



THE DISPATCH

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



March 2018

PhillyNMRA.org

Volume 25, No. 1

April Meet in Southampton

On Saturday April 7, we return to the Southampton Community Center, 913 Willow Street, Southampton, PA 18966. The time is 9:00am with doors opening at 8:30. Directions and maps can be found on page 7.

To start out, member Joe Walters will offer a clinic titled, ***"Scratch Building a 50' Boxcar in Styrene."*** The 50' boxcar was a staple of all railroads for decades, some outliving their home roads. Joe will discuss the ins and



outs of scratch building a 50' boxcar in styrene and two-part casting, including painting and decaling. He'll describe the techniques and tools needed to perform the task, as well as the difficulties he encountered along the way.

Joe is an accomplished model railroader who has zipped through the Achievement Program earning no less than five certificates in a very short period of time. He is well on his way to becoming a Master Model Railroader and is happy to help others on their AP journeys, as well.

Our second clinic will be given by member Mike Dettinger, who has titled it, ***"BlueRail: The Cure for the Rail Blues?"*** Blue Rail is an entry-level train control system that offers a number of operational possibilities. This clinic explores the BlueRail system by examining the technology, the entry costs, and its expansion potential. Topics will include:

- What is BlueRail?
- Who is target market for BlueRail?
- Who are the players in the BlueRail space?
- Where does BlueRail fit in the context of DC and DCC control systems?
- What can BlueRail do for me?
 - BlueRail Sound System.
 - BlueRail + Battery = DeadRail.
 - Micro Layout operation with BlueRail



BlueRail uses your smartphone to control trains. You may want to download the free BlueRail app for your smart phone in advance of the clinic.

Mike is what you might call a "fringe" modeler. If it's odd or obscure, he'll model it and put a decoder in it

and/or animate it. He has also contributed an article which can be found on page 4 of this issue.

As usual we'll have coffee, donuts, and Philly soft pretzels, the white elephant table, door prizes, 50/50 raffle, and a model display table. Members are encouraged to bring projects in any stage of completion to display and discuss if desired. A 2019 MER Convention meeting follows immediately after the conclusion of the meet.

The afternoon fare consists of open house layout tours. Hope to see you there!

Call for Nominations

Every spring, the Philadelphia Division holds its annual election for Board of Directors. There are seven total Board positions, three of which are open for election or re-election this year. The term is for two (2) years. The Board then elects officers from among the Directors. One of the board members will be stepping down, so this is your chance to become active. If interested, please contact a member of the nominating committee: Charles Butsch, Rob Hinkle, John Seibert, or Howard Kaplan. If elected office is too big a step, consider volunteering to chair or work on a committee. Any participation counts as credit toward your AP Volunteer certificate.



MER 2019 Convention Meeting

The next meeting of the MER 2019 Convention Committee will be held at approximately 12:00pm, immediately following the morning session of the meet at the Southampton Community. Anyone may participate even if you were unable to attend any of the past meetings. Note that participation in the MER convention counts twice as much toward your AP Volunteer certificate. Some chairmanships still need filling. See page 6 for the full convention report.

Layouts Wanted

Our June 9th meet will be held at a new location, the Philadelphia First Church of the Brethren in Wyndmoor, PA. This is at the northwest end of Cheltenham Avenue near Paper Mill Road. If anyone with a layout in any phase of construction, living within perhaps 10 to 15

(Continued on page 2)

Form 19



From the Super...

Well, the mystery of the Carbon County & Northern hopper cars has been solved. Two railroad detectives named Ken McCorry (Philly Division member) and Dennis Blank (frequent Susquehanna Division attendee and presenter at our meets) emailed me the answer. Apparently the cars were part of the Schuylkill Valley Model Railroad Club's fleet in Phoenixville, PA.

The SV sold cars at one of their open houses some time ago. I guess I purchased the two of them when my grandson and I toured their layout one cold winter. I remember waiting outside in line while my grandson played with some other kids who were waiting also. I had forgotten the purchase, but not the impressive layout.

