

The Local

A PUBLICATION OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION OF THE NMRA



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Number 2

James L. Teese Memorial New Modeler Award

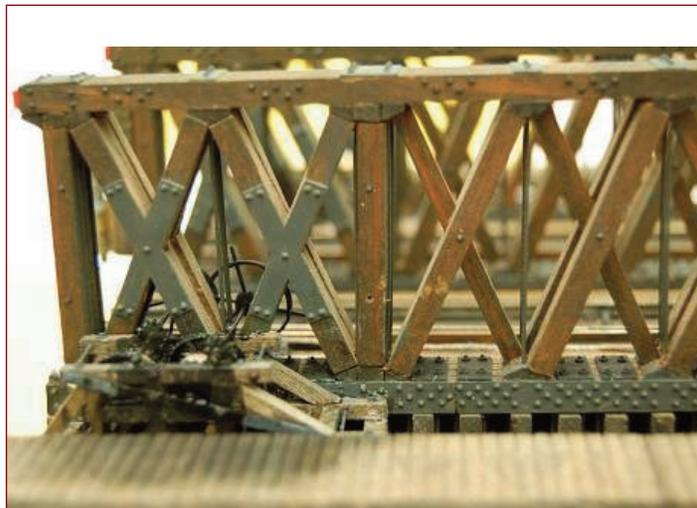
Photograph and article by Steve August

SOMETIME AGO, during the Carolina Southern Division meetings, the subject of James L. Teese New Modeler Award was brought up. This award is given in honor of James L. Teese who was a member of the Carolina Southern Division and a Master Model Railroader. Mr. Teese passed away in the early 90's.

This award is given at the National Convention to a modeler whose work receives the highest score among first time entrants. They must be an NMRA member in good standing and have never entered a model in either a regional or national model contest. The Teese Award will be given to the winner by the NMRA Contest Manager, and if feasible, a representative from the Carolina Southern Division and the Mid-Eastern Region. The award consists of an engraved plaque and a gift certificate for twenty-five dollars presented by the award's sponsor.

At the July 2009 NMRA National Convention held in Hartford, CT the award was presented to Tom Griffiths. Tom is a modeler from the New Jersey Division of Mid-Eastern Region, which makes this award a little nicer because it was given to a modeler from our region.

Tom's model (pictured here) is closely based on a B&O float bridge that was located at St. George, Staten Island in New York. The B&O yard at St. George was located adjacent to and west of the much more famous Staten Island Ferry Terminal. The float bridge was about a



1/4 mile from the ferry terminal. Tom was able to visit the yard in 1976. The first time to take photos, and a few weeks later, when he spent a long, hot Saturday measuring the thing with a six foot folding rule! He spent about two years making drawings of the structure, both to document it, but more importantly to understand just how it was built.

The model is almost completely built using strip wood, except for the finger pier decks, which, in a weak moment he covered with scribed sheet wood. Everything else is from strip wood. There are more than 2,500 castings from model railroading suppliers. The mooring winches are scratch built, but do contain resin gears. The float underneath the out-board end of the bridge is built from sheet styrene.

All wood on the model was stained before use with Campbell's tie stain and then dry brushed with acrylic paints after the stain was dry. The model was awarded 113 points, much to his surprise, but not to the surprise of others at the model contest.

The actual float bridge was used until about 1980 and then abandoned. The remains were removed about ten years ago when the City of New York built a minor league ballpark. You can still see a virtually identical float bridge at West 26th Street in Manhattan.

Congratulations Tom from all of the Carolina Southern Division.

STEVE AUGUST is the Superintendent of the Carolina Southern Division. He is also the photographer for the MER and recently elected as a Director.

The Local

Official Publication of the Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA A Tax-Exempt Organization

The Local is published six times a year. Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of MER elected officials. Commercial suppliers, supplies and materials addressed in The Local in no way constitute an endorsement by the MER. Copyright material that appears in The Local is used for educational and historical benefit only, and does not constitute infringement of the copyright holder.

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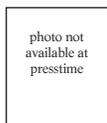
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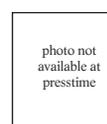
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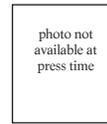
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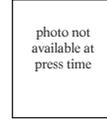
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Division web page: www.trainweb.org/chesapekemernmra/index.html



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 <http://mer.nmra.org/>

Some Notes from the President

By Roger L. Cason, MMR
President

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

As this note is being written, plans are falling into place for *Princeton Junction 2010*. September 30th – October 3rd in Princeton, New Jersey.

CLINICS FOR CONTEST JUDGING AND PARTICIPATION

Contest judging is a subject that can trigger a lot of discussion. Recent experience indicates that we need to formalize some aspects for this process. Martin Brechbiel, our General Contest Chairman, has developed a training clinic for prospective judges. He has also developed a companion clinic for prospective contest entrants. Both of these are being offered to divisions free of charge. I would urge each division to contact Martin and schedule both of these clinics for interested local people.

PROSPECTIVE GRANTS FOR DIVISIONS

At its January meeting, the MER Board of Directors approved a proposal for making selective financial grants to divisions. Key elements of the proposal:

Grants may be made for special projects, events or activities occurring within the MER, rather than for recurring operating expenses.

Preferred objectives include: education, outreach, Boy Scout activities, charitable donations, and membership recruitment.

The offer is for “matching funds”. In other words, for every dollar the region provides, the local division must provide a dollar toward the project in question.

The maximum grant amount from the Region is \$1,000.

Each division can receive only one grant per year.

Proposals and supporting detail (including cost estimates) should be forwarded to the MER President in electronic form. The MER Board of Directors must vote on each grant. This can be done at either of its two meetings per year, or (if urgent) via e-mail.

GOT LOCAL?

In spite of a major effort by Fred Miller, the MER Business Manager, several hundred NMRA members living in the MER still do not receive **The Local**. If you encounter anyone in this situation, urge them to contact Fred and get on one of his mailing lists (paper or electronic). Fred’s contact information is also on page 2.

A NEW FEATURE ON THE WEBSITE

There’s a new and very useful section on the MER website (<http://mer.nmra.org>). A cooperative effort of Marshall Abrams (Clinic Chairman) and Martin Oakes (web master), the section lists clinics that may be available for NMRA events – including your division meets. Program chairmen, take note!

