



The Local

Newsletter of the Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
The Local, 78, Number 2, Mar-Apr 2023

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Official publication of the Mid-Eastern region, NMRA – A tax-exempt organization

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Restored EBT Mikado Headlines Operating Steam at MER Convention

By Lee Rainey



Steam fans will feel especially at home at this year's MER (Mid-Eastern Region) convention, "Round the Curve to Altoona", October 19-22, 2023. In addition to the chance to enjoy the handsome 2-6-0 on the nearby Everett Railroad, the convention will offer a bus tour to ride behind Western Maryland Scenic's 2-6-6-2. There will also be special behind-the-curtain tours of the

[Inside this Print Issue of The Local](#)

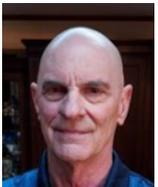
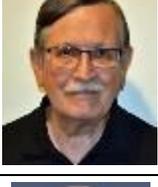
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	<p>Chesapeake Division 14 Kirk Bateman (410) 442-0446 super@chesdiv-nmra.org Division web page: www.chesdiv-nmra.org</p>				

MER Convention Seeks Clinicians

By Barry Schmitt

I am the Convention Clinic Chair for the [2023 Around the Curve to Altoona Convention](#) hosted by our Susquehanna Division 11. I'd like to extend a warm welcome and invitation to each of you and any of your Division members who would like to present a clinic at our 18-22 October Convention. As you know, Altoona was the heart of the Pennsylvania Railroad during the heyday of American railroading. The Convention will provide visits to historic railroad facilities, sites, attractions, and provide educational experiences for all attendees.

For those who have never presented at a regional convention they can earn 4 points toward the Author Achievement Program. This could be their first step in the path to achieving MMR status. We welcome any topic associated with model railroading or prototype railroading that is related to our model railroading hobby.

As currently structured, our clinic program will offer 50+ clinic slots over the four-day convention. A clinic slot is based on a 45-50 minute clinic, 10-15 minutes for Q&A, and 30-minutes for setup, tear down, and break time between clinics. Each of our three clinic rooms will have a full audio/visual setup, tables for model displays or other support material, and a convention clinic team member who will introduce the clinician and provide any assistance needed during the presentation.

We sincerely look forward to welcoming you and many of your members to Altoona in October.

sbschmitt@comcast.net



Restored EBT Mikado (Continued from page 1)

restoration shop in Altoona that is bringing PRR K4 #1361 back to life. And capping these opportunities will be the convention tour to ride behind East Broad Top 2-8-2 #16 (**Photo 1**), returned to service this year for the first time since 1956.

The East Broad Top (EBT) Railroad, located forty miles east of Altoona, was among the first railroads in the country to experiment with an enticing but unproven idea – a narrow-gauge line – and it lived to become the last narrow-gauge common carrier east of the Rocky Mountains. Today its route is the oldest surviving narrow-gauge track anywhere in the U.S. And with its high-performance locomotives, home-built steel car fleet, and innovative system for handling standard-gauge cars, it laid claim during its later life to the title of the most modern narrow gauge in the country.

Mikado #16 came to the EBT from the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1916 (easy to remember!) At the time of its construction and for almost a decade afterwards, #16 and its two younger siblings were the largest and most powerful narrow-gauge engines built for service in the United States up to that time. This mighty three-foot freight hauler operated until the final weeks of the East Broad Top's common carrier era, but has been out of service since 1956 – until this year! Newly restored by the non-profit EBT Foundation, which acquired most of the EBT in 2020, #16 is back in operation for excursions.

Our tour will be Friday, October 20. Our modern, restroom-equipped, 52-passenger motor coach will leave the convention hotel at 8:15 am for Rockhill, home of the EBT. At 9:45 we are booked to start our railfanning at the Rockhill Trolley Museum, riding a vintage trolley through the wild and scenic Blacklog Narrows and past the remains of old iron smelting furnaces.

The trolley will unload us near the boarding area for the East Broad Top train, including our reserved coach, pulled by steaming, smoking #16. A one-hour roundtrip will take us north to the wye at Colgate Grove, where we will turn and head back to Orbisonia and an hour-long narrated walking tour of the historic shops and roundhouse. This remarkably intact facility has been described by the Smithsonian as the best-preserved example of a 1900-era industrial site anywhere in the country.

After lunch on-site (included in the fare), we'll board our bus for a stop at the huge HO/HOn3 layout of the Bricktown Model Railroad Club. The layout represents the PRR from Horseshoe Curve to Mount Union, as well as the full EBT. We'll be back at the convention hotel by 4:15 pm.

Preregistration is required for the day's activities. The all-inclusive price – tickets, lunch, motor coach – is \$99. Seats are limited, so watch <https://www.mer2023.org/layouts.html> for sign-up information.

Lead Photo credit

Photo by Matthew Malkiewicz, February 2023, courtesy of East Broad Top Railroad



MER-NMRA.COM: What's on Your Website?

By Jack Dziadul

With YouTube videos, Facebook posts, Groups.io folders, newsletters, print magazines, photo books, Flickr photos, and many other sources, we often face information overload. Given all that is available to us we sometimes overlook the most obvious. The subject of this article is our own Mid-Eastern Region website: mer-nmra.com.

Webmaster Jeff Burch, with oversight from Director-At-Large Charlie Rausch, MMR, maintains the website. The homepage provides a brief description of the Region. The right side of the home page has five links under the News and Happenings heading.

- Round the Curve to Altoona convention website
- NMRAx online clinic schedules
- Carolina Special 2022 Contest Results
- A sample of a Philadelphia Division newsletter
- 2022 MER Election Results

The left side of the homepage provides eight tabs as described below.

Main – This provides a link to the national website NMRA.org.

Organization – This tab has five subheadings. Any member in or aspiring to a leadership position at the Division or Region level should be familiar with the Executive Handbook.

- Officers
- Superintendents
- Help Wanted
- Code of Conduct
- Executive Handbook

Divisions – This tab has maps of the Region and each of the ten Divisions. There are also links to each of the Division websites.

The Local – This tab provides links to every issue of *The Local* from 1996 to the present. Starting with the 75th Anniversary Issue 76 Number 5, September-October 2021, Editor Greg Warth inserted a very valuable “Search The Local” function. This can be found at the top right on page 1 of this and each subsequent newsletter.

Contests – Here you can find photographs of contest models back to 2011 plus various forms for judging and entering models in convention contests.

Clinic Sources – Pages under this heading are out of date and will soon be deleted. (see Convention Clinic Programming article on page 32 for more information)

Layouts – Six Divisions have posted descriptions (and some website links) of member layouts.

Achievement – This tab provides information on the Achievement Program plus a listing of Mid-eastern Region Master Model Railroaders from #4 Paul Mallery through #718 Robert Rodriguez, our newest MMR.

It is important to remember that the webmaster is the recorder of information. It is up to us to provide updates to ensure that information is current.

What is “New Tracks Modeling?”

By: Jim Kellow, MMR #202



I founded New Tracks Modeling on Zoom almost three years ago because of the pandemic, and as an outgrowth of my “New Tracks” series of articles on Mentoring in S Scale Resource and O Scale Resource online magazines. It is a show “Where Mentors Help Modelers Build.”

It is an exciting new digital opportunity to obtain mentoring to help you improve your modeling. You will meet talented modelers and manufacturers from all over the world who will share their model building expertise and artistic advice.

New Tracks Modeling is open to all modelers of all skill levels in any scale or gauge. Scale or gauge is not important. Modeling abilities, skills, and willingness to help other modelers (mentoring) is what our shows provide.

We encourage questions, and active participation by all viewers to make sure each modeler leaves our shows saying, “I learned something to improve my modeling.”

New Tracks Modeling meets every Wednesday evening at 7pm Eastern Time /4pm Western Time and features recurring segments all geared to the modeling hobby as well as featured modelers and special programs.

Our show segments done by viewers include: Quick Tips, Bits and Pieces, Workshop Tips and Tricks, and Build-Alongs where manufacturers offer discounts of up to 50% off the price of a kit that is then built, in short 15 minute segments, weekly on our shows until it is finished. Any New Tracks viewer can purchase the kit and build it along with the modeler on the show. In effect you have a personal mentor to help you complete the kit.

We also have other segments called “Watch Me Build It,” “Let’s Go to the Local Hobby Shop,” “NMRA Local Clubs and Divisions,” and once a month we have a very special segment called MY BUILD where viewers show what they have built or have under construction. It is very popular as it is non-judgmental but rather another learning experience for the viewers.

So, if you have a tip, trick, or a modeling skill or technique, we want to hear about it and have you present it on our shows. Contact me at jimkellow@newtracksmodeling.com.

New Tracks Modeling shows are live on Zoom and YouTube. Please visit our website and subscribe to get the weekly zoom log in link.

www.newtracksmodeling.com

Visit our YouTube Channel: New Tracks Modeling. Watch live or view our over 800 videos of past shows.

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Jim Kellow MMR

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Jim-Kellow-MMR-107123997469688/>

YouTube Channel: <https://youtube.com/c/NewTracksModeling>

Web Site: <https://newtracksmodeling.com>

APMM Ambassador to Model Railroading

<https://www.modelmakers.org/>



President's Column

President Scott Unger

A New Meaning for "Block Detection"

Or, Stay Sharp and Watch Your Head!

As this is only my second President's Column, I thought I'd share a bit about myself.

My interest in trains began at about 6 years of age. By my early teens I had already constructed a few iterations of a model railroad in an unfinished portion of my parents' basement. My enthusiasm for the hobby never waned after that. I returned to model railroading and joined the NMRA for the first time in 2015. The railroad I constructed at that time was in the basement of an 1880s row home with a narrow basement, so it was constructed with two decks, a helix and a duck-under.

The combination of tight quarters and trying to pack as much railroad as possible in a small space offered numerous opportunities to bump my head. But with the help of numerous friends (motivated by the promise of pizza and beer), we excavated what we estimated to be about 30 tons of soil from the basement, increasing the overall average headroom by about four inches.

The extra ceiling height proved to be of significant benefit. I fit under the joists and other obstructions perfectly... but not everyone did. Bob Charles, MMR, who was then and still is the Susquehanna Division's Achievement Program Chairman, is taller than I am and managed to hit his head on the same duct every time he visited.

Being in my early 50s I am younger than many model railroaders (Bob Charles again comes to mind). Even so, the signs of aging are beginning to manifest themselves. I recently switched to bifocal contact lenses. About four or five years ago I also found it more convenient to simply shave my head rather than continue visiting the barber. Climbing out from under the benchwork still works but is neither fast nor graceful. My energy level also isn't what it once was, and I no longer feel compelled to tackle herculean projects like digging out an entire dirt basement.

My current railroad does not include a duck-under and is primarily on a single deck. With a higher ceiling, more overall space and fewer benchwork hazards, the frequency of self-inflicted head gashes and scrapes has been reduced substantially. But they still occur. I have concluded that my clean-shaven noggin lacks any sort of advance warning of impending peril and by the time I sense contact with something it is already too late! Without any form of "block detection" I periodically find myself in public with a highly conspicuous bandage on my head.

Despite such minor injuries and the effects of aging, I find that working on projects keeps me out of the comfy chair and moving with purpose, particularly in winter months. Learning new tasks or perfecting existing skills helps to keep me sharper mentally as well. This winter has had some very unusually warm days that served to remind me that my time in the basement will be reducing as spring approaches. So, before the impact of climate change keeps us out of the basement for good, head to your railroad room or work bench and find something to do. Exercise your mind and body. Just watch your head!



NMRA Achievement Program Update

Kurt Thompson, MMR
MER AP Manager

Since the last report in *The Local*, the following Achievement Program certificate was earned and awarded in the Mid-Eastern Region (MER):

Division 11 - Susquehanna

Tim Himmelberger - Association Official

PLEASE NOTE: National does NOT accept R&V forms any longer. Please use the proper forms. NO R&V FORMS.





From the Editor's Desk

Greg Warth, Editor

Get Involved

Many model railroaders seem to be content just building and operating their layouts, either by themselves or with a few friends. I know because I was one of them for many years. I didn't want to get too involved with clubs and meetings, mostly because I did not really think I had the available time. Plus, early on, I did not believe I was good enough to contribute anything worthwhile. I would look at the fantastic layouts in *Model Railroader* and tell myself how mediocre my work was compared to those landscapes. In retrospect, that's when I truly *should* have been involved. I could have learned so much more if I had.

After about 8 years of reading all the magazines, working on my layouts, and learning on my own, I started to feel the need to share information with others. There did not seem to be any website where you could get all the model railroading information you needed in one place. There were blogs and piecemeal articles, but nothing comprehensive, so I thought perhaps there was a void to fill. I started writing about model railroading and what I was doing with my layout. What I didn't know, I researched. I communicated by email with people all over the world who had seen my site and had questions. It was interesting and exciting to see what others were doing.

As I became older, I began to feel like I was still missing out on something. I had been a dues-paying member of the NMRA already for many years. I went to one meeting years ago but then did not attend any of them for a long time. Suddenly for some reason, and I'm not really sure why, I just started going to Division meetings. I started meeting people who enjoyed the same things I did, and amazingly a new world opened up for me. I made a lot of friends, got more involved and started volunteering for things. This opened more doors for me and now I am a card-carrying, active, volunteering Tidewater/MER/NMRA member and proud of it. I wouldn't go back to the old days for anything.

If you are like that, a solo model railroader, please consider coming out of that shell and getting involved with lots of great people that want nothing better to do than to help their fellow modelers. There is so much more to the world of model railroading than just building your own layout. Get out there and explore what's available, learn new things, make new friends, get involved. Help others to do what you have done, show off your stuff, and inspire others to do the same. You'll be so glad you did.

This issue of *The Local* has lots of good "stuff" in it. Fred Miller, MMR shows how to install a powered Kadee uncoupler in the Electronics Corner. Mark Nieting takes us into an old wooden

trackside train station in North Carolina and shows what he found there. Pat Flash, working toward his MMR, demonstrates the construction of his transfer table, sort of a staging layout within a layout. Check out the update on the Altoona Convention coming up in October. The Registration forms will be coming out soon. We need a good showing this year, especially in the contest room, which was kind of anemic last year. Learn more about "New Tracks Modeling" by Jim Kellow, MMR, a wonderful, extensive educational course on essentially all aspects of model railroading. Of course, we have a new article on modeling tips and ideas, lots of photos and other "stuff."

Thanks again to the editorial team who makes *The Local* possible:

Martin Brechbiel, MMR

Alex Belida, MMR

Jack Dziadul

Rick Stoneking, MER Secretary, Publisher

Bob Charles, MMR, MER Director-at-Large

And thanks to all the members who read *The Local*. We truly appreciate the great feedback we have been receiving.

Warm regards to all,
Greg Warth, Editor

Advertising in *The Local*:

If you have a model railroading business and would like to place an ad in *The Local*, please contact the Editor. The new rates *per year* are as follows:

Divisions & Clubs	Free
Clinics & Education	Free
Convention Ads	Free
Full Page - Color	\$100.00
½ Page – Color	\$60.00
¼ Page – Color	\$35.00
Business Card	\$10.00
Text Only	\$7.00

Advertising Rates per Year

Your ad may appear as text, photo, art, or any combination thereof. Art must be of high quality and camera-ready. Formats must be in txt, doc/docx, pdf, jpeg, bmp or tiff only. The content must be related to model trains or railroads or provide a benefit specifically to model railroaders. If you need help with your ad, please don't hesitate to ask the [Editor](#).

Send in Your Articles

We are always looking for new articles, tips, ideas, photos, and comments from our readers. If you have been awarded an AP (Achievement Program) Certificate or an MMR (Master Model Railroader) award, please consider writing an article about it so others can learn how you did it. We always enjoy looking at new layouts, dioramas, and models that our members have created. If you would like to contribute to *The Local*, please send an email containing your article and photos to [The Local Editor](#).

The Local welcomes and encourages articles, photographs, and model railroad related material as contributions to members' education and enjoyment of the hobby. Materials should have a wide appeal. The Editor will exercise all due care of submissions, but contributors should not send paper/photo originals without retaining back-up copies. Editors, by definition, reserve the right and have the responsibility to make corrections, deletions, and changes to accommodate space. If your item is time-sensitive in any way, please advise the Editor. Otherwise, stories and photos that are accepted are published in approximately the order in which they were received.

Deadlines for Submitting Articles to *The Local*:

Issue:	Deadline:
Jan/Feb	Dec 1 st of previous year
Mar/Apr	Feb 1 st
May/June	Apr 1 st
Jul/Aug	Jun 1 st
Sept/Oct	Aug 1 st
Nov/Dec	Oct 1 st

How to Submit an Article for *The Local*

Please observe the following steps to submit your contribution:

Please read the article written by Martin Brechbiel, MMR on "[How to Prepare a Manuscript for *The Local*](#)."

