



# Simple Signalling with LEDs

by Jim Atkinson

Most of us model mainline railroads that should have a signaling system. There may be a number of reasons for not having signals. Among them, the commercially available systems are expensive and difficult to install. The kit- and scratch-built systems often publicized in our favorite magazines are very complicated and can be difficult to build. Modelers often give up on them and install dummy signals as a result. But these lack any animation so as a result many don't bother with signals at all.

I wanted signals on my Baltimore & Western and the above reasons held me back. Then, two years ago, I purchased a book called "SIGNALS MADE EASY" by Len Brazis. I liked Len's ideas and suggest you get his book to completely understand his track polarity signal system. His system is simple to understand and build and it's inexpensive. It is a two-color track polarity detection system. It doesn't show train movement, it shows block power polarity using low power LEDs. The signals can be in bridge, mast, or dwarf form on your layout. Properly installed, a lit green light shows the forward train direction and a lit red light shows against the train direction. The LEDs are connected directly to the track of the block they represent with a 680-ohm resistor in series with each LED. The resistors are a must, as LEDs work on a lower voltage than the trains do. The LEDs use very little power and

require no additional power source for a two-color system. By its nature the LED is power directional and nearly full brightness even at low voltages. Wired properly it lights only when its positive side is receiving +DC power and does not light when the power is reversed. I have an understanding of relays so I made a modification to Len's system by adding a yellow signal to indicate no power to the track. This requires an additional 9vDC power source. Since my Tortoise switch machines use 9vDC, I tapped into that source for my yellow signals. The red-green circuits control the relays for the yellow signals. When power of either polarity is turned on for the track the relay opens and the yellow light goes out, while the red or green comes on. Now I have a three-color block signal system that helps the operator (engineer) determine with a glance at the signal if a block has power and its polarity. This can be very useful to determine the problem when a train won't move. Is it the power or is it the locomotive? You'll know quickly by looking at the signals.

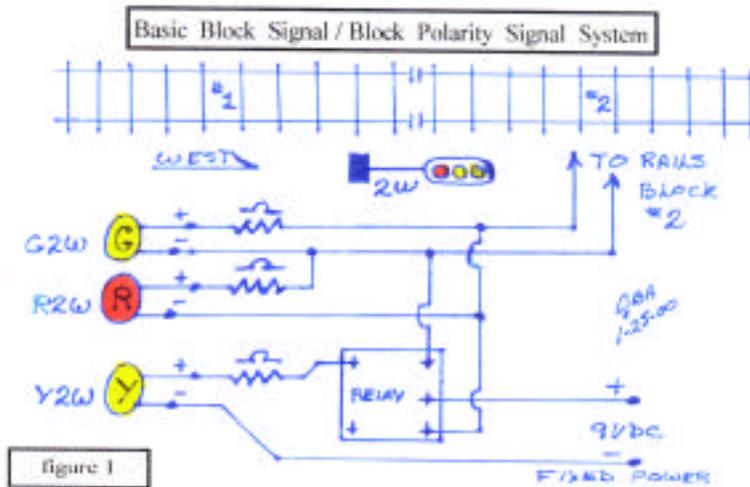


figure 1

The same basic two-color system will work on turnouts to show their position. Simply wire the LEDs with their resistors across the switch machine power connections (assuming a 9 to 12 volt DC power supply). Again Tortoises operate off of 9v DC which is perfect for the LEDs. When the double-pole double-throw turnout control switch is thrown to change the turnout, the signals

change with it. It couldn't be any simpler and the LEDs draw very little power. A 1.5 amp 9vDC power supply will power dozens of Tortoises and LEDs. I use green and yellow LEDs for signals leading to the turnouts to show primary or secondary routing and green and red LEDs on the

*continued on page 6*

## MER LOCAL

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The MER LOCAL welcomes articles, photographs and model railroad related material as contributions to members' mutual enjoyment of the hobby. Materials should have a wide appeal. Editors will exercise all due care of submissions, but contributors should not send originals without having back-up copies of both articles and photographs. Editors, by definition, reserve the right—and have the responsibility—to make corrections, deletions and changes to accommodate space.

## Keeping In Touch...

by Rita Lynam  
MER Business Manager

(Business Manager's Column.)

Thanks for the changes of address. It really helps getting the change of address directly from the member. I e-mail the changes directly to Debi Bennett at NMRA as soon as I get them. She usually responds and updates your records the same day she prints it. This is the fastest way for notifying both the MER and NMRA. So whenever you change addresses be sure to let me know by email or postcard. We don't want you to miss any issues of your LOCAL.

If you have any questions or comments about regional business matters please don't hesitate to contact me at one of my addresses on the masthead. I'll be glad to hear from you.

## Members Who Have Recently Passed Away

Gerald Bellina, Califon, NJ. Born March 1940. Died April 30. Joined NMRA in 1979. Joined MER in 1980.

Gerard Connell, Philadelphia, PA. Born July 1938. Died May 2001. Joined NMRA and MER in 1999.

Dr. George Williams, Richmond, VA. Born December 1931. Died July 2001. Joined the NMRA in 1983 - Life Member #L04359. Joined the MER in February 1998 - Life Member #L120.

Arthur Schuster, Timonium, MD. Born March 1915. Died July 2001. Joined the NMRA in 1930 - Life Member #L00772. Joined the MER in 1971 - Life Member #L159.

Our sincere condolences are extended to each family.

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## President's Column

*Norm Garner*

The events of September 11, 2001 affected all of us and may continue to for some time to come. The rest of the entire Board of Directors and I extend our deepest concerns to any members who may have lost a friend or loved one on that recent fateful day. Never in most of our lifetimes has it been more important for us to support our country and its leaders in striving to normalize our American way of life. The terrorist violence that took place in New York, Washington, and over the skies of Pennsylvania should have given us a rude awakening and greater appreciation for our freedoms. Because of these events it has never been more consequential for us to all pull together and demonstrate our true American spirit.

As I travel around the MER I'm frequently asked a question that many of us may take for granted. Why are there so many MER members who have never attended an MER convention? Others have also asked why the MER spends so much money, time and energy on two conventions each year. The answers are that every convention the MER sponsors is dictated by and has to follow the guidelines in our MER Convention Handbook. Those guidelines are designed so the host group (for example an MER Division) will not lose money. If convention participation is not as expected and revenues don't offset the costs, the Region intercedes to help pay the bills. In a sense the provision of the handbook for doing this has been a moot point. I can't recall any convention ever losing money. However, since it could happen, this contingency has justifiably been covered.

