



## Building The Post Office at Lemasters

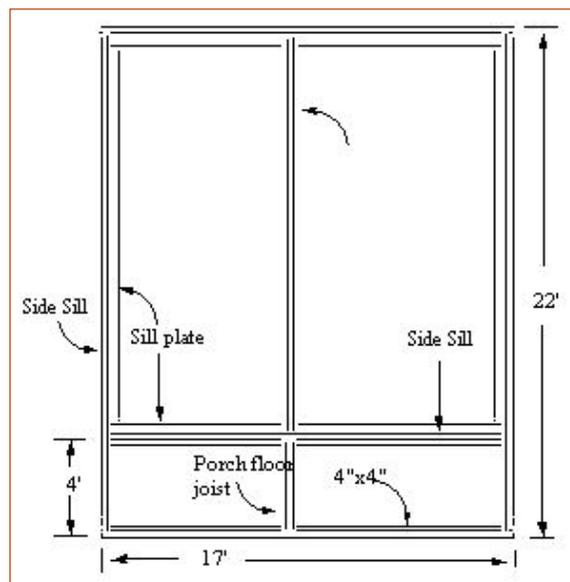
*Photographs and article by Martin Brechbiel*

**E**VERY TOWN NEEDS a Post Office and while some were located within other businesses, many were small stand-alone structures. Since I decided to take a break from building some larger structures board-by-board, I thought I'd relax with a simpler project. I had some photos and inspiration, and some new to me materials to experiment with, so that's exactly where I started on this project.

### FOUNDATION AND BASE

I set up a foundation using a product from SpM-Wiland (Boden & Co.). This material started out as a sheet of retaining wall that is a very dense resin, pre-colored and weathered, that I ripped into 2' scale strips using my band saw. These strips turned out to make nice foundation walls, but cutting the sheet materials was rather hard to control. A good shop vacuum is a definite requirement. That being said, I cut enough for a 16 3/4' x 18" building foundation, beveled the ends, and CA'd it all together on top of a scrap of 1/32" basswood. Due to some less than perfect free hand cutting with the band saw, I had some space to fill in the front and back of foundation to bring it to level. I used a mixed course of grey, red, and brown bricks from 135th Construction Battalion to fill in the gaps and took advantage to add some character and to also make it look like a recycled foundation left from a prior building. I CA'd sill plates (HO 6" x 22") on top of the foundation stone and carved out some recesses to make these fit better where the top of the bricks were too high.

I used 1/16" x 3/16" to make sides sills. The back and sides were fitted flush to the outside edge of the sill plate. The side boards were also cut long (22') to provide a base for a small front porch and the side sill for that end was set back off the sill plate to provide a resting place for the porch floor joists. Another length of 1/16" x 3/16" with a length of O scale 4" x 4" flush to the bottom interior edge spanned the open end for the porch. Small sections of 1/16" x 3/16" were mortised to rest on the 4" x 4" with the opposite end resting on the exposed sill plate while a corresponding set of floor joists of the same were installed on 2' centers. See figure 1 and photo 1. After this was completed, the floor for the entire structure (3/32" x 1/16" thick scribed siding) was CA'd to the floor joists.



**Figure 1: Foundation, sills and floor joists.**

The entrance wall was planned to have a single entrance door with a single 9 over 1 window. The left side wall was planned to have another single entrance door with another 9 over 1 window. The walls were cut from 3/32" clapboard siding: 11 3/4' x 16 3/4' for the back wall; 11 3/4' high at the back x 18 1/2' long and 14' high at the front for the two side walls, and 15 1/2' x 16 3/4' for the front entrance wall. Openings for the window and door on the side and front were cut out using a sharp utility knife and the castings were test-fitted. See figure 2.

The back and side walls overlap the exterior of the side sill and

continued on page 4

# Keeping In Touch...

By Fred Miller, MMR  
MER Business Manager

At the time I am writing this column, I am looking forward to the MER's fall convention in Reston, VA. Probably by the time you are reading this, the fall convention has come and gone. I am sure we all had a good time. Conventions are always a great way to enhance your modeling skills by attending clinics and viewing layouts created by fellow modelers. Catching up with old friends is also no small part of attending a convention. It's probably not too early to start thinking about that NMRA National convention coming up next July in Hartford, CT. Nationals are always a hoot and this one is closer to our Region.

Many of **The Local** subscribers seem to be anxious to keep their subscriptions active. We are certainly happy about that but take a peek at your subscription termination date on the mailing label of your **Local** before sending your renewal. No need to send in subscription payment for dates beyond two years hence. Our Treasurer cannot accept subscription funds that far out and I take the liberty (with the subscribers permission) of converting the excess money into a donation. I think this situation is happening more these days because members add Regional Subscription money when they renew their NMRA membership, and then also send money to me for subscriptions. The date shown on the mailing label is the month that your subscription is no longer active. For example if it said "LOCAL exp: 9/09" next to your MER# on the first line, that would mean your subscription was only active through the July-Aug 09 issue. I also put an extra warning on the label when mailing the last issue covered by your subscription.

By the way, we also appreciate those members who tag on a little extra with their subscription as a donation. We always appreciate any donation. You will always receive a thank you letter, which can be used for your tax records. Remember the MER is an IRS Tax Exempt Organization so your donation may be tax deductible.

As always *Keep in Touch* with any questions or changes in your subscriptions or addresses. A current address on file saves the MER some money. 

# The Local

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**The 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.

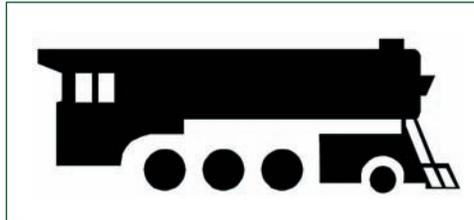
The MER website is [www.mer-nmra.org](http://www.mer-nmra.org)

# A Note From The President

By Roger L. Cason, MMR  
President

**L**ET'S START WITH A "disclosure". Newly elected MER officers begin their terms at the annual meeting held in conjunction with our MER Fall Convention. By the time you read this, the convention and the annual meeting will be a part of history. But, because of publication deadlines and a personal vacation schedule, I'm writing this well before the annual meeting – i.e. before I'm really the MER President. Having said all that. . . .

I'm honored to serve as your President for the next two years. I'm following in the footsteps of some very fine people. In particular, I feel privileged to have known and worked with each of the three immediate past Presidents – Clint Hyde, Norm Garner, and Bill Gruber. And I certainly enjoyed working with outgoing Vice President, Noll Horan. Each in his own way contributed a lot, and set a high standard for those of us who follow.



## BOTTOMS UP

So, "where am I coming from"? For openers, I think the MER should be a bottoms up rather than a top down organization. Consistent with that, I think it's important for the Region to do a lot to help the Divisions. For most of us, the local Divisions are the foundation of the NMRA.