Compose and submit your text in one of the following formats: TXT, DOC, or DOCX.

Consider what photos, illustrations, or other graphics can go with the text. These are essential. But DO NOT include/insert them into your text. DO put notations in the text such as "Insert Photo #1 here."

Your photos should be high resolution and very clear. We cannot accept photos that are fuzzy or out of focus. JPG, GIF, TIFF, and PNG formats are acceptable.

Please rename your photo files in the order you want them to appear, e.g., Photo-1.jpg, Photo-2.jpg, etc.

If you have captions for your photos, etc., create a separate text file for the captions, each of which should be numbered to match a numbered photo or figure.

Send your article or photos by email to [The Local Editor](#). There may be a limit on the number of megabytes you can send depending on your email program. If necessary, either send the photos three at a time, or compress the photos with a "Zip" program to send more at one time.

Special Notes:

Please only send us *your own* creative work or that for which you have written permission to use so we can give that source proper credit. We need to avoid any copyright infringement situations.

If you have previously published your article or photo in any other magazine or newsletter, including a division newsletter or your own website blog, it cannot be reproduced in *The Local* without written permission from the magazine publisher, editor, and author or photographer.

If this is your first submission to *The Local*, please fill out and return this [Media Agreement](#) form to the Editor, which gives us permission to use your material and verifies that the work is yours, or that you have obtained written permission to use it.

Once your article is approved for publication, and you have qualified for 42 or more points in the [Author Category](#) of the Achievement Program (AP), you may submit a [Statement of Qualifications Form](#) to your Division AP Manager to receive your Author AP Certificate.

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Carolina Piedmont Division HO Car for Sale

Carolina Piedmont Division, Mid-Eastern Region



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2 Road Numbers Available

Exclusive, first time run of 86xx series HO scale Norfolk Southern 70-ton Offset Hopper. These ex-B&LE cars were leased by Norfolk Southern from U.S. Ry Equipment in 1967. They were photographed in service and all have lightweight dates that was always stenciled to the right of the car's light weight on the left side under reporting marks. WA was for Washington, Indiana on the B&O, the old B&O car shops on their route to St. Louis. The shops were closed and US Ry Equip acquired them.

Carolina Piedmont Division is offering these in two unique road numbers, 8613 & 8724 for sale as limited edition kits using Accurail's 70-Ton Offset Hopper car. Pricing is \$28 per car plus USPS shipping.

To order, visit <http://cpd13.org> or email railroad@nc.rr.com today!

UPCOMING MER CONVENTIONS

2023 – Susquehanna Division - “Round the Curve to Altoona” October 19-22, 2023, Altoona, PA

2024 – Carolina Piedmont Division—“Piedmont Junction” Sep 26 - 29, 2024, Durham, NC

2025 – New Jersey Division Dates and location TBD

MER Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

Board of Directors Meeting – 11AM Apr 15, 2023 – Altoona, PA

Board of Directors Meeting – 7 pm Oct 19, 2023 – Altoona, PA

Elections 2023

THE MER NEEDS YOU!

**Now accepting nominations for
Directors-at-Large**

Yes, you! If you are a member in good standing and want to support your region with good ideas and real involvement, we need you to volunteer to serve as one of the three Directors-at-Large for the Mid-Eastern Region (MER). The deadline for nomination entry is May 30, 2023. The term of office is two years, with a limit of two terms. Any qualified MER member in good standing can be nominated, either by him or herself or by another member with the candidate's permission. The process is very simple:

Prepare:

A 200-word (max) statement outlining the nominee's interest and qualifications for the position, **and** a photo of the candidate. Send the nominations package – by **May 30, 2023** – to all of the following nominations process officials:

Nominations Committee:

Chair: Robert Charles, MMR	rcharles@aol.com
Jack Dziadul	jackdziadul@gmail.com
Kenneth Montero	va661midlo@comcast.net
Scott Unger	president@mer-nmra.com

Option – also by May 30, candidates may supply a 500-word statement suitable for placement on the MER website.

You can make a difference by giving something back to the hobby you thoroughly enjoy. This is your chance. Successful completion of three years in office fulfills most of the requirements for the Achievement Program “Association Official” certificate. Please respond in one email to all three committee members plus President Unger to insure receipt of your nomination!

Deadlines and Schedules for 2023 Nominations and Balloting:

Our Bylaws require the publication of deadlines and schedules for nominations and balloting in the first issue of *The Local* of each year. The dates and schedule for nominations, ballot and election results are in the Executive Handbook, Section 5, Policies, Article VI.

May 30, 2023 -- Deadline for receipt of self-nominations sent to the Nominations Committee. Date for Nominations Committee to notify Board of Directors of slate of nominees validated by the Business Manager.

July 5, 2023 -- You must be a member in good standing (paid up NMRA dues) based on the membership report supplied to the MER Business Manager from NMRA National as of 07/05 (the 5th of July) of every election year to be eligible to vote. If an individual is not a member or if membership has expired as indicated by the record supplied to the MER, and MER officials have not been informed by NMRA National of a valid renewal of membership by 07/05 (the 5th of July), that individual will not receive a ballot, nor be permitted to vote in that year's election.

August 1, 2023 -- Deadline for mailing paper ballots to members and for commencing electronic votin.

September 5, 2023 -- Deadline for electronic voting, also last day as shown by postmark for mailing paper ballots.

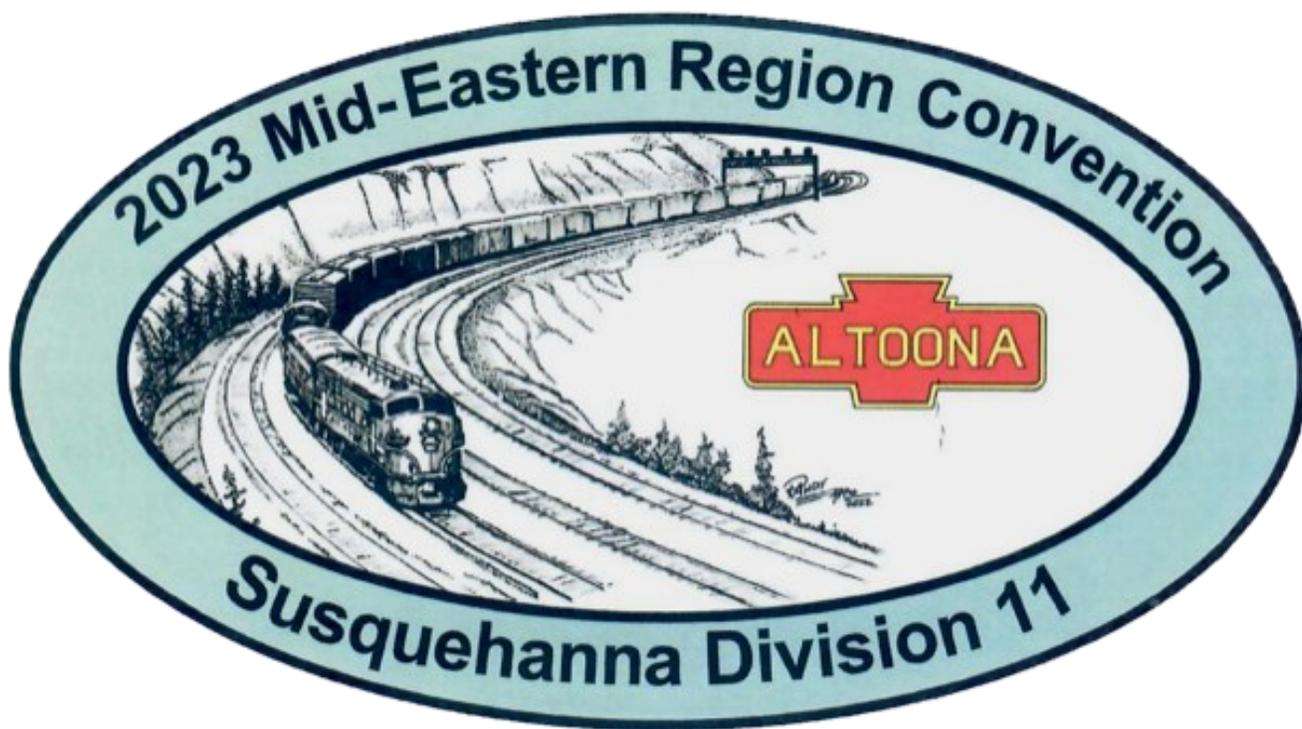
September 9, 2023 -- Deadline for receipt by Balloting Committee of paper ballots sent by mail.

September 16, 2023 -- Deadline for Ballot Committee to transmit results to President, the Director overseeing this committee, and the Business Manager.

September 23, 2023 -- Deadline for The President to communicate the election results to candidates. The Business Manager also notifies the MER Web Master and the NMRA of the election results.

October 8, 2023 -- Deadline for publishing election results on MER's website.

Don't wait! This is a great opportunity to get involved in a leadership role for the MER. Your ideas are vital to the life and growth of our organization. Send in your nomination right now.



Notice...

South Mountain Division Mini-Con

By Don Florwick

Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania

Saturday, April 8, 2023,

from 9 AM to 3PM

The South Mountain Division and Mainline [Hobby](#) Supply will be hosting its 9th annual Mini Con at the Blue Ridge Fire Hall, 13063 Monterey Ln., Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214.

Come and enjoy this one-day free event, one block north of Mainline Hobby Supply, consisting of prototype and modeling presentations, formal and informal clinics, modular displays, and interaction with your fellow hobbyists and beginners. Plus get a 10% discount at Mainline Hobby Supply.

Everything is wheelchair accessible.

This educational event is open to the public for promotion of the hobby of Model Railroading.



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BUILDING YOUR MODEL RAILROAD

Chesapeake Bay & Western

By Greg Warth

It was the day after Christmas in December of 2022. I had been wanting to revisit the HO scale Chesapeake Bay & Western Model Railroad (CB&W) in Grafton, Virginia for several months. I had the day off and the CB&W was having an open house. What a perfect opportunity! My wife wanted to see it again as well. So, off we went.

As we pulled into the parking lot, I easily recognized the old white rectangular structure on Dare Road. The building itself looks quite uninteresting on the outside. But I knew that on the inside was a gold mine of model trains representing years of work by a club that now has over 80 members. As we walked in the door, there was a small lobby where I saw my friend Roger Bir, one of the original founders of the club.

After some initial friendly discussion, we bought a door prize ticket and started our journey beginning with a long train display within the lobby area. We followed the tracks from this section throughout the two-story railroad containing two helixes, built by NASA employees who also happened to be model railroaders. A train from this first area that we saw could travel around the entire layout and back again since they were all connected. It was operated by DCC Digitrax with multiple walkaround throttles. The operators all wore headsets for communication with the chief dispatcher and other operators.

The layout was much more extensive and complete than when I last saw it, perhaps seven or eight years ago. There were well-developed landscapes, cityscapes, water effects, staging and consolidation yards, bridges, turntables, roundhouses; basically anything and everything you would want in a model railroad, and then some. The scenery, roads, trees, and mountains were very artistic, but realistic as well. Industrial areas were magnificent. Both sides of the aisle, upstairs and downstairs, were filled with scenery, structures, and tracks.

The CB&W Club was started in 1973 and built their first layout in The Grafton Hobby Shop. Two years later they moved to a country farmhouse. Eight years after that, they were bursting at the seams. The final move to their current location was in 1984, sharing the building with a dance studio, believe it or not. In 1994, they applied for and were approved for non-profit 501(c)3 status. Through thick and thin, the club has worked hard to develop not only a fantastic layout, but also a great well-functioning organization, thanks to excellent leadership.

The CB&W is a freelanced railroad, but does have a history associated with it, thanks to a member's creativity in writing this fictitious, but colorful and somewhat believable story:

"The CB&W traces its heritage back to 1884 and the entrepreneurial skills of Col. Wendall J. Davis. Davis amassed his fortune in lumber around the sprawling mountains of Keezletown, West Virginia. It was a freak accident in 1886, which would change the course and wealth of both Col Davis and the CB&W. A loaded log train was heading down the notorious Nose Bleed Grade when the brakes failed, resulting in the locomotive and six cars jumping the tracks and digging a 4' deep furrow into the West Virginia mountainside. Realizing the critical value of the locomotive, CB&W maintainers began work to remove the embedded engine. The result however was a totaled engine and six cars, but not before the rescue workers discovered a large vein of coal. Coal was fueling the industrial revolution in the United States, and by 1890, Col Davis and his company became a primary supply source of coal for the region. The Davis company continued to prosper until the untimely death of its founder in 1898. According to legend, Col Davis had consumed too much of a local drink, Davis Mountain Moonshine, or as the locals referred to it, 'coal miners punch.' He stumbled from a local pier, fell into the water and drowned. Despite the tragedy, the company continued to prosper under the Davis family into the 20th century. By the 1940s, steam gave way to diesel as passenger, and freight revenues continued to rise. Those prosperous times began to turn towards the negative as the demand for coal dropped. Not willing to step aside, the CB&W became heavily involved in intermodal traffic, which then carried the company into the 21st century."

So, with a solid "history" behind it, the CB&W rolls on into the future. I won't stay away so long next time. If you are ever in the area, you owe it to yourself and your family to visit this remarkable model railroad. You won't be disappointed.

For more information, please visit the following references:

["Chesapeake Bay & Western"](#), *The Local*, Mar-Apr 2021, p. 33

Website: [CB&W: Largest Model Railroad in Virginia](#)

YouTube Video: [Scale Trains Visits CB&W](#)

On the following pages are some of the photos I took while visiting the CB&W:

Chesapeake Bay & Western (Continued)



Photo-1: Busy town



Photo-2: Even busier here



Photo-3: Suburban living



Photo-4: Best local pub. Serves the Army with pride



Photo-5: Airplane "buzzing" the bottling company. Empty carriers waiting to be spotted



Photo-6: "Gotta deliver this coal 'fore it gets dark."

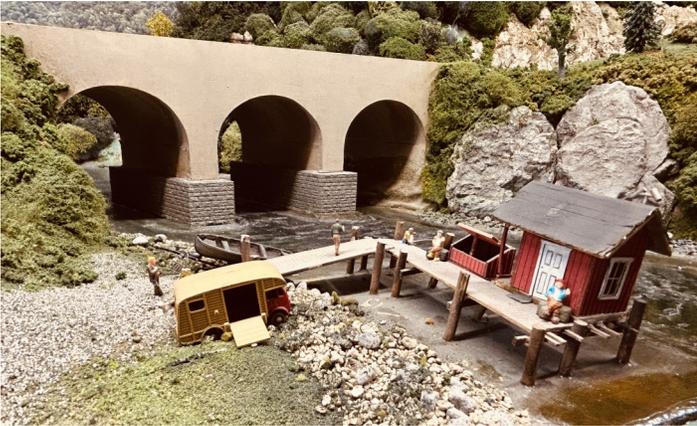


Photo-7: "Not catchin' much today."



Photo-8: "Batter Up!"



Photo-9: Nice day for a Sunday drive. That road goes way back in the woods



Photo-10: Need some rain here. Nice construction



Photo-11: This place has seen one too many storms



Photo-12: If you want a rock on your layout, put a rock on your layout



Photo-13: Nice job on scenery all the way around



Photo-14: Uh-Oh! A three-alarm fire! Hope they get everybody out



Photo-15: Now that's a train yard! Love those first responder engines



Photo-16: Helix #1. View from the second floor



Photo-17: Great bridge construction. Forced perspective. Realistic creek and details

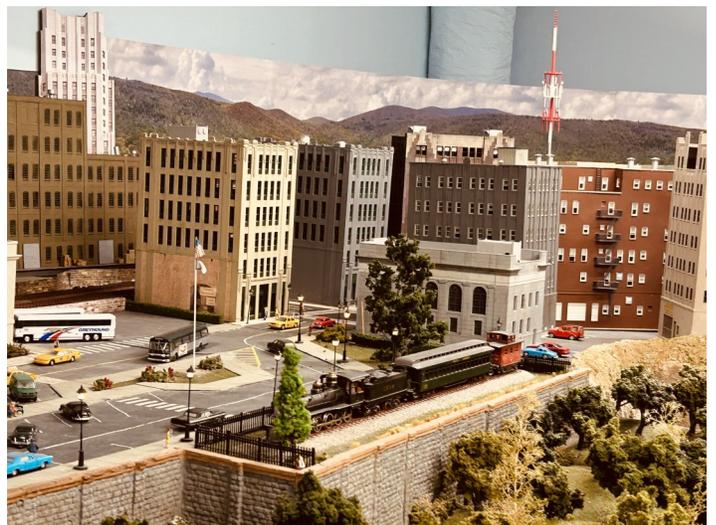


Photo-18: Cityscape with old steam loco on display



Photo-19: City nestled in the mountains



Photo-20: Get your railcars repaired here



Photo-21: If you didn't know this was a model railroad, could you tell from this photo?