There have been occasions when we couldn't enlist a division to host a convention. When this has happened the regional administration hosts the convention itself. The surplus that a division earns from hosting a convention invariably helps to support special projects and provides other benefits for its divisional members. In the years I have been on the MER Board the conventions have always realized profits that are shared with the host division. This has been the case with prior MER Boards also.

It's important to remember that conventions give all members the chance to come together and really enjoy the hobby in its truest form. If you don't attend the MER or NMRA conventions when you get a chance you are really missing out on some of the best the hobby has to offer. Conventions offer the opportunity to meet others of mutual interest and expertise, to share differing modeling techniques, to attend and participate in clinics presented by expert model railroaders, and in a myriad of other ways too numerous to mention. Tours of prototypes and model layouts are another great highlight of conventions that appeal to all of us who are in the hobby to begin with. So in closing I urge you to try to find time to attend the conventions. You will undoubtedly benefit in many ways by being there and others will surely benefit by you being there.

## Letters to the Editor

(and other staff)

### Another Viewpoint

From: Jim Cope ([jjmc167@home.com](mailto:jjmc167@home.com)) to MER President Norm Garner ([nwgrail@aol.com](mailto:nwgrail@aol.com)).

Norm: I read with interest your President's Column in the September/October 2001 issue of the LOCAL. I really feel compelled to make a few observations on remarks in your column. The first thing I'd like to comment on are the dues issue that you discuss. To begin with, I am not directly affected by the dues increase. I purchased a Life Membership in the NMRA many years ago and continue to enjoy the benefits of the organization. The dues at \$45.00 for a year are not too far out of line with several other organizations that I belong to. What these other organizations offer is pretty much the same as what the NMRA offers. The significant increase in dues comes as 'sticker shock' to many members. But maintaining the organization and the benefits it offers requires funding. If everyone would take a look at other costs associated with the hobby of model railroading no one should be shocked at the amount of dues required to maintain the NMRA. As related to the 'full disclosure of the finances should be published' - my question is, "Why?" And what of the Mid-Eastern Region? I don't recall seeing a 'full disclosure of the REGION's finances' published recently. Other organizations that I belong to rely on their elected officials to ensure that their organization is financially sound. Members rarely question for a 'full disclosure of finances'.

The second point I would like to comment on is the statement about 'closed meetings or secret ballots' and 'minutes should be kept [of these meetings]'. I recall on several occasions being aware of business of the NMRA that was of a confidential nature requiring the attention of the board members. All of these matters that I am aware of did not establish policy of the NMRA nor did they directly affect the membership in general. These meetings were of a sensitive enough nature that only the parties involved were concerned. The general membership did not need to know the particulars of these meetings and keeping minutes would violate the privacy and confidentiality of the subject addressed. Yes, closed meetings, secret ballots and no minutes DO have a place in the organization. However, if matters concerning the membership at large or organizational policies are addressed in a meeting, these should be reported to the membership. I do not fault our elected officials when they deem it necessary to go behind closed doors to discuss organizational business.

Norm, I think you are doing a great job for the Mid Eastern Region. I support your efforts and appreciate your candid discussion in your column. I know you meant well by your comments, but I think a more positive

approach to the subject matter in your column would have been appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Jim Cope  
L4674 NMRA - L149 MER

### **Kudos.**

To: Ed Kuser - Author of the "Made in the MER" column.

Dear Ed: We just received the Sep-Oct LOCAL and just wanted to take a moment to thank you and the LOCAL for the very well written and most complimentary "Born in the MER" article. I am proud and honored to have been featured by this publication. Perhaps as time allows I may sub-

mit one of my modeling technique articles. Keep up the GOOD work! Ben Bendever — Smoky Mountain Model Building and Supply. ([www.drbtns.com](http://www.drbtns.com)).

### **Muchas Gracias plus Lost and Found**

I want to thank all those folks who attended the convention (Dutch Station 2001) and especially thank Mel Agne for his great work on our websites. I also would like to mention that there was a dark blue sweater left in my van on one of the off-site trips. If possible, please contact me and I will ship it to the owner. Brian Brandt - e-mail: [brianbrandt3@home.com](mailto:brianbrandt3@home.com)

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## **Introducing Another Writer for "Made in the MER"**

by Ed Kuser

Several times during the past year I've put out a plea for volunteers from the southern portion of the Mid-East Region to interview hobby producers from that area for *Made in the MER* articles. Recently I struck gold! Two individuals contacted me within several days of one another, and it appears both will prove valuable additions to THE LOCAL crew. The *Made in the MER* article in this issue was researched and written by one of them, Bill Fleisher, of Radford, Virginia. I am grateful for his assistance and asked him to introduce himself to you. That introduction follows.

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Like many of you, my interest in trains started as a very young boy—I was just two years old when my father built a train layout at Christmas. It was on a standard 4' x 8' sheet of plywood, painted green, and was a simplistic double oval with three spurs. That layout gave me another reason to look forward to Christmas as that is the only time the layout was displayed! The Christmas tree holder was mounted to the plywood right in the midst of the railroad and, although there were no mountains, the branches of the tree became a natural canopy for the track and town below. I fondly remember arranging the Atlas and Plasticville buildings and cleaning the brass track with a typewriter eraser. Hardly anything was prototypical, but no one noticed let alone cared. The simple joy of imagination and the smell of the Christmas tree as its lights illuminated the town below were all that any of us needed!

Today, my present layout is considerably more realistic but not without its deficiencies. Being my first attempt at build-

ing a model railroad as an adult, I have learned much from the experience. It is not finished (no surprise to anyone) and I continue to make improvements while I dream of a future layout that incorporates every conceivable item I have ever drooled over in an untold number of hobby shops. My modeling scale is HO and I have tried to concentrate on the Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie roads because these were the two that my grandfathers worked on during their early years of employment.

I plan to pursue the MMR program through the NMRA. Living in a small town in southwestern Virginia where the local division is inactive and I know of no other NMRA members who live nearby adds another degree of difficulty to reaching the goal. Therefore, conventions and correspondence are my only connections to other, more experienced modelers.

I am an electrical engineer by profession, specializing in the design of DC torque motors. Among my other interests are genealogy, volleyball, electronics, and biblical history. I'm married and have four grown sons, none of whom share my interest in trains. I look forward to interviewing and writing about individuals located in this part of the MER who are involved in manufacturing model railroad products. Along the way, I hope to contribute where I can and make new friends in this hobby. I would also invite anyone living in my area to contact me to share our modeling interests. Now here's my first article. I hope you enjoy it.

