



The Local

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

SEARCH

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Convention Update!!

Piedmont Junction 2024 Convention

By Don Roback

The Piedmont Junction 2024 Convention is almost here! With the extensive railroad history and vibrant model railroad community in central North Carolina as a backdrop, the Carolina Piedmont Division (CPD13) of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA has prepared a jam-packed and exciting convention from October 17-20, 2024 (Photo 1). [Continued on Page 5]



Photo 1: Piedmont Logo by Tom Shafer



Photo 2: Ken Smith's layout (Photo by John Sokash).

President's Column...



By Chance

By R. Scott Unger

One winter, during the holiday break from college, I worked at the corporate headquarters of a multi-national corporation in their documents warehouse. The facility was part of a larger office campus and was the receiving, storage and distribution point for standard office supplies like tablets and envelopes. Hundreds of custom printed forms and related stationery were also handled at this location, which was managed by two full-time employees. I am dating myself here as I suspect that most of these documents are all now digital rather than in paper form. As the part-time seasonal helper, I unloaded inbound pallets and accumulated orders to be shipped to other buildings in the complex. On one occasion, the internal corporate mail carrier arrived to deliver inter-office mail, and I clearly recall his dialogue with one of the warehouse employees who jokingly informed his colleague that “I get more done by mistake than you probably accomplish all day!”

While recalling that banter is still humorous to me, there are times in which one can make progress simply by chance. For instance, a different large employer, one that no longer exists in Allentown, PA, was the Western Electric Allentown Works of Bell Labs. Their factory in Allentown established the first commercial transistor production in the world and more importantly to model railroaders it was served by the Lehigh and New England Railroad. Many of us use transistors or other electronics as part of our hobby. Resistors are probably the most commonly used electronic devices. For some types of resistors, the manufacturing process also involves a bit of chance. Some resistors are manufactured in batches within a certain tolerance range and only afterwards are they tested and painted according to their actual rating.

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How to Build a Model Railroad

The example of resistor manufacturing is somewhat instructive as it blends how specific intentions combined with a bit of luck can generate progress. When we design our model railroads we often put in tremendous amounts of planning and effort. Every now and then that effort is rewarded by a bit of fortune. One of Thomas Jefferson’s quotes comes to mind: “I am a great believer in luck and find that the harder I work the more of it I have.” Yogi Berra observed a similar phenomenon in personal interactions when he said, “...to meet people you have to be places.” Both quotes imply that securing a meaningful outcome generally requires applying some effort or taking a level of risk.

Some recent effort of mine was recently blessed by a chance occurrence of luck while preparing my model railroad for the first test operation. A portion of my railroad was still operated as timetable and train order in the early 1970s. There was no longer an adopted timetable, so all trains were run as extras. To assist the dispatcher in preparing train orders I was asked to prepare a detailed track diagram. I really wanted to avoid taping a bunch of smaller sheets together to capture the full length of the track diagram, so I hunted around for something that was wide enough to draw on. I found a 36” roll of brown craft paper that had been used to protect flooring in a previous house project. Armed with a pencil, a big eraser and a couple of different sizes of black permanent markers, I got started. I prepared a basic diagram using an old drafting board and parallel bar from college. Again, I am dating myself, as computer aided drafting software was only beginning to be introduced at that time. A

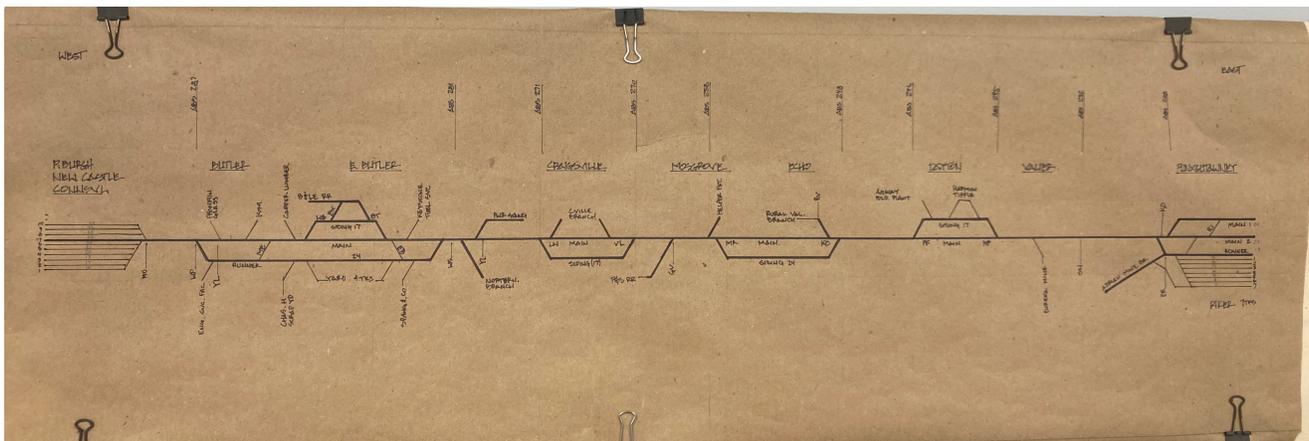


Photo 1

While it was legible, black ink on brown paper provided a sort of drab appearance. If only I had drawn it using one of the various available software programs, I could have easily manipulated the image to be more presentable. I took a photo with my phone and opened the image using “Paint” (formerly Microsoft Paint) and poked around with different effects to see if I could make any improvements. I clicked on the select button and then outlined the image to crop it along the border of the track diagram. Here is where luck comes in! I then right clicked which brought up another menu and just for the heck of it selected “invert color” from that menu. Before clicking, I had not considered how the colors might invert. Clearly the black ink would change to white but what wasn’t readily obvious was the color opposite to craft paper brown on the color wheel (Photo 2).

[Convention Update, Continued from p. 1]

The convention includes a wide array of activities and educational opportunities related to model and prototype railroading. If you haven't yet registered for the convention and chosen activities to participate in, now is the time! The registration form can be found at https://mer-nmra.com/convention/mer_convention_2024/2024_Registration_Form/2024_Registration_Form.php. The host hotel is the Marriott Raleigh Durham Research Triangle Park at 4700 Guardian Dr., in Durham, NC. Hotel reservations can be made for a fantastic room rate of \$79 per night at [Hotel Reservations](#). *[This rate is only guaranteed through September 17 and is subject to room availability. - Ed.]*

Co-Chairmen Jack Dziadul and Kevin O'Connor lead the organizing team for this convention. Twenty-eight layout tours will be held during the convention featuring scales from N to O, sizes from bedroom to basement, themes from urban to mountain, and regions from the American west to Switzerland (**Photo 2 on page 1**). For operations, ten layouts will be open for thirteen operating sessions. These layouts also range from N scale to O scale and from bonus room to large building size. Two T-TRAK layouts at the host hotel also will be available for operations during the convention.

There will be 43 clinics given during the convention including 12 delivered by Master Model Railroaders covering topics such as layout planning, electronics, scenery construction, 3D printing and car and locomotive construction and detailing. This schedule includes six hands-on clinics featuring instruction on layout lighting, ballasting, structure construction, tree-making, resin casting and JMRI.

Other hotel-based activities will include a Company Store where attendees can buy and sell model railroading "stuff," and prototype railroad equipment. The silent auction will also include a "buy-it-now" option. The contest room is where you can enter your models and can make progress towards your Master Model Railroader designation. An author's table will also be set up to give attendees a chance to talk to the authors Steve Benezra and Kevin von der Lippe. (**Photo 3**). The banquet will be held on Saturday night October 19 featuring the Aberdeen and Rockfish Railroad Company President Carl Hollowell as guest speaker.

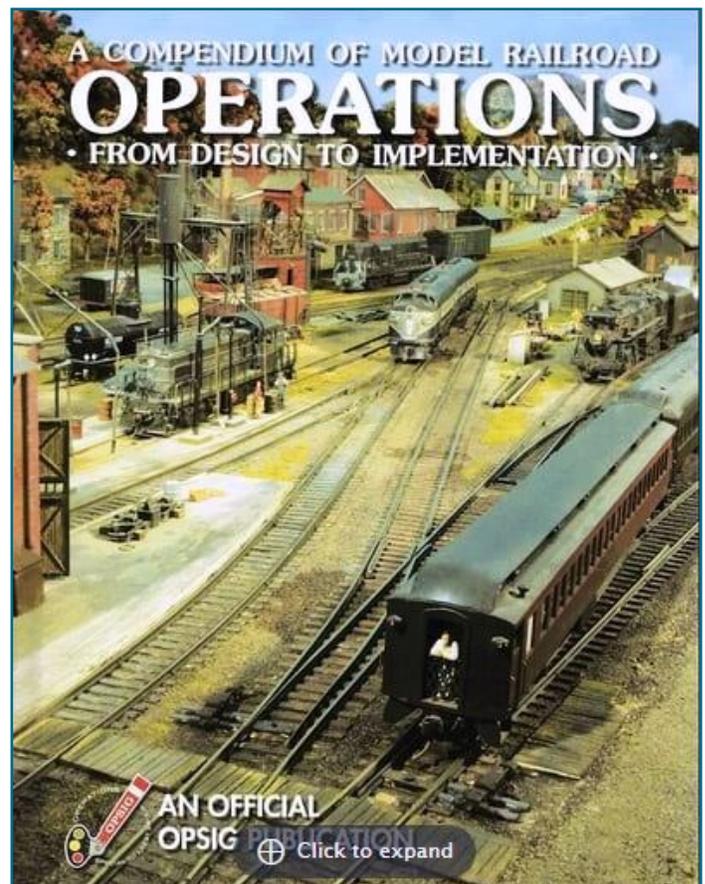


Photo 3: One of the authors of the NMRA's Operations Special Interest Group publication, "A Compendium of Model Railroad Operations" by Steve Benezra will be at the author's table on Saturday afternoon.

Prototype and manufacturer events scheduled include tours of the New Hope Valley Railway ([Triangle Train](#)), the Aberdeen and Rockfish Railroad ([Aberdeen and Rockfish](#)) headquarters and engine servicing facilities along with nearby Aberdeen Union Station Museum which also houses the Sandhills Central Model Railroad Club. In addition, there will be two tours of the Tichy Train Group ([Tichy Trains](#)) factory in nearby Burlington, NC.,

Finally, the beautiful Triangle region of North Carolina (Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill) also boasts many non-rail attractions, so if you are looking to explore the local area while in town, there are many great spots to visit. For example, there are numerous self-guided options including the Duke Lemur Center, several prominent museums, the American Tobacco Campus in Durham, which houses many restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues, and the State Capitol Building in downtown Raleigh. For those that would like to immerse themselves in local culture, the [North Carolina State Fair](#) will also be held in Raleigh during the convention.