It was fun investigating the cars' origin. It all started by looking online for possible locations of Carbon Counties across the country of which there were several. Then I contacted the manufacturer, Accurail. There I found some information that eliminated the western railroads and narrowed it to Pennsylvania. The final piece of the mystery was provided by two local MER members who had read my previous columns in *The Dispatcher*.

That is what is great about this hobby—no, not that anybody reads Form 19. But rather the sharing of information, skills, and experiences of the hobby that we have with each other. I can show you how I did something and you show how you could answer one of my questions. This sharing of knowledge, talents, and experiences enriches our hobby.

It is this sharing that has made our Division what it is today. Our clinics and fellowship have increased our meet attendance and participation in recent years—and not only with our own members, but also those from visiting neighbor divisions.

Hope to see you all on April 7th.

Charles

AP Report

by Dave Messer, MMR



I am very pleased to report that Adam Eyring has earned his Association Volunteer Certificate. This award is somewhat unique because this is for work for NMRA National, not the Philadelphia Division. Adam, who lives in Philadelphia, has worked for several years as a proofreader for the NMRA Magazine.

Also, because of health issues on the part of the National staff person handling AP paperwork, there has been an unduly long time processing material, but hopefully the situation will improve shortly with a new person taking over, and members will receive their certificates in a timely manner in the future.

Layouts Wanted – from page 1

minutes of that area would be willing to hold an open house for that meet, we would appreciate it if you could please contact Director Bill Fagan. Contact information can be found on page 2.

MER Halts Subsidies

Due to tight finances, the MER has announced that it will be suspending the subsidy of the RailPass trial NMRA membership as well as the matching funds it was offering divisions to help defray the costs of their programs. The RailPass is still available directly from the NMRA as a 9-month trial membership for \$19.95.

We Welcome Our New Philly Division Members

Alan Schultz, Settersville, PA
James Thompson, Wyoming, DE
Tom Carr, Newark, DE
Cindy Fields, Newark, DE
Alexa Kvande, Philadelphia, PA
Walter Miles, New Castle, DE

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 editors reserve the right to, when necessary, paraphrase portions of the text in order to fit the space available.

Next Issue: May 2018. Due out approx. May 9th. Deadline: April 24th.

Online Subscription: Free. Make sure the Clerk has your current e-mail address and that you keep your info updated at nmra.org/members.

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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January Meet Report

by Mark Wallace, Clerk



As a new twist to our Division's traditional joint meet with the New Jersey Division on January 13th, we met in a new venue, the Grace Episcopal Church's auditorium in Merchantville, NJ. While the venue was different, our gracious hosts, as usual, provided refreshments, coffee, and donuts, as well as swap tables, a model contest, and more.

Photos by Rob Hinkle

Starting us out, Jersey member Pete Suhmann offered his clinic titled, "Off Layout Car Float Staging." Pete developed his ideas for a flexible staging of rolling stock that you may find usable on your model railroad. He explained how and why a small layout can benefit from the addition of a "car-float staging" feature to a yard. He showed examples of prototype operations as well as methods building car floats from construction lumber, and float bridge and apron. He demonstrated a method for storing the car floats and transporting them without accidentally dropping the cars and damaging them. The floats actually are drawers used to store his rolling stock that provide a modeler with a creative way of staging.

During the intermission, announcements, and recognition, our Achievement Program Manager Dave Messer, MMR, presented certificates to Nick Brownsberger for Electrical and Scenery. Nick is yet another of our members working diligently toward earning his Master Model Railroader.



Philly AP Coordinator Dave Messer, MMR (left) presents AP certificates in Electrical and Scenery to Nick Brownsberger. Nick is yet another of our members working hard toward earning his MMR.