Bill Fleisher

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**MADE IN  
THE MER**

**COMPILED BY  
EDWIN C. KUSER**



*A feature profiling model railroad manufacturers located in the Mid-Eastern Region. To be included in a future issue, contact:*

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184 Popodickon Drive  
Boyertown, PA 19512  
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## **TLC Publishing**

Compiled by Bill Fleisher

Anyone who has researched a specific railroad prior to or during the creation of a home layout has undoubtedly perused several books on the road to be modeled. And chances are that if you do, then you will eventually come upon books bearing the herald of TLC Publishing. Enter Publisher Tom Dixon, an energetic and friendly fellow whose enthusiasm is only surpassed by his love of railroading.

Tom founded TLC Publishing in 1988 while still in the U. S. Army. He retired from the Army in 1990 and has consumed his time with the publishing business and involvement in the C & O Historical Society. Tom entered the business as a result of his love of railfanning. His staff consists of just he and his wife plus two contract designers and a printer in Missouri.

TLC advertising appears in some of the popular train magazines and hobby mailings. TLC books are sold over the Internet, through seven distributors, directly to some model shops and book stores, and during appearances at a few model rail shows. Of course a phone call also works.

TLC produces 2500 to 3000 copies for the first printing of a typical book then up to 1500 for each reprint. Selling nationwide, approximately 70 percent of his books go to modelers. For instance, the popular title, "Chessie, the Railroad Kitten", is in its thirteenth printing meaning a total of 30,000 copies have been printed during the past 10 years. TLC offers a wonderful assortment of titles for the railfan and, on the present special sales flier, one may order books on the major rail lines or specific topics such as "The President Travels by Train" or the "N&W Class J" among others.

Tom publishes only books on railroad history, issuing about

eleven titles each year. Titles and ideas come to him by word of mouth and from customers and authors alike. Tom then reaches an agreement with the authors as to what will be published. Although the topics concern general railroad subjects, a large portion deal with rail events after World War II — between 1945 and 1965. Not surprisingly, this happens to be the baby-boomer generation, rekindling childhood memories through modeling.

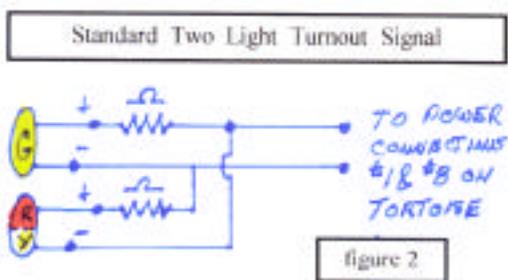
Sadly, many people do not realize the importance of the railroad in our lives and very few young people are coming into the model railroading hobby. Therefore, Tom not only hopes to sell many books, but hopes that in the process he can educate more folks about the importance of the railroads and how the iron horse has impacted the history of this country.

TLC is truly a labor of love because it is marginally profitable and serves only a niche group. However, as Tom says, "I am out to meet a need, to provide useful information to the railfan and modeler. If anyone out there has an idea, please give me a call." We are so glad Tom feels this way.

You can contact TLC Publishing at

TLC Publishing - Tom Dixon  
1387 Winding Creek Lane  
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1-434-385-4076 or 1-434-385-1935  
**[www.tlcrailroadbooks.com](http://www.tlcrailroadbooks.com)**

## LEDs



back signals to show open or closed routes.

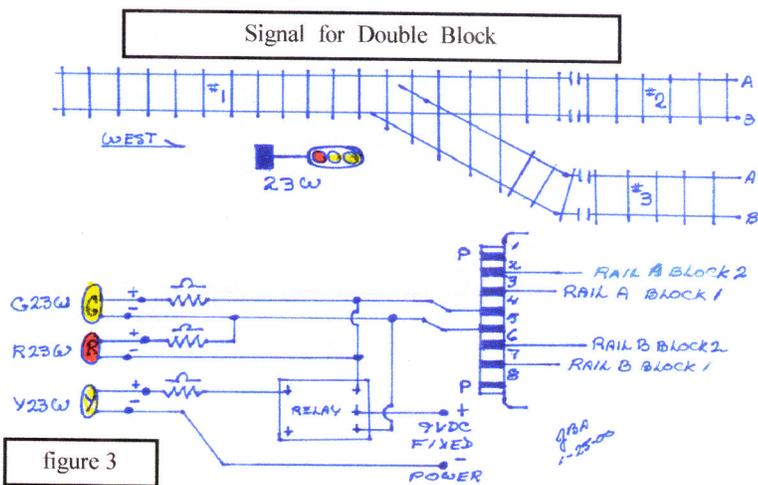
The three-color block signals over two color switch signals look quite sharp on a layout and they serve to keep the operator abreast of track power conditions and switch directions, a feature I find very useful. The system is not expensive either. My entire system cost an average of \$3.30 per signal head.

The mechanics of the track polarity signal system are definitely simpler than most signal systems available today. The basic two-color block signal is wired directly to the proper track near the signal location thereby keeping wiring to a minimum. Or it can be connected to the proper switch machine in the case of a switch signal. Remember to include the 680-ohm resistor in series with every LED. The

prefer AI components because of the wide variety available and their nice quality. I made my dwarf signal heads from portions of AHM signal heads as well. To hide the wires at the signals, use brass tubing for the signal masts or in the case of multi-head signal bridges use a plastic drinking straw to contain the wires. Forty No.30 wires will fit inside a 1/4" straw and painted grimy black are practically invisible. Do as much wiring as you can on the circuit boards at your workbench then mount the boards in a convenient location under the layout close to their respective signal heads. I made my circuit boards from 1/4" luan cut about 8-inches by 8-inches large and used brass brads for the terminals. Make sure all solder connections are good. A couple of badly soldered connections out of several hundred were my biggest problem with my signals so far. I also had a minor problem with one Tortoise circuit board and one sticky relay. So far it's been a trouble free system for one and a half years.

Figure #1 shows the basic wiring for a block 3-color signal head. Figure #3 shows the same circuit expanded to cover a junction. Using the relay points on the Tortoise switch machine the signal displays the proper power situation for the proper route.

Connecting the LED signals to their power sources takes checking of power polarity and patience to get everything right. I suggest first starting with switch signals (as they are the easiest to build) and then doing a basic block signal. With the prior experience the double crossover (involving four blocks and four turnouts) isn't quite so complicated. A multi-meter is a necessary tool in these steps.



actual wires to the LEDs can be very small. I found No. 30 wire in various colors, available from Walthers or Radio Shack, works quite well and is small enough so it is not visible on your signals. Inexpensive dummy HO scale signal hardware is available from AHM, Life Like, Model Power, and others and lends itself nicely to be used in this system. I

LEDs are available in several standard sizes. The T1 3mm diameter (0.120" diameter) sizes are best for HO and probably even for S- and O-scale signals. They come in many useful colors - red, green, yellow, blue, white, and others. There are standard diffused, point source (aimed light, which I like for my signals), ultra bright, and even flashing models available. You can also get bi-color LEDs in red-green and yellow-green. These would be good for one light two-color signals. I understand there are some tri-color LEDs (red-yellow-green) also available that use DC and AC power to work properly. You can see from the variety of LEDs available, there are a lot of possible signal configurations you can build.