For the most up to date information including registration and hotel information for this exciting convention, see the convention website at [PiedmontJunction.org](#) or [NMRA.org](#).

Simple & Cheap N Scale Street Lights

By John Pursell (Photos by the Author)

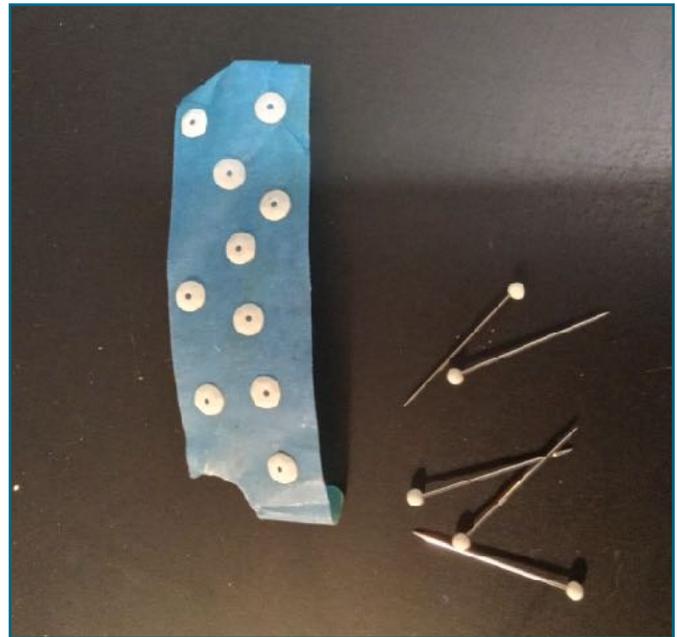
Back in the November/December 2023 *Local*, I wrote about the construction of what I called “the Raffle Railroad.” This is a complete N scale Railroad measuring 2 ½ X 5 feet that I build each year that is then raffled off as a fundraiser for the Cumberland Valley Model Railroad Club in Chambersburg, PA. However, I am primarily an HO modeler, so working in N scale is still a new process for me.

When I determined that the town scene needed streetlights for detailing, I decided to scratch-build, instead of purchasing, mostly to save cash. I’ll stress here, these would not be working lights, but would be simply decorative.

Of course, now I had to figure out *how* to build them. I needed simple lights that would not take much time to make. Sitting at my work bench, I took notice of a box of straight pins with rounded tops that I used to hold parts while painting or gluing. On goes the proverbial light! These were about the right height, if a wee bit short, coming in around 8 feet. But I would need a base of some kind, and I didn’t feel like trying to cut tiny lamp bases from plastic.

So, what's round with a hole and about 2 to 3 scale feet in diameter? Bingo! – sequins! You know, those shiny round things sewn onto clothes and costumes for an extra glittery effect.

Out I went to the local Hobby Lobby store and found a box of white sequins for a couple bucks. I had determined that I would need about eight lights, so I picked out 10 sequins and 10 pins and affixed them to a small board with masking tape, as you can see in [Picture 1](#). I hit them with a pass of Pullman Green spray paint; once dry, I reversed them and sprayed the other side. You might notice that there are some beads also on the board; I later decided not to use them.



Picture 1

After a day of drying, I brush painted the lamp tops with white paint. I drilled eight holes in the plastic sidewalks, slid a sequin on the pin and inserted it in the hole with a tiny dab of glue to prevent movement. You can see the result in [Pictures 2, 3](#).

And that's it! They're simple, cheap, easy-to-make, and they look good. Since working lights weren't in the offing on this project, I think these decorative streetlights serve the purpose.



Picture 2



Picture 3: Close up.



Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA 2024 Convention Piedmont Junction · October 17 - 20, 2024



<https://piedmontjunction.cpd13.org/>

Please enter (print legibly) all names **as you wish them to appear on your registration badge(s)**. Badges will not be changed at the convention.

Primary Registrant: _____ MMR? **Y / N**, Title for Badge _____

Significant Other Attending (living at same address): _____

Children Attending (18 & under - list all + age): _____

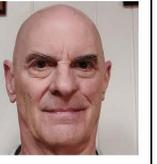
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

<small>Registrar Use Only!</small>	Phone #: _____	E-mail: _____	
	NMRA Member #: _____	Region: _____	Division: _____
	Favorite Scale: _____ Is this your first MER Convention? _____		

Description	ID	Cost	Qty	Amount
Registration				
NMRA Member: ___ \$60 thru Aug 31, ___ \$70 Sep 1 – Oct 4, ___ \$80 On-Site Oct 17 – 20				
Non-Member: ___ \$80 thru Aug 31, ___ \$90 Sep 1 – Oct 5, ___ \$100 On-Site Oct 17 – 20				
One-Day (circle day) NMRA Member: \$45 Fri Sat Non-Member: \$65 Fri Sat				
Spouse/Significant Other		\$10		
Children 18 and Under (Name & Age)		\$0		
Banquet – Saturday Night North Carolina Barbeque Buffet Vegetarian Gluten-Free	401	\$65		
Hot Breakfast Buffet Fri Sat Sun <input type="checkbox"/> Gluten-Free	402-4	\$21		
Lunch Buffet Fri Sat <input type="checkbox"/> Gluten-Free	405-6	\$26		
Editors' Breakfast Fri (Division Editors)	420	\$0		
Superintendents' Breakfast Sat (Division Superintendents)	421	\$0		
Call Boards / Ops – See Convention Web Site for Latest Information				
Golden East Model Railroaders Club -Section 1 (Thu)	801	\$5		
Golden East Model Railroaders Club -Section 2 (Sun)	802	\$5		
Charles Rausch's Rio Grande Southern NC -Section 1 (Thu)	803	\$5		
Charles Rausch's Rio Grande Southern NC -Section 2 (Sat)	804	\$5		
Robert Gamble's Southern Railway (Thu)	805	\$5		
Rick Hollings's Aberdeen & Rockfish (Fri)	806	\$5		
Erik Dyke's ATSF, SP, GN (Thu)	807	\$5		
Jim Kalenowski's Lehigh Valley CNJ -Section 1 (Thu)	808	\$5		
Jim Kalenowski's Lehigh Valley CNJ -Section 2 (Fri)	809	\$5		
Ken Reising's Southern Pacific (Fri)	810	\$5		
Dan Koenigshofer's Western Pacific (Sat)	811	\$5		
Jamie Jordan's Lehigh Valley (Sat)	812	\$5		
Mike Rossi's Baltimore & Ohio (Thu)	813	\$5		
Extra Fare Clinics – Registration Required, Further Information on Web Site				
Speed Ballasting	601	\$5		
Build a Prototype Structure (NHVR Speeder & Oil Shed)	602			
___ N (\$15) ___ HO (\$15) ___ O (\$25) Detail Parts ___ (\$5)				
Making Trees from Wire	603	\$5		
Programming with JMRI	604	\$5		
Creating Zero-Depth Water Features	605	\$35		
Resin Castings for Unique Parts	606	\$15		
Prototype Tours – Further Information on Web Site				
Tichy Train Group Facility Tour (Fri 2 - 4pm)	201	\$5		
Tichy Train Group Facility Tour (Sat 10am - 12pm)	202	\$5		
Operate an NHVR Locomotive (30 minutes)	203	\$160		
Operate an NHVR Locomotive (60 minutes)	204	\$320		
Aberdeen & Rockfish Facilities Tour, Museum, and Layout				
Lunch Sandwich Selection: ___ Ham & Cheese ___ Turkey & Cheese ___ Club w/ Cheese	206	\$75		
Convention Shirt				
Regular: Small Medium Large XL	901-904	\$31		
2XL 3XL	905-906	\$35		
Tall: Small Medium Large XL	907-910	\$33		
2XL 3XL	911-912	\$39		
Convention Car N Scale Norfolk Southern 70-Ton 3-Bay Offset Hopper from Bluford Shops	921	\$25		
TOTAL			➔	
Would you like to be a contest judge at the convention – Circle YES or NO				
Have you been a contest judge in the past – Circle YES or NO				

Print registrations must be accompanied by check payable to **MER Conventions**. Send to: MER Conventions, PO Box 426, Sykesville, MD 21784-0426
 Any questions and/or additional information, contact the Convention Registrar: e-mail mer-registrar@mer-nmra.com or call (410) 442-0446.
Hotel – Marriott at Research Triangle Park, 4700 Guardian Drive, Durham, NC 27703, (919) 941-6200. Room Rate - \$79.00 per night + tax. To receive the convention room rate, contact the hotel directly and reference the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association.

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	<p>Executive Convention Chair (Acting): Gary Brown 757-641-7671 ecc@mer-nmra.com</p>		<p>MER Photographer: Jerry Lauchle, MMR 814-404-6955 photos@mer-nmra.com</p>		<p>Assistant Registrar: Jim Fisher 443-504-3919 jfisher@mer-nmra.com</p>
	<p>Past President: Kurt Thompson, MMR 410-507-3671 pastpresident@mer-nmra.com</p>				

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	<p>Potomac Division 2 Ernie Little, MMR super@potomac-nmra.org Division web page: potomac-nmra.org/</p>		<p>South Mountain Division 10 Bob Johnson southmountaindiv@gmail.com Division web page: http://www.smdnmra.org/</p>		<p>Carolina Piedmont Division 13 Charles Rausch, MMR (919)533-6054 crasch@mer-nmra.com Division web page: www.cpd13.org/</p>
	<p>Philadelphia Division 3 Joe Walters, MMR (302)521-5884 Josephwalters@yahoo.com Division web page: www.phillynmra.org</p>		<p>Susquehanna Division 11 Alan Mende (717) 469-1047 super@susquehannanmra.org Division web page: www.susquehannanmra.org</p>		<p>Chesapeake Division 14 Kirk Bateman (410) 442-0446 super@chesdiv-nmra.org Division web page: www.chesdiv-nmra.org</p>
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UPCOMING MER CONVENTIONS

- 2024 – Carolina Piedmont Division—“Piedmont Junction,” October 17-20, 2024, Marriot Hotel, Research Triangle Park, Durham, NC.
- 2025 —Philadelphia Division — October 16-19, 2025, Crown Plaza Hotel, King of Prussia, PA.

MER BOARD OF DIRECTORS and ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE

Board of Directors Meeting - 7 pm Oct. 17, 2024 - Marriot Hotel, Research Triangle Park, Durham, NC
 Annual Business Meeting - 10 am Oct. 20, 2024 - Marriot Hotel, Research Triangle Park, Durham, NC

From the Editor's Desk...



Running on Empty

By Greg Warth

As I'm trying to figure out what to write about today, I found this quote which seems appropriate: "The human brain is like a railroad freight car – guaranteed to have a certain capacity but often running on empty," – Found on the Net with no attribution by Burlington Bob, on ModelRailroadForums.com.

