The 'zine of small computer railroading

Virtual Railroader™

In this issue

From the Publisher

Summer: time for a trip

By Alfred Barten

Summer is the traditional time for a vacation trip, at least here in the northern hemisphere. Our friends from down under may see things in a different light.

In this issue of *VR*, our associate editor John D'Angelo, takes us clear across the U.S. with his *United Central* route. John also shows us how to add a touch of summer to any route with his Download Gold article, "Summertime fun." John focuses on an amusement park, incorporating traditional rides, fireworks, sounds; and adding a narrow gauge train to give people a ride around the park.

Blueridge route by Michael Goetz.

The Blue Ridge mountains in the eastern U.S. are a favorite destination for people looking for spectacular mountain scenery. Michael Goetz gives us a sampling with his *Blueridge* route for *BVE*. For those who are unfamiliar with *BVE*, it's a freeware cab-driving sim from Japan that features excellent physics and sounds. *BVE* is where I got my start in train simming, and it's a great program to have around. Also, the price is right!

Speaking of mountains, I've used John's *Black Canyon* route to demonstrate a freeware waybill creation program called *Mad Dog & Big Timber Waybills*. It's just right for a short line operation.

Rich Blake really gives us the mountain experience with his two narrow gauge timbering articles. In the first, he describes operations at Deadwood on the famous West Side Lumber Company, which he is modeling. Rich also brings us the conclusion of his four-part series on his *Clear Lake Lumber Company* route while introducing the sequel –- *Clear Lake 2*.

Rounding out the lineup are two more articles by John. The first is an interview with J.P. McNeil (a.k.a. slickjay17), who has just released his *Northeast Rails Version 2* route. This is an impressive route by any standard.

In John's other article "Where IS that car?" he explains how he uses *TrainzObjectz* to organize his rolling stock. If your collection of downloaded rolling stock is like mine, you'll want to have a look at this article.

Let's get on with the summer fun.

Enjoy the ride,

Al

Editorial

It could happen

By Alfred Barten

Well, it *could* happen!. Before you say NO, hear me out. Here's my idea. Mind you, it's not intended to replace anything else that Auran and others are doing. It's simply another idea; something I think makes economic sense and could be a boost to Auran's visibility, not to mention offering people a product that's fun to use.

My idea is that Auran could market a series of low-cost, self-contained, Driver-only CDs aimed at the impulse buyer in places like Wal-Mart and game stores. For 9.99 USD the buyer could get a CD that contains *Trainz* Driver; no Surveyor, no Trainz Download Station; just Driver and selected route(s) and trains. Each disk could be designed to challenge the operator in specific ways. For example, imagine a disk based on switching puzzles in a yard setting, or a disk setting forth demanding rapid transit schedules in the London Underground or New York's subways. The series could be called *Trainz Challenger* (or something else). Some of the disk titles could be:

> *Yard Goat* [switching puzzles]
>
> *Highball* [timetable challenge]
>
> *Waybill* [short line operations]
>
> *Switchback* [narrow gauge mountain railroading to test your driving skills]
>
> *Underground* [difficult schedule]
>
> *Lilliput* [short line 2-foot NG meets SG]
>
> *Down to the Sea* [I like the name -- surely there's a good game to go with it]
>
> *Dockside* [switching among industries, car float, and interchange]
>
> *Running Extra* [apply rules of the road]

With random generation, games could provide a variety of switching opportunities and train scheduling challenges. With good physics the designers could develop runs to challenge a player's train handling skills. The driver could be scored according to the certainty of his/her moves, adherence to the rules and schedule, attention to passenger comfort and goods safety, and so on.

The routes, trains, scenery, and scenarios could be created by Trainz Partners, who could receive royalties from sales. Buyers could be encouraged to upgrade to the full *Trainz*, where they would have the ability to create their own routes, etc. and have access to the Trainz Download Station.

😊
Overrun: 0.0 meters, Delay: 0 seconds

☹
Exceeded the Speed Limit

😦
Violated the Signal

😡
Passed the Station

BVE comfort bars can be switched off by advanced users.

I don't have a *Trainz* demo to show you, but you could try out the *BVE* route described in my article "Drive the Blueridge route" in this issue. You'll see how much fun just plain driving can be when it's done with good scenery, sounds, physics, and a challenge. Mackoy's distribution restrictions make a scheme such as I'm suggesting impossible with *BVE* unless Mackoy himself undertakes to do it. But that would fly in the face of the commerce-free aura that surrounds *BVE*. Auran, on the other hand, could use this scheme to increase the visibility and awareness of *Trainz* and train simulation in general, an increased awareness that could lead to greater participation, more available talent for innovation and development, and so on. So … why not? I **know** it could happen.

Al

This land is your land:

John D'Angelo's United Central Railroad

By John D'Angelo

Action at Central Terminal.

The United Central Railroad is a freelance model of a fictional railroad crossing the United States. The route was created to let you enjoy virtual railroading in a number of different ways. Before we go into a description of the railroad, it is important to understand that you will need to download two major items included in this route from outside the Trainz Download Station (DLS).

You will need the highly realistic track designs created by VMD (see http://virtual-motive-division.com). Download the freeware scenery, US-tracks and US-tracks 2.

Also from VMD, you will need to download the fuel cranes:

38408:28004

38408:28005

The other major item you will need is LARS (Logistics and Resource System). This is a system to that lets you move goods across your route. The complete LARS system can be downloaded from http://www.trainzproroutes.com . You will be required to register with Trainz Pro Routes, but this is a free process. The system consists of "industries" in the form of track sections that can be programmed to deliver and receive goods of all types.

Additionally, there are two items in the Silverton, Durango NG branch of the route that came from Prowler's D&RGW Narrow Gauge web site at:

http://steammachine.com/prowler/trainz/trainz.html .

You will need:

Wooden Depot (2:43955:280021:0) and

NG Roundhouse and Turntable Pack.

If you would like to use motive equipment marked for the fictional *United Central* (F7A, F7B, GP38, SD40, SW7 and Caboose) you can download them from the DLS. Look under my KUID number (46429) and download the pack. These are Auran rolling stock items that were reskinned for the *United Central* using *Paint Shed*.

LARS-capable freight cars are available from the DLS. Just search under "Lars".

Currently there are no LARS-capable narrow gauge cars, but I placed LARS industry tracks in the narrow gauge route for future use when the cars become available. Although this route has LARS industry tracks installed, they will need to be activated when you initialize a session.

United Central SP2 B
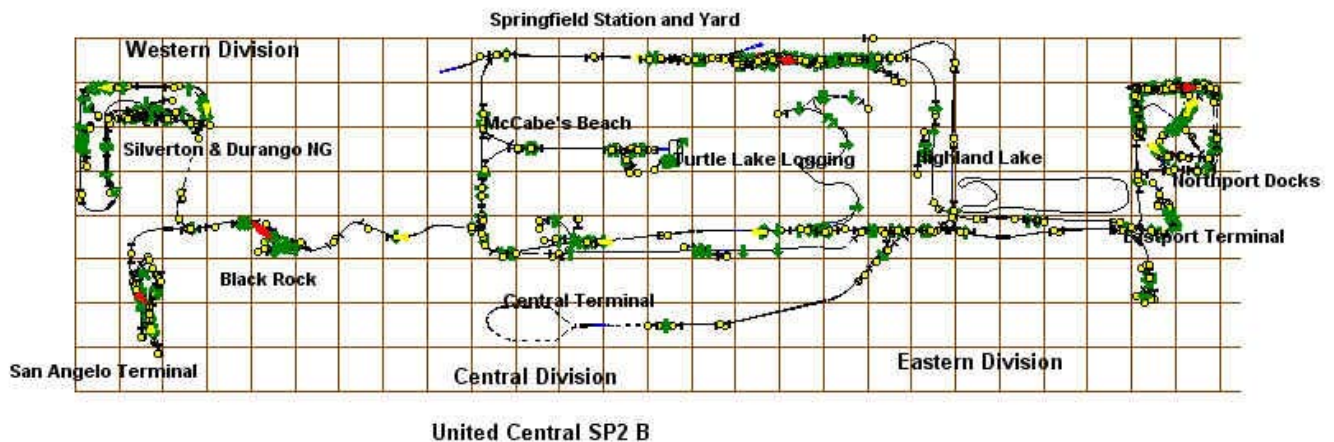
Divisions   The *United Central* route is large and can be broken down into specific areas of operation. The main divisions are the Eastern Division, Central Division, and Western Division.

Eastern Division. In the east you have the terminal of Eastport, the Eastport Rail commuter service, the Northport Docks, and the Highland Lake area with ability to use the Conquistador II drivable sailboat.

There is a new crossover track on the Eastport Commuter line to allow a freight coming from the Northport docks to bypass the double loop of the line when it heads out to the main line.

Central Division. The Central Division can be further broken down into north and south sections. In the north section is the major hub of the route, Springfield. Springfield has Springfield Station, Springfield Engine Facilities, and Springfield Yard. The yard consists of a passenger coach yard, freight yard and coal hopper yard. In addition, there are portals on either side of Springfield that can generate traffic through Springfield station heading east and west. In one session I set up, I have a camera placed at Springfield station and have programmed my favorite passenger trains to leave the portals, travel to Springfield Station, pick up passengers, and move to the receiving portal. Watching the Broadway Limited, 20th Century Limited, Super Chief and other passenger trains come through Springfield makes for a fun time for train watchers.

Southern Division. The southern section has Central Terminal located in Central City, a major destination for class one trains, and a branch line that takes you to Riverdale. There is a new branch line by the town of Mountain View that is operated by the Turtle Lake Logging Company. This is a complete logging branch with *TRS2004* lumber mill and pine forest operation, which is very scenic. Up in the mountain the first snowfall of the season has just taken place. The logging operation consists of one SW-7 switcher that takes log cars up the mountain, picks up logs, uses the wye to turn the consist around, goes to the mill, unloads the logs, then uses the turntable to turn around and start up again. Trains on the main line can stop and pick up the finished cut lumber from the siding.

Western Division. The Western Division provides a trip across the American desert to the Pacific Ocean. In the middle of the desert is the western town of Black Rock. Black Rock is a great spot for folks who enjoy switching freight loads with numerous sidings and small industries. Heading west up out of the desert there is a branch to the north, which takes you to Silverado. Silverado is the central point for the Silverado and Durango narrow gauge route. Heading west at the branch leads you to San Angelo Station and freight yard facing the Pacific Ocean. The class one San Angelino passenger train makes one trip daily from San Angelo to Central City on the East Coast. The return train from Central City to San Angelo is called the Sundowner.

The route   The *United Central* route gives you choices for class one passenger operations, highball freights and small peddler freights with lots of switching opportunities in the towns of Black Rock and other branch locations.

All the industries are LARS-capable, but you will need to configure them in a session before operating them. Drop into http://www.virtualrailroader.com and read my articles on LARS and portal use for further information.

The *United Central* was my first route created for *Trainz* way back in the beginning with version 1.0. It was reissued with different modifications along the way and sometimes ran into frame rate problems. Unfortunately, the detail level became very complex, and a number of PCs had trouble handling all the data. In *Trainz* you can run into jumps in the video if there is too much on-screen detail at once.

Case in point… Springfield yard is a large freight yard with a large engine facility area. If you place a lot of freight cars in the yard and have a lot of locomotives in the engine area, you will have video jitter problems when you run a train past the yard if you do not have a maximum amount of memory and a really powerful video card.

Super detailed locomotives and high poly counts can also affect the frame rate, as can large city scenes.

This version of *United Central* is the most advanced version and can only be run on systems that are using *Trainz 2004* with the *SP2* package, but the detail level has been adjusted to allow systems to handle the data better. The way the route is designed, a person could just operate the narrow gauge route or the commuter route to keep CPU load reduced. Someone with a mega machine with a gigabyte of ram and a hot video card could have the entire route running at once with trains crisscrossing back and forth carrying large freight and passenger consists. It really depends on how you would want to operate. If you find that the frame rate is experiencing problems, try using 800x600 resolution, reducing the draw and detail sliders, and reducing the amount of trains you have "on the board" at the same time. I now have separate sessions for different operations that I use rather than having all my trains on one session; the rate is better that way.

Trolley at McCabe's Beach.

In addition to main line running, there are numerous branch lines with a good number of industry-related sidings for those who like to run peddler freights making drop offs and pickups. There is even a trolley line at the summer resort of McCabe's beach for those who would like to take a trolley ride through a picturesque summer town complete with an amusement park and fireworks display at the beach.

Tracking cameras have been established all along the route to allow you to view with the tracking camera if you wish. Night scenes are well lit and the amusement park at McCabe's Beach is a very nice sight to see at night, complete with fireworks. I would like to express my thanks to all those creative people who worked hard to construct custom items for *Trainz* and which I have included in this route. Great work folks!

It would be smart to run *TrainzMap* (http://www.trainzobjectz.co.uk/) and take a good look at the way the *United Central* route is organized. The *SP2* system works quite well and routing is easy with "Drive To" instructions.

My system: Dell Pentium IV 2.8 Ghz, Geforce FX5200 video card with 128 MB of RAM, 512 MB of memory.

Taking a trip   Let's travel across the United Central Railroad from East to West and take a gander. The easternmost city is Eastport, which is a large city that has its own commuter line. The commuter line meets the city at the North Eastport station and circles around the port area up to Hillsdale Terminal. Hillsdale Terminal is designed as an "out and back" terminal

Eastport Rail commuter train leaving Hillsdale Terminal.

The commuter trains leave the terminal, circle the line in a two-loop commuter run, come back to the terminal and then turn around for the next run.

Freight trains can travel along the commuter tracks from outside the area and deliver and pick up goods at the industry sidings. There is now a crossover from the inner loop to the outer loop, allowing them to bypass the double loop of the commuter line when they leave Northport Docks with a load of cars.

Northport Docks.

Eastport Terminal is one of the three primary terminals for class one trains crossing the country. Eastport Terminal is located fairly close to Central City. You could consider Eastport as being similar to Boston; and Central City as being similar to New York City. Interlocking towers have been placed at every junction of major importance where routes diverge or meet. On way to make the operation more realistic is to follow a procedure where any train approaching an interlocking tower must consult with the tower to be sure the route is clear. This is accomplished by just going to map mode and seeing how the traffic is moving along and how the route is established. I follow this rule when I have a number of different trains traveling on the main line at once. Usually I will let AI control the other trains and just run my train under my control.

Below, the Sundowner Limited is leaving Eastport and will head west across the northern part of the country through Springfield and then southwest to San Angelo.


Sundowner Leaving Eastport Terminal.

The major hub of the railroad is in Springfield. At Springfield there is a major railroad yard, Springfield Station, and an interchange from Northville to Southington. Northville and Southington are the new *Trainz* Portals, and traffic can be generated from them to travel through Springfield Station. All station platforms use the new SP2 passenger animation system for loading and unloading passengers.