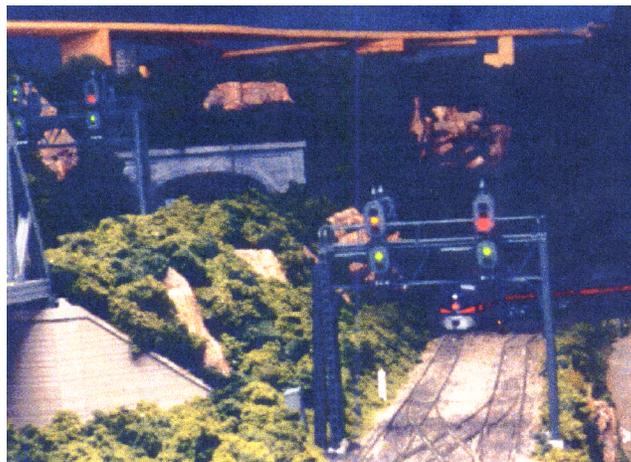
Materials needed for an HO signal system are: T1 LEDs, resistors, relays, 9vdc power source, and wire. I found *ALL ELECTRONICS* at 1-800-826-5432 or [www.allelectronics.com](http://www.allelectronics.com) an excellent source for all the items, except the wire, at rel-

atively low prices (ALL's catalog numbers and current prices are quoted below):

T1 red	MLED7 or MLED1	\$ .08
T1 green	MLED8 or MLED2	.08
T1 yellow	MLED9 or MLED3	.10
Resistors	680 ohm	.05
Relays	9v SP-DT RLY264	1.00
Power supply	9vDC DCTX9120	6.00

Wire #30 - Radio Shack 279-503 or Walthers 942-414.

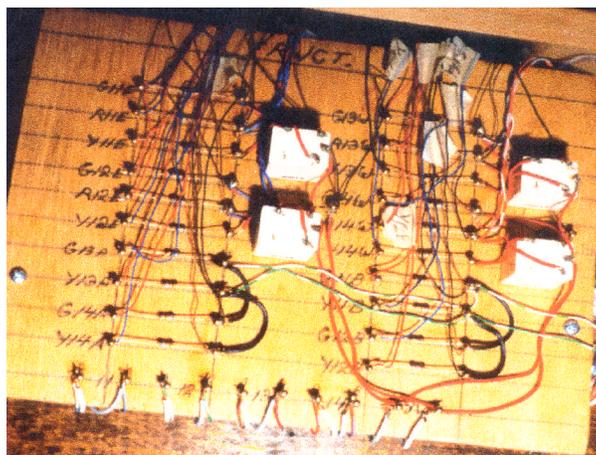
"SIGNALS MADE EASY" by Len Brazis is available for only \$10.00. It can be obtained by writing to: Len Brazis, Club Car Solutions, P O Box 290091, Port Orange, FL, 32129-0091



Bridge Signals at a Double Crossover with Four Blocks



Column signals at a Junction



Circuit Board for Double Crossover with Four Blocks

**Electronic Publishing Note:**

Last issue I mentioned the non-availability of replacement copies of the Local. This isn't strictly true, Rita Lynam does have a few extras. In addition, I would be more than happy to print one for you if yours gets damaged somehow. It won't be on 11x17 folded pages, but it might have a photo in color...

— clint hyde, [chyde@cox.rr.com](mailto:chyde@cox.rr.com)

**Help Wanted  
by Bob Martin - Chairman  
Executive Convention Committee**

I'm looking for a person to fill the position of Convention Manager on the newly created MER Permanent Convention Committee. This position will coordinate on-site convention activities and act as overall assistant to the ECC. For details, contact ECC Bob Martin at 717-848-3640 or: by e-mail: [cpr-boss@aol.com](mailto:cpr-boss@aol.com) or: by snail mail 45 West Locust Lane, York, PA 17402.

# DUTCH STATION 2001

## Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA Fall Convention

### October 5 - 7, 2001

### Lancaster, PA

### Hosted by Susquehanna Division 11



## The Contests at Dutch Station

By Ray Bilodeau

### MER General Contest Chairman

The Lancaster convention had something for everyone in terms of contests. There was a judged Model Contest, and popular vote Arts & Crafts, and Photo Contests. Special awards were given for Favorite train, New Modeler, creativity in modeling – the Marv Kershner Award, the Blue Lantern, The President’s Award, as well as an award given by the host committee – The Dutch Station Award, dealing with a peculiarly scent-oriented aspect of Lancaster county, fresh “country air.”

Special thanks go to our judges in the Model contest: Dean Windsor, MMR, Dave Messer, MMR, Graham Harvey, MMR, Bob Charles, Roger Cason, Dick Landt, Chuck Hladik, Terry Nesbit, and Allan Frame. Larry Lau, was an apprentice judge, and Dave Lynam, an observer of our judging process.

As usual our contest-specialist and CEO, MER Business Manager, Rita Lynam, spent the weekend organizing and sorting through the paperwork necessary to insure that all the contests were properly recorded, certificates made out, and the special awards went to the winners. Rita, and Dick Landt, our recently appointed Assistant Model Contest Chair, were assisted by MER Trustee, Eric Dervinis; Charlie Flichman, and Dave Lynam who took photos of the winning models; our Model Contest Chair, Chuck Hladik; several of the model contest judges; our plaque-Meister, John Johnson; and our President and Vice President who also helped us complete our tasks. I am really thankful to you all.