Dog Days

It's early on a hot Monday morning in August. These are called the "Dog Days of Summer," which traditionally refers to the hot, humid, sweltering weather that occurs this time of year from July 3 to August 11 in our latitude of the world. Like most everything else in our culture, the phrase originated somewhere in ancient Greece, Egypt, or Rome, referring to the rising of Sirius, the Dog Star, the brightest star in the sky, other than the sun. It becomes evident at sunrise this time of year. Sirius is part of the constellation Canis Majoris, otherwise known as the "Great Dog." Its presence was associated with the yearly flooding of the Nile and seemed to bring drought and disease. We later discovered that the increased prevalence of infection was not just a myth, but actually true. That's your trivia fact for the day.

Another Z scale Layout

I hate to blame our canine friends for bad weather and disease. I'd rather thank them for

giving me the excuse to stay indoors and begin working on my second Z scale layout, inside another... you guessed it...guitar case.

This time I'm using an old acoustic guitar case. Its shape presents a challenge in that it is not very conducive to a continuous running layout without using very tight curves that most SD-70s or Alco RS-2s won't run on. I'll have to use the older EMD F-unit diesels which are shorter, or the Z scale motors called "shorties," for which you have to buy a shell separately. Either that, or I'll just make it a point-to-point switching layout. I have some left-over Märklin tracks and turnouts from my last Z scale project, so I'll use that brand this time, but I'll have to buy more.

I've started by removing the small center compartment of the case used for storing capos, picks and other guitar accessories. I then cut two sheets of 1" foam board in the shape of the case and layered them in the bottom. In order to be able to cut them in the right shape, I laid the foam sheet on top of the open case and used a marker to trace around the edges of the case onto the foam sheet. This gave me a guide to use when cutting out the silhouettes with an electric foam cutter. I always like to use two or more sheets so that I can easily cut out rivers and valleys. I can also easily create two levels of train action, or landscaping, if I wish. Plus, a thick layer of foam board is an easy place to hide wires "underground." That's all I can do for now until my shipment of Märklin tracks arrives. I'll let you know how it goes in the next issue.

We need more articles! Looking for a few good layouts to feature.

I have not received many articles recently, so this issue will probably be a little thinner than the last one. I would love to get more articles featuring

layouts. You don't have to write a lot. Just send some good pictures and answer the following questions:

1. What scale is it?
2. What era or theme if any?
3. Freelanced or prototype?
4. How long did it take to build it?
5. What are the best features of your layout?

Make sure you sign-up for the Convention if you haven't already.

Based on the previews, it's going to be a humdinger! You won't want to miss it. Here is the Convention website: <https://piedmontjunction.cpd13.org/>
Check out the final Convention preview article for the year in this issue.

And Speaking of Humdingers

Learn more about adding details to your railcar. If you are submitting a scratchbuilt railcar for an AP (Achievement Program) certificate, and if there is nothing on the bottom of it, you haven't finished. Martin Brechbiel, MMR finishes his four-part series of "Hit the Brakes" with the last two of those articles appearing here, exclusively, in *The Local*. John Arthur shows us how to make a scrap wheel load in case you didn't know what to do with all those plastic wheels you replaced. This is in keeping with the cardinal rule of model railroading: Never throw anything away! Check out our newest feature: "Editor's Picks," including the best stuff from the Divisions. We have two more Division Reports included here, and some railroad humor at the end. No...don't skip to the end now. You have to read everything else first.

Once again, I would like to thank our outstanding editorial staff for all their hard work, not only for this issue but for all they have done over the last several years:

Jack Dziadul

Alex Belida, MMR

Martin Brechbiel, MMR

And special thanks to all our authors. Without them, we would have nothing to show you.

Happy railroading,





NMRA Achievement Program Update

By Kurt Thompson, MMR
MER AP Manager

Kurt Thompson, MMR

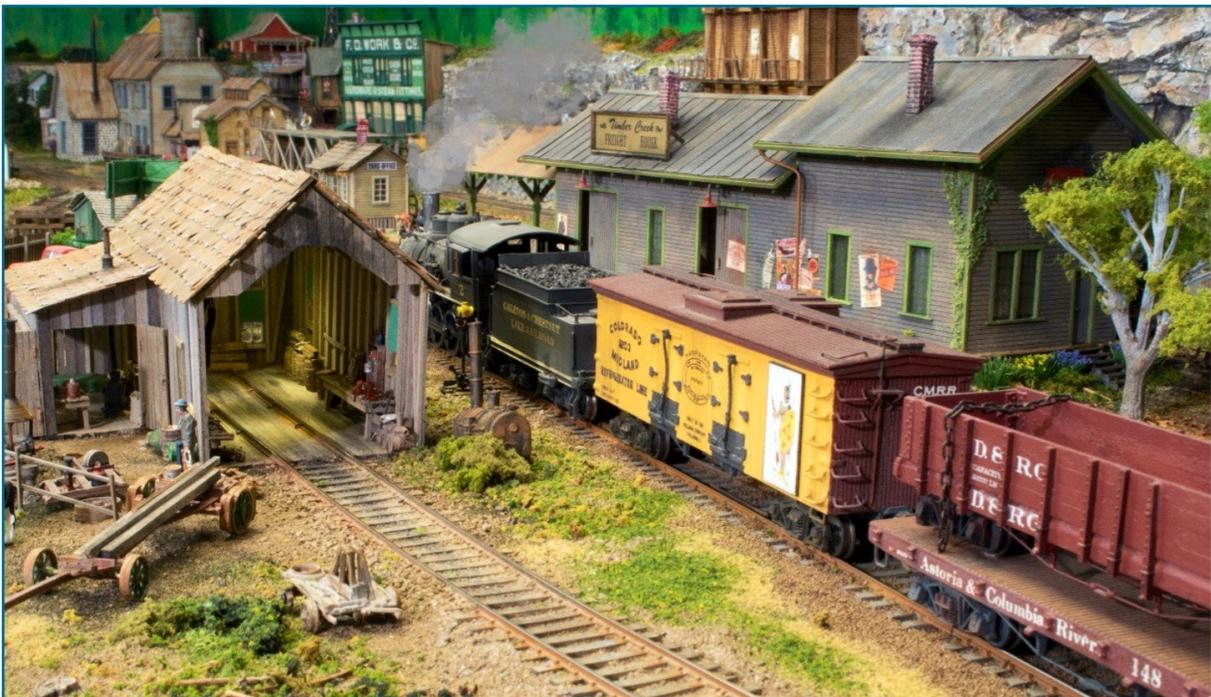
Since the last issue of *The Local*, the following members have earned the listed awards - both AP certificates and Golden Spike Awards. When you see them next, please congratulate them and if you're curious, ask them how they achieved these awards.

Division 3 - Philly

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Eric Hansmann | Model Railroad Author |
| Eric Hansmann | Association Official |
| Michael Junod | Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical |
| Joe Walters, MMR | Association Official |

Division 10 - South Mountain

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| John Pursell | Model Railroad Author |
| John Pursell | Master Builder - Structures |
-



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
1/2 Page - Color	\$60.00
1/4 Page - Color	\$35.00
Business Card	\$10.00
Text Only	\$7.00

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

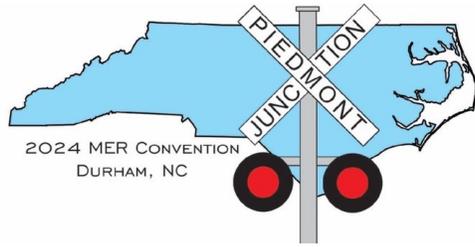
and photos that are accepted are published in approximately the order in which they were received.

How to Submit an Article for *The Local* (Please Follow These Steps Carefully!)

1. Please read the article written by Martin Brechbiel, MMR on "[Preparing Your Manuscript for Publication in The Local](#)."
2. Compose and submit your text in one of the following formats: TXT, DOC, or DOCX.
3. 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."
4. Your photos should be high resolution and very clear. We can-not accept photos that are fuzzy or out of focus. JPG, GIF, TIFF, and PNG formats are acceptable.
5. Please rename your photo files in the order you want them to appear, e.g., Photo-1.jpg, Photo-2.jpg, etc.
6. 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.
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Piedmont Junction

October 17-20, 2024

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Convention website for registration and all information



MMR Alex Belida's Climax

Hit the Brakes: Installing Brake Details on Models - Part 3

By Martin Brechbiel, MMR (Photos by the Author)

Somewhere along the way I noted that the prior two installations of both the K and AB brake systems were examples of the brake rigging and plumbing being above the center sill.¹ So then what kind of fun exists installing brake systems into cars where these parts end up being installed within or through the center sill? I'll very briefly relate how this worked using one such example that traveled through my shop this year.

I had two resin gondola kits on the project queue rack. One called for an AB brake system that traversed through the center sill while the other called for a split two component K brake system. Both kits posed challenges of different sorts for this installation. For this article I'll limit discussion to the Rails Unlimited kit for a PRR gondola with the AB system. I've laid out some white metal castings here, but there's no real defined mounting locations for the three components, nor any holes for the levers, rigging, or plumbing, and then there's no train line (**Photo 1**). Fortunately for me, though, this is resin and so reasonably amenable to having holes drilled and carved as needed.