Springfield railroad yard.
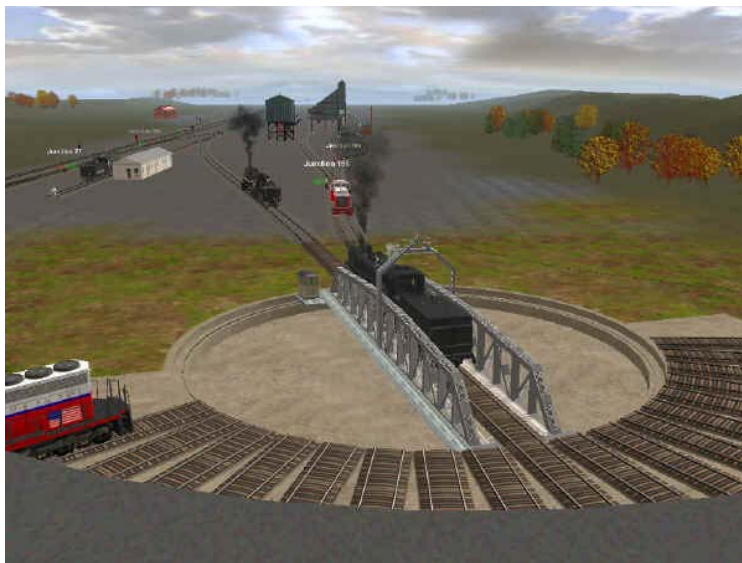

Springfield engine yard.

Springfield Station.

The Sundowner has just arrived at Springfield Station, where passengers will load and unload. The train will then head west, crossing the Mississippi River, head south and then west again at San Angelo Junction. The Sundowner will then cross the desert, go through the southwestern town of Black Rock, and finally arrive at the San Angelo Terminal.

The mighty Mississippi River.

Although this route is large in size, about 150 baseboards, everything has been greatly compressed in order to simulate cross-USA travel. Use a fast clock option if you want to simulate a longer time period for travel.
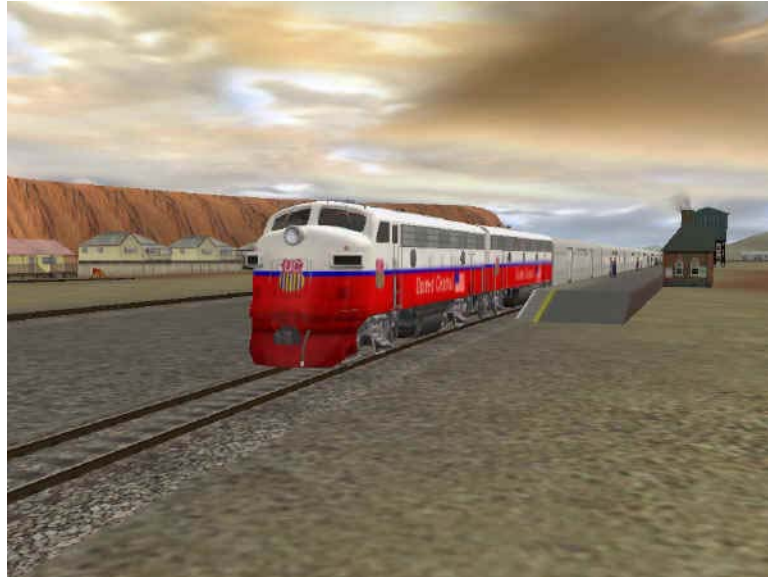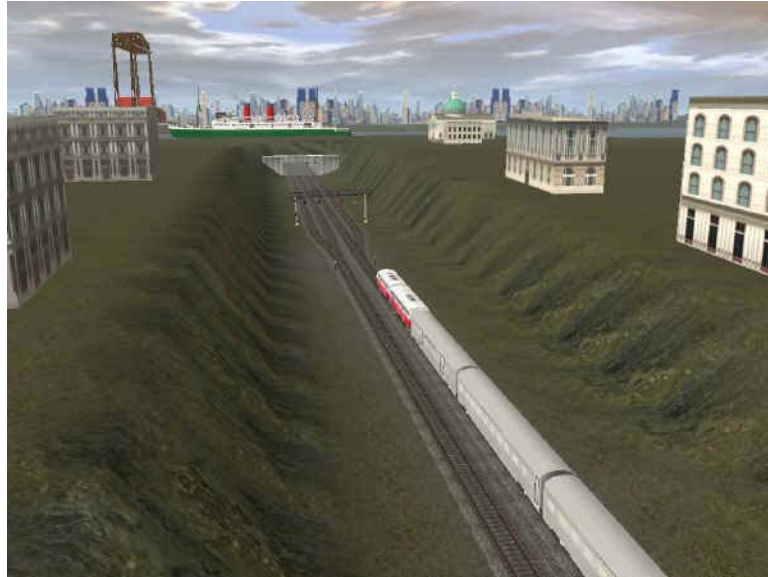
Passing through Black Rock.

San Angelo Terminal.

The eastbound limited is called the East Wind and will take the southern route to Central City. It will leave San Angelo, head south at San Angelo Junction, then east once more, finally ending its trip in Central Terminal located under Central City's streets.

Central Terminal Tunnel.

Arrival at Central Terminal.

That's an overview of the main line, but there are also plenty of opportunities for peddler freight operations.

Working the branch line above Highland Lake.

Turtle Lake logging branch.

Peddler freight working at Black Rock.

There is also a link to a narrow gauge line with dual gauge trackage for goods transfers between the standard gauge line and the narrow gauge line. You can download narrow gauge locomotives, rolling stock and other items from Prowler's web site: http://www.steammachine.com/prowler/trainz/trainz.html

Three items used on the narrow gauge line are from Prowlers web site:

    KUID:43955:28001   NG Single Track Turntable
    KUID:43955:28021   Depot USA
    KUID:43955:38003   NG track no ties

Silverton & Durango narrow gauge line.

Taking a sail on Highland Lake.

One more thing -- along the route there is a lake called Highland Lake. It is based on a lake that I loved in Maine. There are loons and other birds that can be heard. Use the Conquistador II drivable sailboat on this lake. You can download it from the DLS. The underwater track circles the lake and there is a buoy marking the area where you can place the sailboat. Just take an evening sail sometime and relax. Not bad!

I have written articles about the use of Portals and the LARS system in the *Virtual Model Railroad Journal*. Check the VMR Journal link on the *Virtual Railroader* web site (http://www.virtualrailroader.com) to find a listing.

I have a *TrainzObjectz* listing of this route for your information regarding all the sources for custom material used in the route. The listing is too large to duplicate here, but I will e-mail you a copy if you write me at johnda1237@hotmail.com.

You can find the *United Central* route at the DLS as:

    MAP NAME: United Central SP2C

    MAP KUID: 46429:102540

Well, I guess that's a wrap! If you have any questions or comments please feel free to e-mail me.

Bon voyage!

John

Meet J.P. McNeil

By John D'Angelo

Northeast Rails Version 2.

There are many talented people who contribute all types of material for the use of *Trainz* owners. If you visit the Trainz Download Station (DLS), you will find there are people who create beautifully detailed locomotives and rolling stock; and other people who create scenery items such as buildings, track, trees, and other items that add greatly to our enjoyment of *Trainz*. There is also the route creator. The route creator may combine many different elements created by others into a single route. Combining all the different elements and creating a track plan that will result in a realistic reproduction of a railroad, either an actual railroad or a freelance railroad, can be a time-consuming but highly rewarding experience.

I would like you to meet J.P. McNeil (a.k.a. slickjay17) who is currently working on a route called *Northeast Rails Version 2.* When he posted screen shots of his route, we were all impressed with the images we saw, and decided that perhaps you folks would like to meet him.

JDA **JP, can you tell us how you got started in *Trainz*?**

JPM My interest in trains started because I was born into it; both my grandfather and great-grandfather were railfans and my dad worked for the railroad. Growing up, we had an HO layout in our basement that would be filled with my brother's and my newest purchases.

Unfortunately, my dad worked for Conrail in 1998 and we were forced to relocate to Virginia and subsequently tear down the layout. Our house in Virginia did not have a basement, so we were forced to finish off part of the attic in order to make space for a model railroad.

I started to buy and buy HO Conrail and Norfolk Southern locomotives with the hope of one day creating the Pittsburgh Line. My dad planned on doing a totally different landscape, so I would have to settle for just mimicking operations on the Pittsburgh main line. By the time the bench work started to go up I was getting ready to head off to college, and my dad was traveling to Atlanta for four and five days at a time, so there was no time to finish the railroad.

This is when I discovered virtual railroading. I purchased *Microsoft Train Simulator* shortly after its release and enjoyed it thoroughly, but there were some things that it just could not do for me. I wanted to be able to control multiple trains at the same time and be able to design my own routes. The first was impossible, at least at the time, and the second I found to be incredibly difficult.

Shortly thereafter I was fumbling through *Model Railroader* and came across a huge article on virtual model railroading. It mentioned and described each of the virtual railroading games and displayed screen shots of each. This is when I first came across *Trainz*. I saw a picture of Mark Hoffman's modern GE C44-9W/AC44000W's and was stunned by their realism. I immediately went to the nearest gaming store and purchased the original *Trainz*. I then proceeded to download almost all the GE locomotives from Digital Roundhouse. I now have upgraded to *UTC*, since my video card does not support *TRS2004*.

The route. My new route, *Northeast Rails Version 2*, has very little to do with version 1. Version 2 is based on a fictional area, Waterside City, set somewhere between New York and Baltimore in the northeast United States. When I started this project my goal was to create a route that allowed for realistic operation without being modeled after one specific, prototypical main line. I wanted to incorporate multiple freight railroads and somehow tie in a commuter line and downtown urban area. I was able to achieve all of these.

The terminals. Morris Yard is on the CSX (ex-B&O/Reading) main line south of downtown. It serves as the end of ex-B&O trackage and the beginning of ex-Conrail (ex-Reading) trackage, and is also a crew change point. The terminal is composed of a small

arrival/departure yard at the south end and a large intermodal facility at the north end of the yard. Penrose Yard and the Austell Intermodal Terminal are also south of the city, but are on the NS (ex-PRR, ex-CR) spur that runs from CP Penn south. Penrose Yard has a small departure/arrival yard, but is mainly used for automotive and domestic intermodal traffic, while Austell is for just international container traffic. There is also a large intermodal facility north of the city on the NS Penn Subdivision between CP Harris and CP Pitt. Here intermodal trains headed for North Jersey or Penrose/Austell can swap blocks of cars without interfering with the main line, which runs along the south side of the facility. It is also a place to combine trains from North Jersey and Penrose/Austell. The area between CP Penn and CP Pitt is the busiest piece of main on the route because it serves as a funnel between three different subdivisions (see illustration).

NE Rails Version 2
CP Pitt to CP Penn
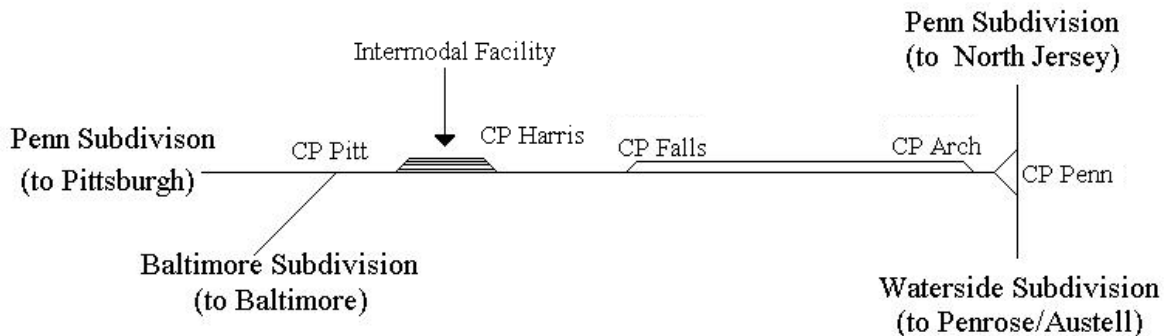
There are staging yards at each end of the CSX main and at the ends of both the western NS mains. Inman Yard lies on the northbound Penn Subdivision and serves as the staging yard at that end of the route.

Commuter trackage

The commuter line runs from a terminal in downtown Waterside City out to West Trenton, making a number of stops along the way. CP Nesh signals the beginning of shared trackage between CSX and the commuter line and is also where the Kraft Secondary joins the action. The Kraft Secondary serves the Kraft Power Plant, which sits adjacent to the NS main at CP Penn. At West Trenton the catenary and commuter traffic end, and CSX takes full control of the trackage. From West Trenton, the CSX main heads north to New York City and points beyond.

JDA Thanks for the great description of your project, JP; it really looks like it is coming along nicely. I was interested in the tracks you are using. Are they from Virtual-Motive-Division (VMD)?

JPM It is actually the *HO TTrainz* track pack, which is available on their website (www.trainz.hu) under the downloads/track section. I used the WL Gray texture track, but I recommend getting the entire pack.
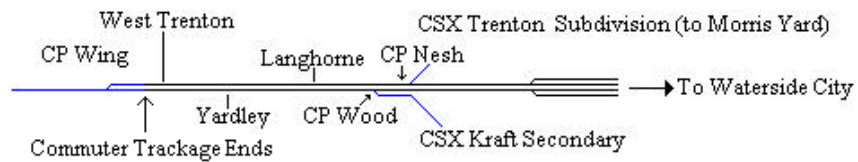
JDA What motive power and rolling stock will you be using?

JPM Since this is set in modern times, the motive power will be dominated by modern GE's with a few modern and older EMD's mixed in. Rolling stock will include anything from container well cars to multilevels to bethgon coalporters. This is because the route was made with the goal of running unit coal trains, intermodal/automotive, and manifest trains. Basically anything you see on US freight rails today you can see on this route.

JDA Do you have a finished baseboard size for your planned route?

JPM I don't have an official count yet; at this point it is about 60 baseboards in size.

JDA I have to say, JP, that it looks like a real beauty; and finally, do you know when we'll see this baby at the DLS?

