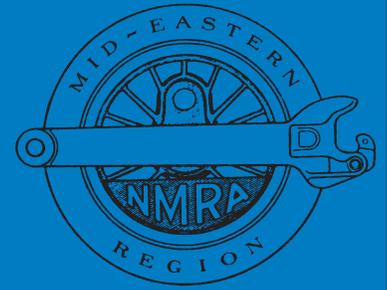


The Local

A PUBLICATION OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION OF THE NMRA



Volume 66

MAY — JUNE 2011

Number 3

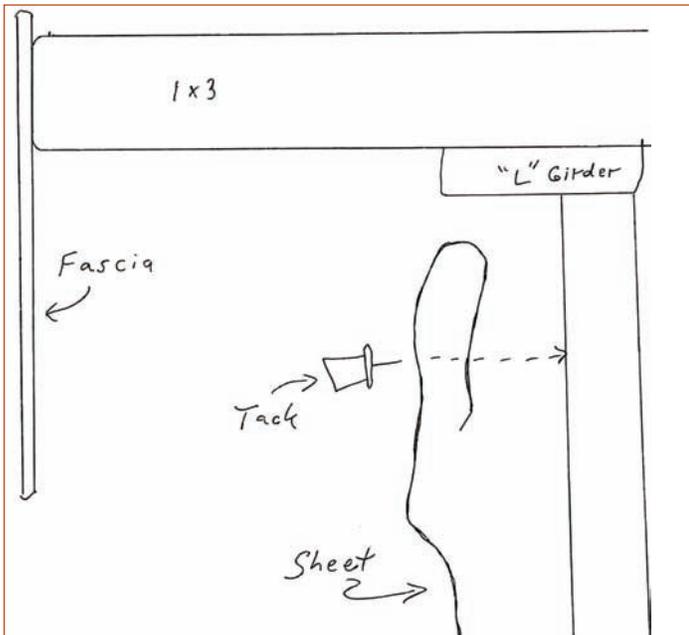
Easy & Inexpensive Layout Skirting

*Photographs and article by Dr. John Pursell
South Mountain Division/HO Scale*

LAYOUT SKIRTING is one of the very few things can make a large difference on a layout at usually reasonable cost. It imparts a sense of “completeness” and allows us to hide the usual collection of boxes and junk that inevitably accumulates. Modelers who have read other articles of mine probably already know that I’m, shall we say, frugal? Oh heck, let’s face it; I’m cheap! And when my Lehigh Valley Railroad reached the point of

at the price of 60 feet of the same material; even inexpensive cotton was pretty high. The other problem was actually finding solid-color cloth without any design.

So then I’m walking with the wife through one of our job lot stores-Ollie’s, in this case—and out of the clear blue, (I married her for this reason) she says: “What about bed sheets?” The



Drawing 1: Side view of benchwork and simple attachment.

installation of layout skirting, I looked over several options.

One thing I knew, I wanted the same skirting all the way around. The layout is (was, actually, it’s since been torn down for a move) a folded dog-bone and basically the whole layout is visible when you enter the room. I figured I needed about 58-60 feet of skirting. I checked with our local fabric stores and was appalled



Final results of inexpensive skirting.

proverbial light went on and I quickly checked the sizes of the sheets in the store’s surprisingly large linens section. I found that the terms “double,” “queen,” “king,” etc, are actually not standardized; they do vary with manufacturer. But I found queen size flat sheets that were roughly 96 inches wide. So, if I split them down the middle, I’d have two 8’ pieces roughly 43” wide. My layout is 42” high—Bingo!

It took a little hunting and digging, but I managed to find four packs in a light beige that had no decoration or design. This would give me about 64 feet of skirting. Home we went. She helped me cut them in half and then we attacked the layout. My layout is “L” girder with 1 x 3s holding the fascia out about 6

continued on page 4

The Local

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

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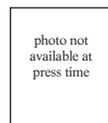


photo not available at press time

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All subscription information, advertising rates and publication deadlines are now located on page 16.

The MER website is <http://mer.nmra.org/>



From The Business Car

*By John Janosko
MER President*

BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, the weather will be nice out and you can enjoy the sunshine. Right now it is still cold outside in March and I just cannot wait to enjoy the warmer weather.

On the 19th of March I attended the Tidewater Division meeting for two reasons 1) was to get together with the 2012 Convention committee that has Gary Brown as chairperson and 2) was to follow thru on attending each division meeting at least once a year either by myself or P.J. Mattson. Last year, it worked out that I almost kept my promise except for the James River Division, which I had to cancel because of some personal conflicts. I will try to make up for the omission this year.