## MODEL CONTEST

The winners are:

### Steam Locomotive

1<sup>st</sup> Noll Horan On30 Dunkirk

### Diesel Locomotive

1<sup>st</sup> Robert Malberti HO PRR GP-9b #3826\*  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Robert Malberti HO PRR GP-35 #2361\*  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Mel Agne HO EMD GP-9, WM #6412  
 circa 1980

### Freight Cars

1<sup>st</sup> Robert Minnis Hon2 Tank Car\*  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Charles Flichman On3 D&RGW 6500 Series Flat  
 Car #6512  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Noll Horan On30 18’ Tank Car

### Caboose

1<sup>st</sup> Jim Atkinson HO Ma & Pa Caboose #2003

### Passenger Cars

1<sup>st</sup> Jim Atkinson HO Combine X Coach\*

### Non-Revenue

1<sup>st</sup> Jim Atkinson HO Double Track Russell  
 Snow Plow

### Structures On-Line

1<sup>st</sup> Charles Flichman O 184’ Curved Chord Pratt  
 Truss Bridge\*  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Tom Lane HO Double Track Thru  
 Truss Span\*  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Charles Flichman On3 Coaling Station\*

Displays On-Line (Changing title from Diorama to match National)

1 <sup>st</sup>	Dave Lynam	HO	Mine Ore Bin*
2 <sup>nd</sup>	John Johnson	HO	PRR Flagstop Station Country Scene

Modules

1 <sup>st</sup>	Marc Sisk	N	Pipestone Pass Ntrak Modules 30" x 12'
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**PHOTO CONTEST**

The winners are:

Model (B&W or Color)

1 <sup>st</sup>	Pete Shatswell	Meet (Phoebe Snow/C&O Caboose)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Terry Nesbit	Breaking Rule "G"
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Pete Shatswell	Crew Change

Prototype (B&W or Color)

1 <sup>st</sup>	Charles Hladik	N&W 1218 at Forest VA 12-6-90
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Terry Nesbit	Winter EBT Steam Up 1970
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Roger Cason	All Steamed Up

**ARTS & CRAFTS CONTEST**

The winners are:

Rail

1 <sup>st</sup>	John Johnson	20th Century Stamp Display
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Pauline Shatswell	Trains Made of Dark Chocolate

(\*Denotes AP Merit Award—scoring a minimum of 87.5 points)

**SPECIAL AWARDS**

Favorite Train: Popular Vote

1 <sup>st</sup>	Robert Malberti	PRR FA-1,FB-1;17 Reefer's + Caboose
2 <sup>nd</sup>	John Johnson	PRR Local Freight circa 1953

The President's Award: given to the best model of a tank car.  
Robert Minnis HOn2 Tank Car

The Blue Lantern Award: given to a model that contains at least 40% commercial parts which best represents Branch, Narrow Gauge or Private Line operating equipment and/or facilities. The Narrow Gauge Car Shop sponsors this award.  
Dave Lynam Kleeman Mine Display

Marv Kershner Memorial Award: Creativity in Modeling (South Mountain Division #10)  
Noll Horan On30 18' Tank Car

The Philadelphia New Modeler Award: given to the first-time entrant in the model contest with the highest point score. (A cash prize as well as a plaque from the Division.)  
Marc Sisk N Pipestone Pass Ntrak Module 30" x 12'

Dutch Station Awards—"Spirit of Lancaster County"  
(Popular Vote)  
Noll Horan On30 18' Tank Car

Best-in-Show: given to the entry with the highest point score in the model contest.  
Charles Flichman O 184' Curved Chord Pratt Truss Bridge



**Bob Minnis' Award-winning Tank car**

# 2001 Annual Divisional Report

forwarded by Jim Kellow - MER Vice President

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Part of the MER Vice President's responsibility is to obtain from each Division Superintendent an annual report on the Division's activities. It should be noted that each MER Division has been notified by the MER President that according to the NMRA and MER By-Laws all Division members must also be members of the NMRA and MER. All of the Divisions responded that their Division Bylaws will be updated, if currently not in compliance, to reflect this membership requirement by the end of 2001.

The following information was received from the MER Divisions.

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## **Division No. 1 - New Jersey Division. Submitted by Supt. Mike McNamara.**

The New Jersey Division kept very busy with five Division Meets held from September through May along with one outdoor garden layout tour in June and a railfan trip aboard the Cape May Seashore Lines in April. Attendance at each meet averaged about 75 people. Each Meet featured clinics, layout tours, popular vote contests and swap tables. The Division Meets continued to feature a raffle of donated items by the membership. The money raised has helped us with some one-time expenses without depleting our treasury.

The year ended with 115 members. In an effort to bring in additional new members, our newsletter is mailed to anyone who has shown an interest in the Division's activities. Not all live within the boundaries of the Division. For those that do we encourage to become members and attend Division Meets. Periodically we send our newsletter to known NMRA or MER members who do not belong to the Division. Progress in this regard has been slow but we have seen our membership grow over the past few years as well as having brought more MER and NMRA members on board from our area. Our newsletter is also sent to other Divisions within the MER as well as a few other Division Editors around the country.

Annual elections were held in March. Our existing board remained intact, an indication that things are being run satisfactorily. The Board asked the membership about the possibility of hosting a Regional convention. Although there was some interest, no one was willing to step forward to help get the ball rolling. The year ended with all financial obligations met and an increase in our treasury. The Division remains in good shape for the coming year with a

full slate of activities planned.

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## **Division No. 2 - Potomac Division - Submitted by Garret Nicholson.**

We organized monthly home layout tours. Members invited others to view their layouts on Sunday afternoons. We have been contacted by members and widows of members to assist them in selling their equipment on consignment. We have also been asked to dismantle layouts. The equipment is often sold at the Timonium (MD) show and various Division events.

Each March we sponsor a one-day mini-convention. There are module displays, AP contests, clinics and a guest speaker. With Northern Virginia Ntrak's help, we plan to hold a weekend convention in the fall of 2002.

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## **Division No. 3 - Philadelphia Division - Submitted by Tim Palmer**

In the spring we hosted what was described as a great convention - The Keystone Junction 2001. A highlight was the visit/tour of the control center for AMTRAK. Several compliments have been received for the folks who provided assistance and presentations. The Division will host the 2006 National Convention. We've aligned ourselves with the NMRA and MER concerning the subscriber issue. Several members have progressed considerably with their goals to become MMRs.

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## **Division No. 4 - Tidewater Division - Submitted by Supt. Dan Taber**

### Newly Elected Officers:

Superintendent	Dan Taber
Asst. Superintendent	Jon Sliwa
Paymaster	John Hammond
Director/Timekeeper	Celeste Robbins
Director	Jim McLemore
Director	Tom Salmon
	(continued)
Director	Neil Rish
	(continued)

### Membership:

We are in the process of changing membership requirements. Individuals must be members of the NMRA and the MER to qualify for Tidewater Division membership. While this will not officially go into effect until January 2002 we are no longer renewing memberships under the old scheme. Fifty-six members now meet the new requirements for Divisional membership.

### Financial:

We currently have a treasury balance of \$12,859.45.