JPM The beta version is currently available now at the DLS:

NE RAILS V2   KUID:87854:452206359

Thanks JP, I just went to the DLS and downloaded your beta copy. I also went to the www.trainz.hu web site and downloaded the HO TTrainz complete track pack. I think the site is a Hungarian site, and at first I had a little trouble navigating it because of the language difference, but the word Download is in English on their menu and I was able to download the pack fine. It is a zip file which, when unzipped, becomes a standard CDP file for installation. Everything is ready for me to take to the throttle tonight and have some fun on your route!
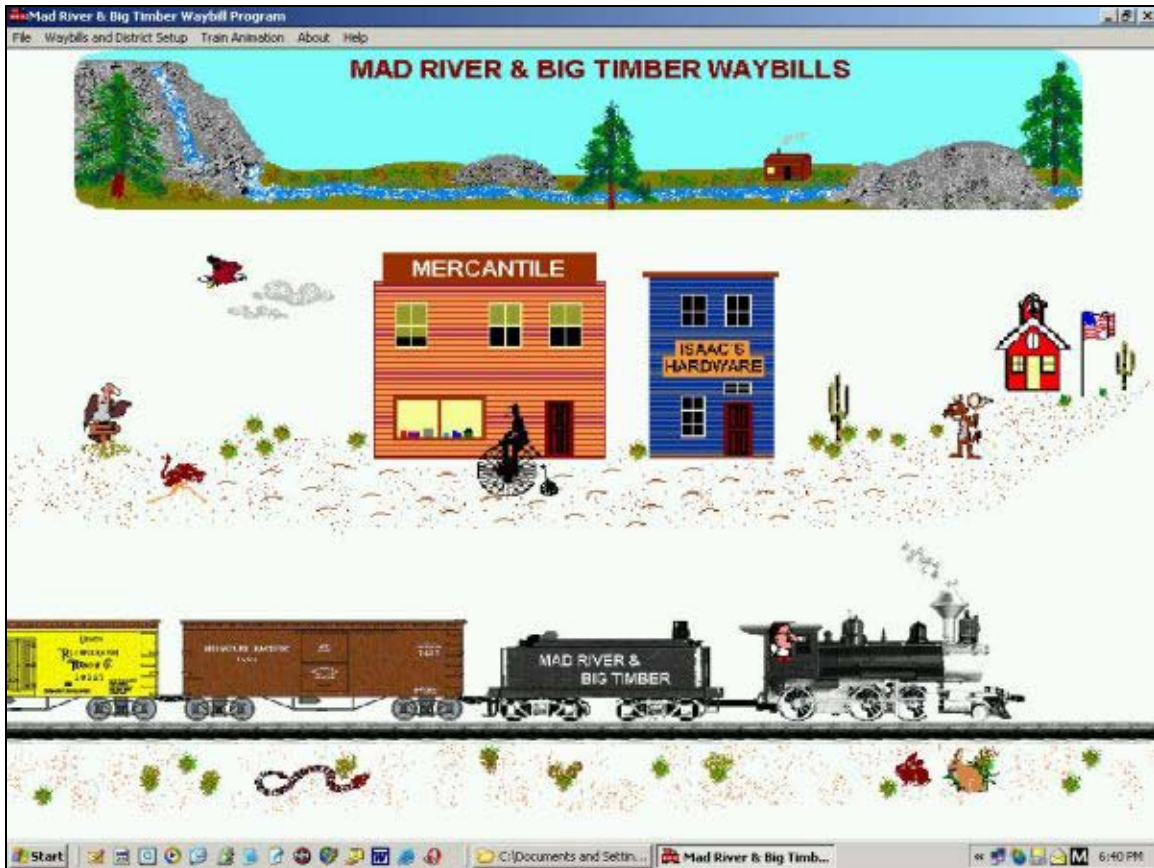
Green light!

JP, thanks for spending some time with us over here at the *Virtual Railroader* magazine. I'm sure our readers will enjoy your comments and will get lots of good use from your excellent route.

John

Waybills on the Black Canyon

By Alfred Barten

I've been enjoying John D'Angelo's *Black Canyon NG RR2A* and predecessor route for about a year now. I first thought of it as a way to run Prowler's great Denver & Rio Grande Western narrow gauge equipment, available from his web site at http://www.steammachine.com/prowler/trainz/trainz.html. I soon realized this was a great route to just have fun operating -- it's straightforward running from Ouray to Gunnison, has 4 intermediate stops (5 now that John has added his logging branch), has good Colorado scenery, and does not overly tax my minimum-spec PC. The industries and sidings at each stop enable the kind of switching activities found on a typical short line.

I measured the distances between stops and timed an easy run, checking times at each stop and allowing additional time for switching. With this information I drew up a timetable and began running a full schedule of trains, including trains in opposite directions with a scheduled meeting point. The success encouraged me to look into various software programs designed to create waybills. There are a number of such programs, all created for model railroaders and perfectly suitable for train sim operations. The most comprehensive is *Ship It!* from Albion Software (http://www.albionsoftware.com). I downloaded the mammoth manual in PDF format and put it into a binder for easy reading. The only reason I

haven't purchased *ShipIt!* is that if I had the required $95 available I would put it into the kitty for my next computer, which is long overdue.

Mad River & Big Timber Waybills	Recently I discovered a free program listed in the Software section of the National Model Railroad Association web site (see http://www.cwrr.com/nmra/Modelb-SW.html). It's called *Mad River & Big Timber Waybills* (see http://home.att.net/~cycleriders/Mad_River_Waybill.htm) and has been in use at the Sacramento Modular Railroaders for a number of years now. Although basic, I found this program to be perfect for use on the *Black Canyon* route. I think it would also work for most any short line.
	The *Mad River & Big Timber Waybills* download page has several options. If you're new to the program, select the complete program represented by the first download item (Download COMPLETE WAYBILL PROGRAM (162K)). You may also need the additional files represented by the third download option (Download VBRUN300, COMMDLG & CMDIALOG (282K)) -- I did.
Mad River & Big Timber Waybills Overview	*Mad River & Big Timber Waybills* (I'll call it *Waybills* from here on) is designed around the idea of producing a set of instructions (waybill) for distributing cars from a main point to a series of smaller points. *Waybill* does not provide for pick up and delivery between intermediate points nor does it provide instructions for picking up cars other than to include the default statement (which you can change) "Pick-up all cars on destination spurs." In other words, when you arrive at a destination, whether or not you have cars to drop off, you are to pick up any cars that are waiting. If you wanted to be more exact about whether or not a car should be picked up, you could arrange your yards to include incoming and outgoing spurs. You could also just add a handwritten note to the waybill.
	Waybill's limitation is also its strength in the sense that you can get up and running quickly. Its editing capabilities are primitive, though, so I recommend outlining on paper what your setup is going to be before entering it. (Of course you will at first want to just play around with *Waybill*, using artificial data to get the hang of the program.)
	Waybill is designed for club and modular layouts. It creates waybills for up to 6 divisions. When you print a waybill, the program assigns an incremental number to the waybill and provides a list of drop-offs. The specific car types and quantities at each drop-off are randomized by *Waybill*, so not every run is the same.
	Black Canyon, excluding the logging branch, is essentially one division. I treated each division in *Waybill* as a timetable run, the first being EB1, the second being WB2, and so forth, where EB

means eastbound and WB means westbound. *Waybill* doesn't know the difference between "Division" and my use of the Division category as "Train."

Using Waybill   **Outline your data**. For the moment, you can follow what I've done. I'll explain it when we get to "Method in my madness." Once you get to know the program you'll want to come up with your own data.
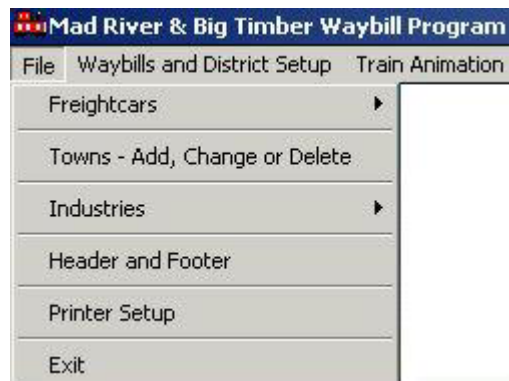
Train EB1 (Eastbound, Ouray - Gunnison).

Location	Industries	Freight cars (drops)
Ridgway EB	Team Track	Box Flat
Colona EB	Team Track	Box Flat
Montrose EB	Team Track	Box Flat
Cimarron EB	Team Track	Box Flat
Gunnison EB	Classification (4)	Gondola - Loaded Box Flat Tank Maintenance
	Warehouse	Box
	Sidings (2)	Left over
	Stock Yard	Stock

Train WB2 (Westbound, Gunnison - Ouray).

Location	Industries	Freight cars (drops)
Cimmaron WB	Cimmaron Coal	Gondola - Empty
	Cimmaron Grain	Box
	Team Track	Box Flat
Montrose WB	LazyB Stock	Stock
	Team Track	Box Flat
Colona WB	Colona Stock	Stock
Ridgway WB	Ridgway Coal	Gondola - Empty
Ouray WB	Team Track	Flat Tank Reefer Maintenance
	Freight House	Box
	Ouray Coal	Gondola - Empty

Menu bar ⟶

Mad River & Big Timber Waybill Program

File   Waybills and District Setup   Train Animation

Freightcars ▶

Towns - Add, Change or Delete

Industries ▶

Header and Footer

Printer Setup

Exit

Set header and footer. You don't have to do this first, but you might as well do it before you forget.

1. Select File | Header and Footer at the menu bar. The Header Footer screen displays.

2. Enter your road name or route name or whatever you want on the waybill header into the upper field.

3. Enter whatever text you want for the waybill footer into the lower field.

4. Click OK to save the entries and close the screen.

Define the environment. The required steps are conveniently numbered. Basically, you need to enter info as follows:

1. Select File | Towns – Add, Change or Delete at the menu bar. The Town File Maintenance screen displays.

2. Enter a New Town Name and click the Add Town button. The Adding Industries to a New Town screen displays.

3. Enter an Industry.

4. Enter Car Capacity of Industry.

5. Click a car in the Freightcar Choices list. It appears in the pane to the right. You can add more cars by repeating this step.

6. Click the Add This Industry button. The industry is saved and the entry fields are cleared. You can add another industry by repeating steps 3 through 6.

7. Click the Exit button to close screen. The Town File Maintenance screen redisplays, and the new town is added to the Towns list.

You can edit your data, but I won't go into it here. The program comes with a manual that provides instructions.

Enter text for the Waybill Header - 78 character limit. This prints at the top of every Waybill.

Mad River & Big Timber

Ok

Enter text for the Waybill Footer - 78 character limit. This prints at the bottom of every Waybill.

Pick-up all cars on destination spurs

Cancel
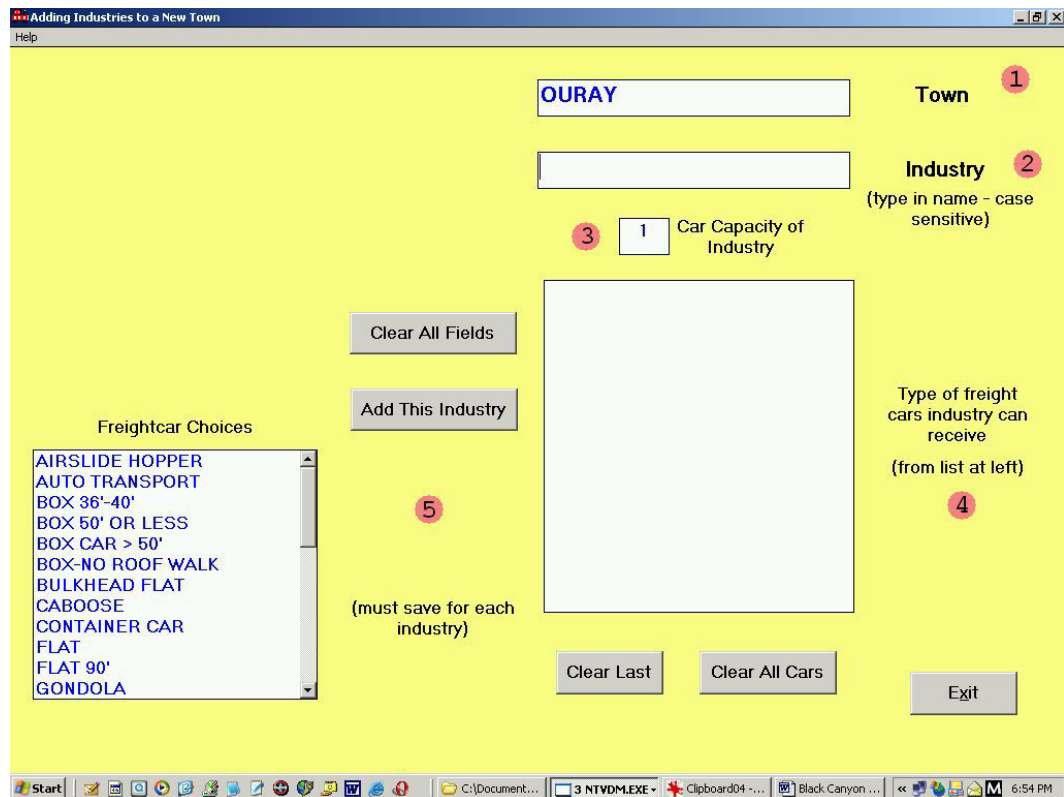
Create and print waybill. The required steps are conveniently numbered. Basically, you need to perform the following:

1. Select Waybills and District Setup at the menu bar. The District Setup screen displays.

2. Click a selection in Town List and click again in you district of choice. The town name appears in that district.

3. You can edit Train Length Settings, but you may want to leave that till you're more familiar with the program. These values refer to values to that can appear on a given waybill, not the values you can enter into the program.

4. Click Waybill button to create a waybill for associated district. The Print Form screen displays.

5. You can reset the waybill number to 1 by clicking Counter Reset button and you can select to print waybill full width of page or half-width. The latter is a convenient size, but is accomplished by truncating data, not by printing in smaller type.

6. Click Print button to send waybill to printer.

7. Click Save Changes button to save, then Cancel button to close screen.

Method in my madness. As set up, the program provides a list of drop-offs for every town identified in the associated division. An industry, like a mine, is only gong to receive empty cars. You don't have to list loaded cars because they are all pick-ups. In the *Black Canyon* route, the empty gondolas are only going to come via westbound trains, so I identified the appropriate towns with a WB after their name. Towns that have industries, or classification or interchange tracks that receive cars from eastbound trains are given the EB identifier.

An industry like a plastics company will receive loaded tank cars with chemicals and empty covered hoppers for loading with plastic pellets, for example. Such an industry could receive loads from one direction and empties from another. Though I don't have any such industries on the *Black Canyon*, I would still use the directional modifier with the town name just to keep things straight in my own mind. Thus I have a set of towns with each identifier.

Tip. Caboose is listed in the available freight cars. Don't select it unless you want to ship cabooses all over the place.

Setting up in Surveyor. This will take some experimentation and may require me to build a yard at Ouray to meet car demand on occasion. The randomness of the waybill creation function can potentially place demands higher than expected. You may even want to keep extra locomotives around in case you need to run two sections of a train or double-head the front-end power.

My initial setup places cars as follows. For reference, I've added after this article annotated screen shots showing track plans of each of the cities. The shots were taken using *TrainzMap*.


Surveyor setup for pick-ups.