Photo-22: Wood was on sale when they built these



Photo-23: Realistic water, weathered home. Nice bridge in the background. Lots of detail



Photo-24: Industrial coal dock with barges and tugboat



Photo-25: Strip mining and logging operation. Any environmentalists around?

How I (Mis)Spent My Winter Vacations

(The saga of the transfer table on the Johnstown and Crystal Lake-South)

By Patrick Flash

In 2006 I started spending the winter in a small condo in Cape Coral, FL on the Gulf coast. My gracious wife agreed that I could construct an N scale layout on a 36" by 80" door at one end of the carpeted living room. So far, after many winters, I have managed to not spill any glue, paint, or other stuff on the rug. My wife regards this as a miracle of the first class.

The original door was purchased at a "dent sale" at Home Depot and was very cheap (notice a theme developing here). The door is shown in **Photo 1** with legs being attached. Eventually, PVC pipe legs extensions were added to raise the layout from 39" to 42". The layout has expanded to include an almost five-foot extension. The extension is shown in **Photo 2**.



Photo 1 - Legs being added to the door



Photo 2 -The extension with the upper level over the door visible in the upper left

My track plan included a transfer table on a reversing loop beneath an upper level of "door skin" (what I call the thin plywood sheet that was the surface of the trashed sliding closet door) over the door part of the layout. You can see the upper-level door skin above the door itself in the upper left of the **Photo 2**.

The door skin for the upper level over the door is another story in frugality. A friend found the door in the trash at a mobile home community. We spent an afternoon removing about a hundred nails to get the door off the frame only to realize it was a half-inch short of 36" wide. The gap is at the back of the layout and is covered by scenic clumps etc.

I pondered how to raise the door skin level over the door to accommodate the transfer table on the door surface. I didn't have access to a chop saw so, having the reputation of being somewhat frugal, I decided to use folded heavyweight corrugated cardboard as risers (**Photo 3**).

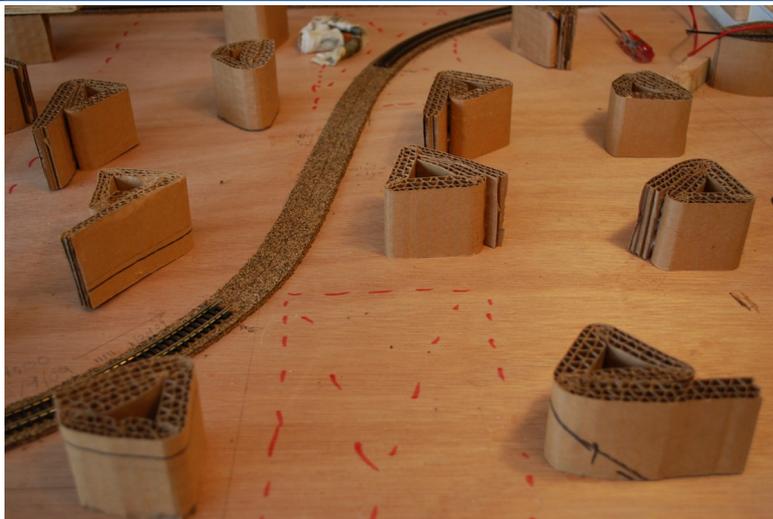


Photo 3 - Support risers

These worked out remarkably well and the triangular shape provides great support for the upper level. However, the area of the door skin over the transfer table developed a significant sag since there are no risers there. Back to the local Home Depot (I was not paid for this product placement.) for a three-foot aluminum angle bar. I glued the angle to the front edge of the door skin in the transfer table area and the sag went away for a while. Another trip for a longer angle piece and the problem was permanently solved since the new angle bar spanned two risers.

My original idea for the base of the transfer table, again looking for the cheap way out, was a surplus piece of Plexiglass which was supposed to slide on a piece of slippery plastic (i.e., garbage bag) and be guided by two wood bars at the track ends. The slippery idea worked but the wood guide bars left too much play in the alignment of the Plexiglass at the ends, so back to the drawing board.

For my second attempt I went the more conventional route and used a piece of door skin for the transfer table and drawer glides for sliding. This gave me a true forward and back movement with no wiggle. I constructed an alignment mechanism for the entering/leaving tracks and the table tracks using some brass tubing, brass rod, a ballpoint pen spring, and model airplane control rods. It's the old pin in the hole method and is shown in [Photo 4](#). So far it seems to be working reliably. I pull the pin out using model airplane control cables, manually move the table while visually aligning the appropriate track, push the pin in, and slightly move the table until the pin spring forces the pin into the socket.

I replaced the top level plywood on the risers and discovered the next set of problems. Since the transfer table was now higher than the Plexiglass sheet, the trains now hit the upper level plywood. A popsicle stick shim on each riser cured that problem but now the trains were hitting the wiring bus glued to the bottom of the

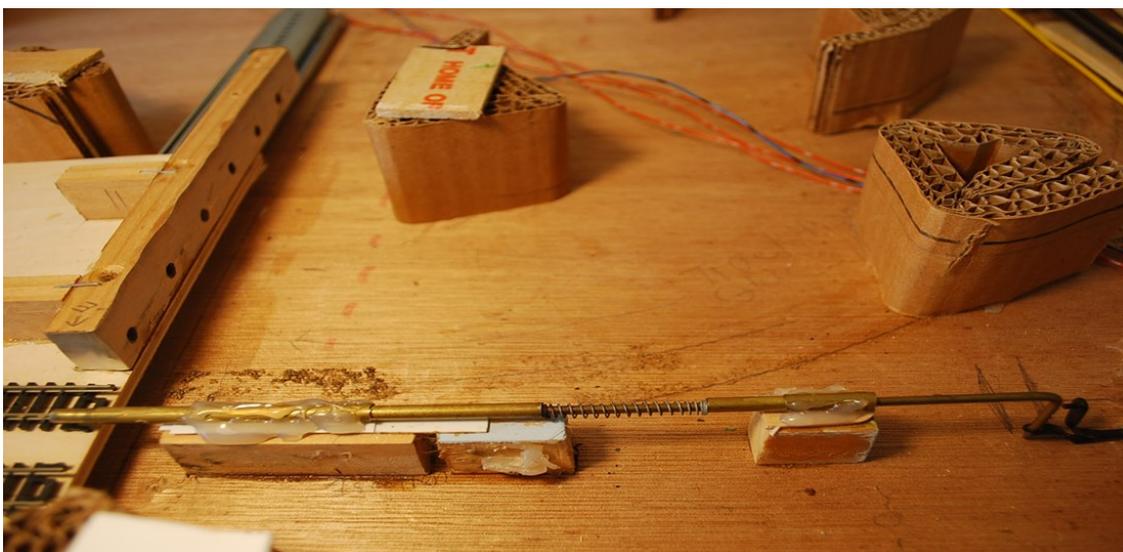


Photo 4 - Transfer table indexing mechanism

upper plywood. I had to reroute the wiring bus around the transfer table area. At last, everything seems to work.

Speaking of wiring, I wired the layout for DC and MRC Prodigy Express DCC. A DPDT switch allows me to switch between DCC and DC power sources. With two reversing loops making up the majority of the layout,

ensuring the correct track polarity is a must. For DCC, once the train is in the lower reversing loop, I decide which way it will emerge and throw the appropriate turnouts and SPDT polarity switches. With DC this means I must stop the train in the lower loop and throw both the SPDT switches and reverse the throttle direction.

Lessons learned? Many! I should have glued a 1/2" layer of blue foam board to the top of the upper level. This would have strengthened the plywood and made it so much easier to plant my pine and sedum trees. The sedum trees could provide another article on lessons learned. Access to the sidings at the back of the layout is difficult. Keeping the track on the lower level clean is also a pain. I should have shortened the extension and built a single level layout with the transfer table on a visible extension perpendicular to the main layout.

The next two pictures ([Photos 5, 6](#)) show views of the layout as it exists in 2022. It's getting close to being done but needs lots of never-ending details and an operating scheme. The extension is permanently attached to the end of the door and is the stuff in the right end of the layout pic. The original door has the door skin as the top layer above it with the left view of the layout being the stuff on the door skin.



Photo 5 - Layout left view

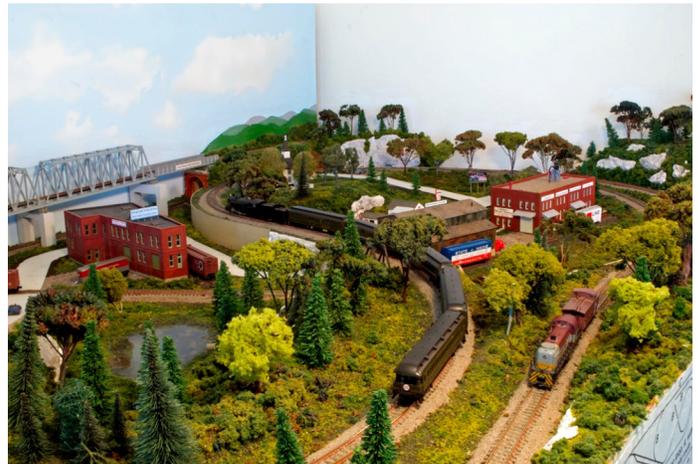


Photo 6 - Layout right view

A scale plan for the layout is shown in [Photo 7](#). Trains emerge from the reversing loop/transfer table on the door, pass over a small section of straight track, and then can take either the right or left route up the hill to the door skin level over the hollow core door base.

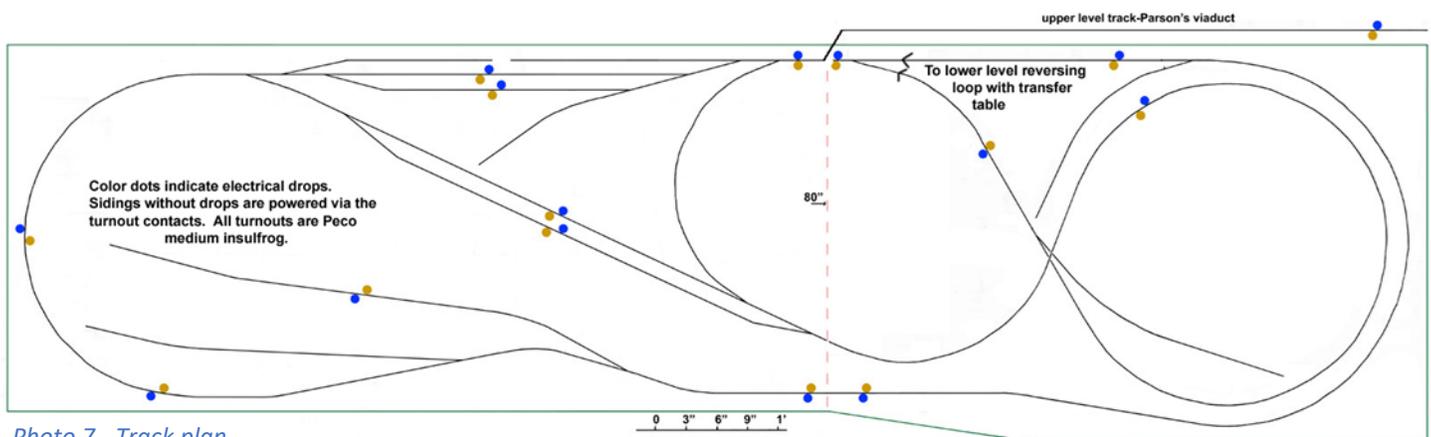


Photo 7 - Track plan

[Photo 8](#) shows my Florida workbench. Yes, that is canal water you see through the window. Sometimes between the musing over the 42 years of snows of Ohio and the waters in the canal, I wonder how I got anything done.



Photo 8 - Workbench

The work bench also illustrates the point that you do not need an elaborate work area to construct a respectable layout.

Photo 9 shows me in front of the transfer table area of the layout with the doorskin layer propped up while I was working on the wiring.

Photo 9 - Author at work



My web site has more pictures (<http://www.iclrr.42web.io/>) and includes material on my HO layout that shrunk from 20 x 37 ft in a basement in Ohio to a 10 x14 ft dining room in our condo in Ellicott City, MD.

Potomac Division Hobby Barn and Virtual Clinics

Contact Jerry Stanley to attend: 703-595-8081



Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn

11552 Hereford Ct. in Hume, Virginia 22639

The Potomac Division sponsors a number of clinics to which all MER members are invited when space is available. Most of the in-person clinics are held at Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn in Hume, Virginia unless otherwise stat-

ed. If you are interested in attending any of these clinics, either in-person or virtually, please contact Jerry at 703-595-8081.

- Events listed to be held in Hume, VA are at the Hobby Barn.
- Events listed to be held in Fairfax, VA are at the Knights of Columbus at 3700 Old Lee Hwy in Fairfax.
- The complete updated schedule can be found at <https://potomac-nmra.org/PDnewsite/Calendar/Calendar.php>

Date/Time	Event	Location
Saturday, 3/11/23 10 AM	Kadee Whisker Couplers – Bob Mosteller	Hume, VA
Sunday, 3/19/23 3 PM	Tools – Paul Bastek	Zoom
Sunday, 4/8/23 10 AM	Tool Operations – Paul Bastek	Hume, VA
Sunday, 4/16/23 3 PM	Details – Brian Sheron, MMR	Zoom
Sunday, 5/21/23 3 PM	TBD	Zoom
Saturday, 5/27/23 10 AM	Lathe, Milling, Soldering, 3D Printing – Paul Bastek	Hume, VA

Historical Applications

A "Two Horse" Operating Idea

By Mark Nieting

Livestock trains are now a thing of the past, but they were big business from the Great Plains to major meat processing cities like Chicago and St. Louis. I remember seeing Penn Central stock cars yet into the 1970s in Chicago. While most of us don't incorporate these movements in our operating sessions, there can be, especially if you model the "good old days," interesting exceptions.

Going through some files, I found a folder full of old Norfolk Southern (the original NS) receipts and waybills dating to the early 1920s. Most of them came from an expedition a friend and I made through rural North Carolina back in 1980. We were following the old NS and came to the small town, if you could even call it that, of Jackson Springs. An old wooden station was sitting abandoned in the woods, no doors or windows, the inside empty.

My buddy boosted me (I was 30 years younger) up through the scuttle into the attic, which was pitch dark. I literally crawled the perimeter in the darkness, feeling for anything interesting. In one corner, I came out with several wads of old railroad newspaper, waybills, and receipts, one of which you see in [Photo 1](#).

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY WAREHOUSE RECEIPT Form 367 100 in a pad

Pro. No. 86
 Date 10/18 1922
 Station Jackson Springs
 Via

Consignee *W. W. Ry Co*
 Destination *Charlotte*

Received in good order from the NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY
 THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES WAY-BILLED FROM *Charlotte* VIA

DATE OF W. B.	NUMBER OF W. B.	No. of Pkgs.	ARTICLES AND MARKS	WEIGHT	RATE	Charges and Freight
<i>9/21/22</i>	<i>2376</i>		<i>Feeding Chgs Charlotte 9/21/22 2 Horses</i>			<i>1.00</i>
INITIAL	CAR No.					
<i>CNW</i>	<i>66846</i>					
INITIAL	EX. CAR No.					
NAME OF SHIPPER						
CONNECTING LINE REFERENCE, ORIGINAL W. B. No. AND POINT OF SHIPMENT						
<i>CNO & JP LEX KY to J SPRING NC</i>						
<i>NO Cx 63 9/21/22</i>						
Date Received <i>10/18</i> 1922						
Receiver's Signature <i>H. O. [unclear]</i>						
Drayage						
Total to Collect						

Photo 1—Receipt

This Norfolk Southern warehouse receipt details a shipment of two horses in a Carolina and Northwestern (Southern) car (an old "equipment guide" might give a clue as to what type) from Lexington, Kentucky to Jackson Springs, North Carolina in September of 1922. Lexington is the center of Kentucky horse country. This receipt, generated a few weeks later in Norfolk Virginia, was for "feeding charges" for these two animals in Charlotte, North Carolina. It appears that the car, most likely some sort of express car, had to be set out long enough for someone employed by Norfolk Southern to accomplish such a task, costing the future owner of said steeds a grand total of one dollar.

I also have one waybill for the shipping of a "trunk" from Kingstree, South Carolina to Jackson Springs at the cost of \$1.71, plus 8 cents war tax, which was still collected in 1920 (Photo 2).

