



# THE DISPATCHER

Official Publication of the Philadelphia Division  
Mid-Eastern Region  
National Model Railroad Association



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## \*\*\* SPECIAL ELECTION EXTRA \*\*\* BALLOT ENCLOSED

Greetings, NMRA members! This special Election Extra Edition of our newsletter, *The Dispatcher*, has been mailed to all Philadelphia Division members. (The issue is also available (in color) on our website at [www.phillynmra.org](http://www.phillynmra.org). Any paid-up NMRA member in good standing residing in the Pennsylvania counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia, or anywhere in the state of Delaware, is automatically a member of the Philadelphia Division of the NMRA and entitled to vote.

Each spring we hold elections for open positions on our Board of Directors. This year's election will take place at the annual business meeting just prior to the morning clinic session at the June 10, 2017 Division Meet to be held at the Plymouth Fire Company in Con-

shohocken, PA. A schedule of upcoming events can be found on page 3, and a summary of the meet itinerary and an area map can be found on the last page. Full details will be available in the upcoming May issue of *The Dispatcher* and on our Division website. The Division bylaws direct us to elect a total of seven board members for two-year terms, four positions of which on odd years, and the other three on even years. The board members then elect four officers from among themselves, while the remaining three serve as directors at large.

Below and on the following pages are the statements of each of the candidates running for office. On page 3 you will find a ballot to vote for the candidates of your choice. Please either mail the ballot to the address listed or bring it to the June 10th meeting.

### Candidates Bios and Statements



#### Charles Butsch

I began my fascination with trains with the family set of American Flyer trains during the Christmas season. During my teens I got a Gilbert HO train set and have been hooked on HO since.

In 1998 I had completed all my major home renovation projects and had served three years volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. It was time to satisfy my creative energies on something else. It started as a 5' x 8' platform in the basement where most layouts do, but ended moving to our third floor. Now the layout takes up most of the 15' x 30' space which includes the original platform from the basement, and I've three additional towns with industries and services to be supplied by not only the Reading Railway, but also the PRR. I have several grandkids who have shared my interest in trains over the years; my one granddaughter has even pulled wires for my DCC system. I think it's important to share our interest in railroading with the younger generations, not only because we enjoy it, but also because railroading is still an important means of transportation for America's goods and people.

Our membership can and should be reinforced with the inclusion of the younger generations. I have worked as a board member to encourage this growth as your assistant superintendent. If reelected to the board I will continue to work on this and to provide meaningful and entertaining programs for all our members.



#### John Seibert

I was born into model railroading. My earliest memories include the little HO layout that my Dad built when we lived in an apartment near Lansdale. Later he built other layouts in the basement of our house in Hatfield and encouraged his children to participate. As a result, all three Seibert siblings enjoy the hobby to this day. I enjoy operating on various local layouts and am part of a very active round-robin group consisting of members of the Philly Division that I have gotten to know through attending our meets. Construction on my third layout is about to commence: Another N-scale mid-1950s one that will once again be based on the Reading's Wilmington and Northern branch.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(John Seibert continued)*

I have always enjoyed the social aspect of model railroading as well as the satisfaction of a job well done on the layout. I strongly support the NMRA as the glue that holds the hobby together. The NMRA isn't just about standardization; it is a driving force for sharing ideas, advancing the hobby, and networking with people who share your passion. I am a firm believer that the Division is the important link that brings the NMRA to the grass roots level. During recent years, your division board has embarked on a program to reach out to members to become active within the division. We have also engaged other fellow model railroaders in the area to join the NMRA. This is paying off in many ways.

We are particularly pleased that over the past 4 years our attendance at meets has doubled and the number of new achievement certificate holders has risen well beyond our expectations. From our proactive solicitation we have enjoyed excellent clinics from new presenters from within our own division. Regular guys that you know. Maybe you could be one with a topic that you are passionate about. Let me know!

We are dedicated to continuously increasing the value the division brings to your membership in the NMRA. With your support, I would like to continue serving on the board and working to maintain your division as a source of pride for all of us. We always welcome your feedback on the job we have been doing.



### **Rob Hinkle**

I have been a model railroader since a very young age when each Christmas would involve a setup of a Lionel set around the tree. I visited a number of tourist railroads and museums growing up that influenced my interest in trains, as well as reading numerous library books around railroads. I drifted into and out of the hobby until I joined the NMRA in 2001. I attended my first NMRA national convention in Philadelphia in 2006 and have been a regular at conventions since then.