Location	*Industry*	**Pick-ups**
Ouray	Freight House	Box - 1
	Team Track	Reefer – 1 Tank – 1 Flat - 1
	Ouray Coal	Gon – Loaded - 2
Ridgway	Ridgway Coal	Gon – Loaded - 2
Colona	Colona Stock	Stock - 2
	Team Track	Box – 1 Flat - 1
Montrose	LazyB Stock	Stock - 2

|		
Cimarron	Cimmaron Coal	Gon – Loaded - 2
	Cimmaron Grain	Box - 2
Gunnison	Classification (4)	Gon – Empty – 6 Box – 2 Flat – 2 Tank- 2 Reefer – 2 Maintenance - 1
	Warehouse	Box - 2
	Sidings (2)	All types – 1 each
	Stock Yard	Stock - 3

Run those trains   All that's left to do now is fire up *Trainz*, load *Black Canyon*, and get on running those trains.

Next time I'll show you how to build a waybill calculator using an *Excel* spreadsheet and *Excel's* random function.

Al
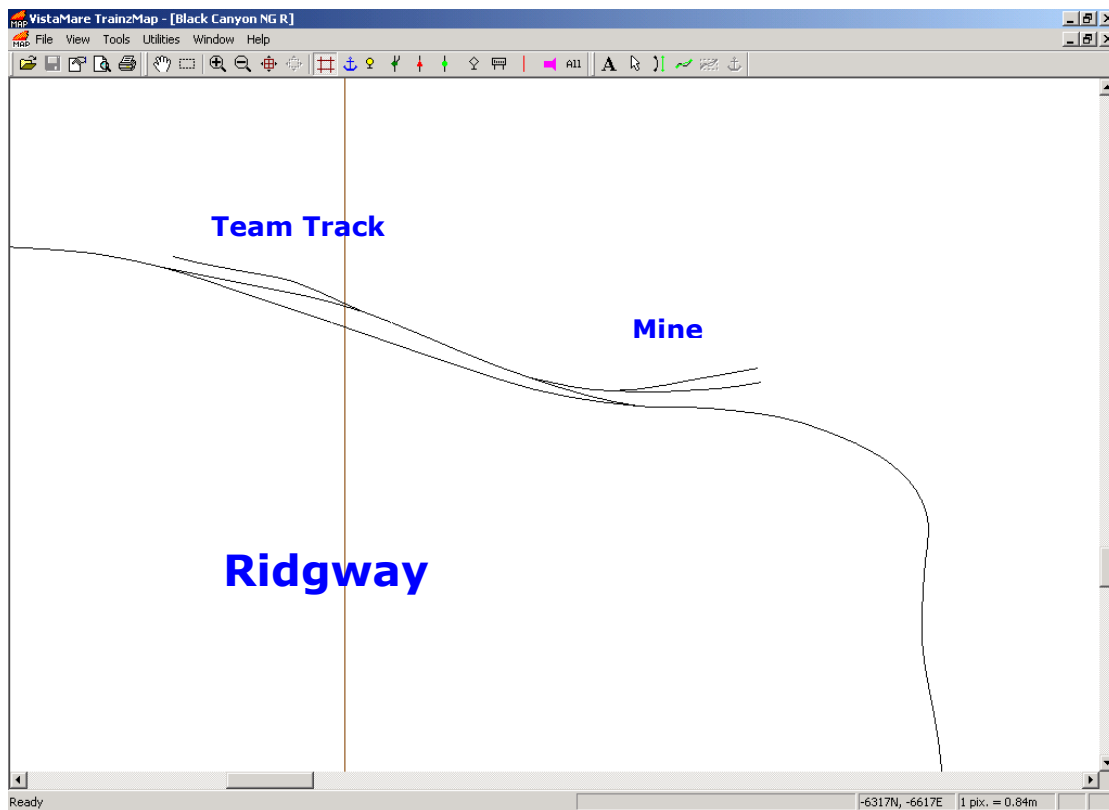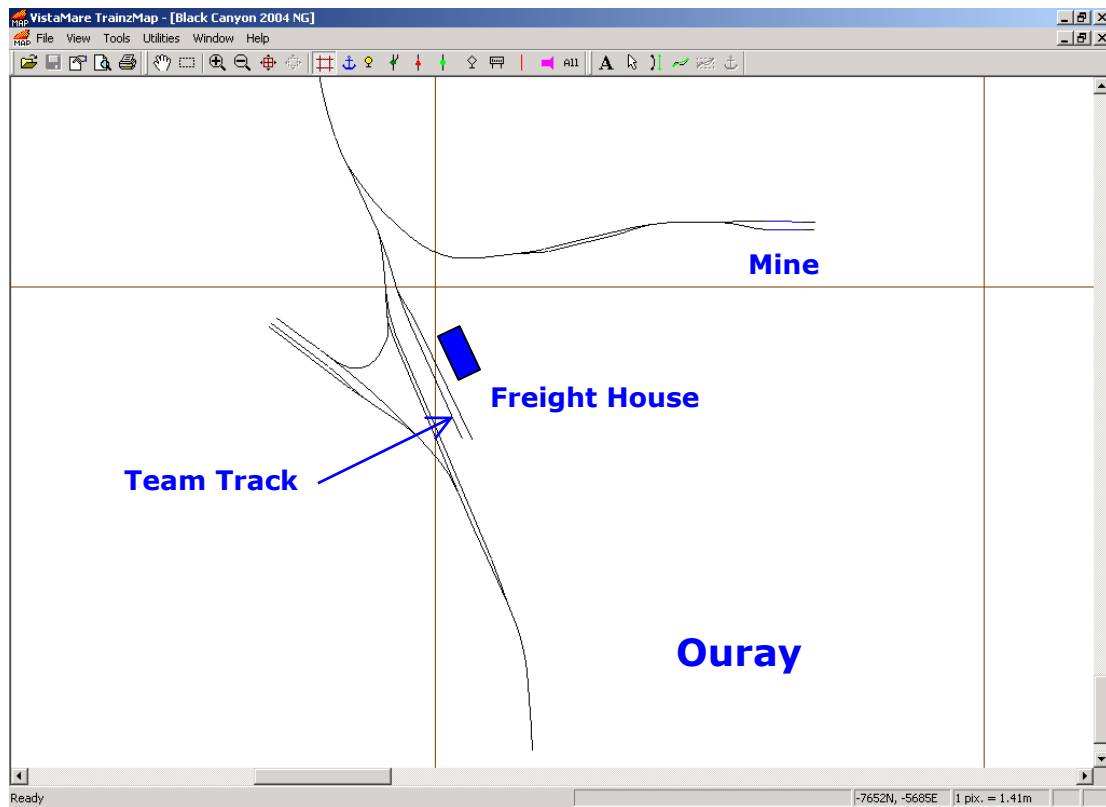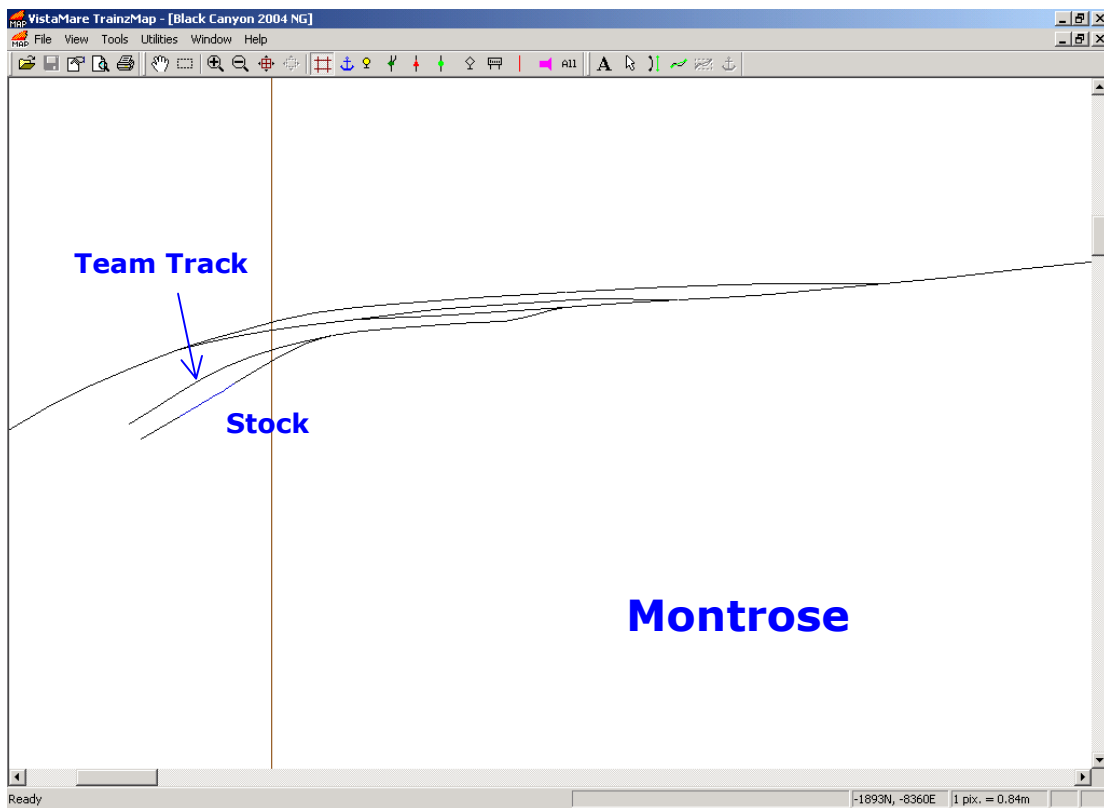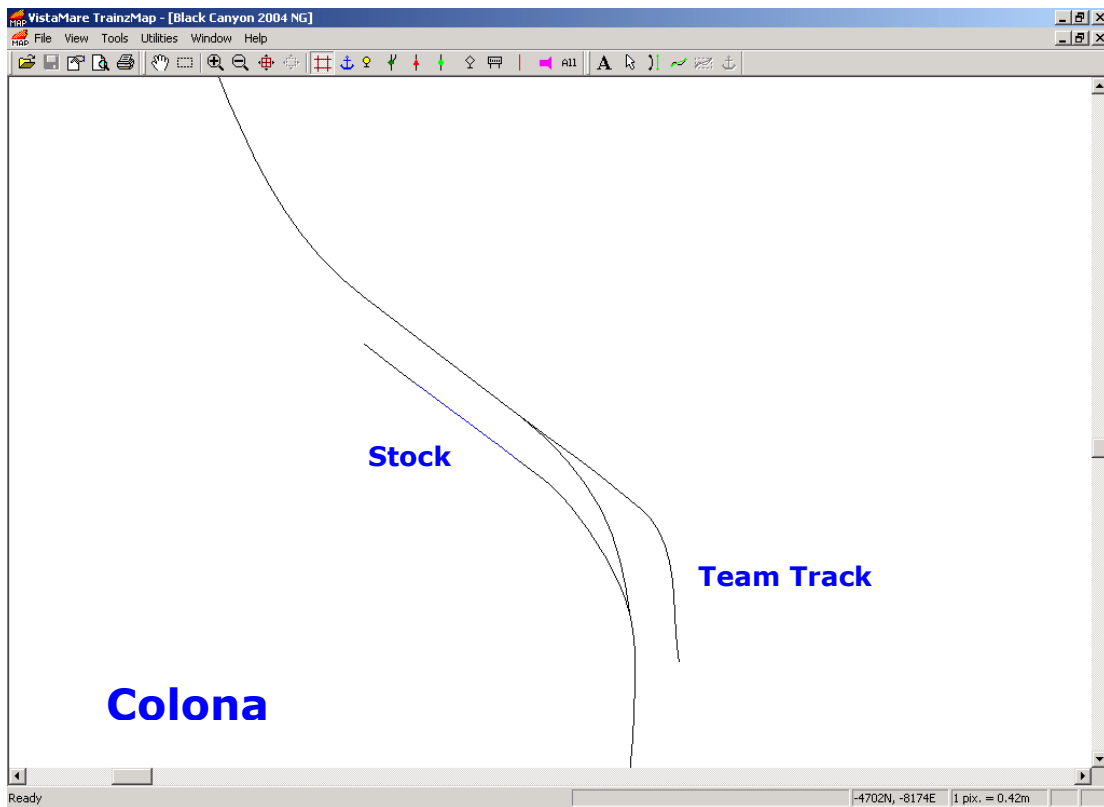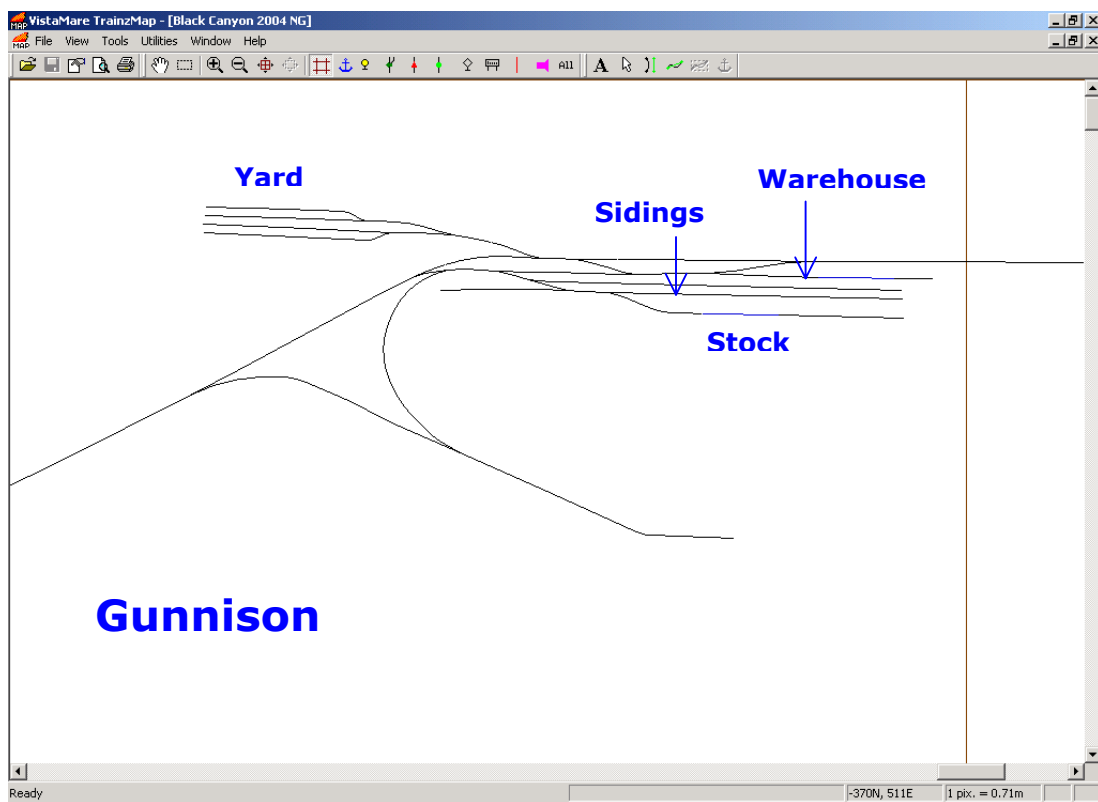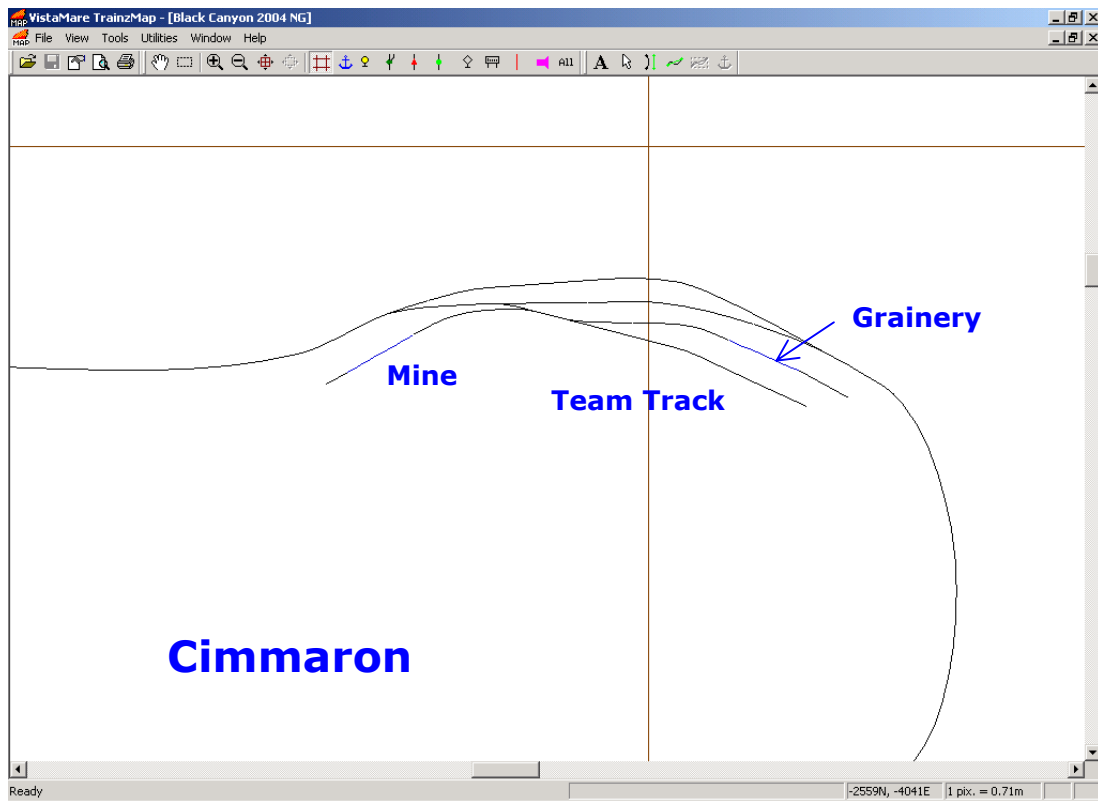
Where IS that car?