Kingstree, So. Car. 1646-E		Date	W. B. No.
Destination		1-5-20	Nº 24520
Consignee		COLLECT	
Street Address		VALUE	Advances
		\$ 5.00	
Pieces Article Description		Weight	Value Charges
1 Trunk		120	Express Charges
			1.71
			War Tax
			.08
Class	Scale or Rate	Verified by	Paid in Part
			Total
Shipper	Receipt No.		C. O. D.
Received from	DELIVERY SHEET		Return Charges
AMERICAN RAILWAY EXPRESS CO., INC	Shipment described hereon		* Additional Charges
Date	Time	Deliveryman	Signature

Photo 2

What's the connection to model railroad operation? Given a reasonably early era, a first- or second-class train could carry an extra car needed to be set out for such care. After the feeding and watering were concluded, the car would be ready to be picked up by the next train heading in the same direction. Who says passenger trains can't do some really interesting local work!

Branch Lines

From the Divisions...

As *The Local* Editor, I have the distinct pleasure of receiving a copy of all the Division newsletters, which are all very informative and creative to say the least. Here are links to those publications so you can stay up to date on what the other Divisions are doing:

As *The Local* Editor, I have the distinct pleasure of receiving a copy of all the Division newsletters, which are all very informative and creative to say the least. Here are links to those publications (the most recent issues available) and to their Division Websites for easy access:

NEWSLETTERS	DIVISIONS	MOST RECENT EDITION
Wheel Report	South Mountain Division	February 2023
The Potomac Flyer	Potomac Division	Feb / Mar 2023
Train Orders	New Jersey Division	January 2023
Sidetracks	Susquehanna Division	Jan / Feb 2023
The Dispatcher	Philadelphia Division	December 2022
The Callboard	Tidewater Division	January 2023
Crossties - Index	James River Division	December 2022
The Brass Pounder	Carolina Southern Division	February 2023
The Herald	Carolina Piedmont Division	February 2023
The Relay	Chesapeake Division	June 2022

And don't forget the new digital NMRA Magazine

Reminder: Here's how to access the [Digital NMRA Magazine](#):

1. Go to <https://www.nmra.org/user/register>
2. Answer a few questions
3. Click on Create a New Account
4. You will receive an email on how to set your password.

Steam Tours at MER Altoona Convention Include Mallet Compound No. 1309

By Lee Rainey



Photo 1—Western Maryland Scenic Railroad No. 1309 in 2022. Photo by Pete Clarke

A ride behind the last steam engine built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works for U.S. service, No. 1309, is one of the highlights of this year's MER Convention, "Round the Curve to Altoona", October 19-22, 2023 (<https://www.mer2023.org/>). While there are other examples of steam on the convention program, for sheer size nothing will rival Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's 2-6-6-2, No. 1309 (**Photo 1**).

WMSR No. 1309 was built for the Chesapeake and Ohio in 1949, as the last of an order of ten. No. 1309 and her sisters were an interesting mix of old and new. The basic articulated design stemmed from 1910 and used Mallet compound steam distribution, while at the same time also incorporating many modern features and appliances. The locomotive weighed in at 217 tons and was rated for 98,300 lbs. of tractive effort.

Designed for service in the steep, curving mine branches of the Appalachian Mountains, by 1956 No. 1309 and her sisters had been displaced by diesel road switchers. The locomotive was placed in storage and was on display at the B&O Railroad Museum after 1972. It underwent an extensive restoration from 2014 to 2021 to return it to operation. No. 1309 is now the largest steam locomotive and the only articulated in regular service east of the Mississippi.

Our tour to ride behind this legend will be Thursday, October 19. Our modern, restroom-equipped, 52-passenger motorcoach will leave the convention hotel at 9:30 a.m. for Cumberland, MD, home of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad.

We'll board our reserved coaches at the 1913 Cumberland depot at 11 a.m. Our train, pulled by No. 1309, will follow a former Western Maryland branch through the Cumberland Narrows, around the famous Helmstetter's Curve, through Brush Tunnel, and around the Woodcock Hollow hairpin curve. The trip will arrive at the 1891 Frostburg depot at 1 p.m.

A box lunch from the highly regarded Toasted Goat Restaurant (included in the fare) will be distributed in Frostburg. You'll then have over an hour to browse the Frostburg Historic District before reboarding our same reserved cars for the return trip to Cumberland. (Pending operating needs that day, our locomotive back to Cumberland could be either No. 1309 or a vintage diesel.) We'll board our bus in Cumberland at 4:00 p.m. and will be back at the convention hotel by 5:30 p.m.

Preregistration is required for the day's activities. The all-inclusive price – tickets, lunch, motorcoach – is \$99. Seats are limited, so visit <https://www.mer2023.org/layouts.html> for sign-up information.

Featured Structure

Hostetter's General Merchandise

By Martin Brechbiel, MMR



Electronics Corner

Powered Uncoupler Ramps

By Fred Miller, MMR

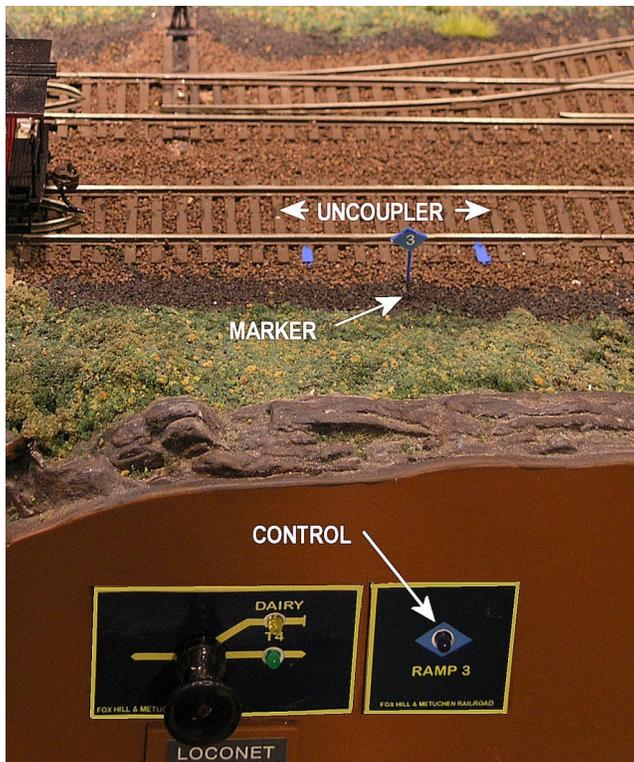


Photo 1: Uncoupler Installed on Author's HO Layout

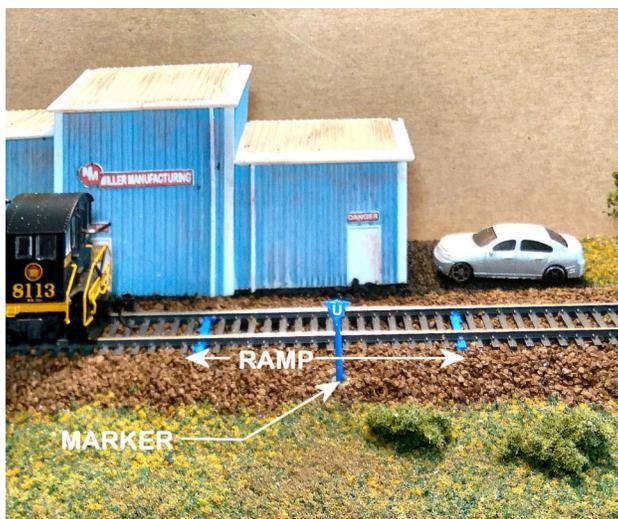


Photo 2: Electric Uncoupling Control Circuit



Many modelers use some sort of pick to uncouple cars during a switching operation. However, there are occasions when reaching to insert a pick between cars is not practical. Kadee couplers and their compatible equivalents can be operated with a magnet mounted between the rails. Sometimes a permanent magnet causes inadvertent uncoupling when a train pauses with couplers over the ramp. The Kadee® #309 Magne-Electric Uncouplers, when mounted under the rails (Photos 1 and 3), provides a solution to inadvertent magnetic uncoupling of Kadee (HO) or Micro Trains (N) couplers which can be experienced with traditional magnet bars. However, this powered uncoupler requires 2-3 amps of

ELECTRIC UNCOUPLING CONTROL

DC current at 16 or more volts, enough to overheat the coils if left on.

The circuit (Photo 2) presented in this article provides a solution to the overheating problem. When the circuit is triggered by a push-button, typically mounted on the layout fascia strip, the 555 IC Timer turns on for an active ON pulse. The Trimmer potentiometer in the circuit can be set to provide a pulse of 1 – 10 seconds. (The author typically sets this for 5-6 seconds, enough time to back a car over the ramp area, reverse direction briefly, then push the car further back, using the 'delayed' action of the Kadee or Micro Trains couplers.)

The ON pulse is used to trigger a Triac IC which in turn passes the power to the coil. The Triac is isolated and triggered from the timer IC with a MOC3010 IC. The 16VAC input to the circuit is passed through the Triac to a bridge rectifier, thus powering the ramp coil with the required DC voltage.

Photo 3: Uncoupler Installed on Author's N Scale Layout

Photos 1 and 3 in this article show implementations on the author’s HO layout (Photo 1) and N layout (Photo 3). The fascia strip control button shown demonstrates a special design described later in this article.

It combines an LED and a pushbutton. The LED gives an indication of the ON state. The author likes to use blue LEDs for this indication.

Construction

The steps to install the Kadee #309 Magne-Electric Uncoupler coil in a layout are shown in the accompanying figure (Photo 4). Note that the Kadee provided instructions to place the plates in a good position for HO track and equipment. Reversing the two outside plates works nicely for N scale track and equipment. Step 2 shows the plates assembled for the author’s N scale implementation.

Activation of the ramp circuit is accomplished with a pushbutton typically mounted on the layout fascia. As noted above, a pushbutton with an LED is convenient to show the active state of the circuit. Pushbuttons of various sizes with LEDs can be purchased commercially.

An inexpensive illuminated fascia strip pushbutton can be constructed by gluing an LED onto a printed circuit board (tactile) pushbutton. The PB-LED unit is assembled into a protective cover made from styrene tube and sheet stock. Color coded #30 stranded wire makes for easy connection to the controlling circuitry. The assembly is glued to the back of a printed fascia panel with a 7/64” hole for the LED. The panel is in turn glued to the layout fascia with a hole to clear the styrene tubing (Photo 5).

The electronic circuit is initially constructed on a breadboard (Photo 6) using the circuit diagram shown at the beginning of this article. After testing the circuit and components for proper operation, the components are moved to a small piece of perf board as shown below. The author likes to use a PC graphics program to design the perf board layout and show the ‘wiring’ on a flipped view of the board.

After soldering the leads to the components and testing the new board, the author coats the back side of the perf board with 5-minute epoxy to secure and protect the wiring.

The completed and tested board (Photo 7) is mounted under the layout close to the ramp coil. The illuminated pushbutton is mounted in the fascia strip close to the ramp for easy operation.

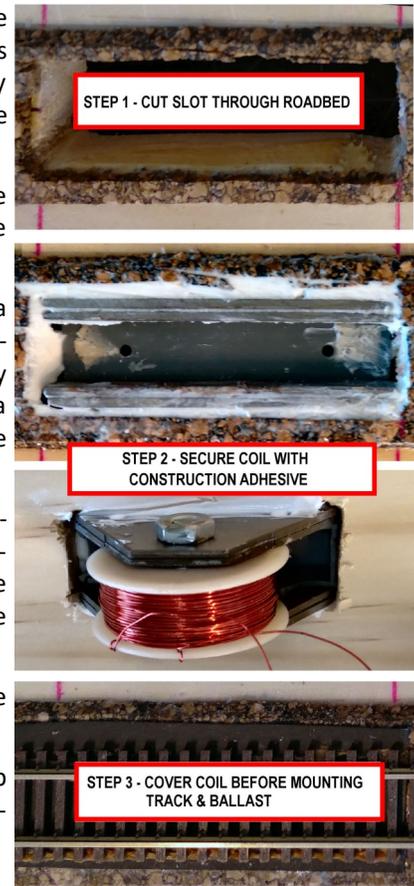
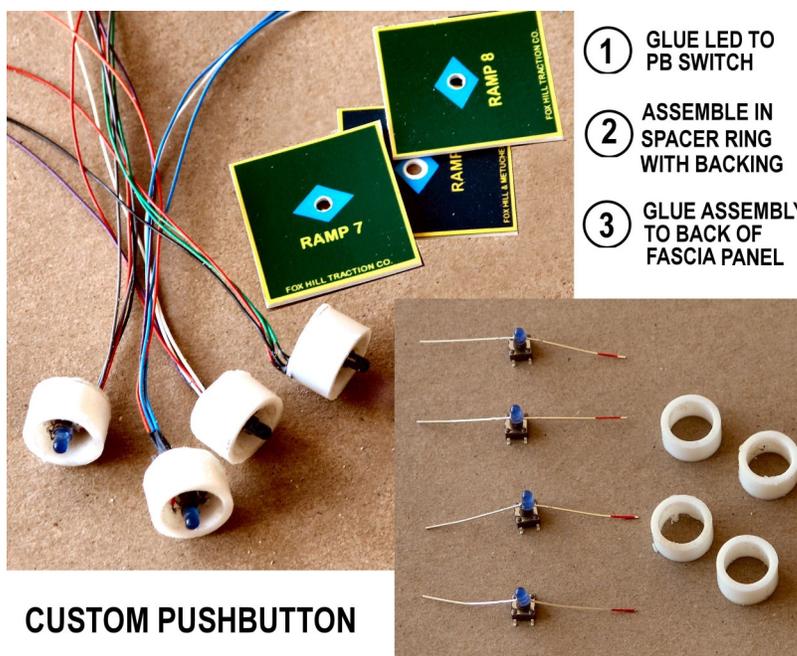


Photo 4: Step-by Step Installation



CUSTOM PUSHBUTTON

Photo 5: Button Sets

ELECTRONIC UNCOUPLING CONTROL

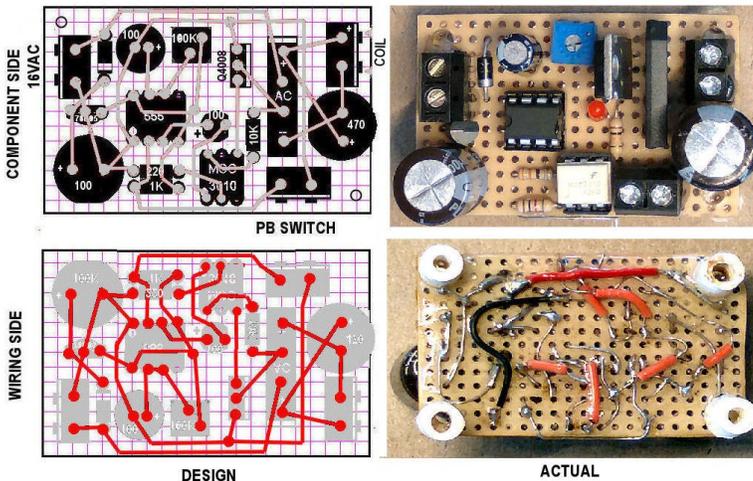


Photo 6: Circuit Board Construction

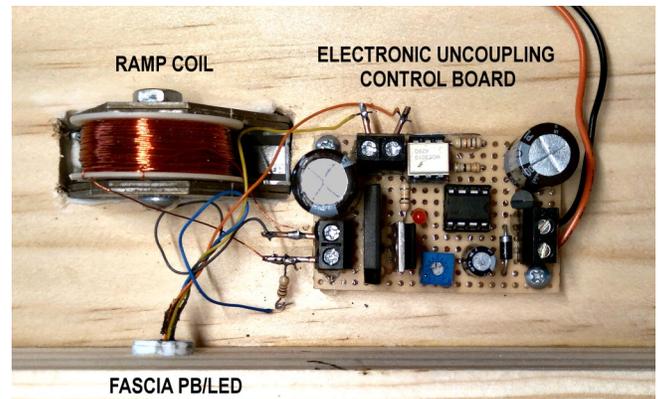


Photo 7: Control Board mounted under layout near coil and PB

A video of the authors N-Scale implementation can be found at:

<https://youtu.be/mPJzZvgzrWs>

The video shows an uncoupling move with an engine and car using the 'delayed' action of the Micro Trains couplers to push the uncoupled car into a siding.

The principal cost of the parts for the uncoupling circuit is the Ka-dee #309 Magne-Electric Uncoupler. The cost of the remaining electronic parts is trivial (Photo 8).

Questions and comments can be forwarded to the author at:

tractionfan@aol.com.