During the summer of 2008 I joined a round-robin group and started attending local division meets gathering valuable knowledge and meeting great people. The experience I've gained between the round-robin and division meets has been influential in the layout and operations planning of my currently-under-construction layout based on the Reading Company's Lebanon Valley Branch.

My goal for the division would be to look to expand membership and attendance at the division meets. I think the division has a lot of members that are willing to help each other out and I think we need to look towards social media sites to draw in members (young and old) who are getting back into the hobby and aren't sure what the NMRA and the Philadelphia Division can do for them. I will also be looking to increase operating opportunities in the division and working towards the planning of a successful 2019 MER Convention



### **Alden Smith**

I retired in January 1997 and almost immediately decided to re-enter the hobby. Actually, my wife urged me to get back "into trains." I had built a layout for my 3 year old son in 1964...guess who had the least interest??

Within a few months I had met a member of StARR Club in Newtown Square, attended a meeting, and joined. Prior to this, my layout construction had begun and through a book, I became interested in modeling the Western Maryland. My "day job" was layout construction. This was before any wide spread usage of DCC. After expanding my layout to a second room, DCC became a necessity. My focus, from the beginning, was scratch building structures. About 90% of them on my layout are scratch built. My Western Maryland layout is now 100% complete. It is an around the room, point-to-point

## **THE DISPATCHER**

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**Submissions:** THE DISPATCHER welcomes any model railroad- or railroad-related material. Members are encouraged to send in articles, letters to the editor, reviews, etc. The editor reserves the right to, when necessary, paraphrase small portions of the text in order to fit the space available.

**Next Issue:** May 2017. Due out approx. May.10<sup>th</sup>. Deadline: May. 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Online Subscription:** Free. Make sure the Clerk has your current e-mail address.

**Print/Mail Subscription (b&w, first 8 pages):** \$10.00 per yr. or \$2.00 per single issue. Send all print subscription applications, renewals, address changes, and payment to the **Treasurer**. Make checks payable to "Philadelphia Division, NMRA".

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concept set in 1950-1954 with 27 engines. I have begun a modest operating schedule with a few friends on a near weekly basis. I am a member of a local group, GAMR, and have been an NMRA member for a number of years. I have completed the Golden Spike requirements and have two recent APs in Structures and Scenery. I may complete other APs in the future. I have made a couple of presentations at NMRA local meetings and one at RPM and MER events. Also, I have authored a few articles for *The Dispatcher*.

Modeling has made my retirement very rewarding and meeting a lot of people who share a mutual interest is a big bonus. Helping to keep Philly NMRA moving forward would also be “rewarding.”



**Howard Kaplan**

As far back as I can remember I was bitten by the train bug and hoped I would some day have my own model railroad. Growing up I would pore through back issues of *Model Railroader* in the library, marveling at the amazing model railroads featured, and dreaming and planning. Then, in high school, using a self-designed track plan, I built an N-scale layout on a 4’ x 5’ sheet of plywood starting out with the power pack and rolling stock from an AHM train set I had received.

Unfortunately, when I went away to school, my younger brothers got hold of that layout and not surprisingly it didn’t last long. And as with many other folks, life just got in the way of building another. Nevertheless, to one extent or another I continued to remain active in the hobby and in 1981 joined the NMRA. Then, at the ’93 Valley Forge Express convention I learned of the existence of the Philadelphia Division and began attending their meets.

My ultimate goal would be to model the Reading Company in Philadelphia including a representation of the commuter system under catenary...in N scale! Yes, I know I’m crazy, but you can’t stop me from dreaming. Once I clean out the junk from my basement (a formidable task in and of itself) I hope to begin work on that project.

It has been an honor, privilege, and pleasure to have served on the board as the division treasurer, as well as having contributed in many other ways including managing the division’s website and helping with *The Dispatcher*. If reelected, I will continue to carry out my duties with diligence, and work toward helping the Philadelphia Division and the NMRA promote the same enthusiasm over trains and model railroading that I experienced growing up and still enjoy to this day.

**Planning Ahead – Division Meets & Other Upcoming Events**

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>April 27–30, 2017</b><br>East Coast Santa Fe Modelers Meet<br>Delaware Valley College<br>Doylestown, PA | <b>May 13, 2017</b><br>New Jersey Division Meet<br>Somerset County/Ted Blum 4-H Center<br>Bridgewater, NJ | <b>May 20, 2017</b><br>Susquehanna Division Meet<br>Christiana Freight Station<br>Christiana, PA |
| <b>June 10, 2017</b><br>Philadelphia Division Meet<br>Plymouth Fire Company<br>Conshohocken, PA            | <b>July 30–August 6, 2017</b><br>NMRA National Convention<br>The Rosen Plaza Hotel<br>Orlando, FL         | <b>September 9, 2017</b><br>Philadelphia Division Meet<br>TBA                                    |

Check <http://www.phillynmra.org/regional-timetable> for links to these and other upcoming events.

