



The Short Line

September
2025

Last month I told about our train trip on the Everett Railroad. I bought a ticket to ride a steam excursion on October 15 from Hollidaysburg to Martinsburg and back. It cost \$45 for a coach ticket, but I am looking forward to riding the Autumn Adventure as it is called and maybe by then, the trees below Altoona will have changed as they are starting to do up here in the northern woods. I hope the trees will be more brilliant than they are now. Lou and Judy are going to join me of the trip. This time I will take my camera.



Dave Catalano has some structures on his trailer layout which I think is a novel idea. He says " My layout is in sections such as old west town, St. Marys, and a campground.



I still need to cover the trailer fenders with a mountain and maybe a tunnel. I want to expand old west by adding a jail and the Grand Hotel as well as other things, perhaps a blacksmith shop and more houses.



In St. Marys I have a railroad station and Johnson's store as well as farms. Johnson's was the local store near my house where we would go for penny candy. I am currently building a model of my childhood home to place there also. The campground was just a fun idea since I had served as a campground chaplain for four years. It is all certainly a work in progress with much improving to do.



I love that my layout is on a platform now. Much easier on my old body not to have to be on my hands and knees to work on it.

Dave

Lou's Open House on Saturday September 20, 2025

Lou invited the club on 9/20/25. Some I know some couldn't make for various reasons. I took my daughter Grace and her husband Matt down to see Lou's railroad as I wanted to give them inspiration on building a garden layout. The day was perfect for running a train on Lou's layout.



My son in law Matt was very impressed by Lou's viaduct which holds the track up by pieces of branches. Study the above picture carefully. Lou was running his Union Railroad NW2 switcher and short freight consist and we see the train rounding the curved viaduct. For those who have never been to Lou's house you are really missing something special. He has all kinds of interesting scenes on this railroad like the Penn State Nittany Lion resting on a rock next to a river of running water.



On top of Lou's mountain, you will find an interesting animal - a bear. I think the bear is afraid of the large bumble bee. I gave Lou a new animal to place on his layout and maybe that is why the bear stays on top of the mountain. I gave Lou a dinosaur that I got from my distributor. It is a Triceratops and this is what known about them although since no one lived in the time of the age described, how do people know this?

"The triceratops name translates to "three-horned face." The triceratops is the second most well-known herbivorous dinosaur because of its unique head shape with three, sharp horns on a large quadruped. People often equate them to prehistoric rhinos, despite the species being unrelated.

They roamed across the Midwest sections of North America, with fossils being found across Colorado, Montana, and Utah. Fossil records indicate that triceratops lived in herds to protect themselves and their young from predators. However, other fossils show triceratops lived by themselves.

The triceratops were 30 feet long, 9 to 10 feet tall, and weighed around 13,000-26,000 pounds. Skull records show they could go through 800 teeth throughout their life from eating plants and vegetation."

The bear doesn't know all about the Triceratops, so he is staying put on top of the mountain until the Triceratops moves away.

One has appeared on my railroad too and has kept my poor little bear stuck on top of the mountain.



I need to take my can of green stain and cover areas on the railroad where there would be grass. On the other hand maybe some grass rug would work as that is what I put on my concrete porch 3 years ago. I bought the rugs from Walmart.

This year, the city of St Marys decided it was time to replace an underground bridge that probably 95% of St Marys never knew it existed unless they grew up on my street. The bridge was built probably around the time St Marys was started in 1857 or maybe a few years later- possibly when the railroad came to town as the bridge is the same style as the bridges built by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

The bridge can be seen in the picture where the arched stone is:



The next picture shows the stones that make the arched roof of the bridge a little more to see how it has to be removed. Now I didn't measure the stones, but my rough guess is that they are about three feet long by 18 inches wide and a foot thick. It starts under the house behind the 2 power shovels.



The bridge passes under my street at an angle starting under the left edge of the house on the left in the first picture and goes under my street and comes out about 15 feet from the street to the right of the guard rail in the first picture and is about 12 to 18 inches below the street surface. The city of St Marys is having a long culvert custom made for the project that will become the new bridge and will installed on October 6th with a crane they have to bring in to lower it in place. The section of the bridge that is under my neighbor house across the street, the crew will have to build a special part of the bridge as

they are not going to destroy his house. There is a room that was built on a slab in the 1930's that was used as a mom and pop grocery store. There are 4 such stores within a mile of my house, but only 2 are still open, but not in the house across the street as that was made into a living room and a hobby room according to my neighbor. I used to know the previous owner and I think he used it as a living room. The house was one of the first houses built in St marys as the present owner told me that he took the plaster off one wall to reveal the house was built with logs.

The crew broke the water line last Friday which they repaired on Monday and tomorrow they are replace the water line and also the gas line which will be about five feet below the bottom of the bridge. The crew dug the area of the bridge on my side of the street today and my neighbor next to me has lost his front yard. The 2nd picture shows how deep the hole is.



The red line above is where the water line and gas line are to be. The black pipe is a sewer pipe. The worker is about six feet tall and he is directing the shovel driver to dig where red line was..



It is fascinating to watch the skill of the power shovel driver dig out the stones and the dirt exactly around sewer pipes without breaking them. He probably knew they would break the water line last week. Monday they cut a 12 foot square hole in the street and the shovel driver dug a square hole about 10 or 12 feet deep where they capped off my water line. The gas company had spent 3 weeks moving the gas lines and I imagine they will be back to replace the lines. It will be interesting to see them finish the project next month as I hope we have our street back before it snows.

Right before the last few days of August, I finished painting the former LGB Swiss 2-4-2 electric to resemble a Pennsylvania B1a electric switcher. If the LGB unit had 4 wheel trucks on each end, it could have passed for PRR P5a boxcab. The locomotive went to friend in Arizona.



I think the heavy electric locomotive came out really well and if I were collecting G scale locomotives, I would have like to have one.

I am currently finish up 3 Pittsburg, Shawmut, and Northern Bachmann passenger cars. The cars are painted and are in the process of being touch up. If my customer didn't care if the interior was lit up, I would have taken the cars to paint them. But my customer lives in part of Pennsylvania where it is totally dark at night and he can run a train while enjoying the stars in the night sky. I will have pictures of the finish cars with the 2-6-0 I previously shown in the Short Line in the October Short Line.

I am still looking for more articles, but thanks to those who have contributed articles.

Cheers,
Jeff