PRESIDENT’S AWARD

One of the nice things about being President is that you get to pick the type of model that will win the President’s Award at the next convention. At the 2009 convention in Hagerstown, the category was “open loads”. In 2010, the category will be “tank car” – any type – chemical, petroleum, corn syrup, water, or whatever. (This is what happens when you elect a President who worked for DuPont.) The car selected will be the one that is most eye-catching, but also prototypically accurate.

A “CONVENTIONAL” QUESTION

There are about over 2,000 NMRA members living within the boundaries of the MER. Typical attendance at our annual convention is maybe 10 percent of that number. We regularly survey convention attendees about their choices and preferences. But, what about the 1,800+ people who didn’t attend?

So, I have to wonder why they don’t attend? What are the barriers? What changes might be made that would motivate more members to attend in the future? Does the issue involve costs? Convention locations? Convention hotels? Clinics? Tours? Just “not that into the hobby”? In the interest of better serving our membership, Clint Hyde, the MER Convention Chairman, and I would like to hear from people who typically don’t attend the annual MER convention. If you encounter anyone in this situation, urge them to contact either of us. My contact information on page 2. Clint’s contact information is: 13443 Brookfield Drive, Chantilly, VA 20151-2614; email: chyde@cox.net. 



Keeping In Touch...

By Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager

My message to you this month will be brief. This old modeler is currently busier than the proverbial one-armed wallpaper hanger. My wife and I have decided to move to a condo, leaving behind our town home. It seems it wasn't much more than a dozen years ago that I had to walk away from a basement size N Scale Empire. Those of you who have seen my current modeling know that I switched over to HO scale traction modules, just so I could fit them in available space. Well now I

believe I will only have space for a bookshelf layout and a shop in a closet.

This entire trauma is I am sure not new to many of you who, in the past have had to grin and bear tearing up a layout. Faced with questions like "Can I save this? Will I have space for that?" With all of my moves a dozen years ago I held on to lots of good "stuff" but now I think it is time to jettison things like 70 years of Model Railroader magazine. Luckily my four completed HO traction modules have found a home in the local Charlotte Trolley Museum. Another O-Scale module, which was under construction when our big decision came about, will also go to that museum. The museum folks would

like me to "finish it" while the museum visitors look over my shoulder. How's that for modeling pressure?

Writing this column has given me enough rest from my chores of dismantling and patching walls. Now it's back to work....

Needless to say, my MER Business Manager work may suffer just a bit in timeliness over the next few months. Bear with me and I will try to get all of those necessary membership and subscription changes done in a reasonable time. 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. 

Statement of Financial Condition Mid-Eastern Region

As of December 31, 2009

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Assets (excluding inventories)	
High Point Bank Checking Account	\$7184.94
High Point Bank Money Market Account	\$15,936.47
High Point Bank General CD 1	\$12,055.94
High Point Bank Life CD	\$42,516.95
High Point Bank General CD 2	\$15,000.00

Liabilities
None

Net Assets (excluding inventories) \$92,694.30

BREAKDOWN OF NET ASSETS

Restricted Assets	
Life Member Fund	\$42,516.95
Life Member Fund Interest (paid to Money Market Account)	\$2,822.62
Pre-paid Subscriptions	\$3,694.67

Assets Restricted by Board of Directors	
Donation Fund	\$12,887.60
Kit Fund	\$5,563.70

Unrestricted Assets \$25,208.76

Total Net Assets \$92,694.30

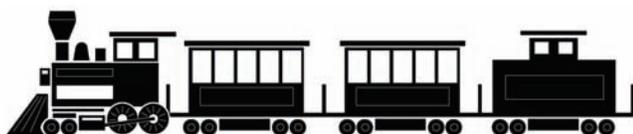
The Life Member Fund covers our liability to provide services to our Life Members. It consists of fees paid by Life Members and interest earned on that money. Pre-Paid Subscriptions are those collected in the current and prior years and held for use in future years.

The Donation Fund collects the donations made by members and other donors. Since we are a 501 (c) (3) non-profit educational organization, these donations are tax deductible. The Board of Directors may direct the use of these funds for special projects.

The Kit Fund is a revolving fund for the car kits and building kits we sell. Proceeds from the kits sold are used to buy new kits. Surplus proceeds may be used for purposes designated by the Board of Directors.

If you have any questions or comments please contact the MER Treasurer (contact information is listed on Page 2).

Respectfully Submitted by
Thomas R. Buckingham, MER Treasurer



Great Decals!™

Fallout Shelter Signs	Southern cabooses	
CP Mandarin Orange	PRR X-29 box cars	
B&O—3 titles	L&N—6 titles	
Interstate—2 titles	RF&P—6 titles	
Virginian—15 titles	FEC—3 titles	

...and more! In G-, O-, S-, HO-, and N-scales

William Mosteller, P.O. Box 994, Herndon, VA 20172
SASE for list, or see www.greatdecals.com

03/11

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NEW JERSEY DIVISION

The New Jersey Division is in very good condition with adequate financial resources, a strong leadership group and good participation from our members.

Averaging approximately 80 attendees at each meet, attendance continues to grow. The January meet was still the best attended with more than 100 members participating. The success of our program is a direct result of excellent communications with the members and having an interesting, meaningful, well-planned clinic program at our meets. In 2010, we will not have a meet in November, as we will be hosting the 2010 MER regional convention in October or November depending upon scheduling of hotel space.

Our newsletter, **Clinkers**, is published 5 times during the year approximately two weeks prior to each of our five meets. The newsletter features photos and information related to the meet and afternoon layout tours with maps and directions to the meets. There are also regularly appearing informational columns by the Superintendent, the AP chairman, and Mike McNamara, along with other national, regional, and local news and events of interest to the members.

The gray scale hardcopy version sent via U.S. mail has grown to 10 pages per edition. The online version in full color and also includes additional pages with more photos and information. The current edition of the online version is always available on the division web site, and is updated on the day of mailing of the hardcopy version.

DIVISION BOARD MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN:

Superintendent: Bob Clegg

Assistant Superintendent: Chris Widmaier

Secretary: Tom Lavin

Treasurer: Bob Liberman

Directors at large:

John Dunn, clinics chair

John Gallagher, layout coordinator

Bill Howard, librarian and videographer

AP Coordinator: P.J. Mattson

AP Assistant: Richard Genthner

Web Master: Mike McNamara

MEETS HELD IN 2009:

January 17 – Haddon Township (joint meet with Philadelphia Div.)