Clerk Mark Wallace and Treasurer Howard Kaplan man the front table

Our second clinician, a former Jersey and now Philly member, Bob Koury presented "Creating Focal Point Trees," a clinic that described his various approaches to modeling trees. In designing the scenery, Bob explained how trees can make a scene on your model layout pop and help add realism to your pike. He described how he separates trees and other scenic vegetation into two categories, mass vegetation covering large areas of your layout and focal point vegetation. Bob models the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific in California. His talk focused on how to think about and create focal point trees with various kinds of foliage typically found along the right of ways of these two great railroads. His approach provided model railroaders with another way to think about building scenery into a model railroad.

The afternoon featured open house tours at some excellent layouts. In addition, Grace Church is also home to the Cherry Valley Model Railroad Club that was open to visitors. Incidentally, for those interested readers, the club will host an "All Scale Swap Meet and Open House!" on Saturday, May 19, 2018 that is open to all.

A gracious thanks to New Jersey Division Superintendent Bill Grosse, Jr., Director of Clinics John Gallagher, their crew, and all our friends at the NJ Division, for inviting us and hosting the January Meet. This coming April 7th we will meet at the Southampton Community Center in Southampton, PA for another round of interesting clinics, vendors, and displays. Any model you might have in any stage of construction or prototype that you want to display or share, please bring it with you! There will be more about this event elsewhere in the Dispatcher and on our website. Should be fun and we'll see you then! 📞



Massive crowds at the swap tables

More meet coverage on page 15



The Secret Advantages of Three-Rail

by Michael B. Dettinger
Philadelphia Division, MER, NMRA

Mike Dettinger is a model railroader with a passion for oddities, DCC, and animation. He has modeled in a variety of unusual scales and gauges, and his animation projects are numerous. If it is obscure, he will build it and/or put a decoder in it. Mike is also a contributor on the "YouTube Model Builders Tech Show with Barry and Mike."

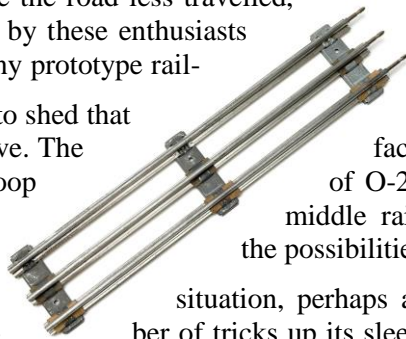
An interesting footnote in history: the first prototype electric train in 1879 used a centered third rail, much like the much-maligned, traditional, toy train three-rail track. History is regularly hidden, changed, or forgotten, but included in our discussion is this little tidbit to keep the interest of the rivet counters in our ranks. Mimicking a very short-lived, obscure prototype certainly does not merit a full article.

Today, if the third rail is mounted between the running rails, it is covered with plates and is visually similar in appearance to the cable car track in San Francisco. The third rail shoe would reach down below the wheels to contact the third rail—visually similar to the cable car's grip. However, this factoid is not the secret advantage that three-rail may be hiding from you.

In olden times, most model railroaders confessed to having three-rail serve as the catalyst for their adventure into the great hobby of model railroading. While the three-rail train around the Christmas tree (or other holiday topiary) is almost cliché, it is also disappearing. The popularity and availability of two-rail equipment at lower cost may even deprive the younger generation of model railroaders of the three-rail experience entirely.

For model railroaders, our story typically encounters the proverbial fork in the road. The most common path seems to be the forsaking of the third rail. The most common scenario involves what model railroaders would consider a graduation to smaller trains running on fewer rails. Philosophically, getting rid of the third rail is akin to taking off the training wheels on a bicycle. With the third rail removed, the chrysalis of toy trains can evolve into a beautiful butterfly of a model railroad empire. It is a coming-of-age story for one's modeling tastes and skills. However, some railroaders never lose that third rail. This seems to be the road less travelled, but it opens up a number of possibilities. There are truly scholarly volumes created by these enthusiasts documenting their favorite manufacturer with all the passion and thoroughness of any prototype railroad technical and historical society.