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Projects:

We have had two significant community projects during the past year. The first is a working HO Scale model railroad of Suffolk Virginia circa 1905. Located in the old Seaboard Passenger Terminal in Downtown Suffolk, it represents an area from Constant's Wharf to the Peanut District. Jim Fay, Norm Garner, and Jim McLemore are the primary modelers. They built the layout, landscaped it, and made many of the structures. Other Division members provided scratch-built and kit-bashed structures also. The Division provided financial support for the project. For the second project, in cooperation with the Virginia Beach Police Department, we helped a local Explorer Troop build dioramas in HO Scale for use in police tactical training. This effort was spearheaded by John Fallon. Steve and Sharon Prescott also contributed time and effort. The dioramas are modeled after specific areas of the city. One depicts a typical Virginia Beach elementary school and grounds. The school model has a detailed interior layout to assist police in working out various school related tactical scenarios.

Shows:

The Division sponsors an HO Module Group that presents public shows throughout the year. The first show was done in conjunction with the Division's annual train show at the Virginia Beach Pavilion in October 2000. The Potomac Division HO Module Crew joined with the Tidewater Division's group. The joint endeavor was a great success so the two divisions plan to repeat it at the 2001 show and develop other opportunities for joint projects. In December the group will have a Christmas show at a skilled care and Alzheimer's nursing home. This was the second time for this show that will become an annual event. The group has continued its annual support of the Greenberg Show held each January in Virginia Beach. Also last March the group again participated in the Chesapeake Public Library Train Days. This show is enjoyed by the Division members and highly anticipated by young library patrons. Again in March, the group set up a railroad layout for Chesapeake's Chittum Elementary School. This show was part of the school's Biennial Science Fair. Students were given steam engine operational information appropriate for their age groups.

Displays and Talks:

A static display was set up for National Model Railroad Month at the Virginia Beach Public Library. Dan Taber, and Richard and Sam Peterson provided a presentation with displays to the Boy Scouts in December. The presentation covered scale with representative models from N, HO, S, O and G. Two modules were shown along with a 1/4" live steam boxcar. John Cryderman spoke to the Great Bridge Intermediate School in May. This featured modular and model displays.

Honors:

The following awards were given to our members at the

Annual Business Meeting:

Volunteer of the Year	Jerry Kay
Modeler of the Year	Bill Fay and Norm Garner
Superintendent's Award	John Fallon
Special Awards of Appreciation	Steve and Sharon Prescott

AP Awards.

Association Volunteer - Celeste Robbins, Max Robbins, and Steve Prescott.

J.J. Johnson has received numerous regional and national awards for his scratch-built model of the City of Suffolk CourtHouse. This model was built for the Suffolk Train Museum mentioned above. Among the awards, J.J. received the following:

First Place - Structure Off-Line - Mid-Eastern Region

Keystone Junction Convention.

First Place - Structures Off-Line - Gateway 2001 National Convention in Saint Louis.

First Place - Best Photo Match - photo match vis-à-vis resulting model.

First Place - Favorite Train - Pennsy Local Freight.

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**Division No. 5 - James River Division - Submitted by Pete Shatswell**

We held four meets this year: one in Lynchburg in conjunction with the SMRF Meet and regular meets in Richmond, Farmville, and Charlottesville. Each meet featured division contests, open houses, and presentations on a variety of subjects as well as other activities.

The JRD Bylaws were updated as per changes voted upon by the membership in June. This change separated the Clerk and Paymaster positions. The Division also had new elections in June to fill vacancies.

New officers are:

Superintendent	Pete Shatswell
Asst. Superintendent	Chuck Hladik
Clerk	Mark Chase
Paymaster	Jay Manning
Director	Bill McMillian
Director	Don Wells
Director	Tony DeMasi
Director & AP Chairman	Chuck Hladik (continuing)
Director and Division	Ron Herfurth (continuing)
Model Contest Chairman	??

Gary Quayle received an AP award for Motive Power. Howard Heltman received a Golden Spike award for his WM layout. Fred Miller was given three merit awards toward an AP certificate for Civil Engineering. Bill McMillian and Fred Miller both won numerous awards at

regional conventions.

The division's newsletter, the Crossties, was published quarterly and enlarged with an online appendix web site. The first WWW appendix section contained many Frazer Convention pictures contributed by Fred Miller and Pete Shatswell. That site's address is:

**www.crossties.homestead.com.**

It was also announced that the "spring" 2002 MER convention will be held in Richmond, VA. Many of the JRD'ers will be working as convention committee members to bring this event about.

Financially the JRD is solvent. The new officers are investigating means to keep it that way.

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**Division 10 - South Mountain Division 10 - Submitted by Supt. Dick McEvoy**

We continued to hold monthly round-robin meetings at members' homes from September through May. We also car-pooled to the Pittsburgh area in June to visit two club layouts and a home layout. This was a very enjoyable excursion, which we hope to repeat next year.

The Division's 1999 Fall Convention Committee proposed a Memorial Award for Marv Kershner who died shortly after that convention. The award for innovation in modeling was approved by the MER Board and will be awarded for the first time at the MER 2001 fall convention in Lancaster.

Our bid to host the 2004 Fall MER convention on November 11 - 14, 2004 has been accepted by the MER Board and initial planning has begun. Don Florwick agreed to chair this event and selection of support staff is in progress. Plans for the coming year are well underway with a fairly firm schedule for the first half pretty well worked out.

Officers for the new season remain unchanged:

Superintendent	Dick McEvoy
Asst. Superintendent	Don Florwick
Clerk/Paymaster	Ray Price

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**Division No. 11 - Susquehanna Division - Submitted by Brian Brandt**

I officially assumed the office of Superintendent in October. We elected our first set of Division Directors. They are: Alan Frame, Bruce Allison, and Scott Turner. We maintained our roster of about 57 members of all three organizations. We had five meets during the year. They were:

An open layout at Robert Martin's home

A slide presentation with Jim Atkinson  
A meet at the Keystone Model Railroad Club in Mechanicsburg  
A meet at the Miniature Railroad Club of York  
The first annual picnic of Division 11 at Washington Borough Park

We hosted the Dutch Station 2001 MER Fall Convention in Lancaster, PA in October 2001. Our finances are in good shape.

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**Division No. 12 - Carolina Southern Division - Submitted by Supt. Larry Lau.**

We began the year with our annual meeting in January. The main order of business was the election of new officers. Our current elected officers are:

Superintendent	Larry Lau
Asst. Superintendent	Jack Parker
Clerk	Dave Chance
Paymaster	Dick Bronson
Director	Joe St. John
Director	Exum Davis
Director	Ed Locklin

Superintendent Lau appointed the following as Chairmen of Standing Committees:

Re-rail and Membership	Ed Locklin
Train Show	Exum Davis
Activities & Programs	Michelle Chance
By-laws	Jack Parker
Achievement Programs	Phil Bostian

Activities:

1) Building two four-foot modules for the Metrolina Model Railroaders modular layout. The themes of these modules are a modified time-saver switching yard without interfering with the mainline. Scenery includes the Charlotte passenger station platform (scratch built by Ed Locklin), related buildings and a tree canopy backdrop.