The division meetings with the officers of the region helps us to find out your concerns on a face to face basis and to see what it is that your division does that might be of some help to the other divisions. It also gives me a chance to see some old friends and make some new ones. I hope our division members feel that it is a two way street.

The 2012 convention committee meeting went well and at this time Gary has ample help in setting up the convention. They have looked into several hotels and are getting quotes on rooms and convention space. We are looking at the end of September into October as potential dates. Some of the hotels are actually on the ocean and normally in September and October Virginia Beach is

still rather warm. From the general air of the meeting I think we could have another great convention. I remember the last one we had in April 2000; I really had a great time. The other thing about the Virginia Beach area is that there are so many other things to do besides railroading.

While at the Tidewater Division meeting someone mentioned that a teacher contacted Max (who does their website) that she used information on their site to do a class project on American Railroads and the information made her job a lot easier. Now this is a good example of someone using the site for other purposes. Since Tidewater has a great site they were able to do a service for the community. I just wonder how many people go into our various sites and come away with wanting to know more about the MER.

One of our members tried to register for the **Piedmont Crossing** at the Embassy Suites in Cary, NC and was told he was getting the last room. I have checked with my contact and we have plenty of rooms and if we get close to the room night total we can always add more rooms. If you do run into any room reservation problems please contact P.J. Mattson or me and we will follow up on the problems.

Remember the hobby is what you make it, so enjoy it for as long as it lasts. 🚂

No cost wire straps

*Article and photograph by Ron Baile
New Jersey Division/HO Scale*

IHAVE BEEN USING these wire straps since I started building my railroad back in the 1980s. They come with a certain famous brand of trash bags whose name I can't remember. More than one brand packs these with their bags. Their intended use is to tie up the trash bags. I keep the ties and put a knot in the trash bag.

Many years ago, when I worked running telephone wiring in large buildings one of the first things we did was to lay out what was referred to a ring-run. This was a series of steel rings that we nailed into the wood or cinder blocks. Once you installed these rings all you had to do was slide the wires through the rings. It was quick and tidy.

I started doing the same thing using these ties. Wherever I thought I might need to run wires I stapled up some of these ties. All you have to do is run your wires and fasten the ties. They are adjustable according to the size of the bunch of wire. I use free-floating ties at intermediate points.

If you need to run additional wires you may either slip them through the locked ties or undo them and wrap them around the wire bundle again. Removing old wires is a snap.



Trash bag ties can make layout wiring quick and tidy.

Keeping In Touch...

By Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager

MANY OF THE MER MEMBERS and friends from other regions subscribe to this newsletter. In fact last month's mailings of the printed paper version of the newsletter went out to 900+ modelers. In addition we have made the electronic version, **eLocal**, available to another 400+ modelers via an email notice with links to **The Local** repository website.

As you probably all know, the subscription for the paper version of **The Local** is \$6.00 per year for six issues. The payment of that subscription can be sent directly to me (see address in the staff listing on page 2 of any issue) or the payment can be included along with the NMRA dues sent to National Headquarters. Many people have found that to be the most convenient way to send in the subscription payments.

However, over the past year I have been receiving correspondence from members who have decided they wanted to drop their mailed paper version in lieu of just the electronic version. (After all they get access to the newsletter much faster and in color.) The **eLocal** is free. I am willing to mark those individual's records for the electronic version notification only. That's all fine...but many

Easy & Inexpensive Layout Skirting continued from page 1

inches from the edge of the girder. We doubled over the top of each piece (see drawing), making sure the hem was down and thumb-tacked it in place behind the fascia. I made sure it didn't go all the way down but stopped about 3 inches from the floor. This keeps errant toes and shoes from pulling the fabric off. We overlapped them at the ends, but this still gives me access every eight feet. Total installation time? About 15 minutes. Actually, it took longer to find four packs that were alike.

So there you have it—inexpensive skirting that's pretty easy to put up. See photo for results. If you go this route, just remember, you want flat sheets, not fitted. You also need to check to see if there's a decoration or a border design. Otherwise, save some cash! 