In my youth and haste I could not wait to shed that space. I was pretty impressionable and naïve. The on the same board that formerly held a loop was more to consider than just losing that opened my mind and allowed me to see



third rail and pack more trains in less fact that I could not put a circle of HO track of O-27 did not tip me off to the fact that there middle rail. Thankfully, life and a bit of nostalgia the possibilities that come with a third rail.

In that rush to change our modeling situation, perhaps a quest for realism, we forgot, or perhaps never even knew that three-rail has a number of tricks up its sleeve. By shedding the third rail, we also lost all of the built-in functionality that came with it—functionality that can easily be accomplished with creative wiring, but that would otherwise require electronics in a two-rail system.

For example, block detection on a three-rail system does not require any current sensing electronics. Once a train enters a block, an indicator light can be lit by using creative wiring. Crossbucks flash when a train is in a block and turn off when it exits just by using wiring tricks. And it is possible to have two trains run around the same circle of track with station stops and collision prevention logic—again only using a bit of creative track wiring.

So as the calendar inches ever closer to “’tis the season,” that dormant, nostalgic yen for three-rail trains returns. It can be considered a true seasonal disorder, as it happens about the same time every year, however a sun lamp doesn't help. The answer is a return to a simpler time of tube track screwed directly down on green painted plywood and Plasticville buildings. There's something really special about the constant noise and distinctive, foul-smelling smoke that can mollify the most hardened Grinch and bring peace and joy.

Since two-rail trains use the traditional DC color scheme to represent each rail—as the old mnemonic goes, “red and black to the track”—we look to the traditional AC color scheme to represent each rail in three-rail. After all, we do have the lovely voltage sine wave and three conductors just like typical 110 volt house wiring.

The middle rail is black. This leaves us to figure out which of the two outer rails is white or green. Looking at house wiring, ground (green) and neutral (white) theoretically have the same potential, but they serve two different functions.

For a section of track in isolation, the green and white labels are completely arbitrary. If you find that both the outer rails are electrically tied together with bus bars or metal cross ties, the green label is completely meaningless—in these systems, the rails will be more appropriately labeled white and white prime. Only in the context of a layout, or at the very least in reference to a transformer lock-on connection, do the green and white labels gain meaning. Only one outer rail is connected to the transformer and that rail becomes the white rail. The outer rail without a direct connection to the transformer will be called the green rail.

For our discussion, we will assume that the two outer rails are electrically isolated. In practice, this may require cutting a bus bar or insulating a metal crosstie or some other track modification. The good news is that only tracks required to perform a particular function need to have isolated outer rails. All other tracks are exempt from this modification and can be used right out of the box.

Generic Track Modifications Overview

In putting this section together, I had three guiding principles:

1. Maintain sectional portability. The track section itself needs to be self-contained. This ultimately leads to the employment of terminal screw strips for section interconnects.
2. Each track can be configured to perform any track function. The track functions will be described in detail later.
3. In the event that a rail needs to be isolated from the rest of the track, there needs to be a provision to electrically connect the two adjacent track sections via a bypass bus.

These three principles were designed preserve the portability and flexibility of each track section while having minimal impact on the electrical characteristics of the layout as a whole. This method unlocks the fullest potential of the modified track sections with configurable functionality.

At a high level, the modification follows the following general steps that follow. I will perform a deep dive for MTH RealTrax sections, however other track systems can be successfully modified along similar lines.

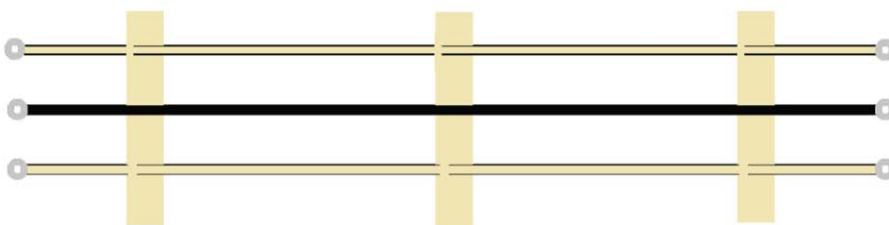
To follow along at home, and to see the words on this page come to life, modify two or three track sections as described below. As I explain the three functions, you can perform the required configuration changes and see the examples in person.