## PLANNING QUESTIONNAIRE

One way to get bottoms up input is via a questionnaire. With help from others, I have prepared a four-page questionnaire intended to solicit input and ideas on all phases of MER activity, including ideas on ways to help the Divisions, and the possible need for MER Bylaws changes. But, who should get such a questionnaire? It would be nice to send it to all MER members, but there are about 2,100 of them. Not too practical! As a fallback, I have sent it to all MER officers, board members, and committee chairmen, plus Division Superintendents and Division AP Coordinators. I

also made copies available to attendees at the "Meet Your New Regional Officers" clinic at Reston. If you have ideas and comments on any phase of MER operation and didn't get a questionnaire, please contact me (e-mail preferred) and I'll send you one. My contact information is included on page 2 of every issue of **The Local**. While this plan doesn't send the questionnaire to each MER member, but we believe it makes it available to every one of them.

Speaking of contact information; my **Scale Rails** listing has one e-mail address ([merprez@hq.nmra.org](mailto:merprez@hq.nmra.org)) and my listing here in **The Local** has another ([rogercason@juno.com](mailto:rogercason@juno.com)). In general, if you want to reach me via e-mail, I would suggest using the latter one. There are some persistent IT problems with the NMRA Headquarters e-mail system – one of which is that it "strips" off any attachments.

## AP ATTABOYS

Continuing to comment on "where I am coming from", and speaking as an MMR myself. . . . I believe that the Achievement Program is an important part of what we do. In that connection, I would like to particularly commend three of our Divisions – Carolina Southern, James River, and Carolina Piedmont. Taking number of members into account, these three Divisions lead the MER in AP activity (MMR's, AP certificates, and Golden Spikes). A big "attaboy" for the AP Coordinators for each of the three Divisions – Dave Chance, Chuck Hladik, and Vic Bitleris.

## A FINAL THOUGHT

Is this a great hobby, or what? We have builders, operators, collectors, historians, scenery wizards, electronics folks, machinery repair people, and photographers just to name a few of the many skills we encounter. To borrow a phrase from Stephen Priest, Editor of **Scale Rails**, it's a "hobby you can personalize."

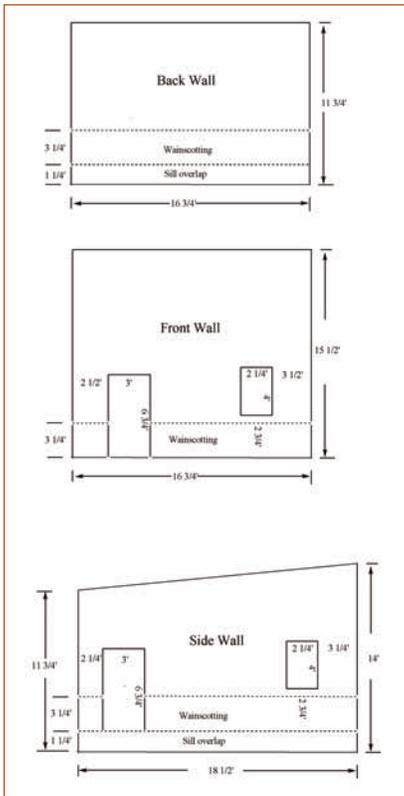
## MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW:

The South Mountain Division will be hosting the 2009 MER Fall Convention on October 15-18, in Hagerstown, Maryland. More information in upcoming issues!

## Participate in National Model Railroad month!

I am looking for stories about what you did during November to support National Railroad month. I am also looking for photographs of your models or layouts taken to work. These will be featured in **The Local** in upcoming issues. Contact the editor – Steve Kindig at (717) 825-5558 or [stevespressrr@yahoo.com](mailto:stevespressrr@yahoo.com), with your story and photographs! A postal address can be found on page 2.

flooring by 1 1/4' while the bottom of the front wall actually rests on the floor. The next 3 1/4' up on the walls was covered with scribed siding (1/16" spacing x 1/32" thick) for wainscoting. See



**Figure 2: The back, front and side walls.**

figure 2 again. The wainscoting was capped with HO scale 1" x 4". The window and door openings were first trimmed out with O scale 1" x 4" followed by a layer of O scale 1" x 6" that neatly covers the perimeters of the window castings. The walls above the wainscoting were finished with horizontal scribed siding (3/32" spacing x 1/32" thick). The scribed siding on the front and back interiors was capped with a length of 3/32" x 5/52" basswood beam leaving a scale foot above that same beam as space for resting the rafters there. The scribed siding on the side walls left space for an O scale 2" x 12" rafter that fit flush up against the side wall interior. The wainscoting, cap board, and scribed siding on the

side walls were also inset ~ 3/32" to account for the combined thickness of the scribed siding and interior of the front and back walls to make nice tight joints in the corners. See photo 2.

Before assembling the walls together, I painted the wainscoting

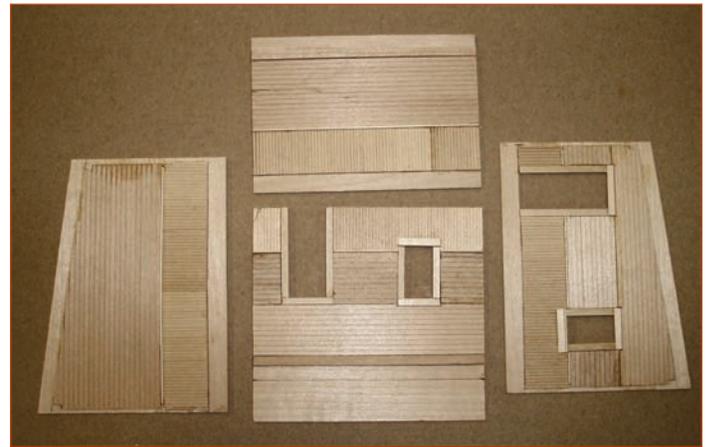


**Photo 1: A photograph of the built foundation.**

and door and window trim Light Green. The scribed siding walls were given a coat of Aged White. After looking at these walls and the trimmed out windows, I decided that the trim was a little too plain. I painted a couple of lengths of HO 4" x 4" Light Green and

added that to the outside edges of the window and door trim to get a more three dimensional effect.

I assembled the walls onto the base starting with the back wall using CA gluing that area below the wainscoting to the exterior of the side sill such that the base of the wainscoting fit flush on the surface of the floor. I added the two sides using CA at the base and Goo at the corners since the corner joints were end grain making



**Photo 2: A photograph of the completed front, back and side walls.**

sure that the trim boards fit together smoothly along with the beam for the rafters that is integral to the sides. The front wall was added last and was just Goo'd into place along the floor and at each edge corner joint again making sure that the trim and rafter support beam interlocked smoothly. Lastly, pre-painted (Aged White) 3/64" quarter round cut to length was set into each corner joint above the wainscoting trim cap board.