CLASSIFIED

ATTENTION ALL MER MEMBERS:

Do you have a wanted/trade/for sale item(s)? Looking for car-pool options to an event or options for sharing a room? **The Local** publishes a FREE classified section for all MER members. Send your classified ad to the Editor at stevespressrr@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 seventy-five (75) words. Please include your NMRA number for verification purposes (number will not be published). 

members still include the \$6.00 subscription fee with their next NMRA membership renewal. When that payment is appropriately accounted for in our system, a new round of paper subscriptions is started and the members again ask why the paper version is being sent. I am sure that the MER Board and I are grateful for the payment, but it would be more useful if you wanted to continue sending dollars to MER, if you sent that as a donation so that it could be appropriately accounted for in our records.

One other issue about our mailed paper version of **The Local** needs to be addressed. The U.S. Postage Permit we use on the mailed newsletter is such that I receive copies that cannot be delivered. That is one way for me to get notice of changed addresses. Apparently if any individual has suspended their mail while they are away at a different location (summer vacation, etc.) the Post Office returns the newsletter to me marked "Temporarily Away." At current rates, each returned newsletter costs \$1.05. If I were to re-mail the newsletter it would cost another \$1.22. I think you can see where I'm going with this discussion. All of those extra costs in addition to the printing and first mailing quickly go well beyond the \$1.00 we charge for each issue.

So my plea...either change over to the **eLocal** or let me know if you will be "out of town" for some future issues.

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. 

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 4 – Tidewater

Nelson Clarke – *Association Volunteer*
John Cryderman – *Chief Dispatcher*
William Bill Miller – *Chief Dispatcher*

Division 5 – James River

Charles Hladik – *Master Builder, Scenery*
John A. Siegle – *Model Railroad Engineer, Electrical*

Division 10 – South Mountain

Michael Shockey – *Gold Spike*

MER at Large

Jack Ward – *Master Builder, Structures*
Jack Ward – *Master Builder, Scenery*

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

The Planning of a Railroading Merit Badge Class

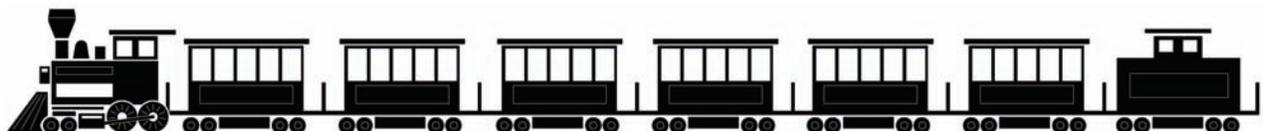
By Don Jennings

MER Director and Liaison to the BSA for Railroading Merit Badge

ONE PERSON is in charge of the event:

1. Secure a building or a room to have class session.
2. Provide the date and times of the event to occur.
3. There are two types of programs that may be done here.
 - a. A teaching session for the scouts by the counselors and presenters.
 - b. The scouts come ready and prepared to a session and;
 1. Scouts have registered prior to the deadline.
 2. Have a waiting list prepared for extra scouts to attend.
 3. Scouts come wearing **full Boy Scout Uniform**.
 4. Scouts should have **read** the RR MB Booklet prior to the session.
 5. Scouts should bring the RR MB Booklet with them when they arrive.
 6. Scouts to have RR MB Booklet WORKSHEETS filled out as best they can prior to arrival.
[This is so the counselor(s) can look over the information on the Scout's worksheets while the other presenters are working with the scouts.]
 7. Scouts have a signed Blue Card by the Scout Leader with Scout's name, address, Troop number and merit badge name filled out on the card.
 8. Scouts and presenters should bring a bag lunch.
4. Advertise in local newspapers, & with local BSA Council(s) newsletters etc.
5. Advertise often in both means of advertisements.
6. Have at least one BSA registered Adult leader (you) at the session as it is being presented.
7. Have at least one RAILROADING MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR present for the entire class session.
 - a. This is the only person who may sign off the Scouts RR MB requirements on BSA Blue Cards.
 - b. He is knowledgeable of the requirements and their answers from the merit badge booklet.
 - c. The merit badge booklet has all the requirements and answers and is **the source** for the answers.
8. Contact your state OPERATION LIFESAVER PRESENTER. (www.oli.org/education-resources/request-a-presenter)
 - a. This person is valuable for requirement # 4 in the RR MB Booklet.
 - b. His presentations may be seen & heard by all adults who are present along with the Scouts.
9. Welcome and Introductions of counselors and presenters for the class.
 - a. Scouts to give a Flag Salute and Scout Oath and Law.
 - b. Have other model railroad people help with the class. Naturally, one person may do more than one section:
 1. Railroading Merit Badge Introduction
 2. Operation Lifesaver presentation
[These two sections can be given to the entire group] Then break into smaller groups.
 3. Modern Railroads
 4. Railroad Signals
 5. Safety First
 6. Railfanning
 7. Careers in Railroading
 8. Resources
 - c. Place break times (maybe fifteen minutes) between every two sessions.