First, all three rails need to be electrically isolated before going any further.

The track interfaces on both sides of an outer rail need to be electrically isolated from the actual rail itself. This step will allow for the provision of a bypass bus and screw terminals for easy interconnections. The isolation is required for both ends of both outside rails, for a total of four isolation points.

Step 1

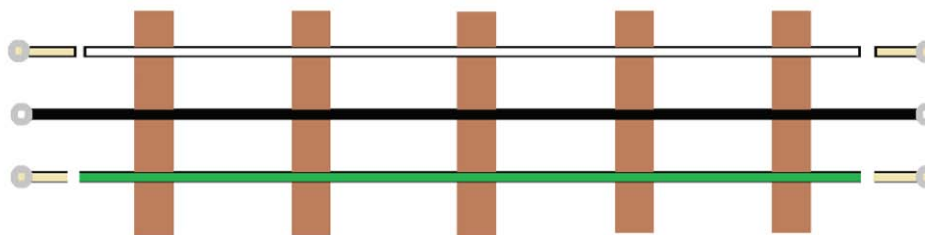
The outer rails need to be electrically isolated from each other.



Some track systems have metal ties or under roadbed bus bars that need to be cut in order to unlock the magic.

Step 2

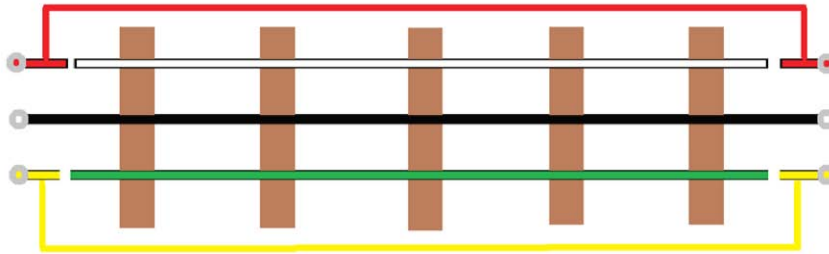
Isolate the track interconnection interfaces at each end for both outer rails.



Electrically connect the isolated track interconnects.

Step 3

Electrically connect the interfaces at each end for both outer rails.

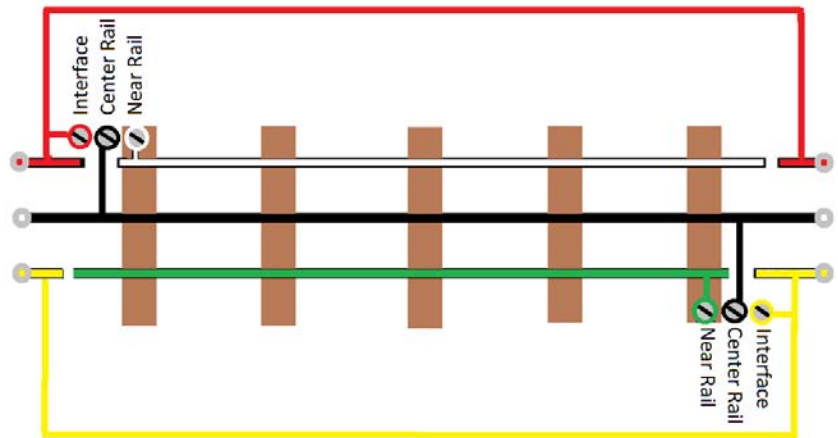


Terminals for the middle rail, each outer rail, and each interface pair should now be installed. My convention is to mount three screw lugs on each side of the track. The screw closest to the interface is for the interface. The screw lug in the middle exposes the center rail, and the remaining screw lug is for the isolated rail.