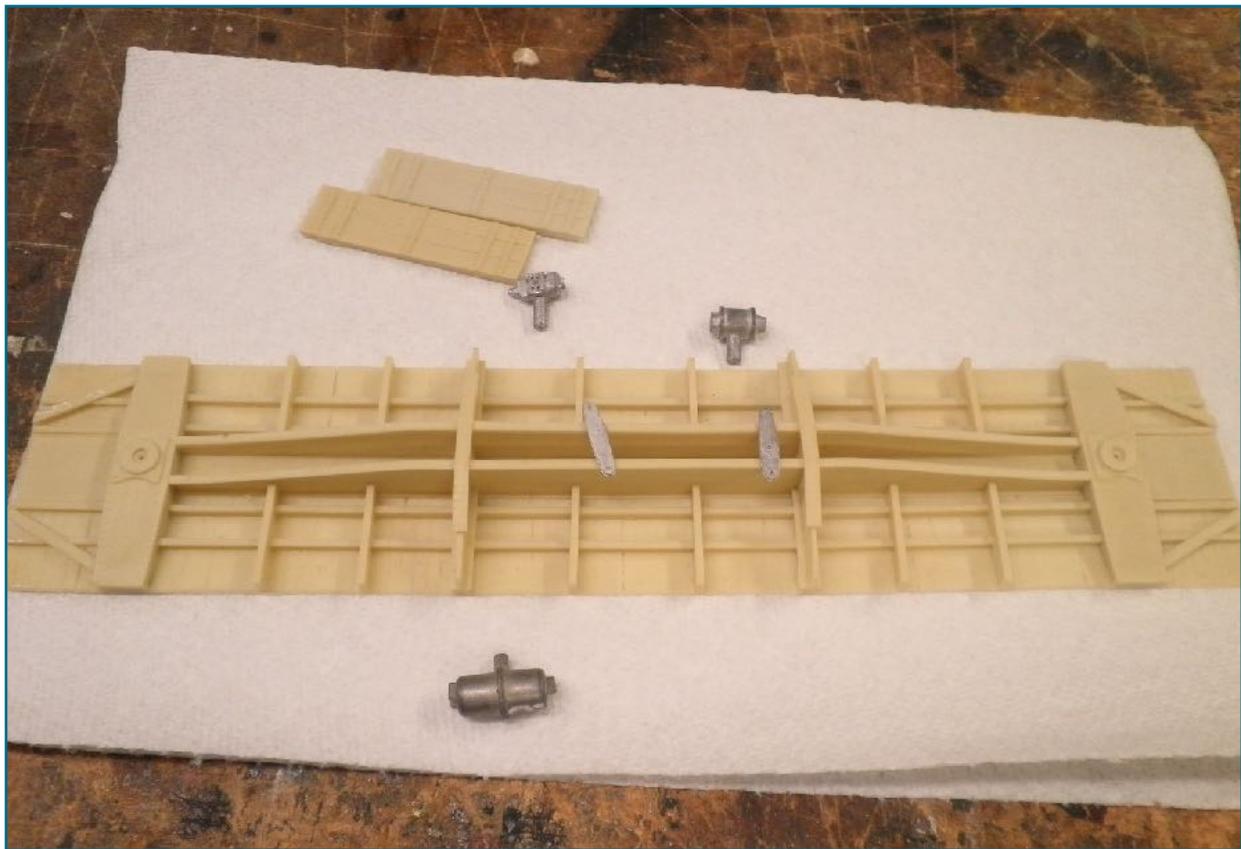


Photo 1

The first step was to do a little leg work to find a few relevant photos since the instructions that I had (shocking!) did not provide any useful information. What I did find were some underbody examples of some very nice higher end brass models good enough for this modeler to emulate. Running the train line was done by drilling holes through the car bolsters, and car frame supports, and through the center sill. The drilling is far easier than threading brass wire around the corners through the center sill, but with patience and a good hemostat and fine tip pliers, it's doable.

That done, installing the brake components required some thought and planning to find the relative height and position of every part before starting any more drilling or carving of resin. The brake cylinder has to sit high enough to connect to the brake wheel rigging. Also, it has to be close enough for the brake lever to pass through and out the other side of the center sill to connect there to the rigging line that runs to the truck at that end of the car. That makes this an exercise in three-dimensional positioning that I found best attacked by first assembling the brake cylinder attached to the brake lever. With that sub-unit in hand, I was able to test and fit visually where this part should be located and then mark the resin where all the additional holes were to be drilled and also where the holes for the brake lever through the center sill would have to be made.

Drilling holes for rigging is almost straightforward. But thinking ahead indicated that these holes needed to not only be big enough for the rigging to pass through, but also big enough to pass through the clevis on the ends. Adding these parts through larger holes intact with clevises pre-fabricated was going to be easier than bending wires around really tight corners or assembling clevises onto brass wire in place.

You can see in [Photo 2](#) that I added a little slice of styrene for the brake cylinder to rest on next to the center sill. Test fitting repeatedly with the brake cylinder showed where the slot in the center sill needed to be made on this side and then spotting from above where the corresponding slot had to be on the other side. The slot was made using a larger drill making three holes side-by-side and then connecting all those using a No. 11 scalpel to open and smooth that hole. That was done again with a lot of test fitting. When the openings were correct or "good enough," the brake cylinder with brake lever unit was mounted in place. Once there, the rigging to the truck and the brake wheel were also installed. The "fun" part was installing the other brake lever connecting the first lever inside the center sill. Locating this is straightforward. Opening up the slot on the one side was just a repeat exercise. This only has to be opened up very slightly on the other side of the sill as it does not pass through, but rather rests within the sill wall. Making a little "dimple" in the interior wall for the end of the lever to rest in helps in the assembling of the remaining brake rigging. Making the connecting rod is a test and fit exercise. Once you have it assembled, an expeditious application of CA is in order. Holding the connecting rod in place at the right height while passing the brake lever through the side of the sill to catch it with the clevis on the rod requires both patience and steady hands. That gets the brake rigging installed! Now it's time for the plumbing. I hate plumbing.

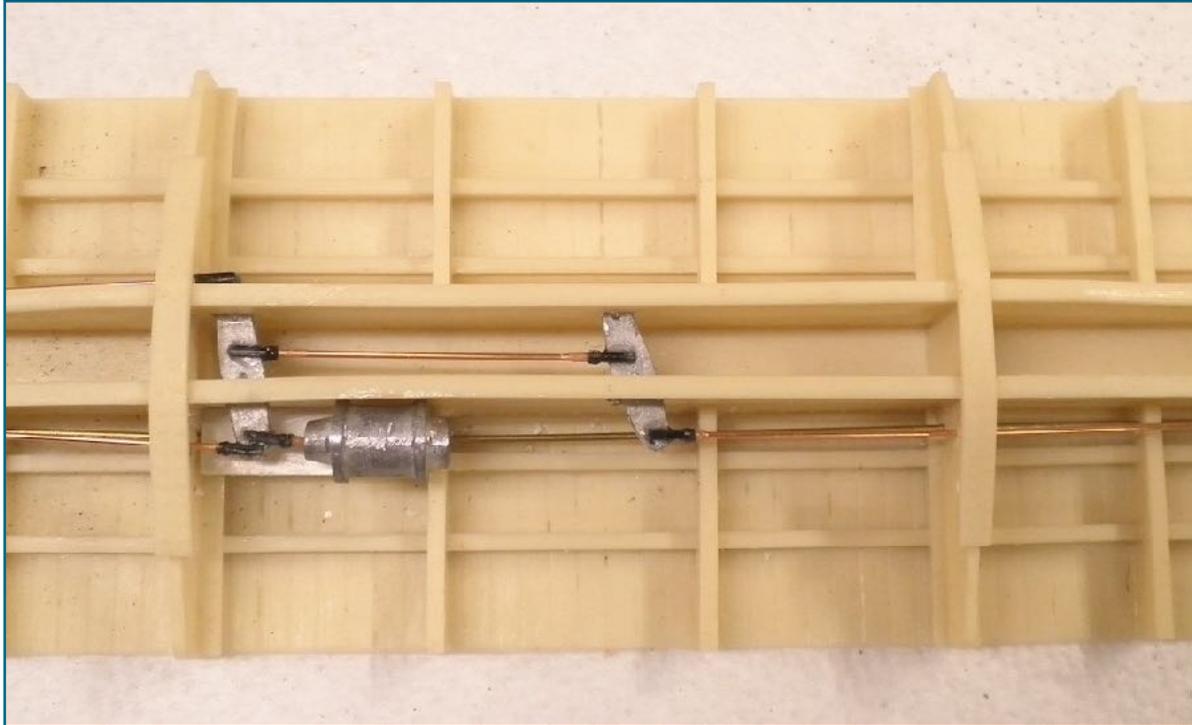


Photo 2

The plumbing here is essentially the same as in the prior article. Preparing the castings for wires to represent the plumbing by drilling the appropriate holes was covered therein. In sum, there's a connection to the triple valve to the brake cylinder and there's one from the triple valve to the train line. Those two are minimally challenging. The other two connections are between the triple valve and the air reservoir. So those two parts both need to be mounted to the underbody framing. One tip here is to try to make the connections line up as best as possible both in height and left/right alignment. You can see in [Photo 3](#) that I added some styrene mounting blocks and a platform for the reservoir and triple valve, respectively. I'm a little off to the right on the triple valve but height-wise pretty close. Drilling the two holes using the spacing from the reservoir keeps most of the wire bending on the one side of the center sill. This is just another cut, bend and test fit. Repeat until it fits right, and then CA into place.¹ A hemostat, some small flat pliers, and bottle of patience will get you to the finish line. Once painted, it looks correct and like it belongs right where you put it ([Photo 4](#)).



Photo 3

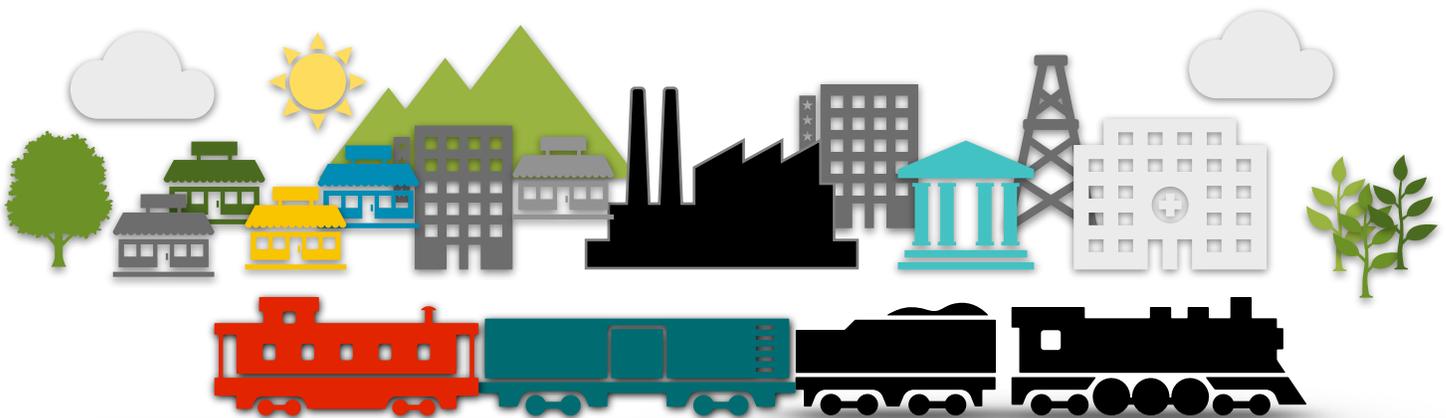


Photo 4

To wrap up, this might be a little more complicated than the prior brake system installments and it's still considerably simplified. But it does cure that naked underbody syndrome that your cars might be suffering from on the layout!