To make the roof, I took a section of some scrap 3/32" scribed siding (1/32" thick) that was edge glued up (19' x 19') such that it would have an overhand of ~9" on the sides with about a 3" overhang in the back. I wanted to make the roof removable which was going to be complicated by the fact that the front edge of the 3/32" scribed siding would be underneath the scribed siding back of the false front. To counter that, I decided to make the roof removable along with some of the rafters such that the roof could be lifted up from the back and then slid out from under the overhanging portion of the false front. See photo 3.



**Photo 3: A closeup of the section of removable roof.**

The rafters were made from O scale 2" x 12" beveled to match the angle of the roofline. Two were secured (CA) flush against the side walls into the gaps that was left there for them above the inte-



**Photo 4: Top and side view of completed post office.**

rior siding and the rest were placed roughly on 2' center spacing resting on the 3/32" x 5/52" beams that had been installed on the inside of the front and back walls. Spacers of O scale 4" x 12" were glued in between the "loose" rafters (Goo) to assemble a removable grid that butted up against spacers of the same material extending off from the two end rafters. The 19' square roof section was then glued (CA) in place to the "loose" rafter grid (scribed side facing downwards!) making the desired 9" overhang on the sides and 6" in the rear with the roof now set flush tight to the back of the false front. With the roof anchored to the rafter grid, an HO 2" x 4" was Goo'd to the back of the false front directly above the roof to create the slot where the removable roof will slide under and lock into place. The space above the 2" x 4" was paneled (CA) with more scrap 3/32" scribed siding. After removing the roof with the rafters now attached, I glued some 1/32" scrap spanning the rafters in two locations and used those to attach a pair of coach lamp assemblies (#3011).

Corner trim (O scale 1" x 6") was applied to all of the corners and "wrapped" around the front porch deck. Trim boards (O scale 1" x 4") were added to the sides of the false front wall to seal the ends while a cap board (HO scale 1" x 18") applied centered front to back across the top of the false front wall.

The porch roof began with another piece of 3/32" spaced scribed siding (1/32" thick) (5 1/2' x 16 3/4') that fit in between the corner trim on the front exterior wall. This siding was glued, scribed side down, to 4 end roof brackets that had been cut apart to make something close to 45° brackets and then glued to the scribed side; one at each end with the other 2 spaced roughly equidistant. This roof unit was then secured to the front wall (Goo) 3' down from the top of the wall.

Tar paper roofing for both roof areas was made from 600 grit sand paper cut into 3' wide strips and then cut into random lengths. The tar paper was applied (Goo) working from the bottom up with

overlapping seams. The last course of paper on the porch was creased to ride up onto the clapboard siding while the last course on the main roof slid under the trim board above that roof.

Steps up to the front porch and the side door entrance were fabricated using some laser cut stringers and treads with the stringers being mortised at the top to rest on some O scale 2" x 4" for support. I added a brick under the ends of the stringers from the side door steps.

Prior to painting, all of the exposed wood was stained Pecan with the porch, steps, and foundation getting several coats of my mystery stain mix (no one knows what lurks in there...). The four exterior walls were then painted with Wisconsin Central Maroon (GLS), but only sparingly on the front along where that wall might most exposed to weather. While that paint as still tacky, all four walls were quickly painted with Milwaukee Road Grey. The tar paper roofing was painted Grimy Black with Engine Black for the tarred seams. See photo 4.

The doors and windows were all pre-painted Aged White for the interior and exterior Sea Green. Glazing was cut from polyacetate sheet and secured with some minimal edge applied Goo. Locks were fashioned from styrene with doorknobs from small pins painted Engine Black and Brass, respectively.

The interior was set into place by using Short Parts Bin and a Long Counter Bench laser cut kits that were stained before being installed. See photo 5. Those units were joined by an Office Desk Set, a coal box, a safe, spittoon, wall clock, counter scale, wall telephone, along with a coal pail. The stove was a set of Don Winter castings that I had acquired somewhere. I set the stove up on stones like those used in foundation, drilled a hole through the wall for the stovepipe to set into, and met that hole on the outside with



**Photo 5: An interior photograph of the post office.**

a smoke jack. I used mixture of Goo in the hole with CA on the end of the casting with a small washer to be a wall flange to secure everything in place. A set of checker players playing over a barrel along with a dog and a shopkeeper populated the interior scene.

The front porch was cluttered up a bit with a barrel and crate

continued on page 6

casting (mine), a Fairbanks Morse scale, and a Quaker style rocker. The "Lemasters Post Office" sign was just printed out on a laser printer, glued to some scrap 1/32" basswood, "framed" with some HO scale 1" x 3", and painted to match the windows and doors. See photo 6. Final weathering was done by dry brushing with sev-



Photo 6: The completed post office.

eral Polly Scale colors, liberal amounts of chalks, and finalized with a light airbrush over spraying with dilute Grimy Black.

Now I just have to "plant" this post office into some scenery along side the main road into Lemasters so that the local citizens will be able to get their mail and gather for that occasional afternoon game of checkers.

#### LIST OF MATERIALS:

Retaining Wall Casting (SpM-Wiland (Boden & Co.))  
Grey, Red, Brown bricks (135th Construction Battalion)

#### Wood:

1/32" sheet basswood (Kappler Lumber)  
1/16" x 1/32" thick scribed siding  
3/32" x 1/16" thick scribed siding  
3/32" x 1/32" thick scribed siding  
HO 1" x 3", HO 1" x 4", HO 1" x 18",  
HO 2" x 4", HO 4" x 4", O 2" x 12",  
HO 6" x 22"  
O 1" x 4", O 1" x 6", O 4" x 12",  
3/32" x 5/52", 1/16" x 3/16" dimensional lumber  
3/32" clapboard siding (FloquilMt. Albert)  
3/64" quarter round (Floquilscrap box)

#### Doors, Windows, etc:

Doors #1451, #1452 (Turner Model Works)

Windows # 3726 (Grandt Line)  
Roof brackets #3518 (Grandt Line)  
Stairway stringers & treads (Rusty Stumps)

#### Paint and Stain:

Light Green, Aged White, Milwaukee Road Grey, Grimy Black,  
Engine Black, Sea Green (Polly Scale)  
Pecan stain (MinWax)  
Wisconsin Central Maroon (GLS),  
Brass, Grimy Black (Floquil)

#### Adhesives:

CA – medium viscosity  
Walther's Goo

#### Other "stuff":

600 grit sand paper

#### Detail Parts:

Coach lamp assemblies #3011 (Grandt Line)  
Short Parts Bin #710, Long Counter Bench  
#705 (Banta Modelworks)  
Office Desk Set #451, coal box #712, safe #606, spittoon  
#582, wall clock #621, counter scale #622, wall telephone  
#53, Fairbank Morse scale #530 (Berkshire Valley)  
Coal pail 7415, Quaker style rocker #7412 (Builders in Scale)  
Stove (Don Winter)  
Smoke jack #2844 (Turner Model Works)  
Checker players & barrel (Grandt Line)  
Dog & Shopkeeper (Arttista)  
Crates & Barrel (my castings)

MARTIN BRECHBIEL lives in the Potomac Division where he models O Scale. 🚂



## For Your Information

FYI to members that attended the "Cheap and Easy" tree clinic presented by Chuck Hladick at Reston.

