

The Big Train Project Status Report (Part 62)

This time we'll look at some more details and small scenes on the EnterTRAINment Junction (EJ) layout. As in the past, the order in which they are presented is in the order you would see them as you proceeded along the EJ layout's aisle.

You come upon the first scene just as you exit the tunnel from the Middle Period to the Modern Period. It's at the lowest level, adjacent to the Modern City's short section of open-air subway tracks. The Birthday Picnic (shown in Figure 1) features a large happy birthday banner, a train-themed cake, a number of presents, the children who make it fun, and a mom to guide the party along. I wonder whose birthday it is. Maybe one of the girls is a train fan. Next to this scene is a tailgate picnic, complete with barbecue grill, coolers, lawn chairs, and a large bag of ice. And, our intrepid kite flyer is still at it. The kite-eating tree hasn't gotten its limbs on the kite yet (you can see the kite string in the foreground of Figure 1).



Figure 1. Birthday Picnic

A bit farther along the park along the aisle, between the dog park and the pond, a troop of American Heritage Girls are having a hot dog roast over a glowing fire (Figure 20). Those are pretty hefty hot dogs.



Figure 2. American Heritage Girls Picnic

Lining the sidewalks of the Modern City are what you'd see in most cities: parking meters waiting to relieve motorists of their change (one of them is shown in Figure 3).



Figure 3. Parking Meter

The grass next to the entrance to the main underground subway station has gotten a bit deep, but not to worry, the Landscape Maintenance Engineer is on hand with to take care of it. He's making progress, but it's going to be a long job. He should have brought a riding mower.



Figure 4. Lawnmower Man

The most impressive scene in this edition of the report is the traffic accident (Figures 5) in front of the strip mall across the aisle from the in-layout restrooms. It's impressive not because it's particularly horrendous, but because it's an ordinary scene put together with an extraordinary amount of thought and attention to detail. For interest, there's a button that can be pushed to make the lights flash on the police car blocking traffic, on the damaged pickup truck, and on the flatbed tow truck.



Figure 5. Traffic Accident

But that's not all. Figure 6 shows the amazing detail on damaged vehicles: the side window on the truck, broken into little glass chunks; the windshield of the red car with its long spidery cracks; the deployed air bags; the crinkled door panels; the out of position headlights; the dented fenders and hood; the broken-off parts; and most notably, the spilled green-colored anti-freeze that leaked from the red car's radiator.



Figure 6. Traffic Accident Detail

The magic about this level of detail comes from the combination of two crucial elements: the ideas about what could be included in such a scene; and the final execution, turning those ideas into models. That's the fun for the modelers, as they try to incorporate as much realism as they can in the hope that it will provide the viewers with the enjoyment of seeing a fully fleshed-out scene (no, there weren't any gory injuries), thoroughly and realistically presented.

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