Using TrainzObjectz to organize your rolling stock

By John D'Angelo

W hen I first used *Trainz*, keeping track of my rolling stock wasn't too difficult because my stable was pretty empty. As time passed by and I expanded my inventory by downloading locomotives, passenger cars, and freight cars, things started getting confusing. When I used Railyard to search for rolling stock or attempted to add a specific car to a consist, sometimes I had a heck of a time locating the little bugger! The *Trainz* system of listing rolling stock is in alphabetical order, and this is fine. The problem was that when people created equipment for downloading they did not follow a single system. Some people listed the rail name first, others listed the car type first; and depending on how the car was listed, that determined its location in the Railyard display or consist listing.

I personally favor the military method of listing, which goes something like this. Instead of listing "50 Caliber Machine Gun" the military would write "Gun Machine, Caliber 50". In an alphabetical listing all guns would be grouped together. In that group all

machine guns would be in their own group and then the caliber of the guns would be grouped.

The listing problem really became apparent when I downloaded a large group of LARS (Logistics and Resource System) -capable freight cars. [To learn more about the LARS system please read my article on LARS in the March 15 issue of *VMRJ*.] After I downloaded the cars, when I looked at them using Railyard they were sprinkled all over the listing, making picking a LARS-capable car for a consist more difficult than I would like. To make the car listing better I needed to change the way the car's information was written in the "name" line of the config.txt file for the car. In the case of the LARS-capable cars, the LARS name was at the end of the name, as in "PRR Boxcar 40' LARS". I wanted to arrange my boxcars by function, size, type, road name. To do this the boxcar needed to be named "LARS 40' Boxcar PRR". With some 60 LARS-capable boxcars waiting in the wings to be renamed, I needed a tool to make things easier.

Enter TrainzObjectz   *TrainzObjectz* is a database program for *Trainz* created by TafWeb. The program is available as a free download from TafWeb at http://www.trainzobjectz.co.uk.

TrainzObjectz has a great many functions that it can carry out. I regularly use it following downloads to correct problems. I also use it to check out the custom items in my routes. If you have not downloaded *TrainzObjectz*, I heartily recommend doing so. The program has too many features to explain in detail in this article, but I will demonstrate how I used it to organize my LARS freight car listing. By the time this article was written, I had already corrected the listing of the over 60 LARS cars, but I had just downloaded a new LARS-capable car that needed fixing. Here is how I used *TrainzObjectz* to fix the car listing:
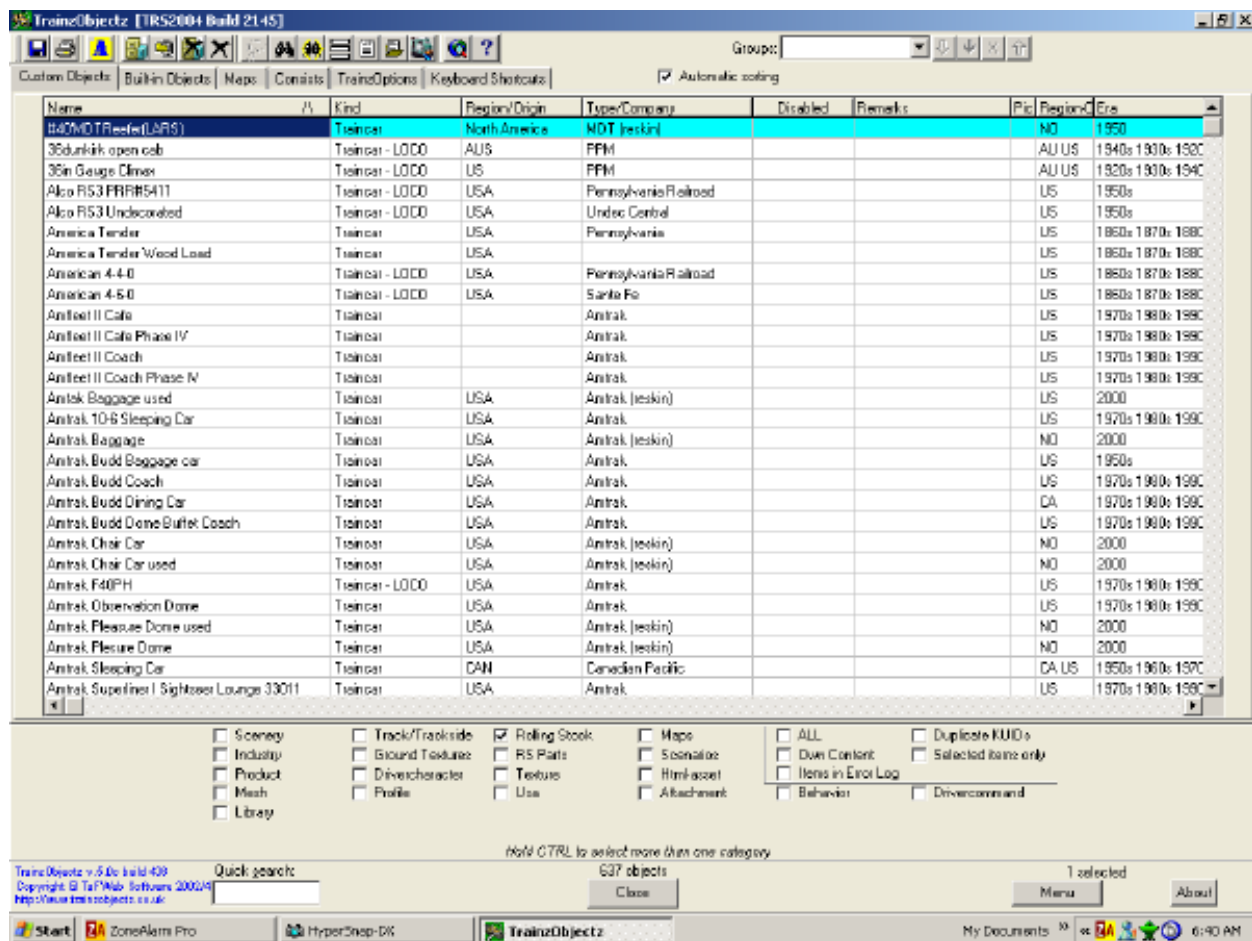
TrainzObjectz opening display.

When I activated the *TrainzObjectz* program, the new LARS boxcar was showing at the top of the list instead of being in the LARS group of cars. This was because in the config.txt file for the boxcar the "name" line was written as **#40'MDTReefer(LARS)**. The # character put the boxcar at the top of the list. I wanted the boxcar to get moved down the list to the LARS grouping, and in order to do this I needed to rewrite the "name" line. Before using *TrainzObjectz* I would have to search for the boxcar file in the World/Custom/Dispatcher/Downloads directory using Microsoft Explorer, open up the config.txt file, make the change, save the change and then search for the next file. *TranzObjectz* makes the searching and editing a breeze. I just highlight the boxcar line and, by right-clicking the name of the item, I make the options menu appear. I choose the EDIT/VIEW option and then the EDIT CONFIG.TXT option.
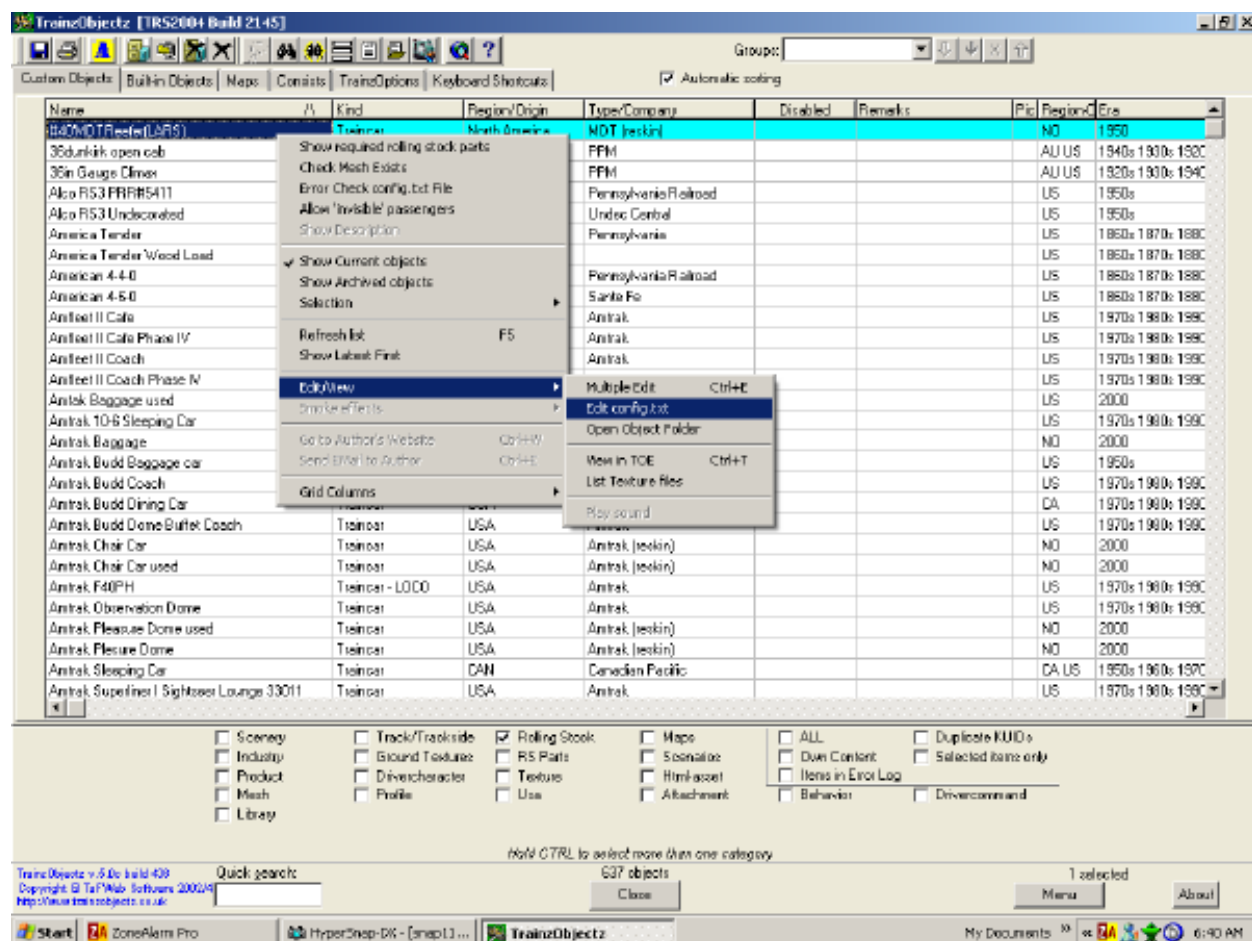
Edit/View and Edit Config.txt choices