March 14 – Hamilton Township

May 16 – Richland

September 19 – Middletown (joint meet with Garden State Div., NER)

November 14 – Delanco

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

Division website: www.njdivnmra.org

NMRA members within Division: 283

Division activity participants: 237

AP Awards to Division Members: 4

Association Volunteer awards: 6

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE POTOMAC DIVISION

FINANCIAL STATUS:

As of December 12, 2009, the Potomac Division has a balance of \$4514.62, which includes a balance of \$402.67 for the Module Crew.

DIVISION EVENTS/SPECIAL PROJECTS:

The Division conducts home layout tours nearly every month. There was no annual Mini-Con this year as we had so recently hosted the 2008 regional MER convention. The Module Crew made a total of 9 appearances throughout the area, participating in such disparate events as Community Day events and Greenberg Shows. Northern Virginia NTrak holds meetings and open houses throughout the year. The 2010 Mini-Con is slated for April 17 in Columbia, Maryland and will be jointly hosted with Chesapeake Division. The Division also initiated the development of criteria for MER judging qualifications including a required seminar for new judges.

At the end of every year, the Board reviews the Division financial status and determines if a donation to railroad related organization is feasible. This year, Potomac Division donated \$500 each to East Broad Top Railroad, Rockhill Trolley Museum, and Western Maryland Scenic Railroad.

The Division bylaws have also been revised to better reflect how to effectively do business in the 21st Century.

NEWSLETTER:

The Division publishes 4 issues of the **Flyer** each year. There are approximately 32 hardcopy mailed issues for a \$5.00 subscription rate. The **Flyer** is published electronically for the entire membership at no charge and is accessed through the

home page on the website. It contains all current events and information, including layout tours, upcoming events etc.

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DIVISION WEBSITE ADDRESS:

The website address is http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac_NMRA/. All Division activities are posted here, along with a "Neat, Nifty 'n Cool" and "Tips 'n Tricks" how-to help column. The Division also maintains a Yahoo discussion group, which is accessed through the home page.

MEMBERSHIP:

The Division had a net decrease in membership of 24 to a total of 366 as of December 1, 2009. However, this reflects a transfer of 29 members from Howard County, Maryland to the newly activated Chesapeake Division.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM:

The Division members achieved 13 AP awards this year:

4 Golden Spike

1 Author

2 Scenery

continued on page 6

- 1 Civil Engineer
- 2 Electrical Engineer
- 3 Chief Dispatcher

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

Under consideration are more joint activities with Chesapeake Division, developing a resource for the Scout Merit Badge in Rail-roading, and perhaps a series of one-day "how-to" seminars on a bi-monthly basis.

2009 YEARLY REPORT OF THE PHILADELPHIA DIVISION

MEETING TIMES AND DATES:

Bi-monthly (except for July & August) from 8:30 AM – 12 PM, open houses from 1 PM – 4 PM.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FROM THE PAST YEAR:

Various activities including live rosin paper scenery demo, clinics on structures, TT&TO operations, car floats, resin casting, and weathering.

SPECIAL PROJECTS OR WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

In addition to our annual joint meet with the New Jersey Division, we also planned and executed a joint meet with the Susquehanna Division. The location of this meeting was the historic Lukens Executive Office Building, a first for the Division.

ANY SUCCESSFUL OR NEW IDEAS THAT YOUR DIVISION HAS TRIED THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO OTHER DIVISIONS:

We continue to work on the "Member Aid" project. It seeks to provide one on one help for modelers utilizing the talents of current members. Although initially web based, we encourage personal interaction through dialog either in person or on the phone.

We are personally contacting each member who is listed as new to invite them to our next meeting.

We are now delivering about half of our division newsletters electronically.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

We continue to make an ongoing effort to familiarize members with the AP program,

and the opportunity it provides in improving their overall modeling skills. The biggest challenge remains overcoming the "fear of the paperwork." Once they get past that, things go smoothly. The Division has several potential MMR's in the works.

EDITOR'S/VICE PRESIDENT'S NOTE:

The Tidewater Division did not submit their 2009 annual report by deadline time.

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JAMES RIVER DIVISION **OFFICERS AND APPOINTED POSITIONS:**

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FINANCIAL STATUS:

We have a total of \$2,078.82 on hand.

DIVISION EVENTS:

We held 4 meets this year, 2 in the Richmond Area, 1 in Charlottesville and 1 in Lynchburg. We held a Layout Tour Day in Colonial Heights, Petersburg, and Hopewell.

DIVISION WEBSITE ADDRESS:

www.trainweb.org/jrd/

MEMBERSHIP:

As of December 1, total membership was 145. During the year we had 9 to join under the Rail Pass Program.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM:

2 members received AP Certificates this year.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

Continue to hold our traditional meets along with a Layout Tour Day and perhaps a Prototype Tour.

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION

We meet the second Sunday of the month, 2 to 5 pm. No meetings June-August.

A LISTING OF PAST MEETING DATES; HOSTS; CLINICIANS AND TOPIC:

January 11, 2009 – Don Flowick – Richard Lind, W. VA Northern RR.

February 8, 2009 – Bob Johnson (host & clinician) – Freelance design from prototype.

March 8, 2009 – Richard Lind (host & clinician) – Making trees using super trees.

April 19, 2009 – Richard Benjamin (host & clinician) - Mushroom design.

May 17, 2009 – Paul Rausch – Pete Clarke, D & S NG RR in winter.

September 13, 2009 – Dick McEvoy – Richard Lind, RR's of Frederick county MD.

October 2009 – No meeting due to convention.

November 8, 2009 – Jay Beckham (host & clinician), The South Shore line in Chicago.

December 13, 2009 – Roy Hoffman (host & clinician), RR's around Philly.

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(No change in officers or AP coordinator since last year.)

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AP Coordinator: Jane Clarke
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ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: None

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FROM THE PAST YEAR:

Each meeting includes a clinic on a modeling or prototype topic.

SPECIAL PROJECTS OR WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

South Mountain Division hosted the Fall 2009 MER convention. It was considered to have been wildly successful. And made money as well. In process of reviewing the division bylaws. We realize that several officers must be replaced in next election due to residence/membership issues.