This is a successful way to plan a Railroading Merit Badge Class. For more information, please use the contact information for Don Jennings on page 2. 🏠



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 **NMRA Magazine**, 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 two years.

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, 333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504, Charlotte, NC 28202-1961. (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 initially allocated \$2,000 for this program. The Board recently allocated an additional \$1,000 to extend the program to the end of 2010, or when the funds are spent – 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, 704-332-1753, tractionfan@aol.com), or John Janosko, MER President (see contact information on page 2). 

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 **NMRA Magazine**, 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 two years, I have **not** been a member of NMRA.

=====
Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Scale(s): _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____

Signature of Sponsor: _____ (Required)

(A Regional or Divisional officer or board member)

When this form is completed,
mail it to:

**Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager
333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504
Charlotte, NC 28202-1961**

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

=====
Date of form: 1/31/07

**MADE IN
THE MER**

Zemkies Unlimited

Review and photo by Eric Dervinis

MILLIONS OF IPHONES AND ITOUCHES have been sold for the ease of use and mostly for the software – what Apple calls Apps. Right here in the Mid Eastern Region, Zemkies Unlimited developed and launched the WiThrottle app in December 2009. Any DCC model railroad running current versions of JMRI on a computer (with wifi) connected to the layout can add throttles by downloading the app to an iPhone, iTouch or iPad.

In April 2009, the creator Brett Hoffman began the process of writing the app. An online posting about the lack of a fully configured smart phone throttle application was the impetus for this project. First he had to learn Java to write the JMRI code and Objective C for the Apple app. By the fall, he had a working app which he tested on Dave Skinner's KADE and P.J. Mattson's Raccoon Valley RR. He thanks both for being the beta sites. Brett estimates that he invested one thousand hours in the project.

The JMRI users were very helpful. They provided feedback and some of them tested the app as well. Brett notes that Chuck Catania was a crucial sounding board and deserves special kudos.

This is the first product for Zemkie Unlimited. Brett had to sign up as an App writer, submit the App for approval and set up a system to receive payments from around the world. Once launched, customers purchased WiThrottle in Australia, Japan, USA and all across Europe. Most Customer Serv-

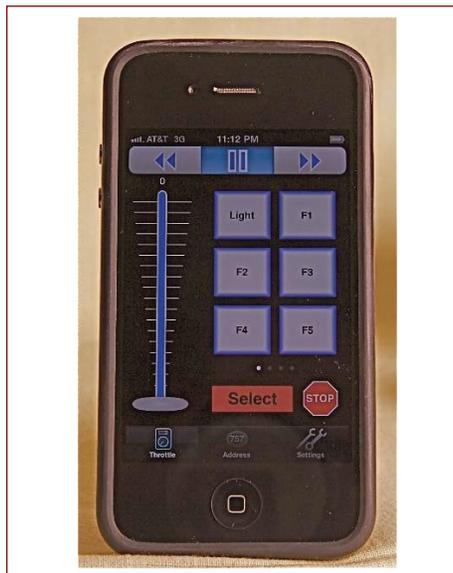
ice is handled by e-mail. The most common problem has been working around existing firewalls.

One of the biggest decisions a new manufacturer makes is pricing. Brett choose to offer a free lite version of WiThrottle and thousands of those have been downloaded. If it works and you like it, the purchase price of the full version is \$9.99.

Once the product was in the App Store, the publicity campaign started in January. Model Railroader featured it on their web site and in the magazine. Model Railroad News ran the announcement and did a detailed review. Sales have been steady as the word spreads around the model railroad community.

This author tested the app on two different large model railroads. While the existing DCC wireless has some dead spots, the wifi works everywhere in the basement. Control is very precise. All of the functions are available as buttons on the screen. The screen can be configured as a yard / local throttle allowing easy change of direction vs. a road throttle with more speed control.

What next? Brett has been improving the app, updating JMRI and loading the changes into the App store. Model railroaders have asked about an Android or BlackBerry version – he is looking into both. Today, the Silicon Valley is anywhere a creative person can establish an internet connection. For more information go to www.withrottle.com. 