1 “Hit the Brakes - Installing Brake Details on Models,” by Martin Brechbiel, MMR, https://mer-nmra.com/MEReLocal_Files/2024/elocal-v79i01-2024JanFeb.pdf, p.45

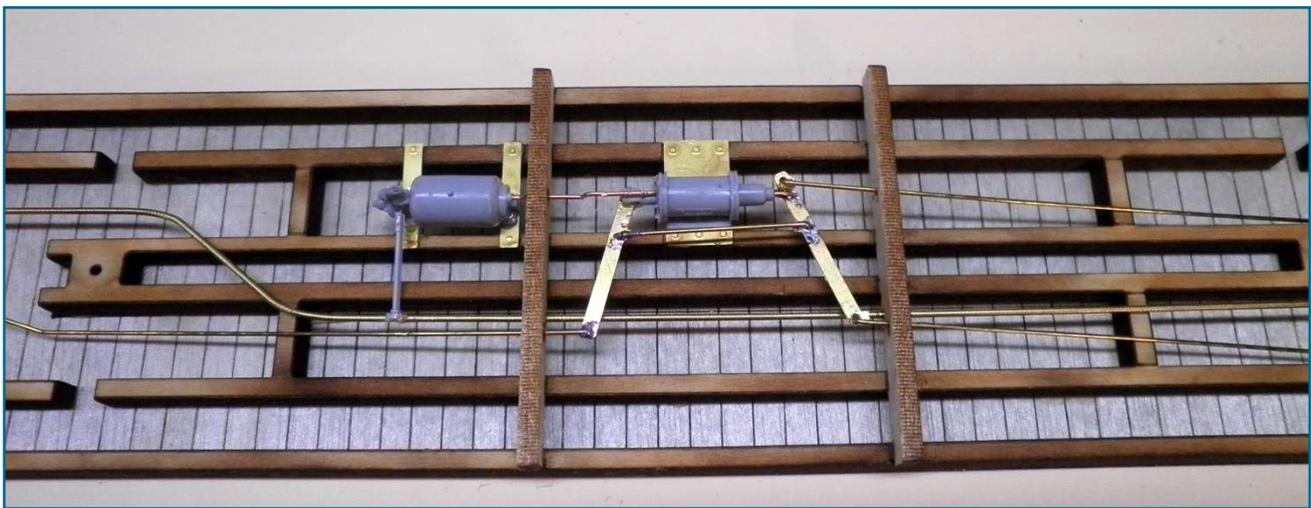
“Hit the Brakes - Installing Brake Details on Models - Part 2,” by Martin Brechbiel, MMR, https://mer-nmra.com/MEReLocal_Files/2024/elocal-v79i03-2024MayJun.pdf, p.32



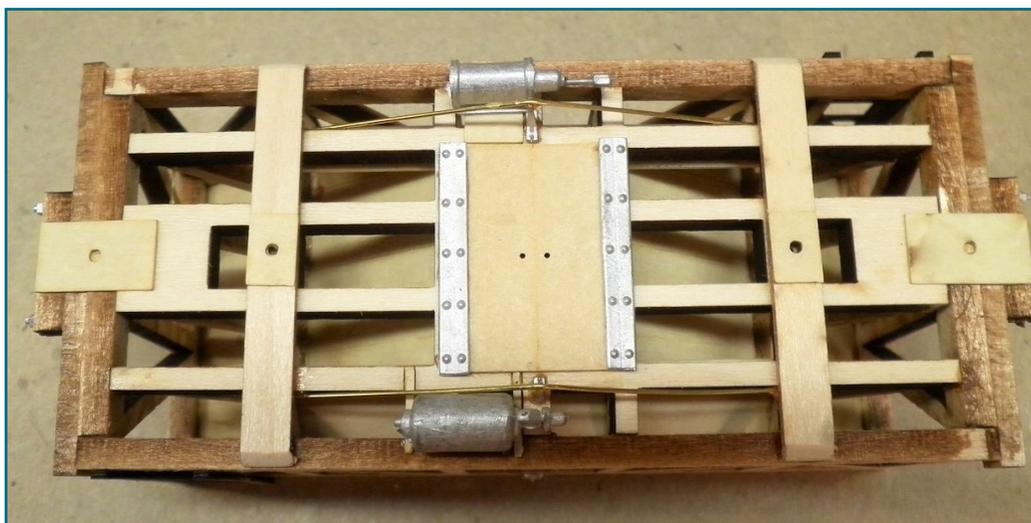
Hit the Brakes: Installing Brake Details on Models – Part 4

By Martin Brechbiel, MMR

Somewhere along the way, quite possibly in Part One* relating to K brake variants, I made note of a split K brake arrangement that might be seen under a car. In this article I'll circle back to that variant to illustrate one possible installation under a freight car. This arrangement also seems applicable to narrow gauge cars. **Pictures 1** and **2** show this variant installed under two narrow gauge kit cars that I recently completed, a Leadville Designs maintenance of way car and a Berkshire Valley ore car, respectively. The components for both of these underbody brake details were from Grandt Line.



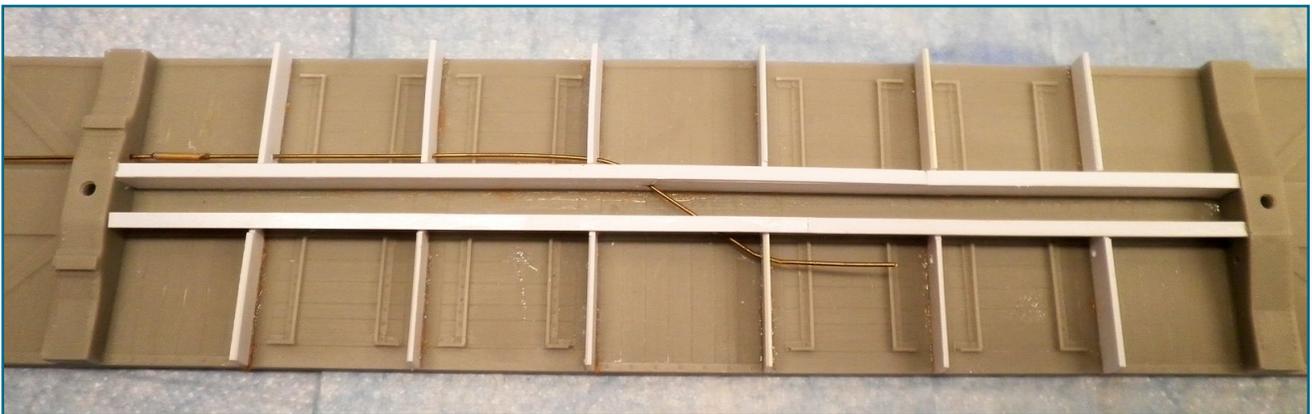
Picture 1



Picture 2

For this exercise, I was confronted with a Des Plains resin kit for a PRR gondola that, while missing the ends and all of the underbody parts, did however provide the precious instructions for their assembly as well as a nice diagram for this same K brake variant. The assembly of this car is another story unto itself, so the excerpt here is limited to the brake system.

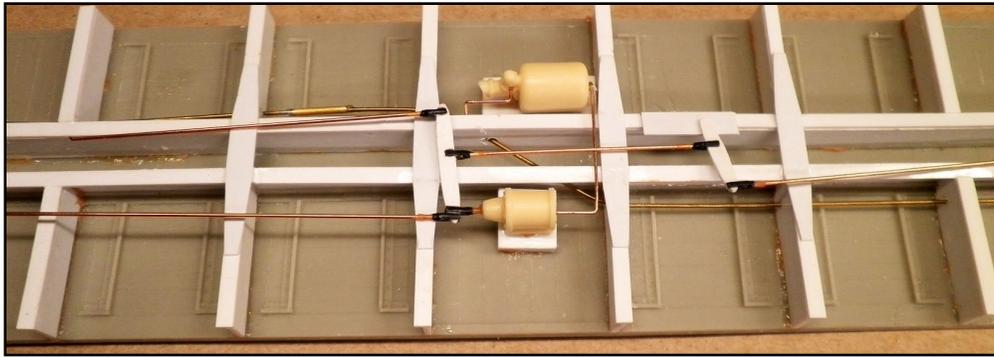
Perhaps the positive aspect of the missing parts in this project was that I could just make my own and while doing so, put the required holes in the cross supports and center sill as they were installed onto the resin floor casting. This was a lot easier to do at this stage as opposed to doing a complete retrofit. Still, bending 0.033" wire around corners was challenging and posed a probable damaging action to the styrene parts that I had added. So the train line was actually made up from three sections of brass wire joined together with 3/64" brass tubing making union joints ([Picture 3](#)).



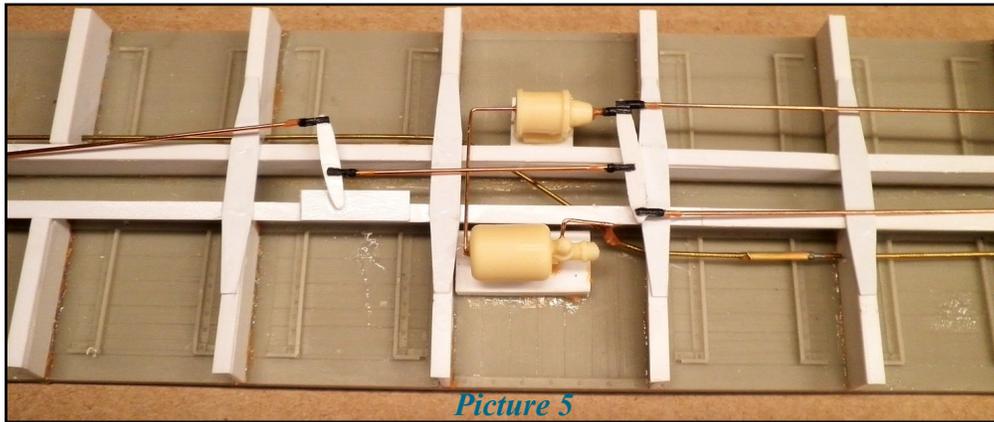
Picture 3

Building up the brake parts started with a resin casting of a full K brake that was cut into the two required parts with the parts sanded over to round the edges. Both parts needed platforms to mount them to the car body. Both parts also needed two holes drilled in them for accepting either rigging or plumbing. The height of the platforms was driven by the need for the brake levers (shaped from styrene) to rest just over the top of the center sill. The brake rigging was essentially the same pattern and fabricated as before from wire with clevises made from Grandt Line turnbuckles. But before making this installation complete, the plumbing connections between the brake cylinder, the air reservoir and valve casting had to be made as they were configured under the brake rigging. Once completed, the brake rigging could be finalized. A small bit of wire connected the air reservoir casting to the train line ([Pictures 4, 5](#)).

After that, it's time for a coat of paint which hides all sins and completed the underbody of this car ([Picture 6](#)). This also completes the series on this topic.....for now. So, adding all these details is really not hard to do and adds a lot of visual interest to your cars, and also adds a sense of completeness that you as a modeler can appreciate having done it all by yourself.