ANY SUCCESSFUL OR NEW IDEAS THAT YOUR DIVISION HAS TRIED THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO OTHER DIVISIONS:

- 1) Operating sessions. We have a subgroup that holds operating sessions every Friday night.
- 2) We've used Google/Picasa as a free way to store picture albums. We have added several about the convention and are using it to store layout tours of division layouts. Hope to use this free publicity as a way to get more folks actively involved.

**2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION
2009 MEETING TIMES AND DATES
(NO SET SCHEDULE):**
Saturday, March 7, 2009 – Visit to Eliza-

bethtown club with 3 clinic presentations.
Special presentation by Roger Cason, MER President.

Saturday, April 18, 2009 – Open house visit in State College area: Jere Herr, Mike Redin, John Kocet, and PSU club.

Saturday, May 30, 2009 – Visit to Steamtown National Historical Site (included family members).

Sunday, June 14, 2009 – Model Railroad visits in Harford County, MD (joint with Chesapeake Division). Ken Poznaniak, Alan Anderson, Dave Renard, MMR

Saturday, August 22, 2009 – Model Railroad visits in Reading, PA area. Bob Bucklew, Charles Kadyk, Joel Holubec.

Saturday & Sunday – September 19 & 20, 2009 – York/Adams Open houses: Bob Martin, Dave Trone, Tim Rasinski. In conjunction with Mainline Hobbies, Blue Ridge Summit, PA

Saturday, September 26, 2009 – Joint meet with Philadelphia Division in Downingtown, PA.

Friday, October 2 – Saturday October 3, 2009 – LSOPS (Lehigh Susquehanna Operations Weekend): joint with OP SIG.

Saturdays, June 6, July 18, August 15, November 7, 2009 – NOT AN OFFICIAL EVENT – Live Steam visit in Shermansdale: Art Dum (we were invited back from last year's official visit).

CONTACT INFORMATION:

NOTE: (Only a change of Director from last year. A complete list of officers with contact info is on our website.)

Director: Wayne Betty (replaces Gale Smith)
936 Wood Street
Mount Joy, PA 17552
(717) 653-9537
wbetty@susquehannanmra.org

WEBSITE:

<http://www.susquehannanmra.org>

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

None in 2009 ... A few awards were presented, but overall, there is little interest in the AP program in this division. Both the Division AP coordinator and myself offer help to anyone interested. I don't have a list of who won awards this year, but we do keep a list of all in the division that has each award on division web site. There are 2 people (that I know of)

actively seeking an MMR in the division – myself and one more.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FROM THE PAST YEAR/NEXT YEAR:

We made an effort to schedule more events of different varieties in a larger area of the division. This seems to have been a huge success from the feedback the division has received from our members. We will try to continue this next year, but are running out of good ideas for places to visit...without repeating ourselves. We mention this issue at all events, hoping someone will come forward with more ideas. We also made an effort to do more activities with other organizations/neighboring divisions. We hope to continue that effort (more below). Based on the feedback, we hope to expand clinic inclusion in 2010 and the future.

We are listing holiday open houses on our website in/near the division, regardless of whether the organization is affiliated with the NMRA or not. We feel this is a benefit we can provide to our members.

SPECIAL PROJECTS OR WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

We have an on-going relationship with the NRHS – Harrisburg Chapter and hope to visit again next year for an official event, possibly a joint one with another division. We hope to have a joint event in 2009 with both the Chesapeake Division and Philadelphia Division in our area. LSOPS was a HUGE success. An article will come out shortly in both the Dispatcher's Office and RMC focusing on the event (written by OP SIG President Phil Monet with input from myself as event coordinator). It is very likely this will become an annual event in our division. We will continue to have open houses in conjunction with the Mainline Hobby Tour, and are looking into a joint event with the PRR T&HS for their convention in Camp Hill ... although the interest on their end has been tepid thus far.

ANY SUCCESSFUL OR NEW IDEAS THAT YOUR DIVISION HAS TRIED THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO OTHER DIVISIONS:

We face a greater geographic problem in this division than others nearby. It only make sense to try to schedule some activity for the people in our "fringe" areas by co-

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Princeton Junction 2010 Special Contest Awards

By Martin Brechbiel
MER General Contest Chairman

IN ADDITION TO THE RANGE of the standard Contest Room awards and Categories, Princeton Junction 2010 will feature the following Special Awards:

THE BEST OF SHOW AWARD: is given to the model that scores the highest point total in the judged model contest.

THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD: for 2010 will be chosen by MER President Cason and given for a "tank car" – any type – chemical, petroleum, corn syrup, water, or whatever. The car selected will be the one that is most eye-catching, but also prototypically accurate.

THE CLYDE GERALD AWARD: is sponsored by the MER and named for the late Clyde Gerald, former MER Business Manager and long time modeler. It is awarded to the kit-bashed model which scores highest in the judged model contest. Be sure to check the definition of kit-bashed on the MER website.

THE BLUE LANTERN AWARD: is privately sponsored and chosen by long time MER modeler Terry Nesbit and his Narrow Gauge Car Shop. The Blue Lantern is given to a model best representing branch or private line equipment or facilities, which contain no more than forty (40) percent commercial parts. The prize—a genuine railroad lantern—is presented to the winner by Mr. Nesbit.

THE PHILADELPHIA DIVISION MODELER AWARD: rewards excellence in model building by first time entrants in an NMRA sponsored judged model contest. The highest score achieved by a new modeler in the contest is worth not only a plaque, but a cash prize of twenty-five dollars!

THE RAY BILODEAU NARROW GAUGE AWARD: is privately sponsored by a group of narrow gauge modelers, and encourages building models depicting aspects of narrow gauge railroading. The narrow gauge model that scores highest in the model contest is presented a plaque.

THE MA AND PA MODELING AWARD: is sponsored by the Ma & Pa Society. The winner is a Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad model, which scores highest in the judged model contest.

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Now Arriving: Princeton Junction 2010!!

By Bob Clegg

THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS of the New Jersey Division are proud to invite everyone to this year's convention, Princeton Junction 2010.

The convention venue will be the DoubleTree Hotel Princeton 4355 US Highway One, Princeton, NJ 08540 during the weekend of September 30 to October 3.