Here is the contact information for the Putnam Company. Word was received at the end of October that they are discontinuing the black poly-fiber at the end of the year. I have not yet located another source; but I will keep you informed.

–Chuck Hladik

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WALWORTH, WISCONSIN 63104  
Phone: (262) 275-2104  
Website: [www.putnamcoinc.com](http://www.putnamcoinc.com) 🚂

# A Trip on the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad

Article and photographs by Steven P. August

**R**ECENTLY, SEVERAL MEMBERS of NMRA Division 12 took a trip on the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad. The historic railroad offers a variety of excursions through the North Carolina Mountains. Our group took the trip from Dillsboro to Bryson City, NC. Departing from Dillsboro and following the Tuckasegee River the train wound through some great scenery. The round trip excursion was approximately 32-miles and took 5 hours.

Not only was the scenery beautiful but the train passed some historical sites also. Namely the location (pictured here) where the blockbuster hit *The Fugitive* starring Harrison Ford filmed one of the most colossal train scenes ever undertaken. The scene in the movie lasted about 60-seconds, but took nearly 10 weeks to plan, 4 days to shoot and everything had to happen with one take. I guess there are not a lot of 650,000-pound U18B's sitting around ready to be destroyed. When the



Along the railroad are the remains from a scene of *The Fugitive*.

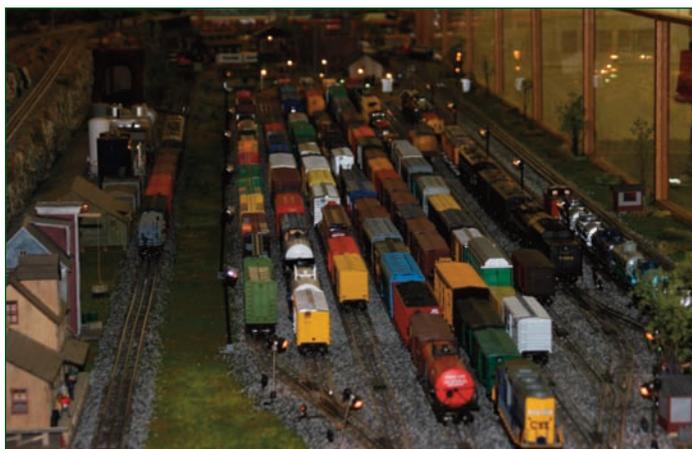
shooting was finished and dust had cleared, one camera was embedded under 26 feet of dirt and took nearly 8 hours to dig out. The remains of the locomotive can still be seen along the tracks.

As the trip continued up the mountain being pulled by our vintage GP-9, we noticed many sites along the way including old 1950's cars buried along the banks of the river in an effort to stop erosion of the banks. There was also a lot of canoeing and swimming along the river. There are many excursions available on the

Great Smoky Mountain Railroad including a dinner train, the Polar Express Run for kids and also the Great Pumpkin Run in the fall.

Bryson City was incorporated in 1887 and named for Colonel Thadeus Dillard Bryson. With the establishment of the railroad Bryson City soon connected other towns like Asheville and Murphy. Along with many other historic sites in Bryson City is the Smoky Mountain Trains Lionel Museum.

The museum was created to share and help expand the hobby of Model Railroading with all ages of individuals. The museum boasts one of Southeast's largest collections of Lionel Trains (more than 6,000 units) and two operating layouts. Kids of all ages can come in and tour the layouts and even operate various items on the layouts. The museum also offers a small hobby and retail shop on the premises.



A railyard from the Smoky Mountain Lionel Train Museum in Bryson City, NC.

All in the group had a memorable trip on board the Great Smoky Mountain Railroads and we hope to be able to go back again soon.

**STEVEN AUGUST** lives in the Carolina Southern Division where he models HO scale. He is also the Assistant Superintendent. 

# Operations on the Easton And Potomac Part 1 – How I got into Operations

Article and photographs by Keith Stillman

I STARTED IN MODEL RAILROADING in 1969 at the age of seventeen. These were the days of Atlas, Athern, MDC and high dollar (\$5.00) Central Valley kits sold at Bob's Hobby shop on Cary Street. My first layout was a five by nine based on a track plan in an issue of **Model Railroader**. It consisted of a folded dog bone with very little switching. No DCC, but I did build a two cab system with momentum throttles. The track was Tru Scale except for one Shinorah double slip switch. I included easements with all of the curves. My focus was modern (for 1969) which included EMD DD40Xs. Not much became of this layout. It was in the attic of my parents house and thus very hot in the summer, very cold in the winter and dusty year round. Just before graduation I decided I liked turn of the century steam, disposed of all of my rolling stock and motive power and started acquiring early 1900's steam engines in brass. By the way the name of the modern era railroad was Eastern Potomac and the name of the steam era railroad was Easton And Potomac Line. Graduation from high school and six years in the Navy put most of my railroading on hold. The most positive outcome of this layout was an interest in electronics, which I studied in the Navy.

After the Navy, college and a career in business did not allow much time for railroading. Then in 2003 my interest in model railroading was renewed. We had a spare upstairs bedroom and I started designing my next layout, one that would be for operations. Using Abracadata's 3D Railroad, I went through several track designs. Once I had settled on one (one which had way too much track, a duck under and not enough aisle space for any operators), I built the bench work, started laying track, purchased a Digitrax Empire Builder and was ready to start wiring when Marlene and I decided it was time to move. Down came everything in preparation for putting the house on the market. Oh, did I mention I didn't know anyone in the Richmond area that was doing operations?

Over the next month Marlene and I looked for an acceptable house, one with a large unfinished basement. I actually found one that was beside a switching spur with a

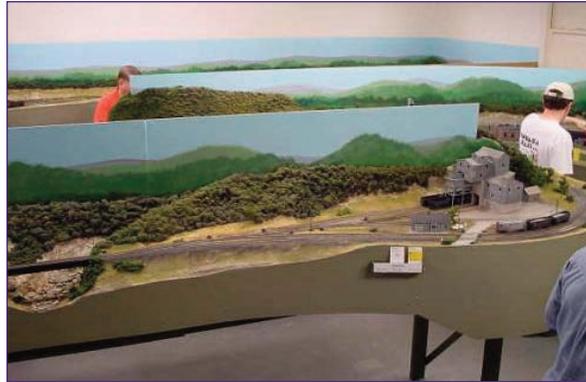
basement so large I could not imagine being able to fill it with trains! But the living space above the train room was not acceptable. We found another with a full and unfinished basement and were almost to the point of signing a contract, but it didn't feel right and we backed out. We finally found our current house. It had an almost full attic that could be used for a layout, but insulation and additional air conditioning would be needed. It did however have a second upstairs master bedroom that would provide just enough space for a medium size layout. The living spaces were acceptable and we made a purchase in May of 2002.