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6

* "Hit the Brakes - Installing Brake Details on Models," by Martin Brechbiel, MMR, https://mer-nmra.com/MEReLocal_Files/2024/elocal-v79i01-2024JanFeb.pdf, p.45



New Tracks Modeling - Scholarship Awards

By Jim Kellow, MMR



Several years ago, the [Walthers Company](#) became the first model railroad company to offer scholarships to young model railroaders. Walther's foresight and leadership combined with Phil Edholm's motivation caused me to start the New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship program in 2023.

The goal of the New Track Modeling Mentoring Scholarship (NTMMS) is to help model railroaders pursue their higher education in a STEAM discipline. I am extremely pleased to announce the three \$2,000.00 2024 New Tracks Modeling Mentoring Scholarship winners. [Here is a link to a video](#) of the presentations on our New Tracks Modeling's YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/1NA0SQyxJas?si=hAQIfKoYDt9OmT6W>

The Three Scholarship Winners are:

Ethan Prasad Bernstein, who just completed his junior year and is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from Johns Hopkins University. Ethan is the recipient of the scholarship sponsored by the Pacific Coast Region of the NMRA.

Brock Marion Durham is pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering at The Citadel.

Robert Daniel Winter will be entering the University of Washington this Fall in pursuit of a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Congratulations to our Three Winners!!

These three model railroaders, along with the other applicants, are the future leaders of our great Model Railroad hobby. We wish all of you the best of everything in your future careers and model railroading endeavors.

Individuals and Companies Whose Financial Donations Made these 2024 Scholarships Possible:

We greatly appreciate everyone's commitment to our young model railroader's education, particularly the viewers whose Donations of \$80.00 or less helped us match the Anonymous Donor's Special Challenge Grant of \$1,000.

Individual Donors

Rick Barton, Greg Cassidy, George Sebastian-Coleman, Bob Davidson, Jim Kellow, David Vaughn, Gary Kirby, LocoFi, Hank Primas, Ronald Przygodzki, Stuart Rankin, Travis Summit, Ronald Walters, Jeff Zibley, Sherri Johnson, Edward O'Rourke, Chris Coarse, Earl Hackett, John Stockton, Kenneth Amos Jr, Jack Dziadul, Phil Edholm, Michael Gorczynski, Bernard Offley, Pat Rivard, Christopher Gleason, Art Carlson, Daniel Brewer, Greg Warth, Gary Shurgold, Steven Provencher, Rich Randall, Kirk and Barbara Bucher, Dylan Lambert, and an Anonymous Donor.

Corporate Donors

We are pleased that the Pacific Coast Region of the NMRA contributed \$2,000 and were listed as a specific scholarship sponsor for one of the 2024 scholarships. In addition, we are pleased to have had four Corporate \$250.00 donors:

1. New Creations Victorian Railroad Buildings,LLC owned by Alan Rogers
2. Brennan's Model Railroading owned by Dennis Brennan
3. Great Scale Model Train Show (GSMTS) owned by Scott Geare
4. The Model Railroad Resource, LLC owned by Dan and Amy Dawdy

For more information or to make a donation to our next year's scholarships please visit our website:

<https://newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship/>

Modeling a Scrap Wheel Load

By John Arthur (Photos by the Author)

My HO scale layout includes a small Repair in Place (RIP) facility located in the industrial area immediately behind the yard. This is intended to add operational interest, receiving boxcars of parts, gondolas of new wheels, and empty gondolas for scrap loads; and it models where the prototype may have made minor repairs to rolling stock on the railroad. Modeling these outgoing scrap loads are what I'd like to discuss in this article.

I figured many of the repairs done here would be wheel replacements, and so I set out to model a load of outgoing scrap wheels to be sent off somewhere and presumably recycled. Around the same time I was considering this project, I had gone through the process of replacing any plastic wheels in all the rolling stock kits I had built with 33" metal wheels from various manufacturers, and this afforded a nice supply from which to model this load.

To make a base for the load, I used styrene from a "FOR SALE" sign. I like this as a source of cheap styrene for many different projects around the layout, including loads, custom-shaped roofs for kit-bashed structures, etc. To begin, I laid a gondola, typical of those that would be servicing the facility, upside down on the sign, marking the interior edges onto the styrene and cutting out the basic shape to match the inside of the gondola. Using plastic cement, I then attached a couple lengths of 1/8" styrene I-beam from Evergreen models, lengthwise along the bottom of the base. This serves two purposes, first to provide stability to the load base, so that it doesn't bend or warp and cause the details to pop off, but also lift the base off the bottom of the car so that I could use less of the detail material to fill the car. This is a good time to test fit the base and make any needed corrections.

I removed the wheels from the axles of the plastic wheelsets using sprue cutters to simply cut them off at the base of the wheel, saving both the axles and the wheels. As the plastic wheels are not made of styrene, plastic cement would not hold them to the base, so now, using super glue, I began to glue wheels and axles at random all around the base. I added several layers of wheels and axles, gluing each to the top of the previous layer until little of the base was still visible. I tried to make it look random, as if the material had been thrown into the gondola haphazardly. In some cases, a wheel is at an angle, resting on the edge of another one. I also tried to load it down more over the axles than the center of the car. If you wanted to be a real rivet counter, which I did not, you could sand down the points on the ends of the wheels as these are not all that prototypical. For me, it was about approximating the effect rather than attempting to replicate, exactly, something I had seen on the rails.

To paint the load, I used a scrap piece of 1" x 2" wood as a handle, and masking tape to hold the load on from the bottom. This allowed me to paint the load from multiple angles as it was tricky to reach all the surfaces and I did not want any bright red or white from the sign to show through. To prime, I applied a couple thin coats of matte black spray paint from an inexpensive rattle can.

This was followed by a dusting of Vallejo Hobby Spray “Panzer Grey” to further flatten the tone, provide some highlights for depth, and make it begin to appear “steel-like.”



Photo 1 – After spraying with matte black and Vallejo Hobby Spray “Panzer.”

For weathering effects, I used “Grimy Black” over the base coats and then applied “Rusty Brown” and “Real Rust” from Scenery Solutions at random to give it a rusty look. I used these on both the parts of the base that were still visible as well as the wheels and axles comprising the load itself. These products contain solutions of ground up pigments, etc. suspended in isopropyl alcohol. The degree of pigment that is applied can be controlled by how much shaking is done, or how long it sits after shaking; a difference of 60 seconds changes the effect entirely. It is also helpful to simply dab the color on, and let it run and settle in the way water would as it creates rust; don’t try to paint with this product. This helps give a natural, uneven rusty look. Some wheels got treated with Real Rust, and some got Rusty Brown, giving some variety and making some wheels appear older than others.

Once the rust effects had all dried, I applied some Bragdon Enterprises Weathering Powders. I started by adding “Soot” to the base to tone down the rust that had dripped there, giving it a dead flat, but dirty grimy look, and set it apart from the load itself. I added “Medium Rust” powder to some wheels to give further variety and tone down some of the wheels that seemed a little too brown to my eye.

All in all, this was a fun project that only took two evenings to complete, utilized scraps I already had on hand, and added some visual interest to the cars coming and going from the RIP facility in South Yard.



Photo 2 – Finished scrap load sitting in a gondola that needs weathering – but that’s a future project!



Photo 3 – a close-up view of the wheels and broken bits of axle in the load, showing heavy rust and how the Scenery Solutions Rust products settle into low areas on their own.

Ronald H. Baile, MMR - In Memoriam



Ron Baile, MMR, Engineer

OBITUARY - On August 3, 2024, of Haddon Township, NJ, age 76 years. Beloved husband of nearly 54 years to Gwenne. Devoted Father of Christopher Baile. Dear brother of Melissa Baile and Dayl Baile (Linda). Also survived by several nieces and nephews. Ron was raised in Gloucester City, NJ, where he graduated from Gloucester City High School in 1966. He then served in the U.S. Army in the Signal Corps during Vietnam. After his service in the Army Ron went on to enjoy a lengthy career with NJ Bell Telephone which eventually became Verizon. After retirement at age 55, Ron continued to keep active. He had a love and passion for the railroad. He became a certified conductor and engineer on the Cape May Seashore Lines Railroad. Additionally, Ron was Master Model Railroader No. 496 in the National Model Railroad Association, past president of the Gateway Model RR Club, past board member of the Mid-East Region of the National Model Railroad Association, and past Secretary of the West

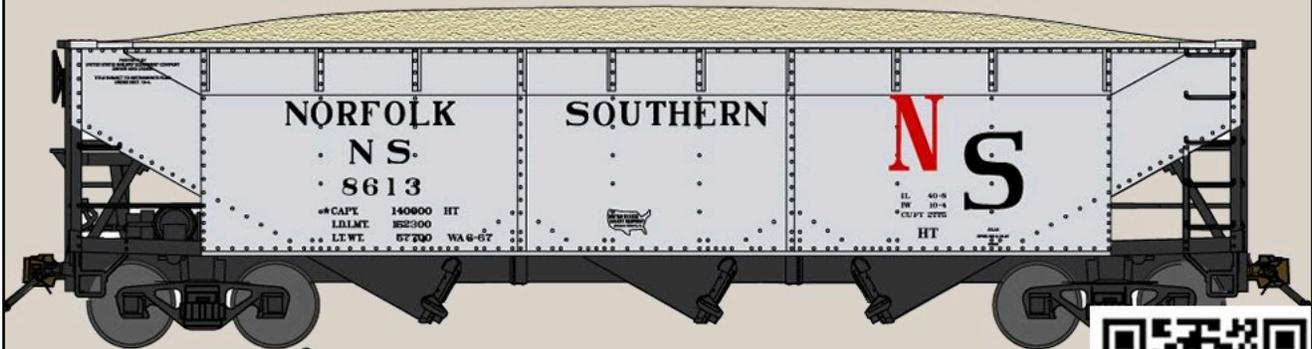
Jersey Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. Outside of the railroad, Ron was previously active with the Philly Fixers Guild, several historical societies, a past docent with the Gloucester City Historical Society Museum, and a past commander of the Gloucester City VFW Post 3620.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to either the West Jersey Chapter National Railway Historical Society, <https://wjcnrhs.square.site/product/donate/3>, or the Voorhees Animal Welfare Association, www.awanj.org. To express condolences, please visit www.njfuneralhome.net.

To order [memorial trees](#) or send flowers to the family in memory of Ronald H. Baile, please visit our [flower store](#).



Carolina Piedmont Division, Mid-Eastern Region



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<https://cpd13.org>



Low perspective on Steam Locomotive at B&O Museum in 2011 (Photo by Greg Warth).

Division Reports for 2023

-Submitted by VP Gary Brown

Prepared by Superintendents from each Division of the Mid-Eastern Region. These reports are printed as is without editing or corrections. Several of these reports were already published in the previous July / August 2024 edition of *The Local*. Here are two additional reports that did not make it into that last issue.