Since we are getting a bit of a late start with this convention due to circumstances beyond our control, other than the location and date, all information here is currently subject to revision but we are making every effort possible to firm up our plans. That said, here's what to expect:

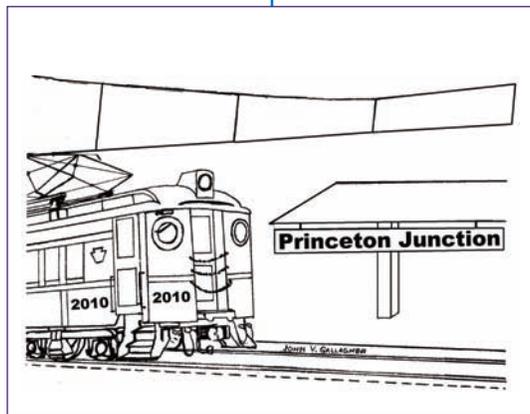
Aside from the usual convention activities we hope to be able to provide a few things that are out of the ordinary. We will have the usual white elephant sales room, the annual auction, and array of great clinics, but we plan to include something a bit different as well. We will have two double "Work in Progress Clinic" sessions. How are these different, you might ask. In these sessions there will be eight to ten different clinics being held at the same time in the same room. You will be free to move from one to another and join the discussions as your interest dictates. Topics range from module construction to DCC theory and installation to scenery techniques.

It might sound as if mayhem will prevail, but we've had great success with this format at our division meets. Home layout tours and Operation Sessions are always a highlight of any convention and Princeton Junction 2010 will be no exception to this rule. We plan to have thirty or more home railroads for you to visit Thursday night, Friday afternoon and evening, Saturday afternoon and for your trip home on Sunday.

Operating sessions are becoming ever more popular convention activities. Our goal is to be able to provide more than a dozen railroads from which you may choose to participate in an OPS session. We hope to be able to accommodate everyone who is interested in this phase of the hobby.

We are hoping that our prototype tours will be interesting and provide something different as well. First, we are arranging for our guests to visit an operating grain elevator, which is serviced by Conrail Shared Assets. It should be in full swing at the time of our visit. We may have to limit the number of visitors at any one time, so if enough of you sign up for this destination, we can do it twice, as it will be a half-day tour. Our other planned destination will be the Black River & Western Railroad where we plan to have a tour of the shops, and here's the different part: lunch aboard a private

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THE FAVORITE TRAIN AWARD: sponsored by the Tidewater Division, is a popular vote award and will be included on the Popular Vote ballot. Any member who visits the contest room can fill out a ballot and choose the winner!

These special awards, and awards for all of the categories in the Model, Photo, and Arts & Crafts contests, will be presented at the convention banquet on Saturday evening. Awards and other contest information will soon be available on the convention website!

If you have any questions, contact me at: martinwb@verizon.net. 

coach while traveling over the rails.

Have you every heard of Free-Mo? If you have, then you'll want to contact Mike McNamara and make arrangements to bring your module for display and operation at the convention. We plan to have several Free-Mo modules on display and operating in the lobby of the hotel. If you haven't you can contact him for information and be sure to attend his clinic on the subject. Mike can be reached via e-mail at mikemcnh@comcast.net.

We should have most if not all of this schedule finalized shortly including something a bit different for your after banquet entertainment. Watch for more information in the next issue of **The Local** and start making plans now to attend Princeton Junction 2010. 

News from the Contest Room!

*By Martin Brechbiel
MER General Contest Chairman*

ONCE AGAIN, I'd sincerely like to take this opportunity to encourage you all to seriously consider bringing one of your models along to **Princeton Junction** – the MER 2010 convention, September 30 - October 3, in Princeton, NJ, and to enter it into any one of the contest categories! Beyond the standard Contest Room categories, there are a number of Special Awards that some of you might want to consider bringing that "Special" model to place into consideration. I'd like to point out that all of the information pertaining to the Special Awards, criteria, qualifications, Judging, etc are now available on the MER website <http://mer.nmra.org/Contests.html>. Just click on the name of the award to be linked to that award's information!

All of the forms that you need are available on the NMRA web site in both pdf and Word format (www.nmra.org/education/achievement/apforms.html) so you can just type up your entries directly. Downloading and filling these out in advance is well worth your time & effort. If you need or can not locate the forms, contact me (martinwb@verizon.net). We will be instituting a "Help Desk" for entrants if they would like some one to look over their paperwork to get one last tune-up. There are a number of other operational changes being instituted that should improve that aspect of the Contest Room. The Crafts Contest, despite declining in entries over the years remains available for entries. In addition to the popular vote Special Award "Favorite Train", we are going to be adding a "Favorite Model" popular vote category!

I had hoped to see a good number of entries in Hagerstown, and that came to fruition. I hope to see that same trend of numbers and outstanding quality maintained since the MER has a high number of truly outstanding modelers. But to handle these entries, we're also going to need great service of our existing cadre of

experienced Judges as well as our Apprentice Judges. In that same light, I want to hear from last year's judging crew to confirm (at least tentatively...) who will be going to Princeton. I also want to hear from any modelers that would like to become judges.

Last year in Hagerstown, I also noted what I can only describe as inconsistencies, so in response we're instituting a training regimen that will be required for all current and future Judges, one that will be made available to all Divisions, hopefully coming to an event in your Division between now and Sept. 2010! The intent is to generate trained and certified Judges for the entire MER Region. I'll be contacting Division Superintendent's about this very soon. In parallel to that exercise, we're also going to providing a complementary clinic/program for Entrants. It's clear that the paperwork/forms are perceived as a real or imaginary impediment to entering models into the Contest Room. As noted by both Charlie Flichman and Bob Hamm, judges only have ~7-9 minutes per category per model. Having the "right stuff" on your paperwork can only help you, and we want you to get those Merit Awards! By the way, remember you only need 87 1/2 points which out of a possible 125 calculates out to be a C grade.