----- CUT HERE AND MAIL OR BRING TO MEET -----

|  |                      |  |                   |
|--|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>2017 Philadelphia Division Ballot</b>   |                      |  |                   |
| <b>Name:</b>   |                      |  |                   |
| <b>Email:</b>  |                      |  |                   |
| <p><b>NOTE:</b> Only paid-up, NMRA Philadelphia Division members in good standing may vote. Railpass members may not vote, having agreed to postpone that right until joining as full members.</p> <p>Please vote for <b>not more than four (4)</b> candidates for Board of Directors:</p> |                      | Detach ballot and bring to June meet or send to:<br><br><b>Mark Wallace, Clerk</b><br><b>665 Bonny Brook Ave.</b><br><b>Trappe, PA 19426-1913</b><br><br>Questions: 610-454-9510 or <a href="mailto:mwallace665@verizon.net">mwallace665@verizon.net</a><br><br><b>POSTMARK NO LATER THAN June 5th</b> |                   |
| _____ John Seibert   | _____ Charles Butsch |  | _____ Alden Smith |
| _____ Rob Hinkle   | _____ Howard Kaplan  |  | Write-in:         |

## JUNE MEET HIGHLIGHTS

**DATE:** Saturday, June 10, 2017

**LOCATION:** Plymouth Fire Company,  
1323 Colwell Lane,  
Conshohocken, PA 19428

**DOORS OPEN:** 8:30am

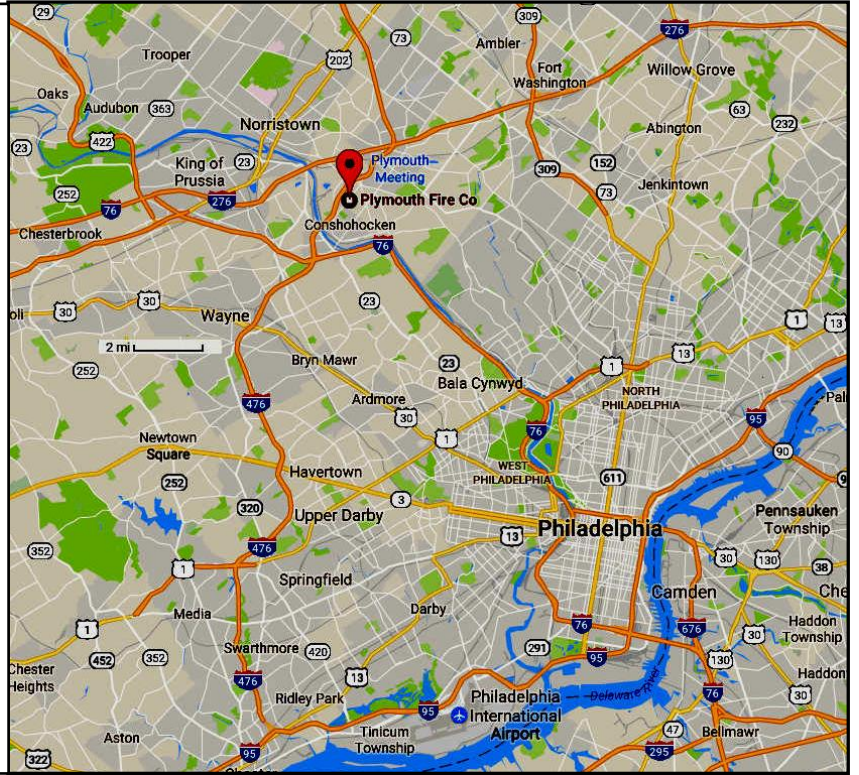
**MEETING BEGINS:** 9:00am

- Annual Business Meeting/Elections
- Clinic: DCC Layout Wiring
- Clinic: John Allen's Gorre & Daphetid, Part 2
- White Elephant Table – sell/buy stuff
- Display Table – bring your models/projects
- Door Prizes
- 50/50 Raffle – Take a chance and win half the pot
- Division shirts and patches for sale
- Refreshments: Coffee, tea, donuts, and Philly pretzels
- Afternoon open house layout tours

Come and join in the fun!

Complete details in the upcoming May issue of  
*The Dispatcher* or on the Division website at

<http://www.phillynmra.org/>



- Candidate Bios
- Election Ballot
- Upcoming Events
- June Meet Highlights

Inside:

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