This brings up the config.txt file for the boxcar and I then search
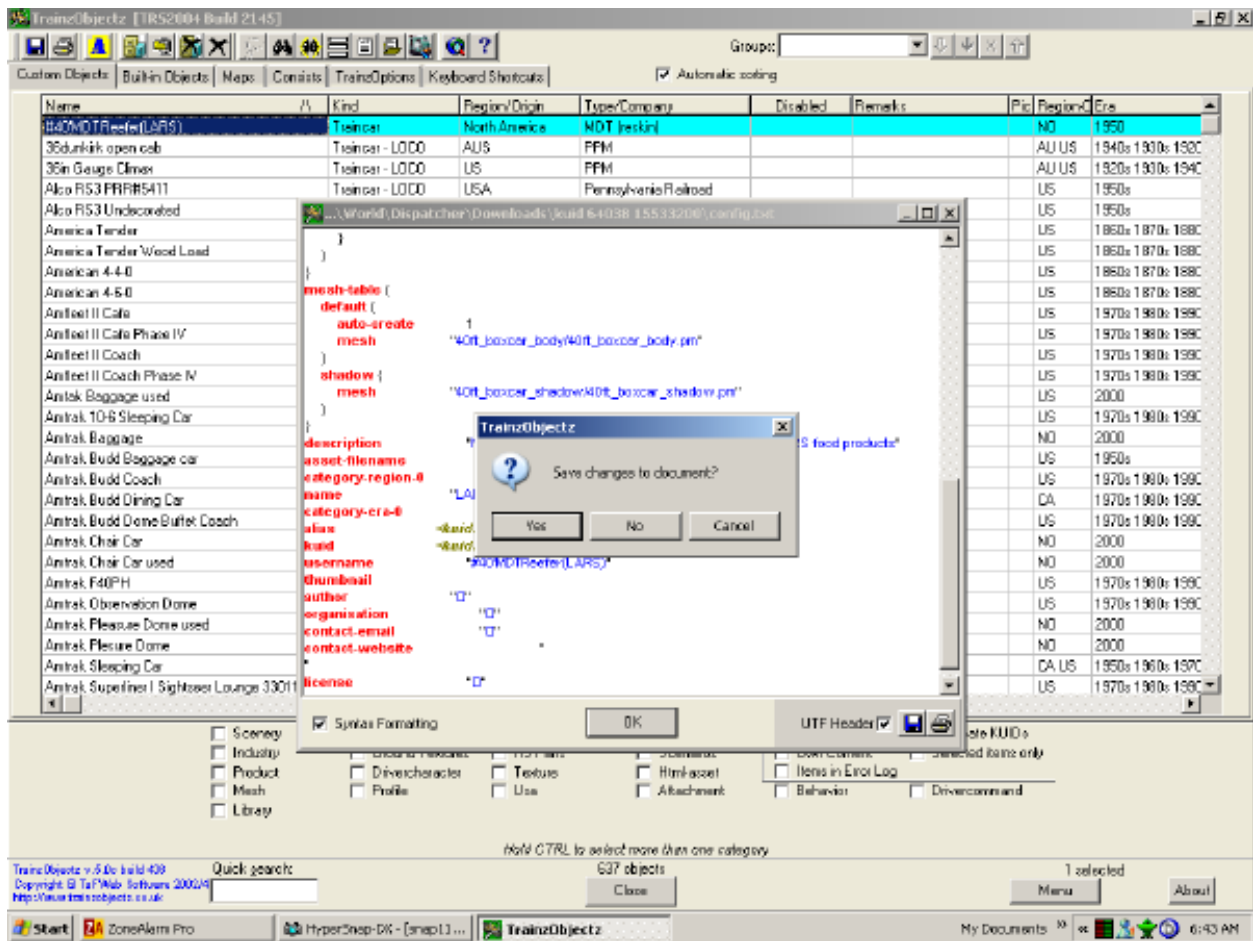for the "name" line in the config.txt file.
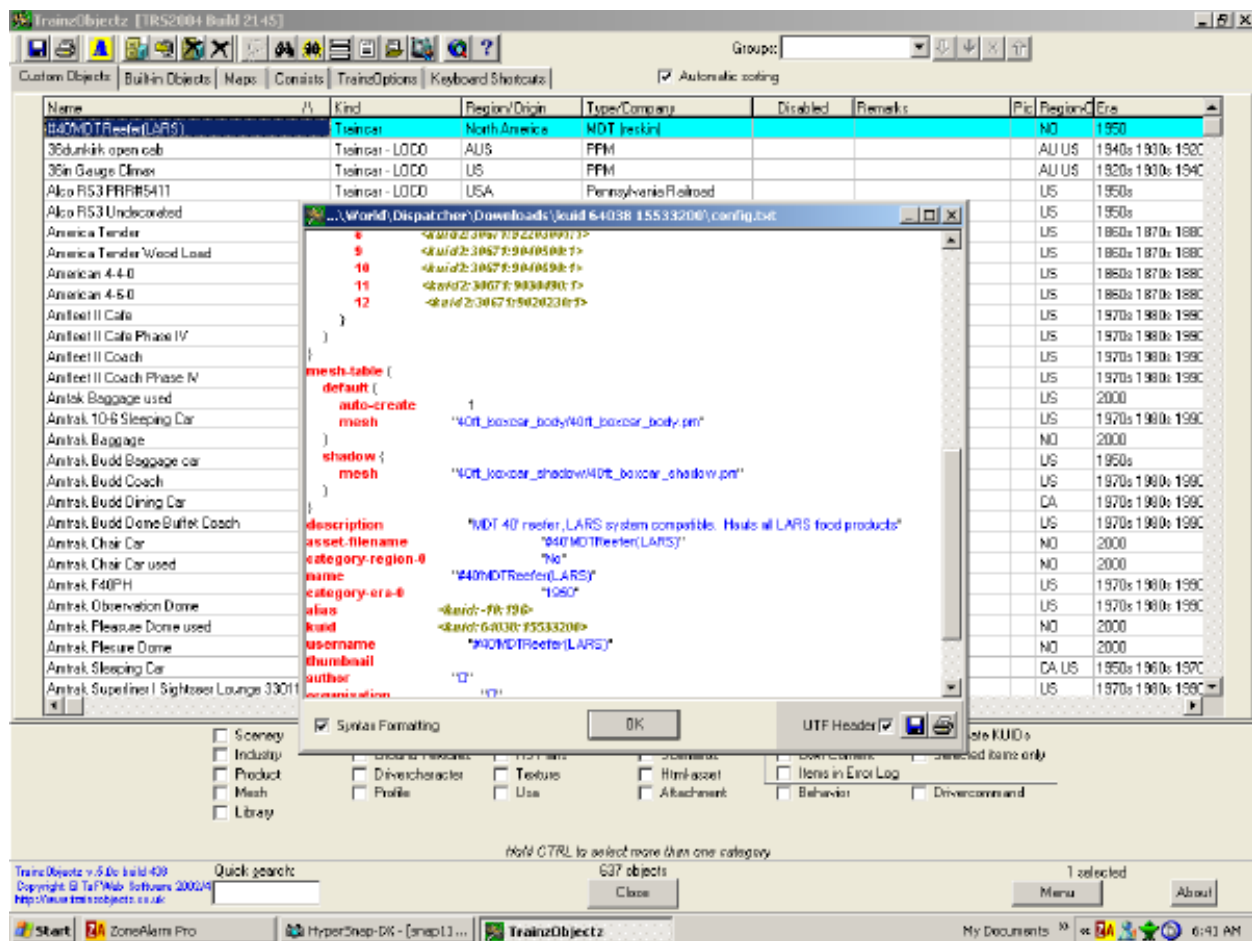
Looking for the "name" line.

I then edit the name and make it **LARS 40' Reefer MDT**.
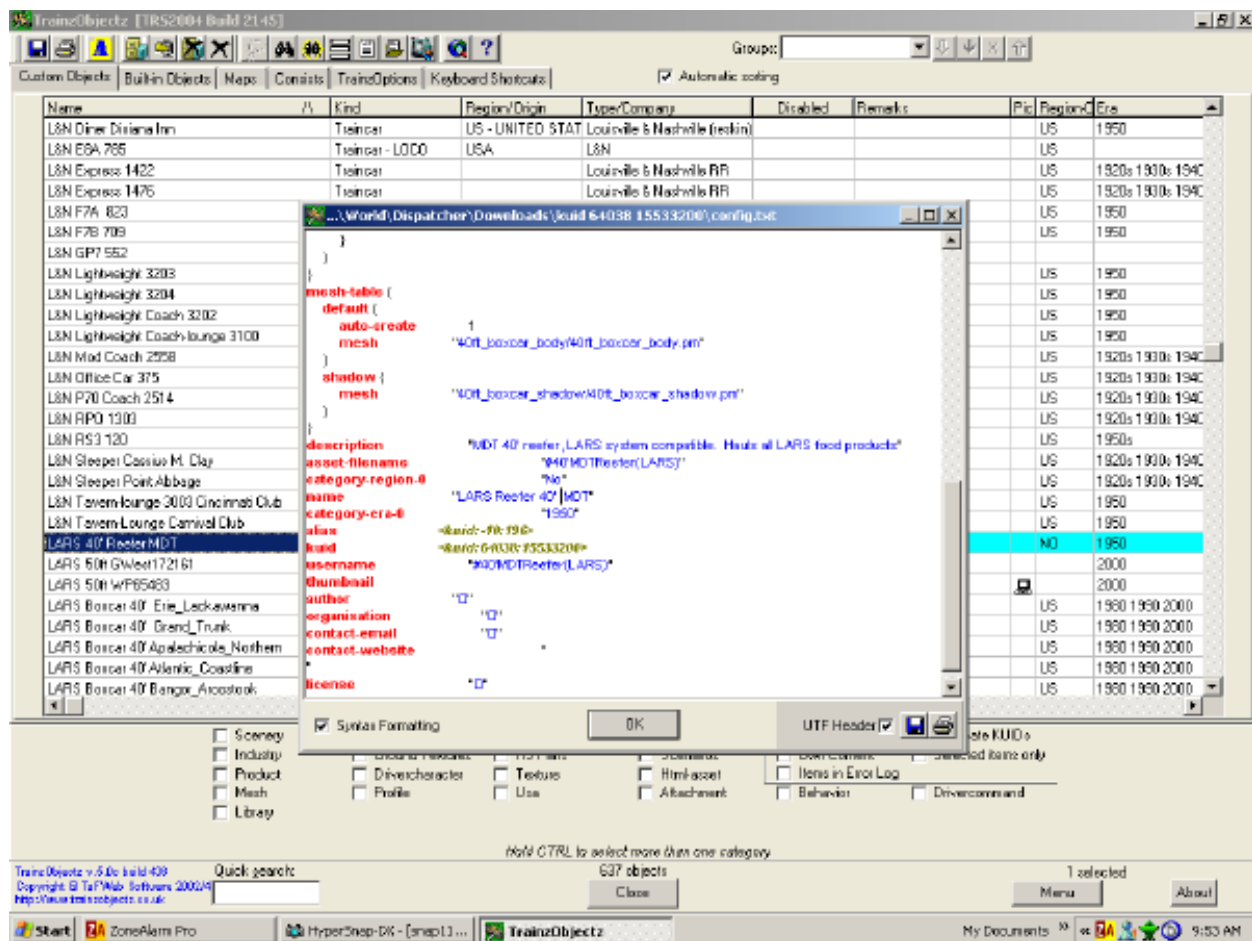
After the edit is finished I save the change.

Once the change has been made, accepted and saved, the car shows in the proper place when viewed in Railyard, the consist listing or in *TrainzObjectz*.
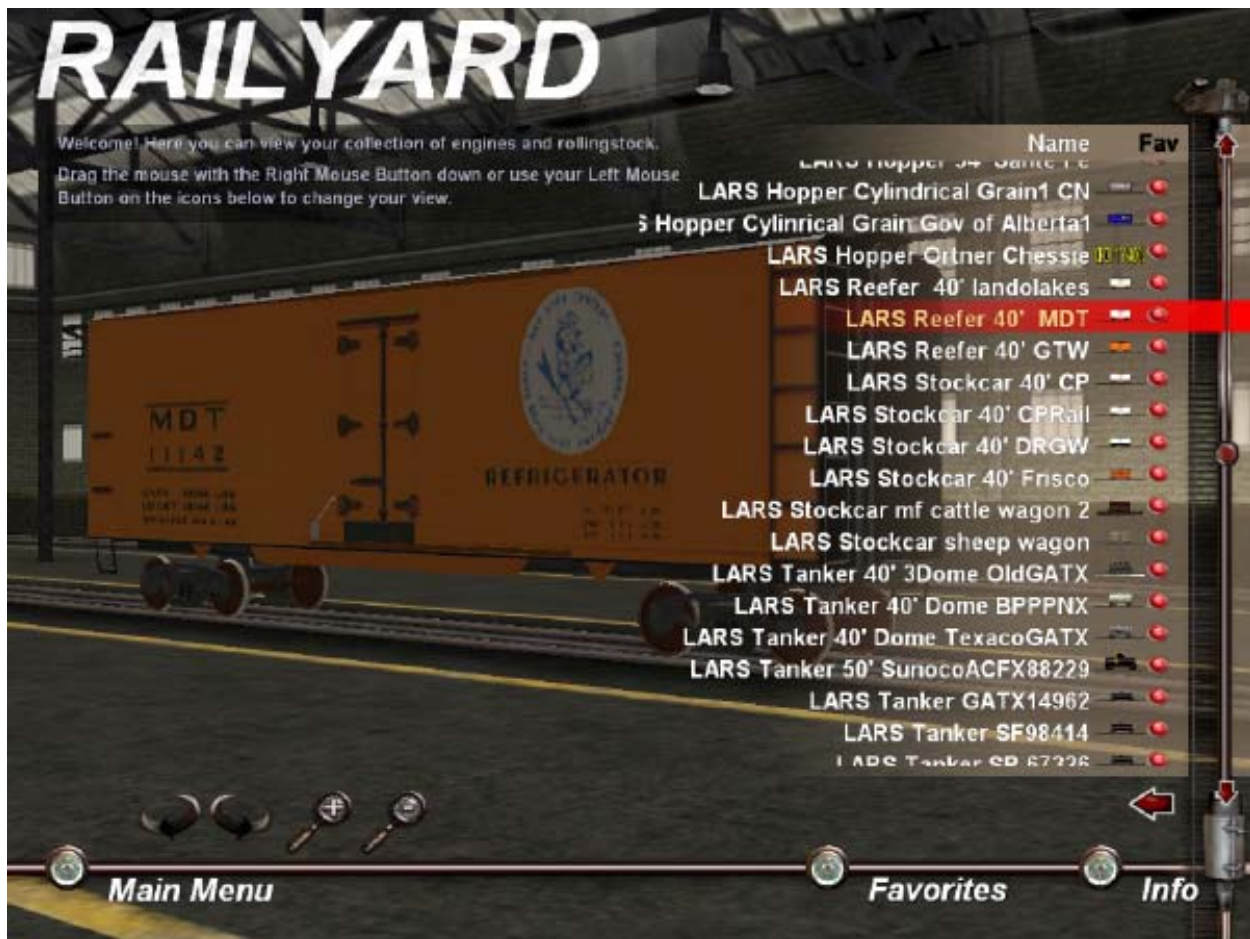
Railyard listing showing the reefer after the edit was completed

Using *TrainzObjectz* has made it easy for me to organize my rolling stock and, to tell you the truth, I'm still not finished. Right now I have my freight cars classified in relationship to the function they perform. On the other hand, my locomotives and passenger rolling stock are organized by Railroad. They are grouped under NYC, PRR, L&N, D&RGW and other groupings. I've just decided to group all my snow plows, cranes and special equipment under a Maintenance grouping, and doing that will be as easy as one-two-three by using *TrainzObjectz*. Thanks TafWeb!