Finally, I've found that participating in Judging is a great way to learn and improve your modeling skills as well as gaining a "hands-on" practical understanding of how the judging matrices are applied. On top of that, judging is another activity that counts towards your Association Volunteer category in the AP program! And, having now mentioned the AP program, I'd like to invite any and all of the Divisional AP coordinators to drop by the contest room, take a look at the entries, and even participate in the judging session! Come to Princeton and come into the Contest Room! For more information, see the convention website at <http://mer.nmra.org/MERConv/MERConv.html>. 

sponsoring joint events with neighboring divisions. We hope to reciprocate on the Chesapeake's and Philadelphia's hospitality in 2010 by hosting events in our division and inviting them (Chesapeake has already tentatively agreed to a June event in our area). I also recommend other divisions consider talking to local NRHS chapters or other railroading groups in their area to see if mutually beneficial events can be arranged. The NRHS Harrisburg chapter hosts a spring train show, and we are considering hosting a fall show in the same place (with their help as they do not want to host 2 shows per year. I think other co-hosting opportunities may present themselves as we talk to more local organizations.

OTHER NOTES:

The division officers have JUST voted to pursue 501C3 status for 2010. We have found that some meeting space is available for free to 501C3 organizations we can use for clinics. Where there is a charge for other 501 organizations (we are currently a 501C7).

The price of mailing the newsletter has become an issue and the BOD voted to raise the yearly charge to receive a printed copy. We are also going to do a one-year trial on allowing advertising (hobby shops, railroading organizations, etc) in the division newsletter.

Health/personal life changes have become a real issue for several division officers with several not having the amount of time they previously did to contribute to the organization. We have asked for volunteers, but, so far, no one has yet stepped forward to fill this void. Until then, the current leadership will do as much as they are able with the time they have (really, no big change there, I guess).

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CAROLINA SOUTHERN DIVISION MEMBERSHIP:

Increased by ten during 2009, from 84 to 94. There are also fourteen NMRA members from outside the division's geographic area who will be annexed into the division in early 2010. There are 10 additional members who receive the newsletter and attend some division events.

FINANCIAL STATUS:

The division has a current balance of \$1,194.35. Net income from events have been: from the OpSession weekend \$234.34; Model Railroading University \$225.00; Turnout clinic \$165.00; a donation \$77.50. The net change from last year is \$730.03.

DIVISION EVENTS:

The division continued meeting almost every month in 2009. Meetings included visits to nearby club layouts, home layouts and display layouts. The division held its first of what we hope will be an annual OpSession Weekend in October 2009. The weekend was a great success to all those who attended. The 2010 event is scheduled again for October 8-10, 2010.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Membership Chairman: Bob Halsey

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 Mooresville, NC 28117

(704) 660-9712;

xnavman@adelphia.net

Web Master: Gil Brauch

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Hickory, NC 28601

(828) 256-5708; csdweb@charter.net

WEBSITE:

The Division maintains a website at <http://www.carolinasouthern.org>. The division's activities, newsletters and AP progress are displayed along with other information helpful to the division membership. There is an e-mail link for visitors to ask questions or seek help on model railroad related topics.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM:

Our Division has been making progress in the AP program. This past year we awarded:

4 – *Golden Spike*

3 – *Volunteer*

1 – *Scenery*

1 – *Civil Engineer*

2 – *Electrical Engineer*

1 – *Chief Dispatcher*

For the year 2010, we have members working towards 11 more Achievement Program Awards, including one member who may become a Master Model Railroader as he is working on his 7th award.

CONVENTION ACTIVITY:

Fourteen members attended the MER Regional Convention in Hagerstown, MD. Two members presented clinics there. Eleven members attended the National Convention in Hartford, CT. 7 more members are planning to attend the National Convention in Milwaukee, WI.

CHARITABLE AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

1) Wade's Train Town. They have had 11 open houses this year, with 580 visitors. About two-thirds of the layout has been restored. Five members have worked over 280 hours on the restoration. The restoration committee is hosted by three members: Carl Wessel, Mike Lethcoe, and Gil Brauch who is the Committee Chairman. They have received about \$1,260.00 in donations most of which has gone back into materials and supplies for the restoration work. They have a cash balance of \$144.00 to meet future needs.

2) The Help Line on the Division website responded to four requests, one for information on local model railroad activities, and the other from a local museum that needed help with a model train that was part of an historical display. Division members assisted the museum in resolving multiple issues with the operation of the train.

3) The Carolina Southern Division is also in the process of building a display layout for a local hobby shop and has been helping to get other things installed on the layout. The shop itself is building all the structures and doing the scenery for the layout. It is an "N" scale layout.

NEWSLETTER:

Each year, the Division plans to publish 4-5 issues of the **Brass Pounder**. So far, in 2009, 5 issues have been published. Almost all distribution to members and friends is by posting an Adobe .pdf format file on the division website and sending an e-mail with the link and notice that it is available. The newsletter currently has a distribution of about 160. The **Brass Pounder** contains reports of previous meetings, the schedule for future division meetings and other events of interest, other pertinent news, and modeling articles.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

The Carolina Southern Division plans to continue meetings on a bi-monthly basis, approximately 6+ times per year. Meeting host sites will be a mix of home layouts, clubs, and prototype. The fourth annual Railroad Modeling University was conducted in January 2010, in conjunction with our Annual Business Meeting.

The Division is also seeking to incorporate and also obtain 501c and 501c3 status in 2010.

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CAROLINA PIEDMONT DIVISION MEETING TIMES AND DATES:

Fourth Tuesday of the month January to October at the Cary Senior Center, Cary, NC. November and December we meet the 2nd Tuesday.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Superintendent: John Janosko

(919) 562-0260

Assistant Superintendent: Pete Slugg

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Clerk: Grif Bond (919) 556-7066

Paymaster: John Rudisill (919) 934 7029

AP Coordinator: Vic Bitleris

(919) 870 7558

Board member (term ends 1-11):

Jerry Mersh (919) 467-7107

Board member (term ends 1-12):

John Wallis (919) 387-0325

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

Several members have several certificates and are working on becoming MMR's.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FROM THE PAST YEAR:

Our annual Train sets for children were again successful and we gave away 7 train sets this year.

Last year we started a diorama contest from a building that we got through Train Buddy in where you had to use 80% of the building in your module. In February we have a judging by popular vote and Board members vote on the best six modules. Prizes are given to the winning participants. There was such good response that we decided to do it again this year and were able to get not only a HO kit but also N.

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHESAPEAKE DIVISION 2009 MEETING TIMES AND DATES AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Since December 27, 2008, when Roger Cason sent out a survey to the NMRA members in the Baltimore metropolitan area, a core of 14 members assembled and went through the necessary steps to restart an NMRA division in the Baltimore area. The initial startup meeting was held on Saturday, January 14, 2009. At that meeting, I was given the "opportunity" to serve as Superintendent of the newly named Chesapeake Division.