All of the functions of the WiThrottle app are available as buttons as seen here on the author's iPhone.

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE BUILDER??

At the Hagerstown MER Convention, in the Contest Room there was a model on display of the Williamsport Drawbridge. Strangely enough, there is no record of who built it or who brought it to put on display. As it happens with such conditions, several people have asked about that specific model now regarding whom it belonged to and/or who brought it to Hagerstown! So, if you possess any answers as ownership, its origins, or who brought it to the room, please contact Martin Brechbiel at martinwb@verizon.net. Thanks! 



Virginia Museum of Transportation

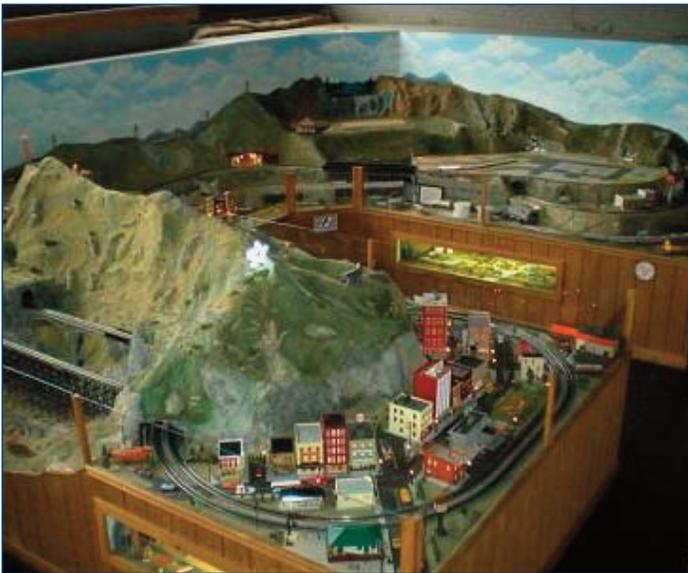
Part 1: The Trains

*Article and Photographs by Jack Dziadul
Carolina Piedmont Division / HO Scale*

ON THE DRIVE HOME from the **Western Maryland Transfer** Convention I detoured to Roanoke and followed signs to the Virginia Museum of Transportation. Since I had not known that such a museum existed it was a nice surprise. Even nicer was that I saved a buck by getting the senior citizen discount. The museum itself is housed in a former train shed and lies next to an active Norfolk Southern yard, not far from NS locomotive shops. So, there are many rail fan opportunities in the area. In addition, I discovered that the O. Winston Link Museum is nearby. But, famous railroad photography and rail fanning will wait for another time. I had about an hour to run through the Transportation Museum and I wanted to make sure that I got my seven dollars worth. These photos focus on what moves on rails.



The Illinois Terminal Railroad “Presidential One” Business Car was originally built in 1916 by Pullman. The car is still being renovated and not all of the interior was accessible. The car was used by four railroads: the El Paso and Southern Railroad, the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad, Chicago and Northwestern Railroad and the Illinois Terminal Railroad. The “Presidential One” has an open observation platform, a living room that served as a conference room on business trips, three bedrooms, a bath with a shower, a dining room, quarters for a steward, plus a kitchen with pantry.



Some of the exhibits included a large O scale model railroad layout, as seen here from the second floor balcony. There were other models displays throughout the museum plus an extensive model circus exhibit.



Alco C-630's had high short hoods and N&W considered the long hood the front. These road freight diesels were converted to hump service as slugs in the 1970s.



Norfolk & Western Railway Class J #611 Steam Locomotive is one of the stars of the show. This unit could travel at 110 miles per hour hauling fifteen passenger cars. It was built in 1950 at the tail end of the steam era, and it pulled the last steam passenger train on October 24, 1959.



An ever-popular GG-1, especially among PRR fans, was also on display. As you can see, the exhibits not under cover are getting a bit weatherworn. #4919 was built in 1942 in Altoona.



This is for the traction fans. PCC stands for President's Conference Committee. (See what you can learn at a museum?) This committee was responsible for designing this car during the depression as a means of reviving local and inter-urban traction industry. Sort of like the prelude to auto industry bailout of the modern era. Car #1470 was built by the St. Louis Car Company and was operated by the D.C. Transit Company from 1937 until its retirement in 1962. This car and others like it that operated in the center of the District of Columbia, was unique. Electrical current was picked up by a "plow" from a third rail that was below street level. Outside of the center city, the conventional trolley pole picked up current from an overhead wire. I sped past this exhibit as I had my fill of riding MTA PCC's "neath the streets of Boston" as the Kingston Trio would say.