POWERED UNCOUPLING RAMP CIRCUIT		
QTY	COMPONENT	APPROX \$
1	100 MF 50 V ELECTROLYTIC CAP	\$ 0.15
*	470 MF 50 V ELECTROLYTIC CAP	SEE TEXT
1	100 MF 10 V ELECTROLYTIC CAP	\$ 0.12
*	FULL WAVE BRIDGE RECTIFIER	SEE TEXT
1	100 K MINI POT TRIMMER	\$ 0.25
4	VARIOUS 1/4 W RESISTORS	\$ 0.40
1	1N4004 DIODE	\$ 0.10
3	2 & 3 POS SCREW TERMINAL	\$ 0.30
1	555 TIMER IC	\$ 0.50
1	MOC3010 OPTO-ISSOLATOR IC	\$ 0.70
2	8 AND 6-PIN IC SOCKET	\$ 0.40
1	Q4008 TRIAC IC	\$ 1.95
2	3 MM LEDS (RED AND BLUE)	\$ 0.30
1	KADEE #309 ELECTRIC UNCOUPLER	\$ 18.00
1	PRINTED CIRCUIT PUSH BUTTON	\$ 0.35
	BARE PERF BOARD	\$ 0.80
	TOTAL	\$ 24.32

MOST PRICES REFLECT PURCHASE IN LARGER QTY FROM AMAZON, EBAY, JAMECO, ALLELECTRONICS.

* CAP & BRIDGE INCLUDED WITH KADEE #309 PKG

Photo 8: Parts

Modeler's Haven—Tips & Tricks

By Greg Warth

This section of The Local is for all members to share any tips, techniques, tools, books, fixes, new products, or any other information that might be of interest to others. One of the many benefits of being an NMRA member is spreading knowledge about the hobby and learning things from other modelers. Please submit your tips to the [Editor](#) for consideration on publishing them here.

Sponge Rocks: Soft rubber sponge material can be used to create realistic rocks. Just tear up the sponge into large and small pieces depending on the size and scale you are modeling. Tearing is better than cutting because you want irregular surfaces. You can use a hobby knife in some areas to create crevices and ridges, but mostly the material should be torn. If you overestimate or underestimate the size of rock you need, you can always tear a piece off or glue a piece on. You can also use thin sheets of this material to make “concrete” retaining walls, either curved or straight. Paintable silicone caulking can be applied to either glue pieces together or to fill in spaces. Paint the rocks with washes of diluted acrylic paint. Sprinkle sand over some areas to add texture. Add a variety of vegetation. If you have left over pieces of foam, put them in an old blender along with diluted paint (half paint and half water) of whatever natural color you want (green, brown, gray, or tan) and grind them up into very small pieces that can be used for ground cover. Make batches of ground cover using different colors of acrylic paints.

Wire Weeds: Using a wire cutter, cut several small 1-2” lengths of stranded wire in various gauges. Strip the insulation off 1/2 to 2/3 of each section. Paint the separated strands whatever color you want your weeds to be. After the paint dries, use the insulated part of the wire to glue into a small hole in the layout surface. (Hughes, Bernard, “Rubber Rocks, Wire Weeds and Other Scenery Tips,” *Model Railroader Scenery Tips & Techniques*, Kalmbach Books, 1999, p.6.)

Dirt Road: Get some dirt from your back yard or from the edge of a construction site. Fine dirt with less clay is the best. Collect 2-3 jars each with a slightly different shade of dirt. Place it on some tin foil in a baking pan and put it in an oven at 300-400 degrees for 15-20 minutes to get rid of any micro-organisms in the soil. Then sift it through an old sieve to remove any clumps. If you don't want to go through all that, you can also purchase dirt for modeling from companies like Woodland Scenics. On your layout surface, which has been previously painted tan or brown, use a pen to mark the borders of the road. Then add a layer of your darkest dirt. Cover the entire surface of the road evenly. Then using a pipette with the tip close to the surface, slowly apply diluted white glue (half glue, half water) mixed with a small amount of isopropyl alcohol to soak the dirt. Before that dries add another thin layer of lighter dirt onto the surface. Then let it dry. Vacuum off the excess dirt. Use a stiff brush to make tire tracks in the road and vacuum again. You could also use fine sand instead of dirt. (Soeborg, Pelle, “Composing a Realistic Bridge Scene,” *Model Railroader*, December 2017, p.49.)

Color Palette: When applying scenery, remember that variability is good, but stick to a color palette so that all your colors blend in well together, not only with the surrounding scenery but with your backdrop as well. Using reference photos can help with this. (Soeborg, Pelle, “Composing a Realistic Bridge Scene,” *Model Railroader*, December 2017, p.49.)

Baseball Field: Baseball played a big part of our lives as a family in the past. So, I decided to add a little league baseball field to my home N scale layout. First, I printed a baseball diamond from a graphic I found on the internet. I used this as a guide to draw the infield and the outfield on my layout. It was as close to N scale as I could make it, within the confines of the available space. I carefully sprinkled the finest N scale green ground cover that I could find in the grassy areas and then applied diluted white glue with a small amount of isopropyl alcohol added using a pipette with the tip close to the surface. I sprinkled a red-brown ground cover in the running areas and on the pitcher's mound which was raised up a few millimeters above the surface by using a thick layer of the ground cover. This was glued down using the same method as for the grassy areas. White paint was used to create the “chalk” lines between the bases, but the white was too bright and unrealistic, so I covered it up with more ground cover and left some white spots to simulate the bases and chalk residue. I created a chain link fence to surround the field by using a fine net of tulle fabric glued to fence posts (headless nails), which I then inserted and glued into the foamboard layout surface. Then I added three outdoor lights and soldered the wires to the rails for power. Some N scale baseball players purchased from Woodland Scenics were added. I may add some bleachers on one side and a wooden fence along the edge of the outfield where it meets the railroad tracks. Here is the final view ([Photo 1](#)). It's not perfect, but you get the idea. Perhaps textured paint or fine sand may have worked better for the diamond.



Photo 1: N scale baseball field

Stucco: Making a building look like stucco was discovered by Gerry Leone by accident. First, he painted the plain styrene model that he was working on at the time with a regular paint primer. Then, without noticing that he had picked up the wrong can, he sprayed on a layer of 3M Super 77 spray adhesive. It didn't look right, which is when he realized what he had done. On further inspection of his model however, he realized that the spray adhesive had added a texture to the model that looked just like stucco. He let it dry for three days, then spray painted it with Vallejo Light Gray acrylic paint thinned with water. Weathering it with pastel chalk powder made the texture stand out even more. It turned out to be a great model for his layout. (Leone, Gerry, "Sticky Stucco," *Model Railroader*, December 2017, p. 41.)

Keeping It Simple: A wonderful article entitled "Managing Complexity" by Lance Mindheim appeared recently in the 2023 issue of *Model Railroad Planning* (p. 48). Unless you are a member of a club where you have lots of resources and help to build a large, complex model railroad, consider starting out with simpler concepts and ideas to which you can add more elements later as you wish. According to Lance, the complexity of your layout can be measured by the number of turnouts you have. You can still have a nice layout that can be used for challenging operating sessions with less than 24 turnouts. Too many grades also add to the complexity of the construction, take up a lot of space, limit the length of trains you can run and do not add that much benefit. It's easier to use foam sheets as your layout surface and carve out rivers, lakes, and cliffs. Too many track curves create complexity and derailments. Straight tracks are easier to build and operate, and you can run longer trains. Narrower benchwork and wider aisles ease construction. Keeping things simple means that you can have a great layout that is easier to build and more fun to operate with fewer derailments. You can always make it *look* more complex by adding more details to your scenery, adding railroad signals, traffic signals, sounds, or even by adding a second mainline as long as it doesn't have too many turnouts connected to it.

What tips and techniques do you use in your modeling? Please send us a paragraph or two about something you have modeled or a tip that would help the rest of us improve our modeling skills. It does not have to be perfect or too long. Even one or two sentences would be great. I know those tips are out there. [Send me a note.](#) -Ed.

Animated Water

From Alex Belida, MMR

[Alex sent in this tip that I just HAD to get into this issue. It has apparently been available in Europe since 2020, but now we can have access to it here...-Ed.]

<https://cubed6.com/index.html>

Convention Clinic Programming

By Jack Dziadul, MER Clinics Coordinator

In the fall of each year the Mid-Eastern Region showcases a four-day event which offers

- layout tours
- layouts displayed at the hotel venue
- callboard operating sessions
- prototype tours of railroad facilities, rail-served industries, railroad museums, or manufacturers of model railroad products
- flea market / white elephant / auction sales
- model contests
- a Saturday night awards banquet
- a Board of Directors meeting plus the annual members Business Meeting

And, the subject of this article, a schedule of clinics. As the recently appointed MER Clinics Coordinator it seemed appropriate to introduce this position and the functions that it serves. Although some aspects of the Executive Handbook require revision, it is helpful to reprint the current version below. The primary responsibility for clinics programming rests with the Local Convention Committee (LCC). The LCC appoints the Clinic Coordinator from among the host committee volunteers. The MER Clinics Coordinator provides resources and guidance as requested by the host LCC.

See [MER-NMRA Home \(testing\)](#)

From EHB Section 3 – Position Descriptions

Clinics Committee Chairman (Note a/k/a Clinics Coordinator)

Appointed by: President

Approved by: Board of Directors

Reports to: Vice President, Executive Convention Chairman

Position Summary: The Clinics Committee Chairman is responsible for searching and acquiring new clinics and clinicians and maintaining and upgrading the roster of available clinic subjects and clinicians for MER conventions, investigating clinic topics elsewhere (other Regions, National, and other model railroading events) for use at MER conventions, and providing this information to each region convention committee and to any divisions that request it. The Clinic Committee Chairman is required to promote and assist in the use of good quality clinics of interest at MER conventions. He/she participates actively with host convention committees to assure a balanced program as requested. A “clinic” may be a program in an educational, informative, or entertaining format for any size audience. The clinic may be a “how to” demonstration, a “show and tell” project, a tape/slide program, a movie, a PowerPoint presentation, or a combination of these techniques, with emphasis on the “hands on, make-it-and take-it” variety.

Specific responsibilities:

- 1. Keeps Vice-President and Executive Convention Chairman informed of progress or any problems concerning the clinic program.*
- 2. Provides clinic description information in suitable format to post on MER website in coordination with Webmaster.*
- 3. If necessary, prepares an annual budget request to cover any anticipated expense.*
- 4. Communicates the needs of the clinic program to the membership either through The Local or in person at regional or divisional gatherings.*

From EHB Section 6 – Convention Handbook

6.4 Clinics Coordinator

The LCC convention chair appoints the LCC Clinics Coordinator, who is responsible for all arrangements pertaining to the clinics, including obtaining clinicians.

The MER Clinic Chair is required to assist the local Convention Committee Chair in identifying potential clinicians. The Clinics Coordinator solicits potential clinicians to produce an interesting and balanced program. The Clinics Coordinator is the primary point of contact with clinicians, obtains descriptions of the clinic suitable for promoting the convention, scheduling the clinics, interfacing with the clinician concerning logistics and equipment, and doing whatever else is necessary and prudent to having a good clinics program. Inclusion of hands-on "make & take" clinics is recommended. Experience has shown that it is prudent to reconfirm all arrangements with clinicians a week prior to the convention.

The clinics data that has been posted to the MER website has long been out-of-date and will soon be deleted. Instead, a sortable Excel spreadsheet that lists most clinic offerings from the 2016 through 2022 conventions will be provided to Superintendents and the Chairmen of the upcoming conventions. As new conventions roll out their clinic offerings these will be posted. Older clinics will be deleted. This should result in at least annual updates of the most current clinics and clinicians. A portion of the new spreadsheet is reproduced below. Feel free to contact me at jackdziadul@gmail.com with any questions, comments, corrections, or if you would like to see the complete listing.

Clinics Master Listing

Clinics Available for MER Conventions																			
Contact Jack Dziadul jackdziadul@gmail.com for additions, corrections, or clinician contact information.																			
Update: 2/8/2023																			
Name Last	Name First	MMR	NMRA Member	Division	Title	Hands On	Presented	Carx	Layout Construction	Motor Power	Operations	Prototype	Scenery	Service	Structures	Technology	Other		
Anderson	Neal	MMR	Yes	Carolina Southern	Speed Ballasting; Great Trackwork in Less Time	Yes	2018 Rockville, MD 2016 Durham, NC	X					X						
Anderson	Neal	MMR	Yes	Carolina Southern	Improved Lighting for Your Layout Room	No	2018 Rockville, MD 2016 Durham, NC	X											
Arday	David		Yes	Chesapeake	Railfanning	No	2021 Mt. Clare, MD				X								
Becker	Roy		Yes	Carolina Southern	Airbrushing	Yes	2022 Charlotte, NC										X		
Beckham	Jay		Yes	South Mountain	Molding and Casting in Hydrocol and Resin	Yes	2018 Rockville, MD										X		
Beckham	Jay		Yes	South Mountain	Introduction to CMRI	No	2018 Rockville, MD										X		
Benezra	Steve		Yes	Carolina Piedmont	Introduction to Model Railroad Operations	No	2016 Durham, NC			X									
Bernstein	Ethan		Yes	Chesapeake	Introduction to 3D Printing	No	2021 Mt. Clare, MD										X		
Bitleris	Vic		Yes	Carolina Piedmont	Give Me a Brake	No	2016 Durham, NC	X											
Blank	Dennis		Yes	Susquehanna	Coal Company of Fulton County	No	2019 King of Prussia, PA				X								
Brechbiel	Martin	MMR	Yes	Potomac	Contest Evaluation Training	No	2016 Durham, NC						X						
Brechbiel	Martin	MMR	Yes	Potomac	Hands on Resin Casting	Yes	2021 Mt. Clare, MD										X		
Brechbiel	Martin	MMR	Yes	Potomac	Contest Judging in the MER	No	2018 Rockville, MD						X						
Brechbiel	Martin	MMR	Yes	Potomac	Trash to Treasure	No	2017 Harrisburg, PA							X					
Brechbiel	Martin	MMR	Yes	Potomac	Getting Your AP Author Certificate - Tips and Hints	No	2019 King of Prussia, PA						X						
Brechbiel	Martin	MMR	Yes	Potomac	Resin Casting: Basics, Intermediates - Tips and Hints	No	2019 King of Prussia, PA										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	NMRA Standard for Layout Command Control LCC	No	2016 Durham, NC										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	Introduction to Signaling Your Layout Using JMRI	No	2016 Durham, NC										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	LCC: What is it and Who is it for?	No	2022 Charlotte, NC										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	LCC: Applications and the Future	No	2022 Charlotte, NC										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	LCC for the Rest of Us	No	2021 Mt. Clare, MD										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	LCC: A Non Technical Introduction and Overview	No	2019 King of Prussia, PA										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	Introduction to Layout Command and Control	No	2018 Rockville, MD										X		
Bronson	Dick		Yes	Carolina Southern	LCC Signals	No	2017 Harrisburg, PA										X		
Bucklew	Robert		Yes	Susquehanna	JMRI Throttles	No	2017 Harrisburg, PA			X							X		
Burkhardt	Ethan		Yes	MFD	Even Based Layout Construction	No	2016 Durham, NC				X								

B&M 105 - Shake the Box 2023

By Jack Dziadul

In October I attended the MER (Mid-Eastern Region) Look South Convention. Browsing the white elephant room is always a must-do activity and I usually walk away buying someone's closet excess or a manufacturer's donation. Charlotte was no exception as Scale Trains B&M 105 jumped off the table when it saw me. Scale Trains owner, Shane Mason, was a show sponsor and banquet speaker, so it is always a plus when you can support a manufacturer, especially when they support the convention.

I have read quite a bit about Scale Trains in recent years, but never had a reason to purchase from them. Being a modeler of fallen flag Boston and Maine (B&M) circa 1956, there are not a lot of new products available for my semi-prototype layout. B&M 105 was no exception with a build date of 1970, but at \$10 I made the investment. MSRP for this made in China sold-out kit was \$18.99 at its February 5, 2016 release date.

In researching B&M 105 for this article, I saw that Atlas produced this same car in 1976 as a ready-to-run product, however there is no mention of the car on the Atlas website. eBay has a similar car listed for sale. B&M 119 is an out-of-production Details West (Athearn) product listed for \$15.99 plus \$6.75 for shipping.

As to the prototype, according to Historical Society records, B&M purchased fifty cars in 1970 from the US Railway Equipment Company of Blue Island, IL. They were originally built in 1969 for UTLX. The B&M cars were given the number series 100 to 149. These were insulated, but non-mechanical refrigerator cars. They were equipped with Dual Air Pak and a Hydra-Cushion underframe. Of course, I had no idea what Dual Air Pak meant. Mr. Google took me to Railroad Dictionary – CSX.com¹ for this definition: "Car equipped with two bulkheads with an inflatable rubber bag between them which, when inflated, exerts pressure to hold the lading against the end walls of the car."