Through the next two organizational meetings (held in February and March), members of the core group prepared our petition to the MER Board of Directors and our By-Laws. These were delivered to the MER Board in late March and approval was given for us to operate as a Division of the MER.

Our first public appearance as the Chesapeake Division of the NMRA/MER was the April 4/5th Great American Scale Train Show (run by Howard Zane). During the two-day show, we gathered 21 new members through the Railpass program and one full pay member. We also handed out lots of NMRA materials and let the local NMRA members know that Baltimore area members now had an active division again.

Within two weeks of that appearance, Russ Forte, our web master, had the Division web pages up and running. Soon our URL address was added to the MER and NMRA websites. Also during that time, Joe Cucchiaro, our newsletter editor, was collecting material for our first newsletter.

On May 17th, the Division held its first meeting for members at the Towson Library. Highlights of the meeting including the presentation of the Division Charter by Roger Cason, MMR, our MER President. Also several division members brought along some models to share in an open "bring and brag" session.

In June, the Harford Area Railroad Modelers hosted a home layout tour of 3 of their members. This was well received and was a great first event. Members of the Susquehanna Division came down to join us for the tours.^{oo}

In July, our Director at Large Arthur Boyd opened up his house and layout to the Division for a meeting, layout tour, and presentation on operations.

Our September event was literally washed out the last weekend of September. The Chesapeake and Allegheny Live Steamers have offered to reschedule the event to a drier time.

In October, MER Board approved the transfer of Howard County members into the Chesapeake Division from the Potomac Division. In late October, formal invitations were e-mailed to all active Howard County members.

Our first Annual Group Meeting was held on Saturday, November 7th. Our presence visible again at the October Timonium Show. We will also be representing the NMRA the first weekend of December at the Greenburg Show also at Timonium.

The Division already has 6 events scheduled for January through June 2010. In April, we will also see our first joint Mini-Con with the Potomac Division to be held in Columbia, MD. In May 2010, we are expecting to have a large layout tour of several Anne Arundel County (Annapolis) modelers.

The Division is working on expanding our visibility and contact with other local model railroad organizations including model groups, hobby stores, and Christmas Train Garden operators. Though we were unable to move forward very far

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with the initiative of getting NMRA information out for display by the Train Garden operators, this still remain an active priority for the coming year.

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Clerk: Joe Botts

jobotts@comcast.net

AP Chairman: Greg Meeks

(410) 579-1389

ap.chesdivmernmra@gmail.com

AP PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

Since May, 5 certificates have been earned by Chesapeake Division members:

Sam Shepard: Master Builder – Scenery, Model Engineer – Civil, Model Engineer – Electrical

Dave Arday: Association Volunteer

Karl Bond: Model Railroad Author.

Several other members are working on their Chief Dispatcher certificate requirements and Association Volunteer as well.

SUCCESSFUL/NEW IDEAS OUR DIVISION HAS TRIED IN PAST YEAR:

Mainly we have been working on just getting the division up and running from a dead stop. We have relied on the experiences my board and other members have had with locals both here in Baltimore in the past and in other areas of the MER and other regions (most notably MCR). 

WANTED: CANDIDATES TO RUN FOR MER OFFICES!

HOW MANY of you go to a train meet, hobby shop or a convention where you may make a purchase of a car of locomotive to add to your railroad? I will wager a bet that you never even give it a thought that the new purchase will not be compatible with your other existing equipment. Know why? The standards that many volunteers have developed over the past 75 years have made the incompatibility of various manufacturers equipment a non-issue. These volunteers spent many hours trying to make things better. We all enjoy the results of their efforts on a daily basis. With the exception of a very small staff at NMRA Headquarters, volunteers run the entire organization. Now you have the opportunity to get involved at the Region level of the National Association.

Each year, the MER membership elects the Officers/Directors who run our organization. These volunteers are elected to serve a two-year term. Every even numbered year, the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are up for election. The three Directors are elected in odd numbered years. Any member in good standing, living within the MER boundaries, can run for these offices.

To be eligible for the office of President, you must have served a full term in some elected Regional Board of Directors or have served a full term as a Division Superintendent. Any one who is interested in running for one of these positions is asked to contact one of the following members of the Nominating Committee:

- (Chairman) Bob Minnis, kahlualab@aol.com, (703) 391-0675
- Mike McNamara, mikemcnh@comcast.net, (856) 824-0871
- Dave Chance, loconut@carolina.rr.com, (704) 933-4200
- Stan Knotts, srknotts@comcast.net, (301) 990-7287.

Anyone interested in being an officer needs to submit a 200-word “candidate’s statement” along with a photo to one of the committee members before April 15th. If you miss that deadline, you will have to add a petition signed by 25 active MER members along with the other requirements. The deadline for the petition application is June 15th. A single two year term served in one of these offices, qualifies for the Achievement Program “Association Official” award.

The Committee looks forward to you volunteering for this important MER function. Ballots will be mailed to the MER membership in August. 

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Easy Detailing for a Common Kit

Article and photograph by Dr. John Pursell

MODEL POWERS' KIT, "The Sullivans" builds into a very nice representation of a home that could be found almost anywhere in the United States. The styling is appropriate for just about any era in the 20th Century. These kits have the advantage of being reasonably inexpensive and can be found in most any hobby shop.

I didn't feel like doing truly elaborate detailing, but I felt that it needed more than was on the original kit, so I decided to just do some simple detailing to bring it up to my other structures.

Prior to assembling the walls, I added some simple window treatments. I used textured paper towels to create "lace" curtains in the lower level windows, while pieces of masking tape represent shades in most of the top story. This gave the impression of a lived-in house without doing any interior detailing.

The kit was then built basically according to instructions, leaving off the porch roof for later installation. I left off the shutters, as I thought they made the overall house look too "busy." After assembly, I glued the structure to a piece of sheet plastic for easier handling.

The roof eaves were next in line for detailing, getting guttering and downspouts installed. The gutter pieces were refugees in my parts boxes (I don't recall what kit they were originally from), but guttering could be easily constructed from half-round plastic rod. The truly ambitious could cut tubing in half, but I think that's going above and beyond, at least in HO.