On my new trips to The Hobby Center (the old Bob's Hobby Shop was renamed and moved to the west end of Richmond in Henrico on Patterson after a brief stay at Willow Lawn Shopping Center), I inquired

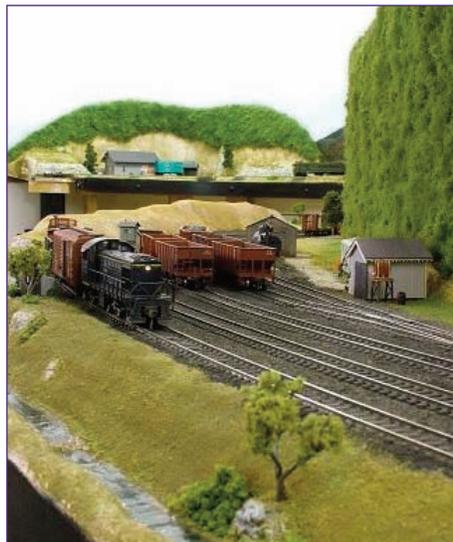
about anyone doing operations in the Richmond area. This was really my interest and I had not actually attended a session or knew anyone that was holding operating sessions. I was surprised to learn that none of the local clubs were operations oriented and Bob suggested I attend the NMRA Mid-Eastern Region convention being held in Richmond in June to see if I could meet someone in operations. I decided to sign up and visit as many layouts as possible.

My first layout visit was Tom Sullivan's Allegheny Alliance Williams River Sub (a fallen flag). It was a two-car garage size point to point with full scenery. I inquired about operations and he said he held regular sessions. I told Tom if there were ever any openings to please call me. My next layout visit, the next day, was another Allegheny Alliance layout, the Western Maryland (a fallen flag) belonging to Howard Heltman. Another impressive, fully scenic and flawless running layout housed in an upstairs room over his garage. Howard also held regular operating sessions. I again asked to be called if any openings came up. It was then on to my third Allegheny Alliance layout, the Southern of Mike Garber, a layout under construction occupying most of his basement. Again the same request was made. My first three layout visits had been to three of the principle operators in the Richmond area.

It was not long after these visits that



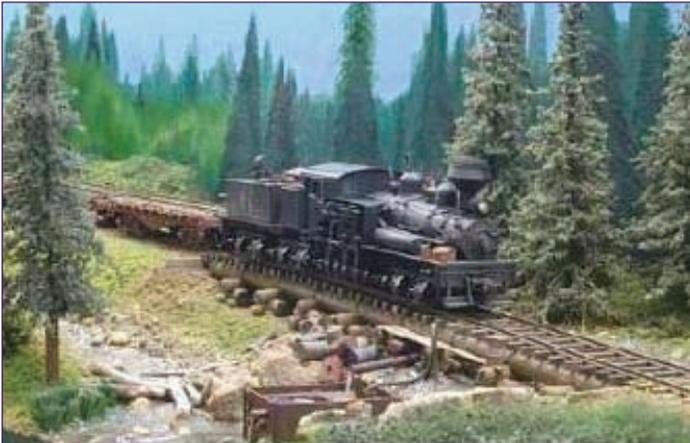
Mike Garber (red shirt), Mark Chase (white shirt) and Steve Robbins (blue shirt) operating on Tom Sullivan's layout.



Laurel Bank yard on Howard Heltman's layout.

Tom Sullivan gave me a call and invited me to one of his sessions. I quickly accepted! The night of the first session came and I was assigned to Mike Garber to help assist me. I didn't know if I was coming or going. Which way was east or west or north or south. Where the next town was or if I could proceed to it. I knew what

My greatest obstacle getting started in operations was the difficulty associated with locating operators. There are no registers maintained either by the NMRA or the Mid-Eastern Region to help make these contacts. Everything is done via word of mouth. You have to know someone that knows someone if you want to



**Dan George's Spring Creek Lumber layout.**



**Clint Foster's C&O layout.**

car card was but I didn't know how to read one and thus what to do with any of the cars on my train. And Digitrax! I didn't know what was acquiring or dispatching much less how to acquire or dispatch (even though I had a Digitrax system at home I had yet to turn it on). But I was hooked! I also knew that all of my previous layout designs were not operations oriented and would be trashed.

get into operations. The only maintained register is by the OPSIG special interest group and you must join this group before you can see this register. A few of us operators from the Virginia, West Virginia and North Carolina area have gotten together and created a Yahoo group, the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Rail Ops at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BRandA\\_RailOps/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BRandA_RailOps/). Although I can't say how up to date it is, it was created to help with schedul-

During this period another Mid-Eastern Region member, Steve



**Monroe Yard on Bill Cox's Southern layout.**



**Mike Dodd's Virginia layout.**

Robbins would become central to my expanding circle of operations. I had seen Steve at all three of the Allegheny Alliance layouts during the convention open houses. It turned out he was another future operator looking for layouts and operating opportunities and he had contacts outside of the Richmond area. It was through Tom Sullivan and Steve Robbins that I expanded my opportunities to the West Virginia layouts of Dan George's Spring Creek Lumber (a fallen flag) and Clint Foster's C&O, the Lynchburg area layouts of Bill Cox's Southern and Tom Nelson's Maine Central and to Mike Dodd's Virginia (a fallen flag) operating under timetable and train order rules.

ing the many operating session between the members and it can be used to help locate operating layouts.

I knew after operating at Tom's, Howard's, Mike Garber's and Mike Dodd's that I needed to do a lot of planning if I wanted to get the type of operations I wanted into the space I had. My next focus was on that planning, that will be the topic of my next article in this series.

My best advice is to ask at the local hobby shop. Ask at the next convention. And ask anyone you know in the hobby if they know someone that is operating. With a little perseverance you should find someone.

I am always looking for people interested in model railroad operations. No experience is required. If you would like to sign up for an operating session or just learn more about operations on the Easton And Potomac, go to [www.easton-and-potomac.com](http://www.easton-and-potomac.com).

The Easton And Potomac is also on the web at <http://eastonpotomac.blogspot.com/>.

