soldering strip if desired, glue and solder.

Division Web site:

www.bytedesign.com/CSDiv

Note that space is available to host 3-4 pictures and lots of text for member's own pages

Minutes of the Last meeting -- Saturday, March 15th.

Meeting called to order by Larry Lau at 10:30

A fund raising idea was discussed: Offering to sell starter train tables to beginners. Basically a 4x8 portable layout with track, switches, power connections. Assigned to Bob Johnson for more work. To report back at the next meeting. An interim meeting on this was planned for April 19 at Bob Johnson's.

A proposed train show was discussed. A 'proforma' budget was passed around.

A date of Oct 18/19 was discussed as being possible. Issues were budgets – an initial cash outlay of about \$1200 is required: -- Two locations are available, both are Recreation Centers. The first choice is Sugaw Creek Recreation Center, located ¼ mile south of I-85 on Sugar Creek Rd. The premises are approximately a high school gym. Photos are available on the Division web site at www.bytedesign.com/CSDiv/TrainShow.htm