Yearly Division Report

Prepared by John V. Gallagher, Superintendent

New Jersey Division

January 2023 – December 2023

Division 1: New Jersey

Meeting Times and Locations – Formal meet with clinics, etc. 9AM-Noon; Layout tours

1 – 4 PM unless noted.

January 14, 2023 – Grace Episcopal Church, Merchantville, NJ

March 11, 2023 – Switlik Park, Yardville, NJ

May 13, 2023 – Joint Meet with the Garden State Division NER as host

County Facility, Hillsboro, NJ

August 5, 2023 – Special All-Day Meet, Switlik Park, Yardville, NJ

September 9, 2023 – Lacey united Methodist Church, Forked River NJ

November 11, 2023 – Joint Meet with the Philadelphia Division, MER as host,

Brandywine Towne Center, Wilmington, DE

Changes in Officers Plus AP Coordinator

No change in Officers.

One change in the AP Coordinator. Due to the passing of PJ Mattson, MMR, the division recruited Glyn Thomas, MMR as the new AP Coordinator and elevated the position to NJ Division Achievement Program Director. Glyn accepted the position.

Glyn Thomas, MMR; Titusville NJ [email the superintendent njdiv-super@gmail.com if contact information is needed.

Achievement Program Highlights

First, we celebrate the accomplishments of NJ division member Christopher Conaway, MMR #724. We look forward to his guidance and mentorship for he is an exceptional modeler,

With the new director of the Achievement Program, Glyn organized an all day workshop and invited Alan Mende of the Susquehanna Division to teach the tasks and techniques of judging for the achievement program. He covered the scoring of models using the AP matrix system to award points and how judges will coordinate their scores to improve validity and reliability among a judging team. About 10 members attended the workshop. Glyn will assign judging teams clustered by their geographical residences to reduce travel times to homes for judging various ap's. The division also began a judging program to take place during division meets. Members will be able to get models in motive power, cars and structures evaluated. This should increase the participation of members in their quest for Master Model Railroader. We are also increasing the number of members to complete the Golden Spike Certificate requirements. Finally, the board is considering the use of paperwork to give volunteer credits for work at meets done by members and organizing committees to perform division functions with volunteer credits recorded on paperwork as a record. Too often, members do work but don't get the credit. That is a failure in leadership.

Activities from the Past Year:

The division held the traditional five Saturday meets during the year. "Regular" meets included a morning session with two clinics of 45 minutes to one hour. Between the clinics, members had free time for socializing, shopping at swap tables and estate sales plus judging/voting for the contest and studying the door prize and raffle tables, We continue4 the "last chance" table where members bring modeling items they want to/need to get rid of. The table confirms that on person's junk is another's "treasure." Items not removed at the end of the meet go into the trash. We've observed members at the end of the day doing dumpster/trash can dives to retrieve some perceived treasure.

Afternoons of the meet day include visits to home layouts. Some of the best lessons happen from the observations and conversations about the work of the layout host. Joint layouts offer opportunities to visit layouts outside the division.

Special Projects or Working with Other Organizations.

The March meet at Switlik Park is reserved for the Works in Progress [WIP] format of clinics. Based on the concept of professional organizations who hold “Poster Sessions” or roundtable presentations of various topics simultaneously in a large room, the WIP offers four 30 minute clinics usually at round tables at the same time. Members must decide the topics they want to attend and have four opportunities to attend their choices. Clinic attendance is limited to 10. Generally, there are 8 to 10 clinic topics offered. It is much like middle school. A bell is rung at the end of the clinic time of 30 minutes and the members have 4 minutes to change “classes.” After two sessions, there is a break and then the two sessions of 30 minute WIP clinics are again offered. It is a win-win program for the clinicians earn one clinic credit toward the author AP and 3 credits toward the volunteer AP. Most clinics cover single topics and demonstrations. Some have been simple hands-on such as scratch building hay bales for your farm barn scene. Another benefit of the WIP is it can introduce a member to offering a clinic. The clinician is offering a modeling idea or technique much like showing a member a technique at his/her home workbench or layout. That confidence building leads to offering a clinic to a division audience. The division clinics director offers mentoring for this transition.

Any successful or new ideas that our division has tried that might be helpful to other divisions.

Assistant Superintendent Mike Prokop offered the idea of a “special” meet during the summer, an all-day event. We used Switlik Park’s facility that is available to township residents by reservation for free! Mike recommended that the meet have three regular clinics, a lunch for \$2 that included a sub sandwich*, a beverage, and a small bag of chips. [* In the Philadelphia/New Jersey area, they are called “hoagies.”] No leaving to go to a fast-food for lunch. Extras were available for those with big appetites for an additional cost. After lunch, there were raffles, door prizes sales at swap tables, the famous “last chance table” and an afternoon presentation by a guest speaker. He discussed the “Camden and Amboy Railroad,” an historic right of way that was the route of the PRR line in New Jersey. The division funded some of the food and leadership purchased items in bulk that was on sale at Costco’s. We had a good crowd with NMRA members coming from divisions some distance away. We will repeat this event this summer 2024.

Where, in your opinion, could MER provide support to our division?

Work on getting membership rosters to the divisions in a timely manner with simple formatted spreadsheets so we can extract member status for meet attendance and other tasks.

The MER may need to modify the format of regional conventions. The NJ Division regretfully had to back out of hosting the 2025 MER Convention because of the extremely high cost of hotels in our division boundaries after an 18 month search and visits to potential venues.

Superintendent’s Name and signature:

Signed: **John V. Gallagher, Superintendent, New Jersey Division, MER, NMRA, Inc.**

Yearly Division Report
Reporting Period: July 2023 – June 2024
Prepared by Bob Johnson, Superintendent

Division 10: South Mountain Division

Meeting Times and Places:

Second Sunday of month – September – March

Meetings are held at members’ homes, host clubs, etc.

Start time – 2:00 PM

First or second Saturday of April – Division Mini-Convention

Blue Ridge Summit Fire Hall Social building

9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Third Sunday of May (avoiding conflict with Mother’s Day)

Meeting held at a host members’ home, host clubs, etc.

Start time – 2:00 PM

June – August – not scheduled meetings – special activities scheduled as opportunities present

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

Superintendent – Bob Johnson (same as previous year)

Clerk – Alex Polimeni

540-532-6244

arpolimeni@gmail.com

Paymaster – Ray Price (same as previous year)

AP Coordinator – Jane Clarke (same as previous year)

Contact information:

Division e-mail -- No change from previous year Superintendent direct contact:

Bob Johnson

Phone – 301 606 5797

E-mail – rcyrilj@aol.com

Achievement Program highlights:

Minimal activity during past year – presented clinic on achievement program at annual mini-con

Activities from the past year:

Mini-convention – April

Group trip to East Broad Top RR – summer activity

Special Projects or working with other organizations:

Any successful or new ideas that your division has tried that might be helpful to other divisions.

NA

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

Coordinated region wide program to attract new members for the NMRA to include hobby shop promotions, press releases, canned articles for publication in various local newspapers

Superintendent's Name and Signature.

/S/ Robert C. Johnson

The Story Behind The US Standard Gauge

Submitted by Gerald Lauchle, MMR

The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used?

Well, because that's the way they built them in England, and English engineers designed the first US railroads. Why did the English build them like that?

Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the wagon tramways, and that's the gauge they used. So, why did they use that gauge then?

Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they had used for building wagons, which used that same wheel spacing. Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing?

Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break more often on some of the old, long distance roads in England . You see, that's the spacing of the wheel ruts. So who built those old rutted roads?

Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (including England) for their legions. Those roads have been used ever since.

And what about the ruts in the roads?

Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match or run the risk of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Therefore the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot. Bureaucracies live forever.

So the next time you are handed a specification/procedure/process and wonder 'What horse's ass came up with this?', you may be exactly right. Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses. (Two horses' asses.)

Now, the twist to the story:

When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains, and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system, was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's ass.

And you thought being a horse's ass wasn't important? Ancient horse's asses control almost everything.

[A nice story, but unfortunately, not true, according to the book *American Narrow Gauge*, by Dr. George Hilton. - Ed]

From the Divisions...

Branch Lines

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 and to their Division Websites for easy access:

Divisions	Newsletters
1 - New Jersey Division	<i>Train Orders</i>
2 - Potomac Division	<i>Potomac Flyer</i>
3 - Philadelphia Division	<i>The Dispatcher</i>
4 - Tidewater Division	<i>The Callboard</i>
5 - James River Division	<i>Crossties - Index</i>
10 - South Mountain Division	<i>Wheel Report</i>
11 - Susquehanna Division	<i>Sidetracks</i>
12 - Carolina Southern Division	<i>The Brass Pounder</i>
13 - Carolina Piedmont Division	<i>The Herald</i>
14 - Chesapeake Division	<i>The Relay</i>

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.
5. If you need help, watch the [YouTube Video](#).

Other NMRA Links:

[Bulletin](#)

[NMRA Partners \(Discounts\)](#)

[Events](#)

[Archives](#)

[Education](#)

[Turntable](#)

[Submit Articles](#)

[Videos](#)

[Clinics](#)

Editor's Picks:

Best Articles, Photos and Videos from the Divisions

I thought it might be interesting to pick out some of the best model railroading material from the Divisions that I have seen over the previous one-two months. This might include articles or photos from the most recent editions of the Division newsletters, good educational videos from You-Tube, or great models that I have seen at Division meetings or Conferences. If you see anything like this that impresses you, please send it in so I can include it here. It could be a scene from your layout or someone else's or a great model structure you've seen. This could be somewhat of a contest to see if what you send in makes it to the "Editor's Picks List." Your submission should include the modeler's name who did the project, who took the photo, the name of the submitter, and if possible a brief paragraph about it.