**KEITH STILLMAN** lives in the James River Division where he model HO Scale. 

# New Membership Recruitment Program

As an aid to membership recruitment, NMRA recently instituted a six month "Railpass" trial membership program which costs the applicant \$9.95. Building on this idea, the MER is instituting a program whereby it will pay the \$9.95 Railpass fee for interested applicants in the MER. In other words, we are making available FREE six month Railpass trial memberships to encourage recruitment of regular members.

## What's covered?

Same as Railpass—receive six issues of **Scale Rails**, three issues of **The Local**, eligibility to attend conventions and meets, eligibility to participate in contests.

## What's not covered?

Same as Railpass—applicants cannot vote or hold office, and will not receive the New Member Pak from national (it's rather expensive).

## Who can be recruited?

Anyone living within the MER who has not been a member of NMRA during the past thirty months.

## How will the recruitment process work?

(1) The prospective member fills out the MER trial membership application form which was sent to all division superintendents (not the standard NMRA Railpass form) (2) The "recruiter" should

also sign the form, and then forward it to: Fred Miller, MER Business Manager, 8960 Challis Hill Lane, Charlotte, NC 28226-2686. (3) Fred will record the information he needs in his data base, and will forward the application to the MER Treasurer. (4) The Treasurer will add the necessary check and forward the application and check to the national headquarters in Chattanooga.

## What happens after the member's six month trial period?

The Railpass trial member will receive a standard dues notice from national headquarters. We hope a substantial number of Railpass trial members will sign up to become regular members.

## Are there limits on the program?

The MER has allocated \$2,000 for this program. The program has been extended to the end of 2009, or when we have spent \$2,000 – whichever comes first. When and if we approach either limit, Division Superintendents and members of the MER Board of Directors will be notified. At that time, the program will be evaluated by the MER Board of Directors. If successful, we will try to continue it.

## For questions?

Contact Fred Miller, MER Business Manager (mailing address is above, 704-752-5138, [tractionfan@aol.com](mailto:tractionfan@aol.com)), or Roger L. Cason, MER President (1125 Grinnell Road, Wilmington, DE, 19803-5125, 302-478-2550, [rogercason@juno.com](mailto:rogercason@juno.com)). 

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## National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) Mid-Eastern Region Application for Free "Railpass" Trial Membership

**YES**, please sign me up for a free six month Railpass trial membership in the NMRA—which includes membership in the Mid-Eastern Region, and in my local Division. During this six month period, I understand that I may attend conventions and meets, and participate in contests. I will receive **Scale Rails**, the monthly national magazine, and **The Local**, the bi-monthly regional newsletter. I will not be eligible to vote, hold office, or receive a New Member Pak.

I also understand that the \$9.95 cost of this six month Railpass trial membership is being paid by the Mid-Eastern Region. (Regardless of who pays, six month \$9.95 memberships are available only once to each person.)

At the end of the six months, I may join NMRA, paying the regular active member dues.

During the past thirty months, I have **not** been a member of NMRA.

=====

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Scale(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of "Recruiter": \_\_\_\_\_  
(A Regional or Divisional officer or board member)

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When this form is completed,  
mail it to:

**Fred Miller, MMR**  
**MER Business Manager**  
**8960 Challis Hill Lane**  
**Charlotte, NC 28226-2686**

Do **not** mail it directly to MMRA  
headquarters in Chattanooga, TN.

Date of form: 1/31/07

# Mix-it Puzzles

By Dr. Charles Wood

These are puzzles of scrambled words. The letters on each line can be rearranged to form a word that relates to models or to prototype railroads. Answers below.

**Puzzle #3:**

- a. E F R Y L
- b. A L T I E D
- c. I B E O R L
- d. P P O H R E
- e. R I N E D

**Puzzle #4:**

- a. B E A O S C O
- b. D B I G R E
- c. K E T T C I
- d. I I D G S N
- e. L G M F A A N

**DR. CHARLES WOOD** lives in the Carolina Piedmont Division where he models HO scale. 

**Answer to puzzle #3:**

- a. Flyer
- b. Detail
- c. Boiler
- d. Hopper
- e. Diner

**Answer to puzzle #4:**

- a. Caboose
- b. Bridge
- c. Ticket
- d. Siding
- e. Flagman

# Hold That Can!

By Ron Baile

**I**T HAS BEEN SAID THAT, “necessity is the mother of invention.” And it was necessary for me to do something after myself and others soaked the layout scenery a few times.

This probably isn't a new idea but it was new to me when I thought about it. I purchased those beverage holders that are available at discount stores, auto supply stores, etc. I also got some at the car wash in that brightly lit in the alley behind the car wash. You know the one, where they always try to sell you a lot of stuff you don't need while your car is being washed. The most I ever paid was \$1.49.

They come in different diameters and configurations. Get some to accommodate your largest average beverage container. Most of them come with a little hook that is supposed to hook in the window slot of your vehicle. Cut that off with a sharp utility knife, Zona saw or hacksaw. If you do it right it only takes a minute. Seriously, be careful. Don't cut off any fingers. Now measure (or not) to find the center of the thing and make a mark. If you measured drill a hole approximately 3/4 of an inch down from that mark. The hole size depends on your fascia screws.

Fasten holder with fascia screw through the hole and repeat for as many holders as you need. Make sure that your crews (and you) use them. Your railroad will now be beverage and spill free.

**RON BALIE** lives in New Jersey Division where he models On3 and a small G scale railroad. 

## Custom Layout Building

By Lance Mindheim

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or  
Martin Brechbiel, [martinwb@verizon.net](mailto:martinwb@verizon.net). 

**MADE IN  
THE MER**

# Model Memories History and Profile

By: Don Silberbauer.

**M**Y INTEREST IN TRAINS started the day I came home from the hospital in September of 1945. Living in a three-room apartment in the Bronx NY didn't leave a lot of room, but my Dad had built a 4 x 6 "OO" layout in a corner of the bedroom. So I was introduced to model trains right off the bat.

Things progressed from there since my bed was adjacent to a West-facing window. It just so happened that window overlooked Woodlawn Junction. Woodlawn was the diverging point of the NY Central and New Haven railroads. From NY City both railroads shared common trackage. At Woodlawn, the NY Central Harlem Division traveled North through Westchester County and ended in a small hamlet Chatham NY some 100 miles North. The New Haven diverged northeast toward the coast (Long Island Sound) and points Northeast (Connecticut and Massachusetts).

Just South of the junction was a short steel girder bridge. Now the rumbling of heavy electrics crossing the Bronx River at the junction would bother most folks, but not me. I cherished the clanking and clicking of 20 wheels on a NYC P-2 or New Haven EP3 crossing that bridge. On summer nights the whole family would walk to Woodlawn Station (just south of the Junction) to watch the trains. In the 50's there were a lot of trains heading to NY City (20 miles South of Woodlawn) in the evening.

Many years later, while living in Connecticut, I fondly looked back on those days and the modeling opportunities that the New York Central and New Haven railroads had to offer. I really had the desire to recreate what I had seen on the railroad from my days in New York.