2) An A/P program was started with a number of meetings for members to construct an Intermountain Boxcar. Members learned construction techniques and tips from each other. The last meeting will be a "weathering with chalk" session. We are planning for regional AP officials to visit in the near future to judge our efforts.

3) The division provided a test track at a local train show in July and will be providing it for a show in December.

The Brass Pounder, our division newsletter, has been published quarterly. Current membership is twenty. A "re-rail" effort of nineteen former members resulted in two rejoin-

ing. There are an additional forty-six MER members within the division boundaries. A new brochure has been developed and will be going out to these potential members in the near future. Our annual picnic is planned for September.

Financial Statement:

Beginning Balance	\$ 168.49
Dues Income	\$ 119.00
Gifts	\$ 17.00

Expenses:

Re-Rail	\$ 6.56
Module	61.78
Train Show	50.00
Ending Balance	\$ 204.15

**Division No. 13 - Carolina Piedmont Division - Submitted by Karl Kleeman**

Officers and Board of Directors

2000 started with the September meeting. Todd Hathaway, who was Superintendent at that time, reported that the Division is part of the NMRA and MER and as such all Division members must also be members of the NMRA and MER. He also announced his resignation. In October the following (new) officers were elected:

Superintendent	Dick Genthner
Asst. Superintendent	Jack Frame (continuing)
Clerk	Karl Kleeman
Paymaster	John Rudisill
Director	Ed Dougherty
Director	John Wallis
Director	Frank Mansfield
Newsletter Editor	Bill Cox (continuing)

Membership Issues

The first business of the new administration was to resolve the NMRA and MER membership issues and assist those who were not members of the NMRA and MER to join both. This became a major controversy and the HO module group within the Division decided to drop out en masse. In addition to the module group, a number of other members dropped out rather than join the NMRA and/or MER. It was clear that the first order of business had to be to rebuild the Division and the Board initiated a membership recruitment effort. Letters were sent to all NMRA members in our geographic area who were not currently Division members. Letters were also sent to former members who dropped out inviting them to reconsider. Lastly, we recruited members at local train shows. By February 24 former members had renewed and by the end of the year we will have over 50 members.

Old Business

Issues held over from the previous year included the Division application for tax-exempt status and the Southern Junction Train Show that we had cosponsored in 2000. Dick Genthner, aided by Bob Fuller and John Wallis, moved forward with the tax-exempt status. Both the North Carolina and the IRS have approved classifying the Division as a 501-C3 tax-exempt organization. Since our cosponsor dropped out of the Southern Junction Train Show the Board voted to not sponsor the show but an individual member has taken on that responsibility and we will assist.

Charitable Activities

At year-end we distributed six train sets in our "Holiday Trains for Kids Program". The Board also voted to continue the program in 2001. We also made a donation to a local chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. Board member Frank Mansfield agreed to be the liaison with the local Boy Scout organization.

In April we sponsored an all-day Saturday Mini-meet at a local retirement center. The objectives of the program were to provide a good show for the residents and have clinics for our members. NMRA Trustee Eric Dervinis and MER President Norm Garner spoke at this event. Other highlights included an HO module layout, an N "kit" layout, outside G-gauge dual track operating ovals with a live steam demonstration and five great clinics.

We've had a number of very interesting programs at monthly meetings. The highlight was a visit to the North Carolina Dept. of Transportation rail facility in downtown Raleigh. We got a good look at the engine and car maintenance shops and a close-up look at rolling stock. Other programs presented during the year included a program on DCC by Ed Dougherty, a talk on High Speed Rail by the NC Dept. of Transportation, a talk on the development and production of commercial model railroad rolling stock by Robert Middour from K-Line, a presentation and review of the spring MER Convention and a presentation on Railroad Stations by Art Peterson who recently published a book about stations in North Carolina.

Financial

We started 2001 with a cash balance of \$3021.61. We manned tables and sold donated railroad magazines at train shows including GATS in Raleigh, a train show at a local mall, and will again at the upcoming Southern Junction show. This gave us an opportunity to promote the NMRA and the Division, to recruit members, and to promote the hobby to the general public. The rest of the Division's income came from dues. Mailings and programs for the recruitment efforts reduced our fiscal reserves such that the current cash balance is now \$2069.01. We are reviewing options to raise additional operating funds in the future including business sponsors, advertisements in the newsletter, and producing and selling a Division-type model railroad car.

### Future Directions

Another major effort has been a membership survey. The Board wanted to determine what the opinions and suggestions of the membership were concerning the current operation of the Division and to receive suggestions for the future. Of 41 surveys, 31 were returned. The results were summarized in the Division newsletter and are being used to guide the Division in the future. Superintendent Genthner is now working on a new Division Committee structure to give everyone an opportunity to participate in the Division's administration and operation. For the rest of 2001 we have planned the following programs: Operation Lifesaver, NMRA AP Judging and building paper models.



Noll Horan's winning tank car  
at Dutch Station

## CALLBOARD — *Coming Events*

Notices must be typed and have complete addresses. Use the style shown below and be brief as possible. Be sure to include a contact telephone number. Send items for CALLBOARD to Art Thomas, 228 Lovely Rd, Alum Bank, PA 15521. E-Mail to [athomas@bedford.net](mailto:athomas@bedford.net)

**November 10 - 11. Allentown First Frost.** 6 - 9 P.M. Allentown, PA. Contact: Bob House - Ph. 610-821-7886.

**November 10 - 11. 17th Annual Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club Train Show.** 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. NC State Fairgrounds, Kerr-Scoot Bldg., 1025 Blue Ridge Road, Raleigh, NC. General admission - \$3. Contact: George W. Lasley - Ph. 919-834-5531 Peter K. Hansma - Ph. 919-217-0407 or [pkh@bellsouth.net](mailto:pkh@bellsouth.net).

**November 18. Twelfth Annual Great Stroudsburg Train Show.** Pocono Rail Historical Society. Contact: Ph. 570-894-3338 (from dodie.com).

**November 18. Pocono Rail Historical Society.** Twelfth Annual Great Stroudsburg Train Show. Contact: Ph. 570-894-3338 (from dodie.com).

**November 24 - 25. Cheltenham Hills Model RR Club Annual Open House.** Noon - 4 P.M. 8000 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA (in the former Ogontz Station of the Reading Railroad). Contact: Bruce Binder - Ph. 215-635-9747.