Hydra-Cushion underframe refers to hydraulically absorbing and dissipating shocks from coupling, starting, and stopping, which greatly reduced freight damage. This shock-absorbing coupler technology was originally developed by SRI International in 1954 for the Southern Pacific according to the SRI website www.sri.com.

Each car was also equipped with 52 forklift pallets. The model has some interesting fine print markings.

**WHEN EMPTY RETURN TO AGENT
BOSTON & MAINE CORPORATION
MERRIMACK, NH**

The *Northern New England Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment* by David R. Sweetland, Morning Sun Books, 1994 has a J. Emmons Photo Collection picture of B&M 104. The caption in part reads,

"B&M #104 rolled through Portland, ME in September 1970. In "Bud Beer" service."

In Bud Beer service? When empty return to Merrimack, NH? What's this all about? Ah ha! Merrimack, NH is the home of one of twelve Anheuser-Busch breweries, coincidentally opening in 1970, the same year that B&M purchased the subject cars. This would be an interesting industry to model for modern era folks as ten cars of this series were in service into 1984.

Merrimack is also one of the five stables for the famous Clydesdales. We old timers were fortunate enough to have been able to tour the brewery as well as the Clydesdale barn and wagons. Unfortunately for today's folks, the tours are no longer provided.

Our model is 7.5" long and weighs 4.9 oz. [NMRA Recommended Practice 20.1](https://www.nmra.org/Recommended-Practice-20.1) for HO suggests a car weight of one oz. plus ½ oz. for each inch of car length. This computes to 4.75 oz., which is close enough to our car weight of 4.9 oz., so I chose not to change the weight. I decided not to weather the car as it will either become a shelf-queen or resold as a new, but already assembled car.

The photos on the following pages show the fine quality of the price-sensitive and sturdy (no fragile parts) Kit Classics line of Scale Trains.

¹<https://www.csx.com/index.cfm/about-us/company-overview/railroad-dictionary/>



Photo 1 Excellent packaging includes the clear lid window to show the product and identifies the boxcar as part of the Scale Trains Kit Classics line.



Photo 2 The box bottom identifies the Kit Classic Freight Car Features and its recommended operating radius as 18 inches.



Photo 3 The box end has a gummed label describing the car as HO scale B&M 105, an Evans double 8-foot plug door boxcar, product number SXT1000. This is the first time that I can recall a manufacturer identifying the brand of paint used; Tru-Color in this example.

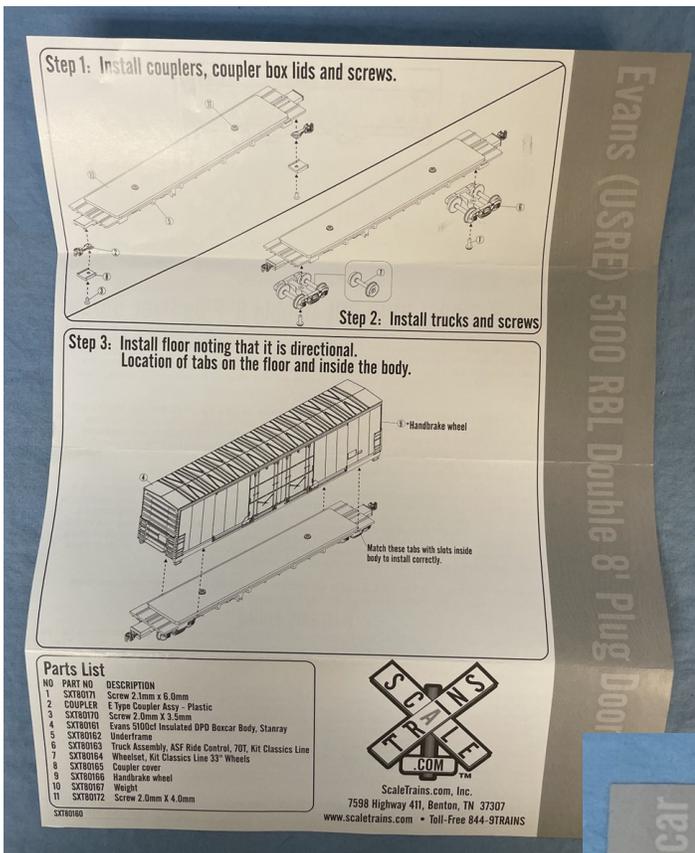


Photo 4 The single page instruction sheet includes typical isometric drawings and a parts list.

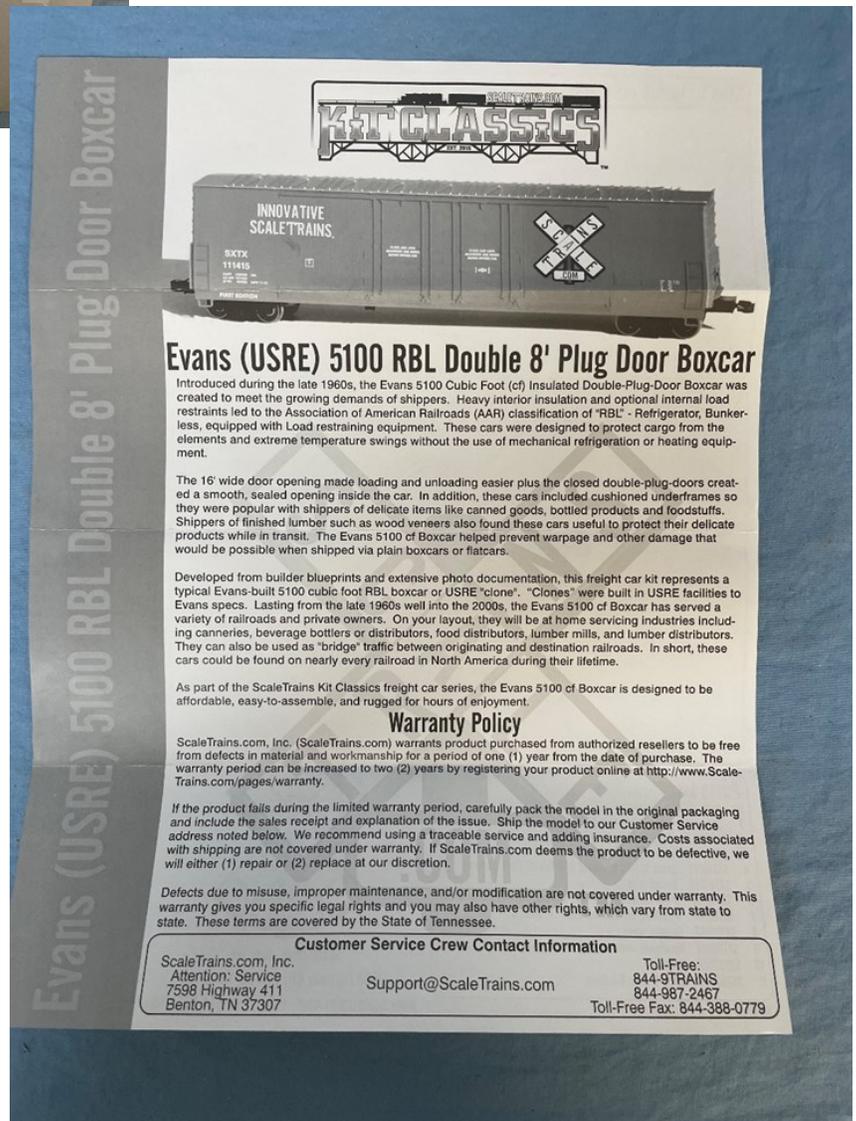


Photo 5 On the back side of the instruction sheet is an interesting description of the prototype cars and the Scale Trains Warranty Policy statement.



Photo 6 Credit Scale Trains for superb packaging. No effort spared even for its low-end product line.



Photo 7 The formed cradle allows product removal without damaging stirrup steps.



Photo 8 Small parts are bagged separately.



Photo 9 Trucks and couplers were easily installed.



Photo 10 The factory painted Evans roof has nice rib and rivet detail.



Photo 11 The underbody has molded on bolsters, triple valve, air reservoir, brake cylinder, and brake levers.



Photo 12 The provided weight fit over the tabs on the car bottom.



Photos 13-14 Completed model.



2023 MER Convention Contest

By Alan Mende, MER Contest Chair

The 2023 MER Convention, **Around the Curve to Altoona**, will feature both judged and popular vote contests that are part of all MER conventions. There will also be Special Awards including the President's Award and others.

The contest room at the hotel will contain all the contest activities. The room will be open for contest entries on Thursday evening and on Friday:

- 9 am – noon
- 1 pm – 5 pm
- 7 pm – 9 pm

NOTE: For security reasons, those visiting the contest rooms are asked not to bring large purses/bags, shoulder bags, backpacks, camera bags, or things of that nature into the room. Thank you for your cooperation.

Judging will begin at 9 am on Saturday and continue until 4 pm with a break for lunch at noon. The Contest room will close at 4 pm on Saturday. Entry owners are to pick up their entries between 9 pm and 11 pm following the Convention Banquet. Arrangements for entry pick up on Sunday morning can be made with the Contest Chairman on an individual basis, but all entries must be retrieved by 11 am, Sunday, October 22.

Judges will assemble in a clinic room (TBD) with the Contest Chairman at 9 pm on Friday for orientation. They should report to the contest room on Saturday by 8:30 AM to start judging the entered models.

The MER allows NMRA and Region officials who wish to help judge the model contest to do so and still enter models in the contest. Those who judge and enter models must, however, recuse themselves from judging the entire category in which they have entered a model.

Any questions? Please e-mail the Contest Chair or speak with one of our contest staff members. The staff will be available in the Contest Room during the Convention. Any persons wishing to serve as an Apprentice Judge should contact the Contest Chair as early as possible and plan on spending the day judging with several of the judging teams.

JUDGED MODEL CATEGORIES

- Steam Locomotives
- Diesel Locomotives
- Traction Power
- Revenue Freight Cars
- Passenger Cars
- Non-revenue Equipment
- On-line Structure
- Off-line Structure
- On-line Display/Diorama
- Off-line Display/Diorama
- Modules

Plaques will be awarded for first place in each model category. Second and third place awards will be awarded a certificate. The model winning the Best of Show Award allows other models in that category to move up one place for a 1st place plaque. If your model scores 87.5 points or greater, it will earn a merit award from the Achievement Program. For more information on the AP, contact the MER AP Manager or your Division AP Coordinator.

POPULAR VOTE MODEL CONTESTS

There are three popular vote model contests which will be judged by convention attendees through a paper balloting method:

- Favorite Train Award
- Favorite Model Award
- Favorite Module Award

The winners in each category will receive a plaque for their modeling efforts.

The contest room will be open during judging on Saturday for convention attendees to pick up their popular vote ballots and make their selections. Please be quiet during these times so as not to disturb the contest judges who will be hard at work. Ballots must be returned to the Contest room by 4 pm on Saturday to be included in the official count.

UNJUDGED MODELS AND DISPLAYS

Members who wish to display models or dioramas that are not entered in any of the contests above may bring them to the Contest Room. They will be displayed depending upon space available. This is a first-come, first-served service. The Contest Chair will make the final determination as to when there is no more space for additional displays. They will be displayed on tables specially set aside for non-contest items.

CONTEST RULES

Our model contest rules are short and to the point! We follow the basic NMRA National Contest Rules. Visit their site for a more detailed explanation of all these rules, and to download the forms needed to enter all the contests; if you need help or forms, contact Alan Mende, MER Contest Chair (contests@mer-nmra.com)

Here is a summary of some of the basic rules:

1. Entrants must be current members of the NMRA.
2. Contest entrants cannot be professional model builders, i.e., derive over 50% one's income from constructing models.
3. Each model must be accompanied by the official [NMRA Entry Form #901](#), filled out and signed by the entrant. In addition, model entries must have a filled out [Judges Score Sheet #902](#). Modules should use [NMRA Entry Form #901b](#). Writeable Entry Forms and Judges Score Sheets are available from the MER website (<https://mer-nmra.com/judge.html>). Go to the website by clicking on the above links, download the forms, fill them out as a Word document, print, and bring them with you to the Contest Room at the Convention.
4. You may enter the contest by proxy. Whoever submits an entry for someone else, however, must present the owner-builder's NMRA membership number.
5. Models that have won a 1st place in any prior National or Regional contest cannot be entered in the same category at this contest.
6. There are no restrictions on the number of models entered by a member.
7. For those modelers who wish to have their work evaluated for the Achievement Program only, your models will be evaluated when the model contest is judged.
8. Models that have achieved a Merit Award in regional or national competitions are ineligible for another Merit Award. Models achieving a Merit Award on the local level are eligible for regional and national Merit Awards.

SPECIAL AWARDS

The following special awards are sponsored by the NMRA and various Divisions and private groups and will be made to selected entries in the judged categories:

THE BEST IN SHOW AWARD is given to the model that scores the highest point total in the judged model contest. In addition to the plaque, this award also provides registration to next year's convention!

THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD for 2023 will be chosen by MER President Scott Unger and given for any structure or rolling stock related to maintenance of way. This can include former passenger cars turned in to rider cars for track crews, old boxcars used as tool cars, cranes, boom cars, wheel cars, plows and spreaders, ballast hoppers, speeder and tool sheds; the list is almost endless. Let's see lots of entries this year.

THE CLYDE GERALD AWARD is sponsored by the MER and named for the late Clyde Gerald, former MER Business Manager and longtime 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 for this award.

THE BOB LIBERMAN MEMORIAL AWARD is given for the model freight, passenger, caboose, or MOW car that would, in the opinion of the awarding committee, be the one that Bob Liberman would choose as the best detailed car in the contest. The award includes a plaque and \$100.00 Gift Card/Certificate to the hobby store of choice.

THE PHILADELPHIA DIVISION NEW MODELER AWARD rewards excellence in model building by first time entrants in the MER judged model contest. The highest score achieved by a new modeler is awarded a plaque and a cash prize of twenty-five dollars.

THE CHUCK HLADIK MEMORIAL AWARD, sponsored by the James River Division (JRD), this year will be awarded for ventilated box-car that ran on a railroad in the south. All questions regarding eligibility should be directed to JRD's Contest co-chair Shannon Crabtree at stctigers@gmail.com AND copied to the JRD Superintendent at superintendent@jrdnmra.org.

THE RAY BILODEAU NARROW GAUGE AWARD is also privately sponsored by a group of narrow gauge modelers, and encourages building models depicting aspects of narrow gauge railroading.

THE "GREAT DECALS!" AWARD is an award for an excellent model that includes a "Great Decals!" product in its construction and/or finishing achieving the highest judged score in lettering and finish for a model that employs a product demonstrated to be from Great Decals that also receives a Merit Award. This award is worth not only a plaque, but a cash prize of thirty dollars.

THE FAVORITE TRAIN AWARD, sponsored by the Tidewater Division, is a popular vote award and will be included on the Popular Vote ballot. Yes, members who can find their way to the contest room and fill out a ballot get to choose the winner.

THE FAVORITE MODEL AWARD is another popular vote award and will also be included on the Popular Vote ballot. Yes, those same members who can find their way to the contest room and fill out a ballot get to choose their favorite model.

Division Reports

Yearly Division Report

January 2022 - December 2022

New Jersey Division #1

Meeting Times and Places:

Saturdays, September, November, January, March and May

9AM – Noon: In person meet [or by Zoom during certain COVID pandemic periods]

1PM – 4 or 5PM: layout visits toured by individuals – generally five per meet.

For the present, we broadcast meets on Zoom only when the in-person meet is cancelled due to the COVID virus threat, or another situation prevents an in-person meet.

Meets are located around our large geographic division of 10 counties in southern New Jersey. We try to locate meets in certain locations depending on the number of members clustered in adjoining counties. The board constantly assesses membership by county and seeks venues depending on that data and past attendance records.

The division generally meets once per year with adjoining divisions. We meet with the Philadelphia Division once per year, alternating hosting in locations near the dividing Delaware River. The division also shares hosting with the Garden State Division of the Northeast Region of NMRA at the May meet, with locations alternating each year near the region's border. In many cases, members from each division frequently attend other meets in these divisions and the reciprocal associations benefit all with additional learning opportunities plus friendships.

Change in Officers:

Note: All officers are elected from the board of Directors. The directors elect the four officers: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Paymaster and Clerk. Directors serve for two-year terms with half running for office on alternating years each summer. The directors nominate and elect the officers at the division annual meet in September.