Model Memories was founded in 1993 primarily to create models of these two great railroads and other fine-scale details found in a typical big city. In my years in the hobby I realized that no manufacturer produced models of unique structures for these railroads such as signals, catenary, 3rd rail system and many other structures and accessories. The challenge was how to produce the fine details necessary for these models.

The answer was found while visiting a friend's model railroad. Some years ago a British company (Scalelink) manufactured fencing from etched-brass. The fencing was very nice and extremely detailed and definitely fine-scale. Following my discov-

ery I did some research on the etched-metal process and found several companies capable and willing to work with a novice. After some trial and error the first simple fences were produced.

My original thought was to produce models for my own use. But after the great initial results I figured it might be worthwhile to offer these products for sale. Working a full-time job in mainframe computers and communications and trying to start a business was another challenge. I had to keep things simple as I had very little working capital. Thank GOD for the Personal Computer, packaging, instructions, and advertising copy were all done with the help of the PC. Next came the website [www.modelmemories.com](http://www.modelmemories.com). With

this addition modelers anywhere in the world would have a full color catalog of products that is always up to date.

As time passed the product line expanded to include Pennsy/NE Corridor catenary, lightpoles, skylights, fire escapes and much more. Primarily HO is my scale of choice although a few products have been produced in S Scale.

Now that I'm retired and living in Powhatan, VA I have devoted my full attention to Model Memories. In addition to the standard product line, I have taken on special projects, the most recent of which is a DL&W 4-track signal bridge. So if you

have a special signal, structure, or whatever, give me a call.



**A Model Memories NHRR catenary  
on Rick Abramson's layout.**

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# Corkscrew Turntables

By Fred Willis

**T**URNABLES are fascinating devices. They are an interesting design element to include on a layout and provide challenging operating opportunities. Turntables have had multiple designs over their history. In the 19th century, they were made by Sellers, Armstrong and others. Since I model the 1900's, all turntable technology ends there.

Turntables have one common feature; they are located in engine repair yards. That is except for one, which was located on the main line of the Silverton Railroad, a 19th century Colorado narrow gauge railroad. It was an unusual feature, even for mountain railroads.

In the 1880's mining developed in the mountains around Silverton Colorado. Ore was transported by horse and wagon, very slowly because the land had few passable roads. The nearest railroad was the Denver and Rio Grande, but even the Rio Grande did not want to venture into the mountains surrounding Silverton.

In 1887 Otto Mears, a Russian immigrant, entered territory the Rio Grande had passed on and built the three foot gauge Silverton Railroad. By 1889, it was moving ore from the mines north of Silverton.

The railroad's fortune followed the mining industry and as the industry prospered, so did the railroad. However, to prosper with the mines it had to reach them. Reaching the mines was a spectacular achievement.

In 17.5 miles the railroad climbed from Silverton's 9,300 foot elevation to the town of Chattanooga at 10,280 feet, crossed a mountain summit at 11,113 feet, then descended to the town of Red Mountain at 10,910 feet; stopping at numerous mines including the Yankee Girl mine at 10,610 feet before descending to the town of Ironton at 9,853 feet. The railroad's most interesting operating feature was the Corkscrew turntable approximately 500 feet above a mile from Ironton.

Faced with insufficient space to build a passing siding, loop or wye in Corkscrew Gulch and with the necessity to keep the engines facing forward for tracking reasons, Charles Wingate Gibbs, the Silverton's chief engineer, initially built switch backs. When these proved to be unsatisfactory, he proposed building a turntable in the mainline. This was the Corkscrew turntable.

Gibbs built a 50-foot long, manually operated, Gallows turntable. A train descending the mountain from Red Mountain was stopped short of the turntable. The engine was uncoupled from the cars, moved onto the turntable, turned and moved onto the Ironton track. Cars were fed by gravity onto the turntable, spun to position and removed by the engine. The track descending to Ironton was elevated near the turntable to allow cars to roll onto the turntable. This created a crown in the Ironton tracks. When the train ascended from Ironton the procedure was repeated.

Total time to move the train through the turntable was five minutes. Trains were short, as existing photos show only two cars per train.

Moving silver, supplies and passengers to and from the mines was the reason for the railroad's existence. When the price of silver collapsed in the 1890's, the mines fortune collapsed as well. The railroad lasted until 1922, though its use of the turntable ended in 1897 when the railroad abandoned service north of Red Mountain.

A Gallows turntable had two center posts with iron rods and turnbuckles running from the posts to the turntables end. This type of turntable was built from the beginning of railroading. It was 50 feet long and capable of holding a 2-8-0 engine weighing approximately 56,000 pounds.

The railroad operated from mid-May through mid-January when snow stopped operation. The turntable was enclosed with a circular angled roof that protected it from the snow. Sixty-foot long snow sheds were later added on both switchbacks.

A small holding track was built on the far side of the turntable. From photos it appears long enough to store one car, though smaller wheeled vehicles were mainly stored there. Photos of the uncovered turntable are rare or non existent. My research has not revealed any.

A Denver and Rio Grande drawing dated 07-29-07 shows the turntable design. Turntable drawings were published in the March 1989 issue of Railroad Model Craftsman.

All historical photos show a turntable on a barren mountain-side. A forest fire had swept the area a few years before the railroad was built. Today it is different. The forest has reclaimed the area, hiding the turntable. In 2000, two rail fans found the turntable remnants. Still remaining was the cast iron spider on which the turntable rotated. Remnants of the right of way, rotting ties, rusting rails and decaying wood from the turntable also remained.

The turntable provides an interesting modeling design element. It has been incorporated into several layouts. For modelers interested in operation it is a very unique feature. While impossible to justify on an eastern mainline, a little artistic license could place a turntable on a rundown West Virginia or New Hampshire branch line.

Regardless of whether it is incorporated into a layout the, actual turntable is a fascinating aspect of railroad history.

## References:

- **The Rainbow Route – An Illustrated History**  
by Robert E. Sloan and Carl A Skowronski
- **Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette** – May/June 2005
- Yahoo egroup – Silverton Railroad
- [www.narrowgauge.org](http://www.narrowgauge.org)
- <http://soapysmith.faradic.com/corkscrew/corkscrew.html>

**FRED WILLIS** lives in the New Jersey Division where he models HO Scale. 

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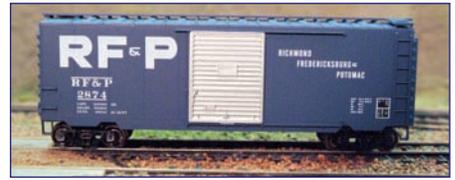
COURTESY OF THE FREIGHT YARD



These 40' Western Maryland N-Scale box cars are Micro-Train bodies custom painted by The Freight Yard. They are box car red with prominent white "speed lettering".



