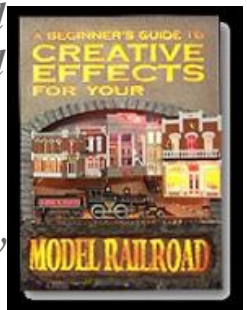


Sound Powered Fire



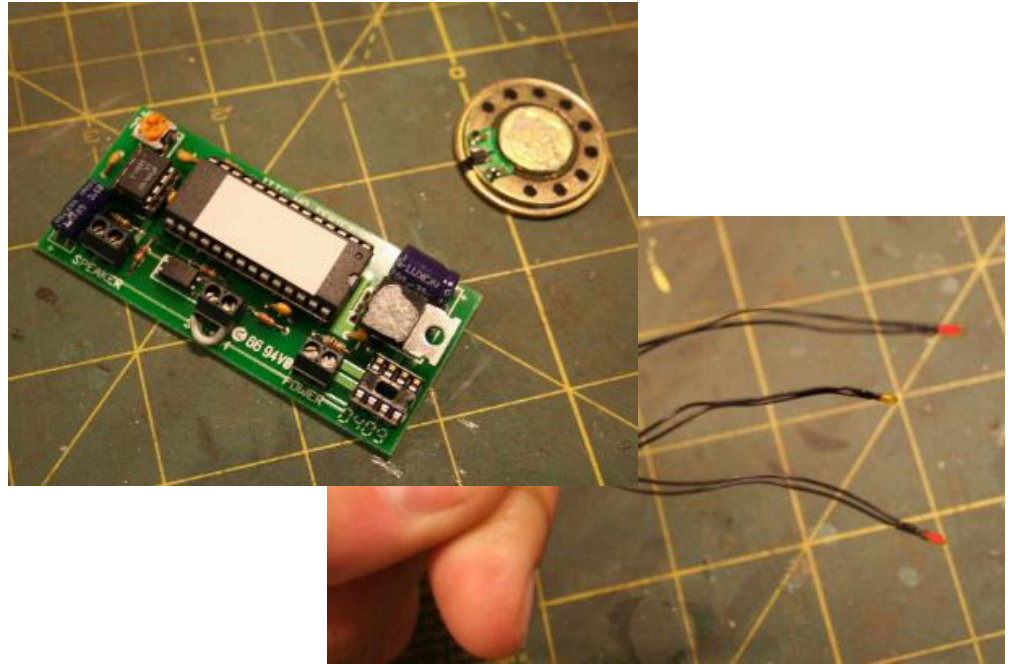
*This little trick is something I stumbled across while trying to come up with a low cost campfire scene. There are several ready-made fire simulators, some that flash at a predictable pace and more elaborate ones that alternate different colored light bulbs to give the look of fire. I'm cheap so I wanted to find away to do it as cheap as possible. On my last layout I had a camp fire scene with smoke, sound and fire, looked cool however the heat from the smoke unit took it's toll on the pricey fire unit. Wanting something more reliable I came up with the following. I remembered reading in my friend Paul Newitt's book, "A Beginners Guide To Creative Effects For Your Model Railroad", that you can use sound to power low voltage 1 and 1/2 volt light bulbs giving that random glow like a candle. I figured a fire looks like a candle. It just so happened that with my old layouts campfire scene I had an **ITTC sound module** of hobo's around a campfire playing Old Susana. Now before you say, "Well the module cost about the same as the fire unit, why use it?" As I said before I am cheap, using the sound module for the campfire is a two for one deal. You get the sound of the hobo's as well as the flickering of the campfire. If I had bought both I wouldn't be cheap. You can even go cheaper if you purchase a small FM radio at the dollar store. It works just as well but you wont have the music to go with*



it. Hook the lights to the earphone jack, tune the radio to a rock station and watch the lights flicker. I have done both, I prefer the module, the flame is more constant.

Take the sound module and follow the directions on hooking it up to power,

You can also set the module up to play continuously or when a button is pressed it will play through once then stop. I set mine to play continuously. On the speaker terminals attach two red one amber 1 1/2 volt light bulbs along with a small cheap speaker. I used a small 8 ohm one that I had laying around.



You may want to put a volume control in line with one of the of the speaker wires. The volume on the module needs to be up all the way for the lights to work. Run light bulbs up to the campfire and detail with logs, run the speaker up close to the campfire and hide with scenery. Place a few hobos around, hit the switch and enjoy the campfire. As you can see in the video above, I later decided a cowboy fire was more appropriate for my current layout so I left the module to power the camp fire and used a track on one of my Dream Players for a couple of harmonica songs that play at dusk. Maybe in the future I will make the man with the harmonica raise and lower his arms while playing, I guess you will have to check back later and see.