I'll get it started here:

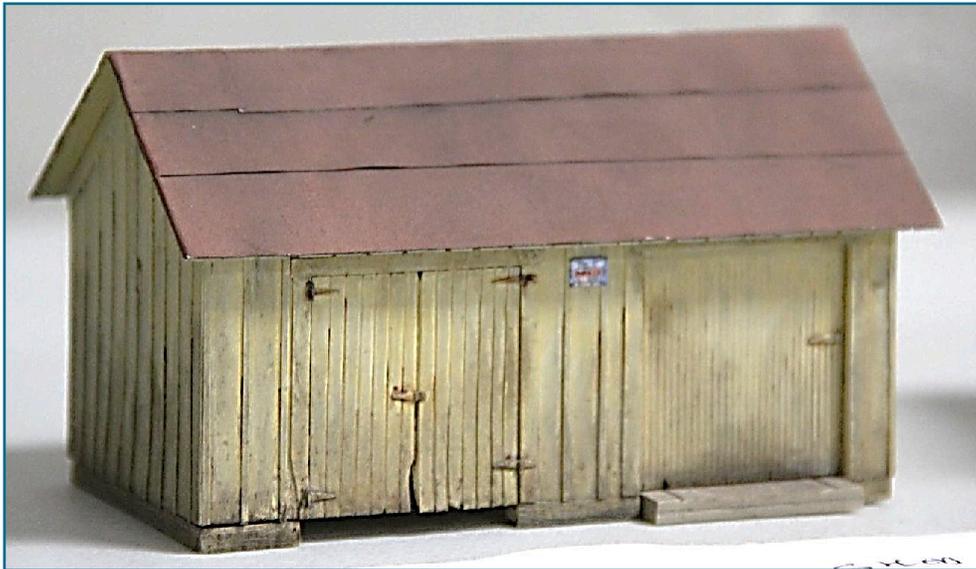
From the Philly Division Dispatcher (April 2024)

The first pick is a YouTube video showing an engineer's view of Rich Newmiller's Dresher Division Mainline Eastbound, <https://youtu.be/73Nt-VL3wps>.

Next is a photo of Andreas Nesemann's depiction of Frankfurt, Germany. More of these photos can be seen on page 20 of *The Dispatcher*.



Another pick from The April 2024 *Dispatcher*:



Santa Fe tool shed in S scale. Scratch built in styrene from own measurements and photographs by Alan Mende. Prototype located in Hurley, NM.

From the New Jersey Division, *Train Orders* (May 2024):

Weathered rolling stock
by Jack Menaker.



From the Potomac Division, *The Potomac Flyer* (May 2024):

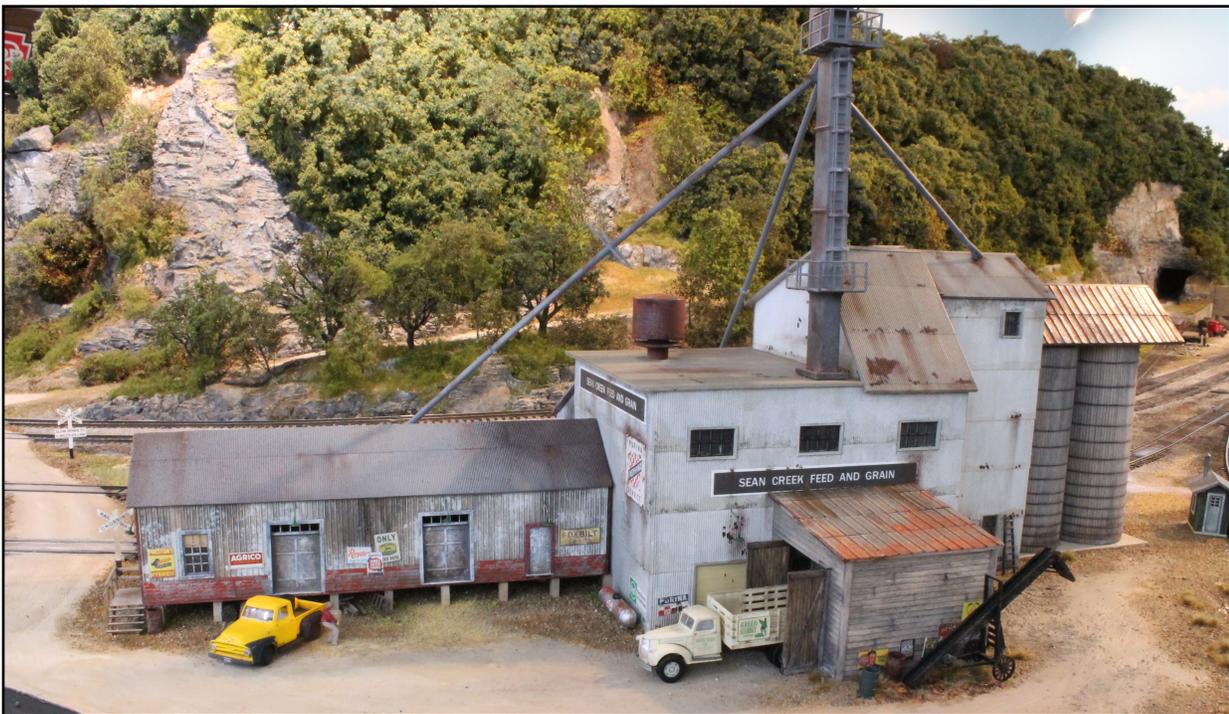
Congratulations to John Paganoni, MMR, whose Vermont Central layout is featured in *Great Model Railroads 2024* in an article written by Mat Thompson, MMR.

Congratulations also to Bernard Kempinski, MMR for his O scale USMRR Acquia Line featured on the cover of RMC (*Railroad Model Craftsman*).

[Check out the slide show of excellent models on the Potomac website!](#)



Mat Thompson's Plant



Dale Latham's Feed and Grain

From the Tidewater Division Callboard: (July 2024):



Lee Hall Depot: a replication of the surrounding area exactly as it was in the 1920s. All buildings were scratchbuilt to the exact scaled specifications of the originals. Built by Roger Bir, Dale Ridgeway, MMR, George Downer, Gary Brown, and Fred Humphrey.

From the Susquehanna Division Sidetracks (July 2024):



Great Northern HO Flatcar detailed from a Walthers kit by Dave Ellis.



HO Mantua Brass Engine kitbashed by Alan Mende.

From the Carolina Southern Division *Brass Pounder* (August 2024):



Barlow's Barbecue scratchbuilt by Keith Iritsky

From the Carolina Piedmont Division *The Herald* (August 2024):



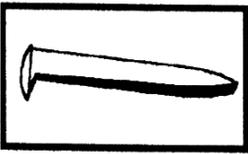
On3 Rio Grande Southern by Charles Rausche, MMR.

A promotional graphic for the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) featuring the text "Get more from your hobby" and the NMRA logo. The graphic includes several small images of model train layouts and a video player interface at the bottom.

Get Started with the Achievement Program

Start with the Golden Spike Award. Then you're on the way to your MMR.

[Learn more here...](#)

	<p>ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM GOLDEN SPIKE AWARD APPLICATION FORM FEBRUARY 2019</p>
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PLEASE COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION FORM AND SEND TO YOUR DIVISION OR REGION AP MANAGER

Member Name: _____ NMRA#: _____ Expiration: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State/Province: _____ Country: _____ Zip/Post Code: _____

Date Submitted: _____ Region: _____ Division: _____

- The Golden Spike Award (GSA) will be awarded to any NMRA member who completes the Qualifications Checklist, obtains the necessary signatures (Division AP Manager or some local NMRA member approved by the Division AP Manager), and if the applicant does not already hold MMR status.
- The GSA will be administered by the Division and Region AP Managers.
- AP requirements and definitions apply for scratch building and super-detailing.
- The Division AP Manager will submit the signed form to the Region AP Manager who will issue the Golden Spike Award certificate.
- The Region AP Manager will then forward the completed form to the National AP Manager so that an announcement can be made in the NMRA Magazine.

GOLDEN SPIKE AWARD QUALIFICATIONS CHECKLIST:

1. Rolling Stock (Motive Power & Cars):

Display six units of rolling stock either scratchbuilt, craftsman kits or superdetailed commercial kits.

2. Model Railroad Setting (Structures & Scenery)

Construct a minimum of eight square feet of model railroad or module(s) including scenery in any scale.

Construct five structures either scratchbuilt, craftsman kits or superdetailed commercial kits. If a module has less than five structures, additional structures separate from the scene may be presented.

3. Engineering (Civil & Electrical)

Three types of track are required (e.g. turnout, crossing, crossover, etc.). All must be properly ballasted and installed on proper roadbed. Commercial track may be used.

All installed track must be properly wired so that two trains can be operated simultaneously (e.g. double track main, single track main with sidings, and block or command or other form of control).

Provide any one additional electrical feature such as power operated turnouts, signaling, turnout indication, lighted buildings, etc.

Witness: _____ Name: _____ NMRA #: _____

Region AP Manager: _____ Region: _____

Back on Track...

Railroad Humor

By Greg Warth

How many model railroaders does it take to change a lightbulb?

Answer: 100

1 who actually changes the lightbulb.

89 who complain about the price of lightbulbs, how manufacturers are gouging everybody, and how they are not going to play their game anymore.

4 who claim you can make a lightbulb out of household materials.

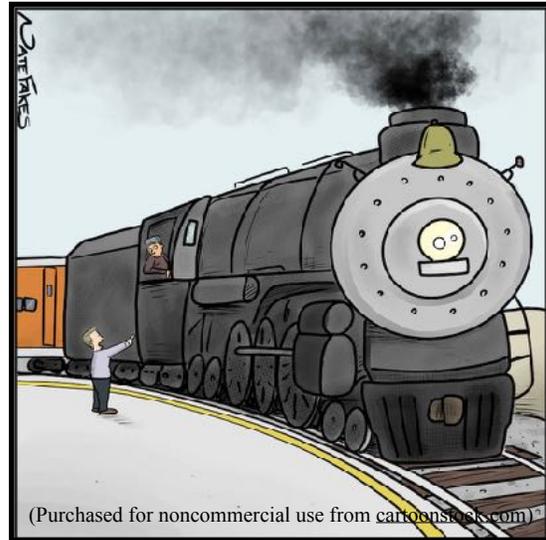
3 who rail against one company's bulbs that are not compatible with everyone else's light bulbs.

1 to take pictures.

1 to criticize how it's being done and who wants to quit the club because the club standards on lightbulbs should be a different brand.

And 1 who knows everything there is to know about lightbulbs, their history, and eventual demise during the second Eisenhower administration. (Courtesy of the Model Railroader Forum)

My model railroad is my passion. It's also my obsession, my addiction, and my financial ruin. But mostly my passion.



“We need you to turn that off. This is a non-smoking train!”

A fired *Local Editor* took an “*ex-press*” train out of town (ousted from the press due to corny jokes).

On a slow train, a young woman passenger said to the conductor, "See here, Conductor, aren't we ever going to reach Chicago? You can see I'm far gone in pregnancy. Well, if we don't get to Chicago soon, you'll have to help deliver the baby." The Conductor stared at her in horror. "But madam, you shouldn't have got on the train in this condition." And the woman replied, "I didn't."

We hope you enjoyed this issue of *The Local*. Please continue to send in your original articles. Let us know what you are working on. Whatever it is, if it's related to model railroading, I am sure it will be of interest to the rest of us. If you want to learn more about any particular topic, let us know about that as well. We'll do our best to research it and write about it.

Thanks again to our fantastic [editorial staff](#) for their assistance in putting this together. The quality of these issues is largely due to their expertise and wisdom.