Virginian Class SA #4, an 8-wheel switcher, is the sole remaining steam engine of the Virginian Railway. Baldwin built this engine in 1910 and it earned a living until 1957.



The EMD SD-45 features high short hoods and the long hood was designated as the front end. #1776 was delivered to Norfolk and Western in 1970 and was repainted red, white and blue in 1974 at the Decatur Shops.

continued on page 10



NW G-1 #6 is a 2-8-0 Consolidation, which had a long life from 1897 to 1955, was built by The Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia. It could pull 50 cars. According to the museum website, #6 was originally N&W #352. "In May 1917, it was sold to the Virginia Carolina Railroad and renumbered #6. When N&W acquired the Virginia Carolina in January 1920 its number remained 6."



Seldom seen and rarely modeled, the dynamometer car is a specialty non-revenue car that was equipped for measuring and recording drawbar pull, brake pipe pressure and data connected with locomotive operation and train haul conditions. An employee in the cupola charted the location of the readings and recorded roadbed conditions, station locations and topography notes. #514780 was built by the Norfolk & Western.



Virginian Railway Rectifier Type Class EL-C Electric Locomotive #135 in its Erie, PA shops for the Virginian Railway, which had electrified tracks between Roanoke, Virginia and Mullins, West Virginia. After a merger, NW eliminated electrification and #135 ended up running on New Haven rails and then subsequently Penn Central and Conrail. This unit has the distinction of having been dressed up in four paint schemes during its working life.



Photographs By Kathy

Class A #1218 was built in the Roanoke Shops in 1943 and ran until 1956 hauling heavy freight and 150 car coal trains. This unit is famous in that it ran "extra" as NS excursions until 1994. In 2001 it was featured in *Vanity Fair* magazine with the photographer O. Winston Link.

In addition to the locomotive roster shown, there were many examples of freight rolling stock on display throughout the museum grounds. It is always helpful to our modeling to have up close views of what the big boys drove, and it is always useful to have a camera at the ready when your travels take you on a diverging route. I will present some of the vehicle exhibits in Part 2. 📷

Are You Getting Ready... For PIEDMONT CROSSING 2011?

By R. Stephen Milley

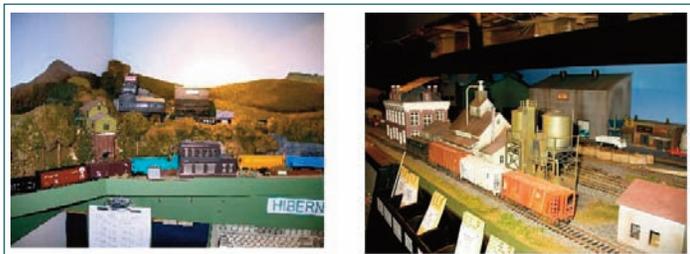
AS WINTER TURNS TO SPRING HERE in North Carolina, not only is the outside temperature heating up, but also planning for the 2011 MER Convention is heating up. **Piedmont Crossing** will be held October 27th through October 30th in Cary, NC, and we have a broad range of activities in the works for attendees. Cary, NC, is located just to the Southwest of Raleigh, in the heart of North Carolina. We look forward to host our visitors from the Mid-Eastern Region and beyond. Read on for an overview of some of the activities planned and an overview of one of the featured hands-on clinics.

Piedmont Crossing will include many of the activities that you would expect in the annual convention, such as: 40+ clinics, prototype rail/industrial tours, home layout tours, layout operating sessions, model contests, dinner banquet with speaker, model displays, 5 “make and take” workshops, auction, model train show and modular layout displays.

HOME LAYOUT TOURS & OPERATIONS CALL BOARD

Piedmont Crossing will feature a variety of home and club layouts in all scales: N, HO, O, G, and even a Live Steam outdoor layout. We expect over 25 layouts on the tour list throughout the central North Carolina region. Visitors can see layouts that are still under construction and others that are complete and fully operational. Many feature DCC or computer-controlled operation, and some have been featured in commercial press and magazines. Layout tours will be open for visitation from Thursday evening through Sunday afternoon. See tour details on the convention website.