The front porch just begs for some detailing, so I constructed a simple bench from strip wood and painted it green to contrast

with the rest of the house. I originally thought about building a swing and hanging it from the porch roof with tiny chains, but I decided this also went beyond the idea of "simple" detailing. A side chair from the parts box also found its way onto the porch and small pieces of round plastic with tiny pieces of foam in them became planters on the porch steps. I then installed Mrs. Sullivan and attached the porch roof.

The yard details were next to last. Foam shrubbery goes around the house, foam grass on green paint makes the yard, and the bike and young boy were put in place.

Last of all, I made a simple television aerial from thin wire and installed it at the back of the roof. This is an easy detail that is often left off model homes. In this age of cable and satellite TV, we tend to forget that almost every home in the country had a television aerial in the '50s, '60s and into the '70s.

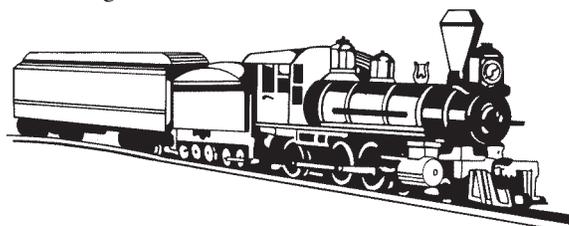
As pictured, the house is not yet weathered. I usually wait until I'm ready to install the kit on my layout, and then I base my weathering on other structures in the vicinity. Houses of roughly the same age and in the same locale will usually show similar weathering patterns,

So, there you have it. Simple detailing installed over a couple of evenings brings a common kit up to much higher standards.

DR. JOHN PURSELL lives in the South Mountain Division where he models HO scale. 🏠



Some simple detailing such as gutters, downspouts, a bench and planters can improve a simple kit.



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CALLBOARD

Coming Events

MARCH 6TH & 7TH. Greenburg's Train and Toy Show at the Lancaster County Convention Center located at 3 East Vine St in Lancaster, PA. Hours: 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.

MARCH 6TH & 7TH. 15th Annual Carolina Coastal Railroaders Model Train Show. Held at New Bern High School located at 4200 Academic Drive in New Bern, NC. Hours: Saturday: 10 AM till 5 PM; Sunday: 10 AM till 4 PM. Cost: \$6 for adults/12 and under free. For more information contact Joe Hofmann at (252) 638-8872 or hofmannjoe@cox.net.

MARCH 15TH. Wade's Train Town monthly open house. Operated by Carolina Southern Division members at the Brookford Town Center located at 1700 South Center St in Hickory, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

MARCH 14TH. Two Potomac Division layout tours in Gainesville, VA. Both open 1 PM until 4 PM. Contact layout coordinator Tom Brodrick at (301) 253-0558 or t.brodbrod@comcast.net.

MARCH 26TH – 28TH. The third bi-annual Valley Forge Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet sponsored by the Philadelphia Division will be held at the Desmond Great Valley Hotel located at 1 Liberty Boulevard in Malvern PA. Clinics, model displays, vendor room, and Sunday layout tours. For updates, visit www.phillynmra.org. To make hotel reservations: (610) 296-9800. For more information, contact Paul Backenstose, 103 West Uwchlan Ave. Downingtown, Pa 19335, (please include an SASE for a reply). Email prrpaul@aol.com or (610) 269-2763.

APRIL 9TH & 10TH. Great Scale Model Train Show at the Maryland State Fairgrounds located at 2200 York Rd in Timonium, MD. Hours: 9 AM till 4 PM on Saturday; 10 AM till 4 PM on Sunday. Cost: \$9 for adults; kids 15 and under are free (admission is good for both days). For more information and directions visit www.gsmts.com.

APRIL 10TH. Wade's Train Town monthly open house. Operated by Carolina Southern Division members at the Brookford Town Center located at 1700 South Center St in Hickory, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

APRIL 10TH. James River Divisional Meeting at the National Radio Observatory. Located at 520 Edgemont Road in Charlottesville, VA. From 9:30 AM till Noon; clinics, contests, door prizes, white elephant table and annual business meeting. Layout tours from 1 PM till 4 PM. For more information contact Robert Alvis at (804) 329-4060 or rwalvis@mac.com.

APRIL 17TH. Join the Potomac and Chesapeake Divisions at a mini-convention with model displays, AP judging, clinics and a

white elephant sale. South Columbia Baptist Church located at 8814 Guilford Road in Columbia, MD. 8:30 AM till 4 PM. Cost: \$10 (payable at the door). For more info visit http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac_NMRA/.

UPCOMING MID CENTRAL REGION CONVENTION MAY 13TH – 16TH in Charleston, WV!! Visit www.coaldivision.org/coalfield_express. For complete information and registration.

Tell members about your upcoming event!! Send event listings to the editor (contact information is listed on page 2.) Be sure to include all the specifics for the event: including the date, time, place, cost (if any), a contact person, and a means of getting in touch with him/her (address, phone, e-mail, etc.), and web site for updates or to get more information. Due to publication schedules, please give plenty of notice before the event. 

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 1 – New Jersey

Ron Baile – *Gold Spike*
Joseph Calderone – *Chief Dispatcher*
Carl Corsi – *Association Volunteer*
William Emmons – *Association Volunteer*
Thomas Griffiths – *Master Builder, Structures*
Carl Halett – *Association Volunteer*
William H. Howard – *Engineer, Electrical*
William H. Howard – *Association Volunteer*
Frank Neufeld – *Engineer, Electrical*
Raymond L. Notaro – *Gold Spike*
Thom Radice – *Gold Spike*

Division 2 – Potomac

Brian Sheron – *Chief Dispatcher*

Division 5 – James River

John A Siegle – *Master Builder, Scenery*

Division 11 – Susquehanna

Howard Oakes – *Association Volunteer*

Division 12 – Carolina Southern

Edwin C. Locklin – *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**. 

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CLASSIFIED

ATTENTION ALL MER MEMBERS:

Do you have a wanted/trade/for sale item(s)? Looking for carpool options or options for sharing a room? **The Local** is starting classified section for all MER members. Send your classified ad to the Editor at stevesexpressrr@yahoo.com, or see all the Editor's contact information on page 2.

The ad must include full name and contact information and will be limited to one issue. Word count is also limited to fifty (50) words. Please include your NMRA number for verification purposes (number will not be published).

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Visit the MER's website for all the latest information, contacts and archives www.mer-nmra.org.