Superintendent:

John V. Gallagher 2021 - 2023
njdiv.super@gmail.com 856-261-2668

Secretary/Clerk

Joseph Zebrowski 2022 – 2024 [reelected 2022]
trackjack@comcast.net 609-744-3236

Assistant Superintendent:

Michael Prokop 2021 - 2023
njwrr@aol.com 609-610-2687

Director – Membership

Geert Marien 2022 – 2024 [reelected 2022]
geert@mindspring.com 732-834-9845

Treasurer/Paymaster

Thomas Neukirchen 2021 - 2023
t.neukirchen@aol.com 609-273-7402

Director

Thom Radice 2022 – 2024 [elected 2022 replacing Rick Stoneking]
thomradice@gmail.com 732-713-5649

Director – Editor of *Train Orders* [the New Jersey Division Newsletter]

Fritz Plenefisch 2021 -2023

fplen3@verizon.net 609-585-7660

Director – Contests

Jack Menaker 2021 - 2023

jackmenaker@yahoo.com 732-908-6571

Achievement Program Coordinator

P.J. Mattson, MMR [not a director]

pjmattson129@gmail.com 856-467-0421 [Note changed email address.]

Achievement Program Highlights:

With the COVID pandemic, the division was challenged in the judging and reporting of the achievements of members in the Master Modeler Railroader program. With the improvement of the pandemic in the spring 2022, teams of AP judges visited more members and conducted assessments of member's work. The following certificates were awarded during the period of this report:

Golden Spike – 2

Volunteer – 2

Motive Power – 2

Cars – 1

Structures – 1

Scenery – 3

Dispatcher – 1

Volunteer – 2

Civil Engineer – 1

Electrical Engineer – 1

Master Model Railroader - 2

Robert Price #717

Christopher Conaway #724

There is a number of applications for AP's in process at NMRA at this time, to be reported in next year's report. The improvement of the judging this year occurred because a group of members stepped forward to learn the role and processes of judging. Geographically, access to judging improved for applicants.

Activities of the Past Year:

The COVID pandemic still affected the meet programs and venues during the year of this report. We did hold meets in person, reported below, but had to cancel the January in-person meet with a dramatic spike in COVID cases that month. Even with masking and distancing, our in-person meet attendance was about half our normal attendance, averaging about 38.

January 2022 – Grace Episcopal Church, Merchantville NJ – Cancelled due to COVID – broadcast via Zoom

March 2022 – Switlik Park, Yardville NJ

May 2022 – Camp Evans, Wall Township NJ

September 2022 – Cumberland County Community Church, Millville NJ

November 2022 – Deptford Township Community Center, Westville NJ

Clinic Programs:

- January – on Zoom – Tilt Up construction of structures, prototype and model; Hosting open-house layout procedures
- March – Prototype procedures in model railroad operations; Garden railroad construction and operations
- May – Joint meet with the Garden State Division [Northeast Region] with NJ Division as host – one clinic offered by each division: Blended Backdrops using Photo prints and acrylic paints; Planning a layout using CADRAIL.
- September – Modeling the Steel Plant, Atlanta Georgia, 1855.
- November – Photographing Model Railroading for Publication; A Short History of Model Railroading

Special Projects or Working with Other Organizations

We didn't join with the Philadelphia Division for a joint meet this year. As reported above, we hosted the Garden State Division at our May 2022 meet where they attended the morning program, provided a clinic, and visited layouts in the local area in the afternoon. Next year, the NJ Division members will travel into the Garden State Division for their hosting a joint meet. With these joint meets, we have developed friendships and frequently attend other meets in their respective divisions, furthering our hobby learning and enjoyment.

New Ideas

As described above, COVID forced us to use Zoom as an alternative for in-person meets. Since our membership is generally considered "elderly," members stayed away from group meets to protect themselves or to protect vulnerable family members by not exposing them. In cancelled meets, up to about 30+ members attended via Zoom. We decided after the COVID threat declined and State of New Jersey limitations on in-person meets were lifted, that we wished to increase in-person attendance at meets. We stopped simul-casting meets on Zoom. Attendance has improved but still is lower than before-pandemic numbers.

MER Support

Keep up the quarterly division superintendent's Zoom meet where we can share ideas and learn how other divisions serve their members. Let's get more divisions involved.

Updated membership roster timeliness remains a problem making membership currency checks for at-the-door meet attendance difficult. The format of the lists sent from MER are too complex and require time consuming editing and reformatting. As a division superintendent, I need a simple Excel list that I can personalize to do my work. Files should be separate and not linked.

John V. Gallagher
Superintendent, New Jersey Division

Yearly Division Report

Reporting Period: 01-01-2022 --- 12-31-2022

Division: Potomac Division

Meeting Times and Places.

Our Annual Meeting was held this year by Zoom.

Annual Elections were handled by Election Buddy with sincere thanks to John Hoyt. Ballots were physically mailed to those members that have declined to grace the NMRA with an email address. Board Meetings have continued by means of Zoom and have been held regularly on a monthly schedule.

Change in Officers from last year (including AP Coordinator).**Contact information:**

Name	Address	Contact Info	Position	NMRA Number
Martin Brechbiel, MMR	3404 Monarch Lane Annandale VA 22003-1155	703-309-3082 Superintendent @potomac-nmra.org	Superintendent	114353
Alex Belida, MMR	705 New Mark Esplanade Rockville MD 20850	301-424-8164 sr-asst-super @potomac-nmra.org	Senior Asst. Superintendent	167742
Ernest Little, MMR	10162 Woodbury Dr Manassas VA 20109-3724	571-383-7316 asst-super @potomac-nmra.org	Asst. Superintendent	129108
Lee Stoermer	24407 Indigo Run Lane Aldie, VA 20105-2267	clerk @potomac-nmra.org	Clerk	138185
Jerry Stanley	11552 Hereford Ct Hume, VA 22639	Paymaster @potomac-nmra.org	Paymaster	142333
Mathew A. Thompson, MMR	13000 Triple Crown Loop Gainesville, VA 20155-3207	703-743-1895 achievement-program @potomac-nmra.org	AP Coordinator	081125

Division web site address

<http://potomac-nmra.org/PDnewsite/Main/Home.php>

Membership (Number of members including the change from the previous year. Membership recruitment activities conducted during the year.)

According to the roster extract provided to the Division from the MER:

November 2022 --- Unknown with any precision; best we can tell our membership is 262 as of October – we have not gotten a full roster supplied to the Division for several months. This continues to be a serious deficit to operations of the Division as we have only a passing knowledge of new members in the past 6 months and can only presume that the existing members from early in 2022 are still members,

However, it is also clear that our membership Roster data that filters down to the Division through the MER is not at all accurate and has varied significantly from month to month. And while acknowledged that this roster has been a source of problems for many years, it seems at this time serious revision is overdue as to how it is processed for use by the Divisions.

We do make every attempt to recruit new members at every open house and other events, e.g. the Timonium train show; membership forms, NMRA benefits, and a Divisional brochure are available at every event.

The Division will hold elections again in April 2023. These will be conducted by electronic voting by our members with ballots being sent those members that deign to provide the NMRA with an email address.

Per the new bylaws approved in 2023, the elections will be for three specific positions:

Superintendent, Senior Asst. Superintendent, and Clerk. The current Superintendent is philosophically term-limited. An election committee has been formed to oversee nominations and the election.

Financial.

Dollar amount in bank at end of the last accounting period was \$6,065.77

We do not charge for any event or service at this time. However, to cover costs of venues in the future we will be accepting donations and that may be amended to be a nominal fee as the cost charged by venues within the Potomac Division are extravagant. Clinicians do charge to cover material costs at Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn this year.

Achievement Program 2022 highlights:

Master Model Railroaders

[Pete LaGuardia, MMR 716](#)

[Robert Rodriguez, MMR 718](#)

[Richard Steinmann, MMR 719](#)

[John Griffiths, MMR, MMR 723](#)

Achievement Program Certificates:

Volunteer	- Lee Stoermer
	- Mat Thompson
Civil	- John Griffith
Chief Dispatcher	- Bill Mosteller
Author	- Jerry Stanley
	- Rich Steinmann
Electrical	- John Griffith
	- Bill Mosteller
Structures	- Rich Steinmann
Cars	- Pete LaGuardia
	- Bob Rodriguez
	- Rich Steinmann

Activities from the past year.

Virtual Clinics were held throughout 2022 and are scheduled to continue into 2023. In person clinics took place in a very controlled limited attendance setting (4-6 persons) at our Paymaster's Hobby Barn and these are also scheduled to continue into 2023. We held a Joint in-person Meet with the James River Division in November attended by some 78 members of the two Divisions, plus a handful of members of Tidewater and Chesapeake, with one NMRA member traveling from New York.

Division Events 2022

Virtual and Make & Take in person clinics both have been held monthly throughout the year.

Attendance of virtual clinics has routinely ranged between 20 and 40. All of our virtual events are recorded, uploaded to the Division web site, and to the Division YouTube channel.

We held three open house layout tours in connection with our Joint Meet with James River and two more on the following weekend. We are now scheduling new Open Houses for 2023.

Special Projects or working with other organizations

We intend to once again hold a Fall joint meet with the James River Division in Nov. of 2023 and to make this a regular annual event. We are now actively exploring the possibility of a Spring joint meet with the Chesapeake Division to be held in Maryland.

Any successful or new ideas that your Division has tried that might be helpful to other Divisions.

The ongoing program of monthly clinics via Zoom has demonstrated significant attendance success and will be continued. Use of Zoom for other purposes will be instituted to address travel times of members to attend event in person. This will no doubt require the investment of a camera system suitable for remote capture of clinics and layouts to be recorded for placement on the Division web site and YouTube channel.

Charitable and Educational Activities.

The Joint Meet with James River resulted in a collected donation in excess of \$1000 for the charity operations overseen by the Church whose venue we used for this meet.

NMRA and MER Convention Activity.

Unknown.

Ongoing & Future Directions.

The Board members remain committed to working to fulfill the requests and desires of our Division's membership. The attendance response exemplified by the attendance at the virtual and in-person Hobby Barn events, as well as our Joint Meet with James River clearly reflects a significant level of success in this effort. This is also very clearly satisfying some measure of the socialization aspect of the hobby as we can gather as a group, see one another, and talk to one another. We do remain hopeful of securing additional meeting venues for in-person events in 2023. To this end, we are currently able to make use of a Knights of Columbus meeting hall in Fairfax, albeit not at the optimal cost of "free", it remains within the reality of our budget.

The expanded publication of the Division newsletter *The Potomac Flyer* to six issues a year and the introduction of new features such as our Layout, Rolling Stock and Trackage Structures Challenges in 2021 showcasing member models has proven to be of great interest and will be continued in 2022. The Editor also launched "Potomac Division Newsbriefs" in November 2021 which go out in the months between release of *The Flyer*. The Challenge entries have also been featured on our Division website with rotating photo carousels with links to the descriptions published in *The Flyer*.

Where in your opinion could the MER provide support to your division?

We continue to celebrate the MER forwarding 100% of the dues rebate to the Divisions. However, support of Divisions by Nat'l NMRA remains completely inadequate support vs. expectations given the constant assessment of the Divisions to be the most important level of the NMRA. The MER Board is requested to challenge the Nat'l budget allocation to move it to a more representative level of need

at the local level vs. those expectations levied on the Divisions.

The matching grant program currently on hold by the Region is really needed to support the acquisition of A/V equipment for the Division particularly given that the events that the Division will be promoting will be either virtual or looking forward these will be hybrid live in person and broadcast via Zoom. As such, upgrades and expansion of existing equipment is anticipated as a highly probable area of need to be able to continue to deliver quality programming for our members.

The current guidance, effectively none from the MER, on implementation of the At-Risk policy as dictated by Nat'l has been completely inadequate. Questions abound regarding the need for affidavits (legal documents), their use and retention, etc. This all can deeply impact open house events as well as any larger gathering such as possible convention hosting.

The structure of the AP program as it pertains to Volunteer is in need of revision particularly as that pertains to members working directly on recruitment of members to the NMRA. The rewards vs. actual time and effort are not commensurate in scope and value. We have forwarded suggested language to Nat'l and gotten back a response of complete silence. We need the MER Board to champion this change if Divisions are going to shouldering the burden of recruitment. Otherwise, we simply will not have the volunteer manpower to actively pursue this effort.

While we fully recognize the long-term complexities of dealing with Nat'l on issues surrounding the membership roster information that trickles down to the Divisions, the lack of this information completely compromises the Division's ability to contact and greet new members, and to continue to contact and communicate with all of their existing members. We are in need of the basic information, member's names and contact info now without all of the frills which can be added later as desired. Clearly there is a real, immediate need for executing this and doing it under an auspice of simplification to expedite delivery of needed information.

Over the past 3 years we have been presenting virtual clinics as well as in person clinics on a monthly schedule. Looking forward we could use more clinicians to provide a good program for our members. One might think that the Clinics page on the MER web site could serve as a viable resource for the Divisions. However, the information there appears to be grossly out of date and overall not updated for the past 5-8 years. We ask that the MER please update the information and revive this page to be a viable resource for all Divisions. Yes, we are aware that the MER web site is being updated, and it is improved; however, this page and its content crosses over all Division boundaries in its impact and needs immediate attention to correct the long-term neglect that compromises this resource.

Superintendent's Name and Signature.

Martin Brechbiel, MMR

Yearly Division Report Reporting Period: 2022

Division: Philadelphia Division

Meeting Times and Places:

February Meet: Saturday February 20th

Location: Horsham Township Community Center, Horsham, PA Two clinics presented

Attendance: 30 Members

April Meet: Saturday April 9th

Location: Henrietta Hankin Branch Library, Chester Springs, PA Two clinics presented

Attendance: 27 Members

June Meet: Saturday June 11th

Location: Alverthorpe Park, Abington, PA

Annual Business Meeting, followed by two clinics. Picnic lunch proved free. Attendance: 30 Members and 1 guest

September Meet: Saturday September 10th

Location: Southampton Community Center, Southampton, PA Two clinics presented

Attendance: 28 Members

November Meet: Saturday November 12th Location:

Brandywine Town Center, Wilmington, DE Two clinics presented

Attendance: 29 Members and 1 guest

Change in Officers from last year (including AP Coordinator). Contact information:

Three Positions were up for election in June 2022, three candidates ran for the positions. Joe Walters, and Mike Dettinger were re-elected, Charles Long was elected to the board for the first time.

Joe Walters was reelected by the board as Superintendent, Rob Hinkle was reelected as Assistant Superintendent, Kevin Feeney was reelected as Treasurer and Charles Long as elected as Clerk for the 2022-2023 board.

Board of Directors:

Officers:

Supt. Joe Walters, MMR josephwalters@yahoo.com Asst. Supt.: Rob Hinkle robhink@gmail.com

Clerk: Charles Long

Treasurer: Kevin Feeney

ic4277@yahoo.com

AP Coordinator: Earl Paine
AP Committee Chair: Joe Walters,
MMR Newsletter and Website: Howard
Kaplan Layouts/video: Bill Fagan
Clinics/Door Prizes: Mike
Dettinger Venues: Jeff Witt

Ops/Social Media: Rob Hinkle
Donations/Shows: Kevin Feeney
Publicity/Member Outreach: Chip Stevens

Achievement Program highlights:

Activities from the past year:

A celebration of the Division's 50th anniversary was held after the annual business meeting meet which occurred on June 11th. The division coordinated the rental of a large covered picnic area with large cooking surfaces to feed all of the members and guests tat attended the event.

On Saturday December 3rd the Division held the second annual Division Train Show with assistance from the GATSME model railroad club. The Train Show was moved to a larger venue after the first show we held in December 2021. Total attendance for the train show was around 160.

Yearly Division Report

January 1 thru December 31, 2022

Division: Tidewater Division 04 Website: www.nmra-mer-tidewater.org

Newsletter Published 6 times yearly is the "Callboard"

Meetings: Meetings are held in January, March, May, July, September and November on the 3rd Saturday morning from 0900 to approximately 12 Noon and are held in the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, Virginia Beach, VA.

Officers: Superintendent: John Robey

Assistant Superintendent: Gary Brown * (resigned in October to move up to VP of the MER)

Assistant Superintendent: Mark Nieting (appointed in October from membership) is also Membership Chairman

Paymaster: Greg Warth

Timekeeper: Robert Cook (MMR)

Director: Dale Ridgeway (MMR)

Director: John Fallon

Director: Fred Humphrey (Immediate Past Superintendent)

AP Coordinator: Norm Garner (MMR) (resigned in September)

Chuck Davis (MMR) (appointed in September)

Elections are held in January with a new or reelected board assuming duties at the Official Annual Business Meeting the 3rd Saturday of January.