These 40' RF&P PS-1 HO-Scale box cars are Accurail bodies, custom painted by Accurail. They are blue with aluminum-colored doors, and feature prominent white lettering.



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## Coming Events

### NOVEMBER – all month long – NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD MONTH

**Nov. 1st** – Susquehanna Division Layout tour in Sherman's Dale, PA. 1-1/2" scale live steam layout. Advance signup required. Contact: Bob Martin by Oct. 14th; [cprboss@comcast.net](mailto:cprboss@comcast.net) or (717) 848-3640.

**Nov. 8th** – Joint meet with Philadelphia and New Jersey Divisions. Held at Brandywine Town Center. Located at corner of Concord Pike (Route 202) & Naaman's Road in Wilmington, DE 19803. 9 AM. Contact: Greg Shindledecker at [greg@shindledecker.com](mailto:greg@shindledecker.com) or (610) 383-7767.

**Nov. 8th** – Wade's Train Town Open House, operated by Carolina Southern Division members, at the Brookford Town Center in Brookford, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

**Nov. 8th and 9th** – "First Frost Train Show" presented by Allentown Train Meet Associates. Held at Allentown Fairgrounds. 302 N 17 St. in Allentown, PA 18104. 9 AM till 4 PM on Saturday; 9 AM till 3 PM on Sunday. Cost: Adults - \$6; children 12 and under are free. For more information visit [www.allentowntrainmeet.com](http://www.allentowntrainmeet.com).

**Nov. 8th and 9th** – 24th Annual Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club Trains & Railroadiana Show and Sale. Held at North Carolina State Fairgrounds. 1025 Blue Ridge Blvd in Raleigh, NC 27607. 9 AM till 5 PM both days. For more information and cost visit [www.nrvshow.org](http://www.nrvshow.org).

**Nov 8th and 9th.** The Rockville Lions Annual Train Show to be held at the Rockville Senior Center located at 1150 Carnation Drive in Rockville, MD. Railroads in Z, G, N and HO Scales. Setups by the Potomac Module Crew, National Capital Trackers and NVNtrak. Hours: Saturday - 10 AM till 4; Sunday - Noon till 4. Cost: \$5 for adults; \$3 for children. Free parking. Admission benefits all of the Lions Club Charitable efforts. For more information contact: Ellsworth Geib (301) 259-2588 or e-mail: [geib@erols.com](mailto:geib@erols.com).

**Nov. 21st** – Take your model train to work day.

**Nov. 29th and 30th** – Cheltenham Model Railroad Club Open House. 8000 Old York Road (at railroad bridge), adjacent to Elkins Park Square, Elkins Park, PA 19027. Noon till 4 PM. Admission free, but donations gratefully accepted. For more information: call: (215) 635-9747 or visit: [www.cheltenhammrrr.org](http://www.cheltenhammrrr.org).

**Nov. 28th and 29th** – Greenburg's Train and Toy Show at the New Jersey Expo Center located at 97 Sunfield Avenue in Edison, NJ. 10 AM till 4 PM both days. Cost: \$7 for Adults; kids 12 and under are free (admission is good for both days). For more information and directions visit: [www.greenbergshows.com](http://www.greenbergshows.com).

**Dec. 6th and 7th** – Greenburg's Train and Toy Show at the Maryland State Fairgrounds located at 2200 York Rd in Timonium, MD. 9 AM till 4 PM on Saturday; 10 AM till 4 PM on Sunday. Cost: \$7 for adults; kids 12 and under are free (admission is good for both days). For more information and directions visit [www.gsmts.com](http://www.gsmts.com).

**Dec. 6th and 7th** – Fairfax Station's 19th Annual Train Show. 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station, VA. 10 AM till 5 PM on Saturday; Noon till 4 PM on Sunday. Cost: \$4.00 for adults; \$1.00 for children. For more information visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org).

**Dec. 13th** – Wade's Train Town Open House, operated by Carolina Southern Division members, at the Brookford Town Center in Brookford, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

**Dec. 14th** – Potomac Division layout tour in Gaithersburg, MD. 1 PM till 4 PM. Contact layout coordinator: Tom Brodrick at (301) 253-0558 or e-mail [t.brodbrod@comcast.net](mailto:t.brodbrod@comcast.net).

**Dec. 13th and 14th** – Greenburg's Train and Toy Show at the Valley Forge Convention Center located at 1160 First Avenue in King of Prussia, PA. 9 AM till 4 PM on Saturday; 10 AM till 4 PM on Sunday. Cost: \$7 for adults; kids 12 and under are free (admission is good for both days). For more information and directions visit [www.greenbergshows.com](http://www.greenbergshows.com).

**Dec. 27th and 28th** – Greenburg's Train and Toy Show at the Dulles Expo Center located at 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center in Chantilly, VA. 9 AM till 4 PM on Saturday; 10 AM till 4 PM on Sunday. Cost: \$7 for adults; kids 12 and under are free (admission is good for both days). For more information and directions visit [www.greenbergshows.com](http://www.greenbergshows.com). 

## Achievement Program Update

*By Charlie Flichman, MER AP Manager*

Since the last report in **The Local**, the following Achievement Program certificates were earned and awarded:

### Division 2 – Potomac

John Griffith – *Motive Power*

### Division 3 – Philadelphia

Earl T. Hackett, Jr. – *Model Railroad Author*

### Division 13 – Carolina Piedmont

James P. Murphy – *Association Volunteer*

Robert Rosseau – *Association Volunteer*

In a perfect world, this information will appear soon in **Scale Rails**. This should not deter you from giving recognition locally. Normally you will be able to recognize AP accomplishments long before the names appear in **Scale Rails**.

We continue to keep a running total of how many Gold Spikes and AP Merit awards have been earned in the last year. Since November 1st, 2007 MER members have earned 12 Gold Spikes and 14 AP Merit awards.

With the articles currently running on the "Year of the MMR" in **Scale Rails**, I hope we will see more activity in the Achievement Program. If you have any questions after reading any of the articles, please do not hesitate to e-mail me. Your Divisional AP Chair and myself are here to assist you in any way we can, but you have to ask. Thanks. 

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**NMRA Included  
 in 2008 Combined  
 Federal Campaign**

*By Roger L. Cason, MMR  
 NMRA Fund Raising Manager*

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) takes place in federal work places once a year. In many ways, this campaign is similar to a United Way solicitation. Employees can make contributions to charitable organizations of their choice via payroll deduction.

We have been notified that – for the first time – the NMRA will be included in the next CFC campaign – projected for the fall of 2008. This is in response to our application for inclusion (fifty nine pages, including attachments).

Bottom line: if you are a federal employee, and you wish to make a financial contribution to the NMRA, you may want to consider the CFC as the mechanism for making your contribution. We will be listed under “National/International Independent Organizations”. Our identification number will be 12286. 