John

Narrow gauge

Virtual West Side Lumber Company:
Operations at Deadwood

By Rich Blake (Slugsmasher)

Logging railroads are characterized by unique operational properties. The nature of the logging method –- lay the track, use the track, rip up the track to move somewhere else, all on steep and rugged terrain –- is sure to sometimes induce operational ingenuity just to get from point A to point B. Inclines, switchbacks, short sidings, balloon tracks –- all add to the interest in operations.
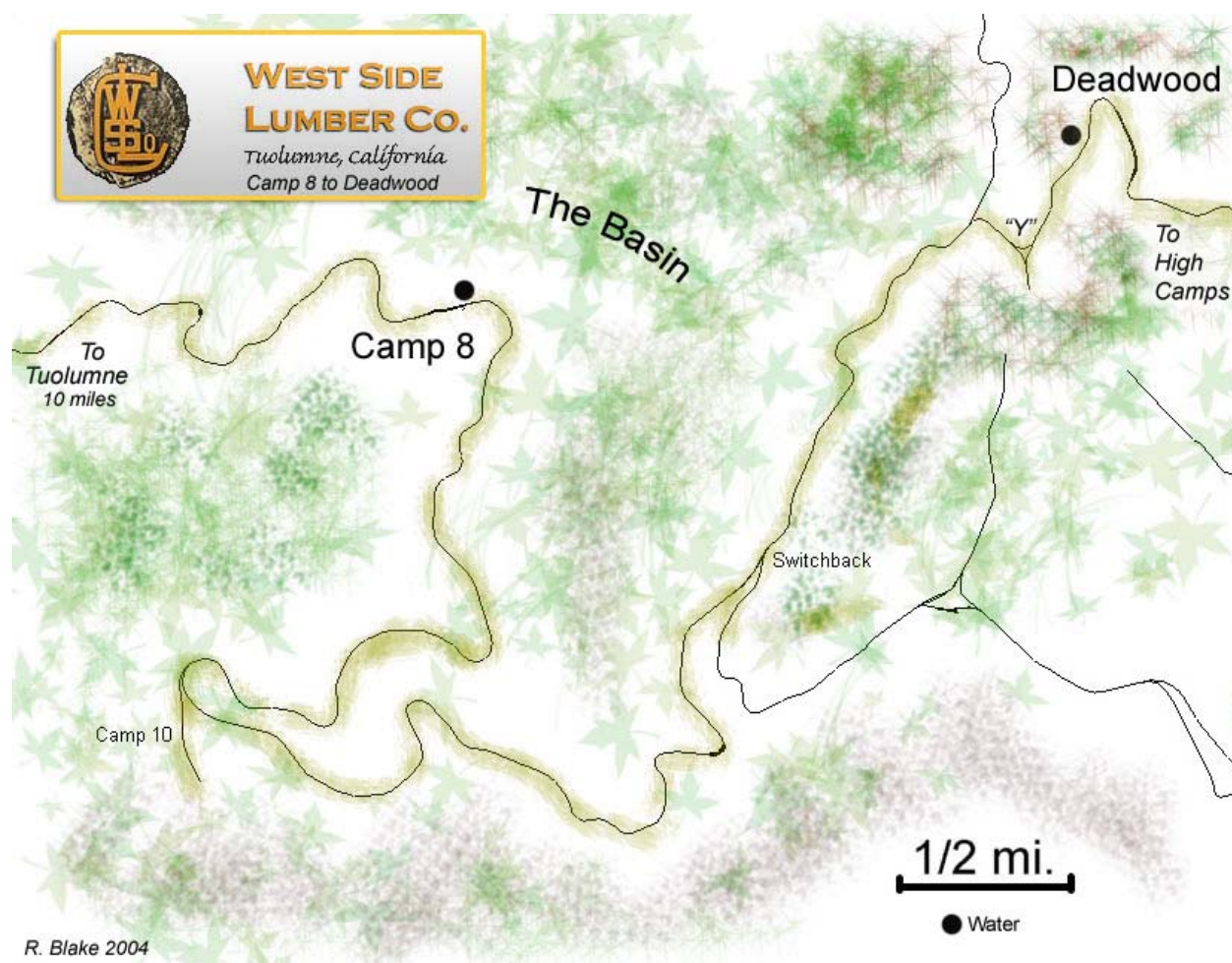
Turning locos could be a problem for the loggers. Turntables are expensive, and were often shunned in favor of the wye track arrangement or simply running the loco backwards down the hill. The wye created it's own problem during construction in that it

required extra space in which to lay the tracks. When we are dealing with highly rugged terrain like that found on the West Side, flat space is at a premium and wye tracks can only be placed in specific and strategic locations. Fortunately, Deadwood was located in a spot that offered space for a wye and some passing tracks. It was about 20 miles from Tuolumne in a centralized location. There was also a water tank available from which to top up. This was a common area in the later years where the trains would meet and swap consists.

Typical operations consisted of the "mill" train heading up with empties and the "woods" train bringing loads down from the log loading areas at the high camps and spurs. The run from the mill at 10-12 mph along up to 4.5% grades would ensure that the gear-driven Shay locomotives would need to stop for water more than once, and would take quite some time to gain the necessary elevation up and out of the Tuolumne River canyon. A typical timetable would see the train departing Tuolumne and arrive at Camp 8 for water in a little less than two hours. Continuing on up from Camp 8 usually took a little over an hour to get to the "Y" and Deadwood Siding.

Sometimes there was congestion, or other trains operating, so the conductors would have to check in at designated stops by phone to the dispatcher. Once clearance was obtained, they would continue to the next checkpoint. The West Side used this simple phone dispatch system for nearly 60 years. It wasn't the most efficient, but it got the job done. We can add this to our operating sessions

easily by following train orders that call for stops at River Bridge, Straight Siding, or Camp 8 and on up to Deadwood.
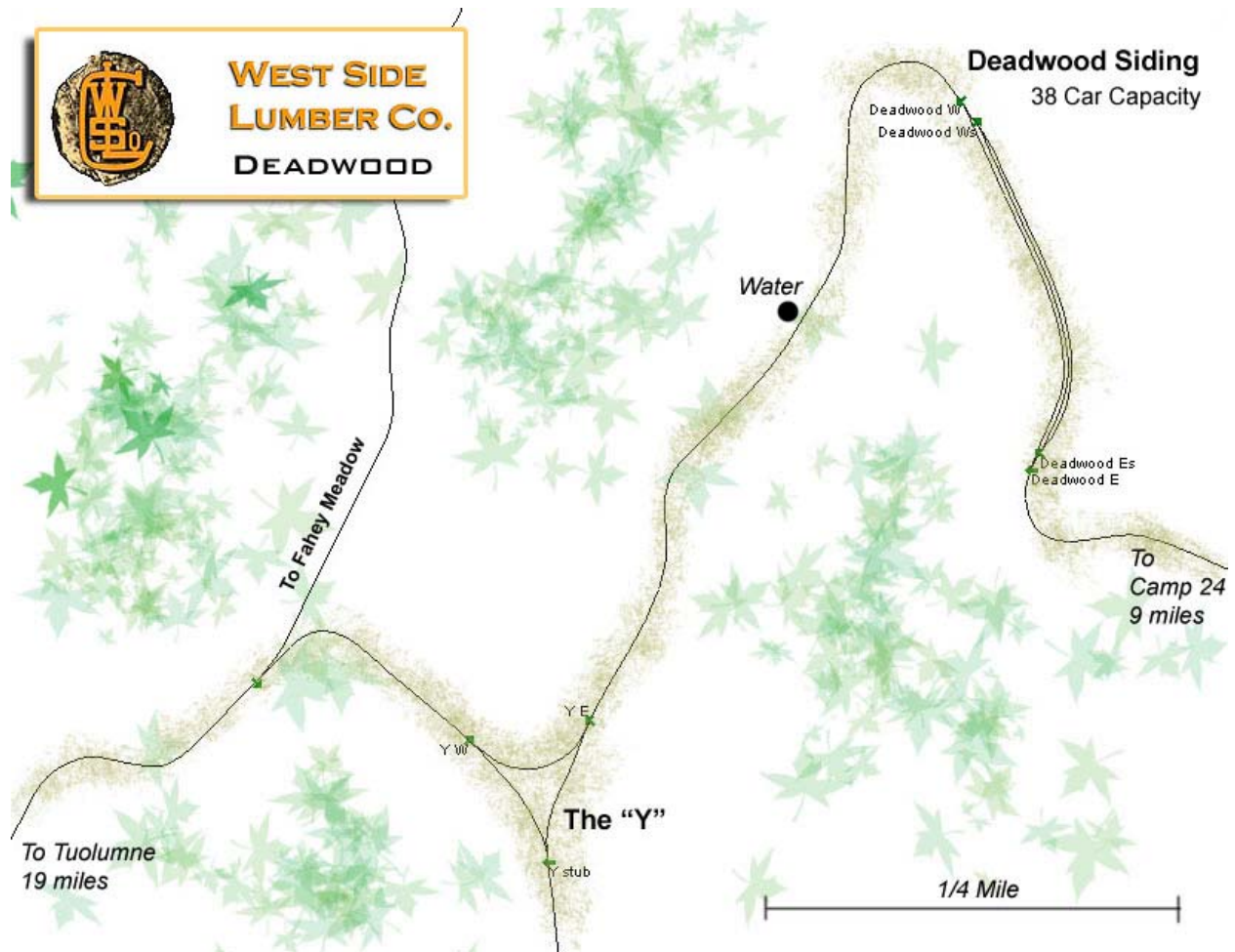
The woods train would pick up the loads at the high camps and reload areas where trucks could drop off logs for transfer to rail. These trains, depending on the era, were based at Camp 24 or further up at Camp 45. They usually got an early start to get the loads down to meet with the mill train at Deadwood. There they would turn the locos on the wye and swap out the consists to finally head back to their respective starting points. This entire session typically took the crew most of the day. It must also be mentioned that Deadwood swap-outs of consists sometimes did not happen at the same time. The woods trains could drop off loads early that day and head back up with yesterday's drop off of empties. The siding at Deadwood could accommodate 38 cars, which allowed for ample storage of the logging skeleton cars.

On the road   Let's follow a mill train up with empties to see what operating was like on the West Side at Deadwood.

We get an early morning start, departing at about 0615 from Tuolumne with our orders to take a train of empties up to Deadwood with a sand car for drop off. We are to pick up a loaded consist and bring it back down to dump into the millpond.

Next is a normal stop at River Bridge at about 0700 to phone Dispatch. This only takes a few minutes and the line ahead is clear. The train arrives at Camp 8 for water at around 0745 and, after topping up, continues upward. Making the grade above the Basin, the train makes it to the wye at around 0900.

The next series of moves is typical of West Side operations as discussed among the old timers on the WSLC Modelers Yahoo Group. The group members have actually interviewed some of the West Side engineers, like Shorty Maddox and Bert Bergstrom, confirming some of the methods used to transport the logs. This group has proven to be an invaluable source of prototype information.

Stopping just short of the wye, the brakes are set and the loco is pulled off to turn on the wye. Turning the loco on the wye, we couple to the consist and pull it on back towards the siding.

The loaded cars are sitting a little over ¼ mile away from the wye on the actual Deadwood Siding tracks as left there by the woods train.

The brakemen set the turnout on the siding to the track with the loads on it and we gently back the train into it. Deadwood Siding is on a grade, so we have to keep the steam up on the Shay while backing the loads up the grade and pulling the empties onto the siding. Once the empties are in place, we set the brakes. Decoupling from the empties, the train continues backing onto the siding with the loads until clear of the east switches. Once clear, the turnout is set for the main and the loaded train heads down the grade past the siding.

Stopping just past the west turnouts of the siding, the train makes a reverse move to pick up the caboose from the empties consist. Finally, the train heads down a bit to the water tank to top off and do a final brake check before heading down to the mill.

This all seems like a lot of work, but in actuality it is more efficient than other switching methods. Both siding tracks at Deadwood were usually chock full of empties from the woods trains, so in order to keep the main open, this push and shove method was necessary.

On my West Side route it took me about an hour to perform this switching operation with adequate times allowed for setting retainers and brake checks. I do not know if the crew turned the caboose around as well on the wye, but that could add a bit more work to the session. Many of the pictures I've seen of downgrade loaded trains show the caboose in the proper direction, so it is likely that the caboose was turned as well. How and when to turn the caboose presents it's own switching problem. A few minutes of

armchair railroading with the track diagram will save some time later for this move.

This was just a small glimpse into the methods and intricacies that made the West Side unique. Many operating sessions can be built around the Deadwood area. Adding speeder operations and meets with the woods train can really make for an enjoyable session with a lot going on. Many may think that these logging railroads are slow and boring. Quite the contrary, when even a simple matter of picking up a consist involves some strategic planning and an entire day's work. The methods the old timers used are becoming an ancient art. Fortunately, though, with our virtual and physical model railroads, we can continue to hone our engineering technique and relive an interesting part of our national railroad heritage.

Rich

Narrow gauge

Clear Lake Lumber Company, part 4 Conclusion
and
Introduction to Clear Lake 2

By Rich Blake (Slugsmasher)

This last installment in the series brings us to closure on the creation of the original *Clear Lake* and also takes a peek into the future with an introduction of the *Clear Lake 2* route now in development. I'll also cover a few things on some of the selected structures.

Part 4: Conclusion

10,000 downloads. The original route has been on the Trainz Download Station, *Trainz Luvr* and *TrainzProRoutes* web sites for just over a year and has seen over 10,000 downloads. I must have done something right because after all this time and all those emails, I haven't heard anything bad about the route. I truly appreciate all the accolades from those out there who have stuck

with it and were rewarded with what is still my favorite operating layout. Those who don't have this route may want to consider reading the previous articles in this series to see what it has to offer. There are links at the end of this article if more information for downloading is needed.

A look back. The route began as a small testing area for my initial foray into *gmax* and content creation. Since I enjoy operations and switching puzzles, I found myself immersed in the route much more than others that were available at the time. As I continued to create items and find suitable items on the Internet, the route continued to grow. I purposely limited myself to one baseboard because with that limit I knew it could be finished in a reasonable amount of time with highly detailed scenes. As I learned new techniques in Surveyor, I applied them to the route.

Practically all the influence in the methods of placing scenery and creating visual scenes came from the experiences I had with the Trainz Pro Routes layouts that I had downloaded when I first got *Trainz UTC*. Routes like the *Prospector* and the *Clinchfield* are great studies in how classic routes are put together.

Structure selection

Part of what attracted me to *Trainz* was some of the structures and locos I saw while exploring the Internet. The place that really

attracted my attention was *Trainzone*, and especially the creations of Peter-Pardoe Matthews, a.k.a. "Narrowgauge." After seeing his work I bought *Trainz UTC* the next day. The rest is history.