Achievement Program Highlights:

One Division member, Bob Cook, achieved his MMR title with Mark Nieting receiving Master Builder Scenery; Roger Bir received two certificates for Master Builder Scenery and Model Railroad Author; and Fred Humphrey for Master Railroad Author. In addition, we have 3 other individuals working on their Achievement programs. Norm Garner (MMR) was our long time AP Coordinator, was honored with a Tidewater Division Lifetime Achievement Award for all of his accomplishments. Chuck Davis (MMR) was appointed to succeed Mr. Garner as the Tidewater Division Achievement Program coordinator.

Activities from the past year:

The Division sponsored a White Elephant model train swap and sales meet to benefit the Division coffers. Division members organized and displayed model train history and items in showcases at the Virginia Beach Central library during the month of November to commemorate National Model Train Month. The Division chose to hold a monthly meeting at the local hobby store (HobbyTown) to promote model railroading as the public was invited to attend. Division members attended a joint meeting and clinics with the Potomac and James River Divisions in Warrenton, VA. Several members attended the 2022 MER Convention. Several members have started an Operations SIG activities with 3 layouts and working on expanding to several more layouts. Seven of these members have received their Chief Dispatcher. Four members held open house/layout tours during four of the "off-months" that we did not have a Division meeting.

Special Projects or working with other organizations:

Five Division members have organized and developed plans for a Model Railroad Museum of Hampton Roads. (www.mrmhr.org). The plan and concept of this museum is to provide a public venue to educate, teach and expand the enjoyment of model railroad hobbies. The concept is to have major clubs from all scales to be represented with an operational layout for public display. To date, agreements have been made for G scale, O scale, S scale, HO scale, N scale, and Lego clubs to participate. This volunteer committee has met with City officials, City Mayors and Major Business coordinators to promote the museum project.

One member, Gary Brown, has continued to lead a charity program of providing model train sets for Christmas gifts to families that otherwise not be able to provide this luxury. Gary assembles these sets from donations of rolling stock, track and power supplies.

The Division was requested to build a scale diorama depicting the 1930's scene of the Lee Hall Train Depot. This diorama will be on display at the Lee Hall Train Depot Museum for the City of Newport News, VA. Six members have studied historical photos of the site, have visited and measured existing buildings and roads and have scratch built structures for the diorama (some of which will be judged in the AP program).

The Division has continued to support the model train layout at the Suffolk Virginia Train Museum (Norfolk & Western) with maintenance and modifications to the layout.

Successful Ideas:

Our Division has learned the value to seek and "lock in" a consistent meeting location. We had lost our long time meeting location, so the idea was implemented to move our meetings around to the far borders of our division. We experienced a decline of attendance, apparently because members did not want to drive that far to a meeting. Then we experienced the COVID lockdowns where we weren't allowed to hold meetings. Post COVID we have now located a consistent meeting location through the efforts of one member. Our new meeting location has a complete audio visual system that now allows us to conduct Zoom workshops from other divisions, present training videos and You-tube railroad subjects.

Our Division has implemented a member social hour before each meeting. We provide coffee and donuts and the idea to encourage fellowship, introduction to new members, sharing modeling ideas and special interests. We have also promoted a member "show-n-tell" or "bring-n-brag" table to display items of interest to the membership of something that you learned to do, built or new product that you want to share.

Every meeting must have an educational theme with a presentation. We have avoided the mundane, lifeless business meeting that doesn't particularly have any interest to draw the member to attend. Interesting and relevant prototypical and modeling railroad videos have been the most favorably received activities by the membership. As you develop these concepts for a meeting you will notice an increase in member attendance.

MER Support:

All of the MER Superintendents have dealt with the membership roster issues this year. And, it now appears that our Business Manager has accomplished a stellar job in settling all the technical issues and has finally been able to publish a comprehensive roster that we can utilize to track our membership. In the Tidewater Division roster we have identified seven (7) members that their email does not work. We have been able to identify typo's and contacted several members to correct their emails. Here's the problem: we have not been able to find any location on the NMRA website where you can submit a change or correction to your member information. I can understand that National does want to allow direct access to data bases, but we have yet to secure any information where you can submit changes other than during renewal time! If a member needs to contact someone in the Region or an office at National to update (email) information, we need to know what this procedure is.

Submitted:

John Robey

Tidewater Division Superintendent

Jrobey2019@gmail.com

Cell: 571-217-0599

Yearly Division Report Carolina Southern Division 12, MER
Reporting Period: 2022

Contact Information:

Superintendent

Andrew D. Stitt 910-572-2321

160 Woodland Dr., New London, NC 28127-7632

superintendent@carolinasouthern.org

Assistant Superintendent

Curtis Alan Hardee

908 S 9th Street, Bessemer City, NC 28016-2736 704-868-6976

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Paymaster

David D. Thrans 704-747-6823

209 Rainbow Dr. Stanley, NC, 28164-1185

paymaster@carolinasouthern.org

Clerk

Edward P. Gumphrey 911 Pleasant Dr., Shelby, NC 28152-8310 757-353-8355

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Director 2023

Joe W. Skorch 480-558-6235

542 Eastway Ave., Kannapolis, NC 28083-9023

director2@carolinasouthern.org

Director 2024

Larry Paffrath 704-778-2745

17815 Prescott Border Dr., Cornelius, NC 28031-8763

director3@carolinasouthern.org

Director 2025

Edward Smith 828-495-7441

142 Williams Cove Ln., Taylorsville, NC 28681-6875

director1@carolinasouthern.org

AP Chairman

Neal R. Anderson 336-408-3296

172 Woodfield Dr., Statesville, NC 28677-2619

apchair@carolinasouthern.org

Membership: The Division membership fluctuated during 2022. Overall, it increased by about 12 members. Members of the Division participated in activities at the North Carolina Transportation Museum including their model train show in May.

Financial:

Major Checkbook Items	Income	Expenses	Balance
1 Jan 2022 Balance			7,948.65
USPS Stamps		12.00	
MER Dues share	153.00		
Meeting Rooms Rent		284.00	
MER Convention	799.50		
Zoom license		149.90	
Haberdasher	83.50	305.27	
CSD sales at Convention			
General Store	292.50		
CSD Cookout		213.46	
Newton Depot Authority		250.00	
Interest Earned 1.31			
31 Dec 2022 Ending Balance			8,063.83
MER Convention checks outstanding		799.50	
31 Dec 2022 Ending Balance			7,264.33

PayPal Haberdasher Items	Income	Expenses	Balance
1 Jan 2022 Balance			34.66
PayPal Sales (7 items)	327.50	12.88	
31 Dec 2022 Ending Balance			349.28

Division Events: The Division normally holds meetings the third Saturday of each month, except December. The meeting in September is traditionally the Division's picnic. In 2022, the Annual Meeting, which is held as the first meeting of the year in January, was held at the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum in Newton, NC. During the year, meetings were held at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC, the Cherryville Depot in Cherryville, NC, the Waymer Recreation Center in Huntersville, NC, and at a member's home. The Annual picnic was held at the city park in Kannapolis, NC. Attendance averaged 14 members in person, and several more remotely via Zoom.

Most of the meetings included a clinic, and/or an information session presented by the hosting group. The meeting at the Newton Depot included a tour of Wade's Train Town, which the Division maintains and operates. The meeting at the NC Transportation Museum included a presentation on volunteering at the museum. The meeting at the Cherryville Depot was hosted by the Cherryville model railroad club who operated their layouts for attendees. In April, Division members were invited by our neighboring division, CPD 13, to tour Tichy Train Group in Graham, NC, along with a local train layout. One of our members hosted an operating session in May. Meetings in June, July, and August were held at the Waymer Recreation Center with a continuing series of hands-on clinics on building a diorama. September's meeting was the annual picnic.

In October, the Division hosted the 2022 MER convention in Charlotte. Over 100 NMRA members attended, including 39 from CSD. Countless hours of preparation and travel time by the convention staff turned into a successful event! By all accounts from those who attended and provided feedback to the committee, the event was handled very well. Congratulations to the committee!!

In November, the Division held its annual member swap meet at the Waymer Recreation Center.

Charitable and Educational Activities by the Division: In 2021, the Division committed to relocate Wade's Train Town to the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum in Newton, NC. As part of this agreement with the museum, the Division agreed to maintain and host regular Saturday open houses. Thanks to the efforts of 3 core members, and a host of volunteers, the Division has been able to fulfil its commitment through 2022. Attendance at the museum has skyrocketed due to this attraction as well as other model railroads hosted in the two adjacent buildings.

Achievement Program Activity: During 2022, three AP Certificates were earned and awarded. Fifteen Division members have previously earned AP Certificates, and two of those members are within 2 AP Certificates of obtaining MMR.

Future Directions: For 2023, plans are underway to renew our hosting a Railroad Model University (RMU). Previously an annual event since 2004, RMU had been suspended due

to the Pandemic, and then the MER Convention. The RMU features one day of clinics and demonstrations hosted by members of the Division for any person interested in learning more about the hobby. The Division has been holding these for a while, and generally they are very well attended.

Meeting locations will continue to be developed across the Division's geographical area to encourage more members to attend. This winter, meetings will be held at the Mooresville Public Library in Mooresville, NC which is centrally located within the area.

Submitted by:

Andrew Stitt

Carolina Southern Division 12 Superintendent 1/12/2023

2022 Annual Report of the Chesapeake Division, MER, NMRA

Prepared: February 10, 2023 by Kirk Bateman, Superintendent with input from

Tim Beaty, Clerk and David Arday, Paymaster

Officers and Directors

Kirk Bateman

Superintendent, Webmaster

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K Travers Stavac

Director-at-Large

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David Arday

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Tim Beaty

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Kurt Thompson

AP Chairman, Newsletter Editor

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Tom Casey

Past Superintendent

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Division Website

<https://www.chesdiv-nmra.org>

Membership

The December 2022 roster received from the MER shows 108 members. The November 2021 roster provided by the MER indicates 114 members on the roster. (I do not have a copy of the December 2021 roster for comparison.) Note that both rosters are known to contain at least one error, that of a member who moved away from the Division in 2018.

Financial

The 2022 Paymaster's Report states our total balance (the sum of the balances in our savings and petty cash accounts) to be \$2,325.52. This is a net decrease of \$418.61 from 2021.

Division Events

January 21, 7:30pm: The Division held a virtual meeting via Zoom. Dave Ackmann of Florissant, Missouri (Gateway Division), presented a clinic titled *2 and-a-Half-D CAD Using PowerPoint - A Clinic for Model Railroaders*. The clinic was attended by approximately 14 individuals.

April 8, 7:30pm: The Division held a virtual Meet-n-Greet via Zoom. Members got to know each other and their railroad modeling interests better. Members were invited to say hello and introduce themselves, and to share pictures or other information about their model railroading interests and/or current projects. In addition, we arranged for one short clinic: Division Superintendent Tom Casey discussed his experiences learning LCC and installing it for his staging track. The clinic was attended by approximately 12 individuals.

April 30: The Chesapeake Division and our hosts welcomed members and guests to visit four layouts, most of which were on tour or operating for the Mt. Clare Junction Convention (hosted by the Chesapeake Division in October 2021). As part of our efforts to promote member interaction, we opted to gather in small groups for some fellowship and railroad modeling camaraderie. The layouts opened were:

John Teichmoeller – 1960-ish B&O Old Main Line, based in the Patapsco Valley, and the Avalon steel mill

Ken Larsen – Industrial Switching Operations, 1970 Ohio based

Al Pugliese – Freelanced Cass, WV, modeled with a Sellios-like big city, and mainline steam and diesel

Alan Del Gaudio – Transition era, eastern Class 1 passenger focus

We estimate about 22-23 people attended one or more layouts.

May 15: Open house of two layouts in the Westminster area:

Pat Mitchell – Western Maryland, O scale, Proto-48; and,

Anton Mazza – Canadian Central RR, HO scale, featuring helix to 3 decks!

We do not have a head count for the open houses.

June 12, 2:00pm: The Division scheduled a visit to the Western Maryland Railway Historical Society in Union Bridge, MD. The Society gave us a full tour and discussion of their facilities and their activities. Approximately eight (8) members and guests attended.

July 10: The Division visited the Baltimore Street Car Museum. Unfortunately, due to several conflicts, this was not well attended. We know of two members who made the trip to downtown Baltimore, but are unsure if there were others.

August: The BOD held 3-4 work sessions on the Chesapeake City Railway & Dock Co. (CCR&D), the Division's switching layout, in preparation for the Timonium Train Show, October 15-16. In all, about seven (7) individuals attended one or more of the work sessions.

September 11: The Division scheduled a visit to the Chesapeake and Allegheny Live Steamers. We are unsure of the number of attendees from the Division.

October 15-16: In association with the Potomac Division, the Chesapeake Division hosted a table and displayed the Chesapeake City Railway and Dock Co. switching layout at the Great Scale Model Train Show, at the Timonium State Fair Grounds. About a dozen Division members spent at least some time at the table.

November 12, 9:00am: The Chesapeake Division Annual General Meeting was held at the B&O Railroad Historical Society facility in Eldersburg, MD. The AGM included a short business meeting, discussion, and a presentation on operations by one of our members. Thirteen (13) Division members attended.

December 9, 7:30pm: The Division hosted a Zoom presentation by George Johnson. George is an active member of the Cumberland County Historical Society in Carlisle, Pennsylvania – where he has been charged with cataloging and rationalizing the very large photo collection left to the Society by Jim Bradley. George has compiled a portion of the collection into a book titled *Iron Horse Rambles as Seen Through the Lens of Photographer Jim Bradley*. George's presentation centered on the book. He also discussed, briefly, the Society's 2023 exhibit, which will highlight the railroads in Cumberland County. Ten (10) Division members and one (1) guest attended, in addition to our guest speaker.

Charitable and Educational Activities

None

Achievement Program Activity

Name	AP Certificate	Date Awarded
Patrick Flash	Civil	9/21/2022
Patrick Flash	Electrical	9/21/2022
Patrick Flash	Scenery	9/21/2022
Robert Price	Motive Power	9/21/2022
James L. Fisher	Volunteer	10/21/2022
Jeff Burch	Volunteer	10/21/2022

NMRA and MER Convention Activity

None

Future Directions

We are exploring a joint miniconvention with the Potomac Division, tentatively planned for June 10, 2023.

Back on Track...

Train Wrecks

By Greg Warth, Ed.

This is a strange topic for a column with the byline of “Back on Track,” but the reality is that our transportation system really does need to get back on track. We have had multiple incidents of major accidents and close calls recently. I am hopeful we are learning from these events to correct our systems and prevent future events. The knowledge is there already to do so, but cost is always a concern. Should it be?

In East Palestine, Ohio, a 141-car Norfolk Southern train derailed in early February with 38 railcars spilling toxic chemicals including vinyl chloride into the Ohio River and the surrounding landscape. This required evacuation of 4700 residents and caused tremendous environmental damage. One resident said the air smelled like “nail polish remover and burning tires.” There were innumerable reports of nausea and headaches. We don’t know yet what the long-term effects of this chemical exposure might be. (Reference: [Vox.com](https://www.vox.com))

The problems associated with train disasters like this often include the following:

The state was not notified about the train carrying hazardous materials through residential areas.

First responders are not trained for this type of catastrophe.

There are no limits on lengths of trains. Longer trains save money, but the longer the train, the higher the risk and the bigger the accident.

An overheated wheel bearing is suspected to be the cause of this derailment, although it will take years before the investigation is completed. There are ways to detect this type of problem by using acoustic detectors that can pick up the noise that a failing wheel bearing makes hundreds of miles before it seizes, but it costs more to implement these detectors.

ECP (electronically controlled pneumatic) brakes that allows trains to brake all railcars at the same time would make trains safer, but they are not mandated and cost “too much.”

Only two crew members are required to run trains that may be 2-3 miles long. Decreased workforce saves money. Train companies have cut their workforce by 45,000 employees over the past six years.

Privately owned railroads are always under pressure from investors to reduce costs.

Having said all that, the rail industry has fewer derailments now (1044 in 2022) than it did in the 1980s (more than 3000). So, trains are generally safer now than in the past. The accidents that do occur now are bigger because of longer trains and more damage. Yet there is much more that could be done.

Safety in railroading, even model railroading, should be always in the forefront of our thoughts as we work on our layouts, especially while using power equipment like band saws, lathes, drills, and laser cutters, and while working around electrical devices and paint fumes. The moral of the story is: don’t cut costs when it comes to safety. Make sure you have the proper equipment for every project, including gloves, eyewear, proper lighting, fire extinguisher, paint booth (with proper exhaust to the outside), etc. Take your time. Read the directions carefully. If you lose a finger, it doesn’t grow back.

Thanks to all for reading The Local, and thanks again to the editorial and publishing crew who make it all possible. And most of all, Happy Railroading!



Local responders putting out a fire caused by an electrical problem on someone’s layout with no fire extinguisher available. (Photo taken by the author. Courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay and Western Railroad.)