**December 2. Whistle Stop Train Show.** Williamsport, PA. Contact: Jim Stabley - Ph. 570-326-4280.

**December 8. Altoona Train Collectors Club.** Altoona, PA. Christmas Show. Contact: Gerry Edleblute - Ph. 814-693-1673.

**December 8 - 9. Middle Division NTRAK MRC/Open House.** Pine Grove Mills, PA (near State College). Contact: Bob Ginter - 814-355-4131 before 8 P.M.

**December 8 - 9. The Gateway Model Railroad Club Annual Open House.** 100 Browning Road, Brooklawn, NJ 08030. Donation \$2; kids under 12 free with an adult. Contact: Ron Baile. Ph. 856-858-6644 or [rbaile@aol.com](mailto:rbaile@aol.com) or visit website [www.gatemodelrr.org](http://www.gatemodelrr.org).

**December 16. Slatebelt Area Train and Toy Show.** Wind Gap, PA (south of Stroudsburg). Contact: Jean Nidosik - Ph. 570-620-2346 before 9 P.M. (from dodie.com).

(Thanks to James Ingram [[JamesIngram@track2.com](mailto:JamesIngram@track2.com)] for providing much of the information)

## More on the Business Meeting

By Bill Roman - MER Secretary

This meeting was mostly of a housekeeping nature. Some of the key items taken up were the election of Bob Minnis, Roger Cason and Noll Horan to the Director positions, approval of the By-Law changes, and a report that planning for the Richmond Convention in June 2002 is proceeding on schedule. There were no other momentous decisions or action items. Bob Martin is working hard on future conventions, but nothing is firm so far. This Annual Meeting was very well attended and had the installation of new officers, presentation of plaques to outgoing Directors, and considerable discussion from the floor concerning a need to better involve the Divisions in the recruitment and retention process.

## Weather Report—Hail and (a)Dew

A hail (Get it?), hearty welcome and congratulations to our new incoming Directors Bob Minnis and Roger Cason and our re-elected Noll Horan. Also, a hearty adieu (Get it? Adieu/dew?) and best wishes and thanks to our outgoing Directors W. Terry Nesbit and Jim Atkinson along with a belated note of appreciation to Don Yingling for their efforts and service.

## Trustee's Report

By Eric Dervinis - MER Trustee

### THE BEST TIME OF YEAR

Most of us have been model railroaders since we were young. We were introduced to the hobby by Lionel or American Flyer trains racing around under the Christmas Tree. Yes, we only 'played' with these trains as our fathers, friends or relatives built the layout.

Now, the season is again upon us and it is the best time in three special ways. First, November is Model Railroad month. We have the chance to participate through open houses, exhibits at libraries, module displays or mini clinics at local train shows. No matter how, we have a chance to display our skills for potential model railroaders. We can get out of the basement and demonstrate how much fun our hobby is. Second, is the oppor-

## Contests Richmond Rails 2002

by Ray Bilodeau  
MER General Contest Chairman

The spring convention in Richmond, VA, June 6-9, 2002 will have a judged Model contest and a popular vote Photo and Arts and Crafts contest. Any current NMRA and MER member is eligible to enter these contests. The following special awards will be presented in Richmond:

**The President's Award** — President Garner requests that our modelers bring an off-line structure to Richmond next Spring. Prototype, freelance? We are scale blind here! How about a narrow-gauge structure? If that makes you nervous, then look around you . . . model something with a "Southern" flavor.

**Clyde L. Gerald Award** — This award is given for the best kit-bashed model.

**Blue Lantern Award** — This award is for a model containing not more than forty percent commercial parts that best represents branch, short or private line operating equipment and /or facilities. It is sponsored by *The Narrow Gauge Car Shop*.

**Philadelphia Division New Modeler Award** — This award will be given to a first time modeler entering an NMRA sponsored, judged, model contest at a Mid-Eastern Region Convention. The new modeler whose entry receives the highest score regardless of category in the model contest will win the award. A cash prize and plaque will be presented by the Philadelphia Division and a 'New Modeler Award' certificate will be presented by the MER.

We would like to mention at this time that Dick Landt of the Philadelphia Division has been appointed by President Garner to be the Assistant Model Contest Chairman. Dick is a long time modeler, a merit award winner in the Achievement Program, and is computer techno-enabled.

tunity to add to our collection without leaving the house. Start by dropping hints about the model, book, etc. that you always wanted. Be specific, so you will receive exactly what you're looking for. Not only may you get what you want, but the presenter may give you a unique present that can be pointed out for years to come. Third, the long nights arrive in December so we have the time to work on our favorite projects without being distracted by the lawn mower, boat or outdoor projects.

Readers of the LOCAL are interested in what you did over the holidays. Document your holiday model railroad project and send it to the Editor of the LOCAL. He can lend assistance to anyone unfamiliar with publishing guidelines. Best wishes to everyone for the best of the season! Do share the holidays and your trains with friends and family and Happy New Year to you all!

**MID-EASTERN REGION, NMRA, INC.**  
**9 Roosevelt Ave.**  
**Wilmington, DE 19804-3044**

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**MER Special Box Car Order Form**

Car	QUANTITY	MEMBER PRICE *	NON-MEMBER PRICE	TOTAL
#23506 _____		\$8.95	\$10.95	\$ _____
#23515 _____		\$8.95	\$10.95	

MARYLAND RESIDENTS ADD 5% SALES TAX

SHIPPING: \_\_\_\_\_

\* M \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Ship \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU MISSED THIS ONE. THE NEXT ONE WILL BE AVAILABLE A COUPLE OF ISSUES FROM NOW—KEEP YOUR EYE ON THIS SPACE!**

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO  
 MID EASTERN REGION.

MAIL TO:  
 THE MID-EASTERN REGION INC.  
 Business Manager  
 9 Roosevelt Ave.  
 Wilmington, DE 19804-3044

The Mid-Eastern Region Inc., NMRA  
 An IRS Tax Exempt Organization  
 Business Manager  
 9 Roosevelt Ave.  
 Wilmington, DE 19804-3044

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/DUES RENEWAL NOTICE**  
 YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION  
 TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION

**Remittance Enclosed for:**

**NMRA Dues:**  New  Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

1 year: \$45.00  2 years: \$90.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Life membership cost is based on your age.  
 Send your Birth Date to the NMRA for a quotation.*

**Region Dues:**  New  Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

1 year: \$8.00  2 years: \$16.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Life membership cost is based on your age. Send your Birth Date to the MER for a  
 quotation. Only NMRA Life Members qualify for MER Life Membership*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip (+4) \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

NMRA # \_\_\_\_\_ Expire Date \_\_\_\_\_

MER # \_\_\_\_\_ Expire Date \_\_\_\_\_

Scale \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Tel # \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region**

MER Lapel Pin/Tie Tack @ \$6 each \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 MER Cloth Patch @ \$3 each \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Donation \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_