Once I got going with the route, some of Peter's creations were to become key elements, the camp huts and the sawmill being the main structures I used. The big truss bridge at Nookachamps Gorge is also one of Peter's creations.

The creator of *Trainzone* is Mike Sutton, "Sirgibby." He had released some very nicely detailed houses in his "Pioneer" series. A couple of the more weathered specimens found a home on the *Clear Lake* route.

Another creator that found a place on the route is Shane Perriman, "the Cowboy." His old west series of structures are very well suited for narrow gauge routes. I used the Blacksmith shop and the Old West Building1.

Much of the other key structures were built-in items. They were chosen for their fit and finish within a steam-era logging route. There are actually quite a few nice items that are included with *Trainz* that many people overlook. The two rustic warehouses and

the log cabin, for example, are great structures that have good textures and are also low in the poly count.

The rest of the items I had to make on my own. One of the things the route did for me was motivate me to create models in *gmax*. Much of the logging items found on the route were not available and had to be custom made as I gained more skills. I would get to a point in the construction of scenery and needed something. If I couldn't find a suitable item on the web, I would make it. This process turned out to be the impetus in my cross-creation learning –- work on route, work on models, place model on route, work on route, and so it carried on. This route was truly completed in the spirit of model railroad building with the same approach in scratch-building technique and ideas.

Clear Lake lessons. The route has been a great teaching tool. I've learned everything there is to know about the Surveyor mode for manipulating the various features of the route and scenery. I learned to use *gmax* and *Photoshop* to greater and greater degrees of skill and difficulty. Once the route was near completion, operations took priority and I learned how to make scenarios and write code using *StopGap2*. After the route was released, I began to explore rolling stock and locomotives to build and run on the route. I continue to this day to use *Clear Lake* as a test bed for all my 3-foot items. It has been a great learning experience and I've also gained many new friends along the way through testing, co-creating and general mutual interests in narrow gauge.

One of the things I did not expect to learn about, however, was the amount of support that is needed for a route that has complicated features like this one. I had to create web pages and dependency lists. I needed to learn how to make direct links to various places throughout the Internet. I had to devise easier ways to obtain all the information that was necessary to run the route and create scenarios so anyone could enjoy it. I found errors in different types of content that nobody knew about and got most of them fixed. Although tiring at times, the support actually had many positive benefits that I did not think about when I made the route.

Introduction: Clear Lake 2

Following the success of *Clear Lake* and the release of *Trainz Railroad Simulator 2004* with the interactive industries, it is only appropriate to upgrade *Clear Lake* to take advantage of the new features. I have spent a lot of time learning techniques for building interactive rolling stock and experimenting with animated industries. The future of logging will be really exciting.

The basic theme of the route will remain the same. The size will not be altered and the basic track plan will be unchanged. I have, however, made a few minor changes to the track plan to make it just a little more interesting for operations.

The most obvious changes will be the interactive industries. An operating log deck and log dump are already being tested. This also required new log products and new cars to carry them.

Bringing a full load of logs down to dump them off at the log pond and then heading back up with the empties will be more realistic than ever. I also plan to add a few extra surprises that I won't divulge just yet, but you can be assured that they will be on the cutting edge of what is possible within *Trainz*. Progress of this project can be followed at the narrow gauge forums at [Trainz Pro Routes](#).

Conclusions

Clear Lake has been an interesting and fun venture into digital model railroading. It illustrates how powerful a creation tool *Trainz* is. It would have never been possible without all the support and testing I got from many great creators and enthusiasts in the *Trainz* world. I will continue to use the lessons and techniques I've

gained from it and all the people I have worked with well into the future.

Narrow gauge and logging content for Trainz

This is one area where *Trainz* is often overlooked. Those that discover it are rewarded with some of the most highly detailed and Fun-to-operate items ever made for this simulator. There is a small group of content creators that are dedicated to producing some fantastically detailed models for narrow gauge and logging operations. Best of all –- most of it is FREE. Many of the references given also provide loads of information and pictures covering this fascinating subject area.

Clear Lake Home Page

Narrow gauge *Trainz* Content links:

www.trainzone.co.nz

www.steammachine.com/prowler

www.steammachine.com/slugsmasher

Recommended narrow gauge and logging links for research:

Camp 2

Western USA Logging

Pacific Northwest Logging History

West Side Lumber Co Narrowgauge

Reference books and magazines:

Tall Timber Short Lines Magazine

Timber Times Magazine

Logging Railroads in Skagit County; Dennis Blake Thompson

Railroads in the Woods; John T. Labbe

Last of the 3 Foot Loggers; Allan Krieg

Rich

Download Gold

Summertime fun

By John D'Angelo

Summer at the amusement park.

"Summertime, summertime, sum sum summertime!"

Remember that song? Well, summertime is here, and it is time to have FUN! The amusement park that you see in the picture has just been added to my trolley route, which I wrote about in the May 15th issue of *VMRJ*. It makes for a great stop for the town residents and their kids when they want to enjoy a warm summer day.

The town trolley arrives at the park.

The park now occupies the west side of my trolley route. It is a good-sized park, taking up the width of the baseboard. Inside the park is a magic castle where fireworks go off all day long, a roller coaster where you can hear the clatter of the cars and the happy screams of the riders, a small lake with rowboat rides, a beach area with bathing houses and the sound of the surf, all types of rides including a merry-go-round and Ferris wheel, a paddle wheeler ride and a narrow gauge railway that brings riders from one end of the park to the other.

All aboard for Fisherman's Dock!

Rowing on the Lake

Shooting at ducks.

The animated rides.

Fisherman's Dock.

The roller coaster.

What makes the amusement park come alive is the animation of the rides, the shooting gallery with moving ducks, the fireworks display and the sounds. Especially the sounds! This was what made the roller coaster become a great effect. I used a sound effect for the roller coaster that has the clickity-clack of the coaster and the screams of the folks riding it. The coaster track and scaffolding were created by laying down a wood trestle in the coaster pattern, then raising the sections to different levels to duplicate a coaster's hills and drops.

When you place sound effects on your route, place the sound effect at the place where you want to hear the sound *from*, that is, the source. For the roller coaster I used two copies of the sound effect. One I placed next to the trolley tracks so that when you passed by in the trolley you would hear the coaster. The other I placed near the narrow gauge track so when the train passed by the coaster you could hear it. I placed other sound effects throughout the park. Included are children laughing and waves crashing on the beach. Another idea was to run the narrow gauge railroad throughout the park so that you can just hop on board the train and get a close-up view of the park attractions.

Nighttime fun at the park.

The illumination of the park during nighttime is very nice looking, and the fireworks display really stands out. I will be adding additional items to the park as time goes on. Right now I'm searching for additional sound effects, such as music and people laughing, to increase the enjoyment factor. Some of the park rides are already included in *Trainz TRS2004* and are listed under Miscellaneous. They are the balloons, roller coaster parts, duck shoot, Ferris wheel and merry-go-round. Here is a listing of the Trainz Download Station items that I also used so that you can start your own park.

Item	KUID Number	Creator
Castle Ruin	1942:39004	Tafweb
Cotswold_Stone_Wall	1942:37025	Tafweb
D&RGW Watertank-old	43955:28002	Prowler901
D&RGW PassW (passenger car)	54822:10111	Whitepass
Dockwall Timber	60238:38159	Vulcan
Fireworks Low	118781:28031:1	Palanor
Fireworks	118781:28019:1	Palanor
Flag_single_30_feet	86859:26032	Soupystan
GWR Platform lamp 01	46219:28040	Jonny211
KB Beachwave (sound effect)	52682:39400	Bossman
MB_NG_Track_3_new	35412:38107	Mike10
Parking Lot	60795:39000	UnNerved
Platform gas lamp	84912:28044	Brook
Roller Coaster (sound effect)	45203:100778	Wiley's Sounds
Rowboat beached	60238:26142	Vulcan
Rowboat	60238:26141	Vulcan
Scrambler (ride)	316:26013	Austin316hockey
Seaside_beach_hut_spline	89759:290167	tkeithmat
Shelter 1	76689:28031	McEagle
SS Robert E. Lee	93366:100031	jobe
Station_small_building_01	46219:28030	jonny211
Trabant (ride)	316:26012	Austin316hockey
Tree Fast Fir Group 4	2:74247:200002:1	Bobbet
Tree Fast Fir Group 7	2:7427:200005:1	Bobbet
Victorian Streetlamp	78865:40002	Diecastgalore

Additional narrow gauge equipment can be downloaded from Prowler901's web site:
http://steammachine.com/prowler/trainz/Trainz.html

My thanks go to all those creative folks who have made these creations available for free so that we can more fully enjoy *Trainz*.

Thanks guys!

John

BVE Extra

Drive the Blueridge route

By Alfred Barten

Sometimes I just want to *drive* a train, *feel* its dynamics, and *hear* its sounds. When this happens I reach for my old friend *BVE*. It's the train sim that got me started three years ago. Although it has been overshadowed in many respects by the features in the can-do-everything simulators from Microsoft and Auran, *BVE* is still the best at what it does.

BVE does not permit views from outside the train, nor is it suitable for shunting cars; but if you want to drive a train in a game-like atmosphere on a desktop/laptop computer, *BVE* is hard to beat.

When you take the controls of a *BVE* train, you accept the challenge that every motorman faces: meet the schedule -- not too fast, not too slow; obey the speed limits; give your passengers a

comfortable ride; and stop your train exactly where required. You may also have to deal with steep grades, bad weather, and possible wheel slippage. The control panel displays, among other things, a collapsible timetable for you to meet. The panel also displays a variable smiley face that gives highly graphic feedback as to how well or poorly you are doing (I get plenty of scowls) and includes a readout at every stop that tells you how you are doing against the schedule and how close you came to the stopping point.

BVE, which stands for *Boso View Express* and in Japanese literally means "reckless driving view express," is the work of Mackoy. (I don't know what his real name is, but in Japan it is common to work under a pen name, much like our custom of taking on monikers when chatting on the web or contributing to forums.)

BVE first appeared in 1996, but wasn't discovered in the West until late 2000. It now boasts a cult-like following around the globe. I first discovered it about a week after I had purchased *Microsoft Train Simulator* in the spring of 2001. The first route I tried was Ernie Alston's New York City Transit Authority's *Flushing Line #7* route from Times Square in Manhattan to Flushing in Queens. The sounds of the driver saying "Please stand back of the closing doors," the subsequent sliding shut of the doors and rumble of the train through the tunnel, the extra sounds at special trackwork, and -- best of all -- the screech of flange on rail as the train careened around the tight curves of New York's underground took me back to my days as an adolescent growing up in New York. That did it for me. I've been a fan of *BVE* ever since.

BVE is freeware with one caveat –- you must download it only from Mackoy's web site and you must not redistribute it to others or host it on any site. Moreover, you must not make a direct link to the download file. Mackoy holds the fear of "turning off the spicket" as a means of enforcement. No one wants to be the villain who causes Mackoy to withdraw his great creation.

There's quite a lot of information available on the web describing how to download and install *BVE*, and how to create add-ons. Later in this article I'll provide a list of sources and a few tips. Meanwhile, I want to present a slide show of one of the newer routes, *Blueridge*, a scenic tour through the Virginia mountains by Michael Goetz.

Oh, yes -- one of the things that makes it so easy to sit back and enjoy *BVE* on the whim of a moment is that even on my aging PC it takes only 20 seconds to load the program, select a route, and start driving. How great is that!?

Now for the main event. Throw up your feet, turn down the lights, sit back, and enjoy!

As routes go, *Blueridge* is short -- only 2.7 miles. But it sports a lot of interest and gives an idea of what can be done with the scenery. Kudos to Michael for an outstanding job.

Many of the newer trains take advantage of the ability to mask the viewing area with more of the cab, as seen in the screen shot at the start of this article. I used an older train in the slide show to retain the entire view.

A few things you should know

Getting started. Go directly to this site: *trainsimcentral.co.uk* (http://www.trainsimcentral.co.uk). There you will find instructions on where and how to get *BVE*, how to install it, and how to operate it. You will also find some other useful things; including links, utilities, and a GP38 train.

> **NOTE**: If you have trouble installing your downloaded *BVE* file (I did), change the file name from bve2.6.3en.zip to bve2_6_3en.zip (the difference is two periods have been changed to underbars).

Next, go to *BVE-routes* (http://bve-routes.com/rbroutes.php). There you will find routes listed from around the world along with screen shots and links to the sites where you can get the routes and associated trains. You will also find lots of other useful links.

If you would like to get the *Blueridge* route, go to *BVE in Virginia* (http://www.geocities.com/mcg2h/).

There are two forums where you can ask questions and keep up-to-date. Both are part of multi-platform forums. In the UK there is *uktrainsim* (http://forums.uktrainsim.com) and in the US there is *train-sim.com* (http://www.train-sim.com).

For an in-depth review of *BVE*, see http://www.trainsim.org.uk/bve.html.

You can also find guides and downloadable objects, trains, and instructional routes at my *BVE Works in Progress* web pages

(http://alfredbarten.com/BVE_works.html). The material on downloading and installing is dated, but the object and route creation material is still useful.

File structure. The file structure is important to retain and useful to be aware of. It will also be self-evident after you install *BVE*.
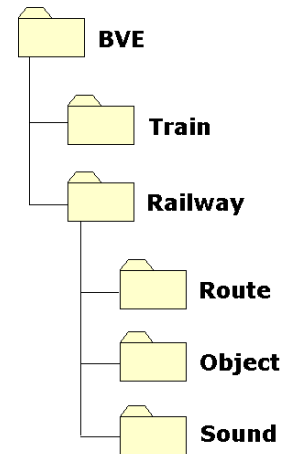
Change a train. Each route calls for a specific train. If you want to run a different train on the route you need to open the route file with a text editor, such as *Notepad* or *WordPad*, and change the train folder name that is called for. If you want to retain the original entry for future use, place a semi-colon at the start of the line. (In *BVE*, a semi-colon marks the start of a comment, which continues to the end of the line.) When I installed *Blueridge* I found the required train was F40PH, but I wanted to use a train that had a full-screen cab view. I therefore changed to a train I already had, in this case the older GP38. Below is the revised code. You'll find it very close to the top of the file.

Before	After
Train.Folder F40PH	;Train.Folder F40PH
	Train.Folder GP38

We plan to cover more *BVE* news, routes, trains and whatnot in the future. We hope you enjoy it and let us know what you would like us to cover.

Basic operation. Complete operating instructions are at (http://www.trainsimcentral.co.uk). The following key commands will get you up and running.

Common	Dual-lever controls	Single-lever controls
Up forward	**Z** increase power	**Z** increase power/decrease brake
Dn reverse	**A** decrease power	**A** decrease power/increase brake
Enter horn	**<** decrease brake	
	> increase brake	

Al

Credits

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