With a broad selection of operating layouts in the area, we are fortunate to be able to offer an Operations Call Board featuring at least five home layouts. There is at least one session planned for each day of the convention – Thursday evening through Sunday morning. Keep your eyes on the registration information on the website as the dates, times, and details firm up.



Photos of home layouts on tour.

PROTOTYPE TOURS

Piedmont Crossing will include several railroad prototype tours in the local region. One of the tours will feature a trip to the local NCDOT Rail Yard in Raleigh. The yard includes service facilities,

a freight and passenger car yard, and several locomotives and rolling stock that visitors can see up close. Another tour will include a visit to an active mixed concrete facility; have the chance to see a rail-served industry in action. Additional prototype tours will be added to the website list through the spring and summer.

CLINICS

As with past MER Conventions, **Piedmont Crossing** will feature a full slate of railroading clinics. These clinics will cover a large variety of topics and will be presented in several different manners including presentations, demonstrations, and hands-on practice. Some of the hands-on clinics will require a small extra fare and some will include the “make-&take” feature.

The clinics schedule includes four concurrent sessions during the convention, from Thursday evening through Sunday morning. There will be over 60 hours of clinics to choose from, from as short as one hour to as long as an 8-hour hands-on session. The schedule will offer a broad range of topics, including tracts such as scenery, technology, operations, modeling, design & construction, prototype, NMRA activities, and a hands-on make-&take tract.

A FEATURED HANDS-ON CLINIC – BUILDING A BAR MILLS KIT & DIORAMA

Here is an overview of the 8-hour diorama construction clinic. Gene Sing and Stephen Milley (author of this article) will walk participants through the steps of building a small Bar Mills crafts-



Photos of Diorama Build 8-hour clinic supplies.

man kit, hand-laying track, creating trees, and putting it all together on a small diorama. This clinic will require an extra fare of \$30, but all materials and tools will be provided, and participants will take their creation home with them. Conveniently, the diorama is sized to fit into a small USPS box! Be sure to register for the convention and into this clinic as quickly as possible, as it will be limited to the first 12 participants.

The first phase of this clinic will include construction of a small Bar Mills trackside craftsman kit. There will be four different kits to choose from: Twin Utility Sheds, Furlow Freight Company, Miracle Chair Company, or Magee’s Tire Repair; three of each kit

continued on page 12

will be available to participants on a first-come, first-serve basis. The hands-on activities will include reviewing and preparing the components of the kit, painting, assembling, weathering, detailing the structure and preparing it for placement to the diorama base. A special thanks goes to Art Fahie, owner of Bar Mills Scale Model Works, for providing kits for this special clinic.

The second phase of the clinic will cover the basics of hand-laying track. Participants will learn about tie spacing, the tools for laying track, the techniques for spacing and spiking the track, and practice the skill by laying a small section of track on their diorama. Participants will ballast the track as well. During the session, participants will observe a demonstration of how to hand-lay a track turnout.

The third phase of the clinic will include adding ground scenery to the diorama and creating trees using the Scenic Express Super Trees product. Participants will learn about assembling and painting trees from the Super Trees materials, adding foliage, and placing them to the diorama to complete the scene.

This clinic should be great fun, and for those who would like

some up-close-and-personal guidance on these techniques, come join the fun.

TRANSPORTATION

Amtrak serves Cary, NC, with several trains, so there are convenient transportation options to get you here.

HOTEL

The convention will be held at the Embassy Suites (Raleigh-Durham/Research Triangle) 201 Harrison Oaks Boulevard, Cary, NC. The hotel rate is \$89/night (plus taxes) and includes a full cooked-to-order breakfast every morning and an evening manager's reception.

REGISTRATION

NMRA members \$45; early registration \$40 (due September 15); non-members \$55/50. There is an extra fare charge for the banquet and "make and take" workshops.

Complete information and an early registration form are located on page 13 and on the convention's website www.mer2011. 

The East Coast Santa Fe Modelers are inviting everyone to the 19th Annual Spring Meet. Members of the Philadelphia Division will be attending this year and it should be a great event for everyone!

DATE: May 6th and 7th.

PLACE: On the Campus of Delaware Valley College (700 Butler Avenue, Doylestown, PA) Student Center, 2nd Floor Coffee House

This year they are very pleased to have Steve Priest from Paired Rail as the principal speaker. He and his wife are the authors of many well-known Santa Fe books and he is the founder of one of the best on-line resources for Santa Fe information, **The Santa Fe Archives**. Also presenting again this year will be Josh Shedekar from Tony's Train Exchange and Dick Bronson from RR Cirkits. Josh will be introducing the new Quantum Q-3 sound decoders and Dick Bronson will be introducing his new multi-purpose switch, occupancy and signal control board.

There will be additional white elephant sale tables available so bring what you can for sale or trade. Remember that you have a better chance of selling those unwanted Santa Fe items to a fellow Santa Fe modeler.

For this year's auction we are also asking members to bring one SF item that they would be willing to donate for the auction. Please keep in mind that the money raised from the auction pays all of the expenses for the entire event and enable us to bring renowned speakers.

ADVANCED ADMISSION FEE: \$25

DOOR ADMISSION: \$35

WHITE ELEPHANT TABLE FEE: \$5

CONTACT PERSON: Mike Davis, Treasurer

Phone: (410) 757-8274 E-mail: mjdavis55@comcast.net

CONVENTION QUESTIONS: Don Borden

Phone: (267) 549-4015 E-mail: dabordenrla@verizon.net

HOTEL: Courthouse Inn (www.courthouseinn.net)

625 North Main Street

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Phone: 888-673-8683 (Reservation Name: East Coast Santa Fe Modelers) 



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CALLBOARD

Coming Events

April 30 and May 1st. Severna Park Model Railroad Club Open House held at 3 Riggs Rd in Severna Park, MD (the B & A Train Station on the bike trail). Noon to 5 PM both days. Admission is free, donation welcomed. For more information contact Sam Shepherd (410) 647-6077 or Frank Winner (410) 647-3335.

May 6th and 7th. 19th Annual Spring East Coast Santa Fe Modelers Meet. See more information inside this issue.

May 14th. 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.

May 21st. New Jersey Divisional meet held at Woolwich Fire Hall 1517 Kings Highway in Swedesboro, NJ. Clinics from 9 AM until Noon. Tour of SMS Railroad facilities at the Pureland Industrial Center from 1 PM until 5 PM. For more information contact Bob Clegg at (856) 696-0463 or bobcats@comcast.net.

June 11th. 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.

Divisions and Clubs tell MER members about your upcoming event!! Send your FREE 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, a contact person, and a means of getting in touch with him/her (address, phone, e-mail, etc.), and if available a website for updates or to get more information. Please see the publication deadlines on page 16 to make sure your event is published on time. 

Mix-it Puzzles

By Dr. Charles Wood
Carolina Piedmont Division/HO Scale

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 #21:

- a. NYATGR
- b. MMUUES
- c. TSHDAIPC
- d. SSUTR
- e. CCEENTOR

Puzzle #22:

- a. BHHAILLG
- b. YSUTR
- c. UESONCRPT
- d. MYALEBSS
- e. UIBARRHS

Answer to puzzle #21:

- e. Concrete
- d. Trust
- c. Dispatch
- b. Museum
- a. Gantry

Answer to puzzle #22:

- e. Airbrush
- d. Assembly
- c. Inspector
- b. Rusty
- a. Highball

In Remembrance

Nelson Garber passed away on Thursday, April 14th, 2011. Nelson served the MER as President, Secretary, MER Trustee of the NMRA, Business Manager and two extended periods as Editor of **The Local**. While President, he and Dick Higgins managed the incorporation of the MER and the granting of 501(c)3 non-profit status by the IRS. He had been in poor health and recent surgery was more than he was able to cope with. Internment will be at Arlington National Cemetery at an undetermined future date. Condolences may be sent to his family at:

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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. The editor 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. Upon receiving any submission the editor will also confirm receipt and at a later date indicate the anticipated edition the submission will appear in **The Local**. If you do not receive a postcard or e-mail within two weeks please resend your submission or contact the editor by phone.

Publication Schedule:	Articles/Callboard items due to Editor by:
Jan/Feb	December 1st of previous year
Mar/Apr	Feb 1st
May/June	Apr 1st
Jul/Aug	Jun 1st
Sept/Oct	Aug 1st
Nov/Dec	Oct 1st

If you are interested in advertising with the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association please contact the Editor, as listed on page 2. The current advertising rates for **The Local** are as follows and must include camera ready art (jpeg, pdf, bmp, tiff formats):

Callboard Ads (30-50 words) (Div. and Clubs Only)...	Free
Business Card size (6 issues)	\$60.00
Quarter Page ad (6 issues).....	\$125.00
Half Page ad (6 issues).....	\$225.00
Half page ad (per issue) (Div. Only)	\$25.00