Continued on page 18

Step 4

Install a 3-position terminal strip on each end of the track. These terminals will make accessible the connection points of the interfaces, the isolated outer rails, and the center rails, and unlock the animation potential of rail three.



MER 2019 Convention Report

by Rob Hinkle, Convention Chairman

Greetings, fellow Division members. I wanted to give you an update as to our plans for the upcoming MER Fall 2019 Convention. Late last year the MER and the Philadelphia Division signed the agreement to host the convention at the Crowne Plaza in King of Prussia, PA. This hotel is located at a very central location in our Division, accessible by many major roads, and should allow our attendees to have a good chance to see many of our amazing layouts..

To help with the effort we have a number of committee heads working on various parts of the activities that we want to include to show off the best of our Division. Bill Fagan (wfagan@comcast.net) will be handling all of our layout open houses as part of the convention; he will provide a questionnaire to gather all of the details of your layout.

John Siebert (johnhseibert@comcast.net) and Earl Paine (earlpaine@verizon.net) are handling our clinics. In addition to the traditional clinics, we would like to present a series of hands-on clinics. If you are interested in presenting either type of clinic, please reach out to one of them.

Mark Wallace (mwallace665@verizon.net) will be coordinating our operating sessions. There are a large number of operating layouts in the Division which we are looking forward to showing off to interested operators from both our own and other regions of the NMRA.

Finally, we will need lots of volunteers to handle setup, monitoring of the white elephant and contest rooms, assisting clinicians, and making sure all the attendees' questions are answered. Charles Butsch (cabutsch@gmail.com) will be the primary coordinator of all of our volunteers.

We are also looking for various prototype tours that might be of interest to our attendees. If you have any contacts or just any general suggestions or comments, you can email me at 2019merconventionchair@gmail.com.

Thank you and we look forward to hosting a great convention and showing off the best of our Division. 📞

RETURN

Directions to the April Meet

From Northwest: PA-132 E to Pennsylvania Ave. (see "From West"- Pennsylvania Ave.)

From North: PA-232 S, turn right on PA-132 W to Willow St. (see "From East"- Willow St.)

From South: PA-232 N, left on PA-132 W to Willow St. (see "From East"-Willow St.)

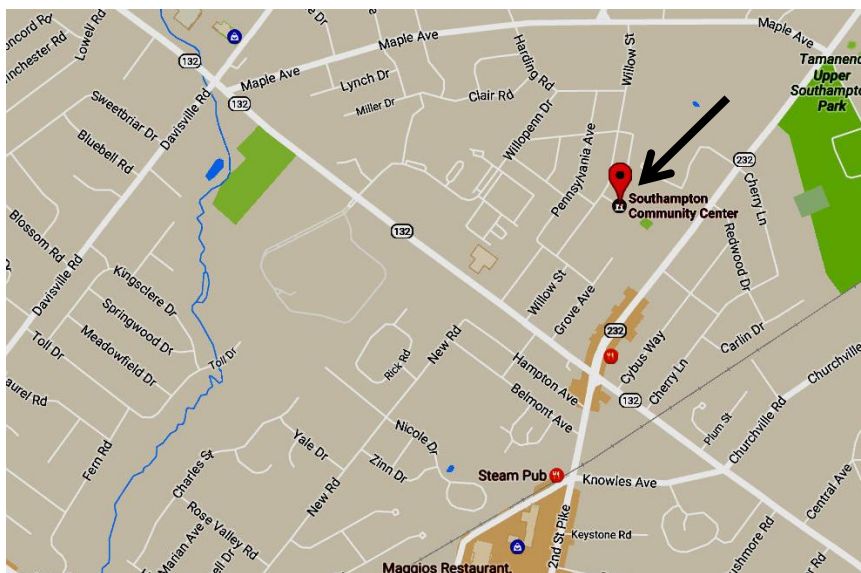
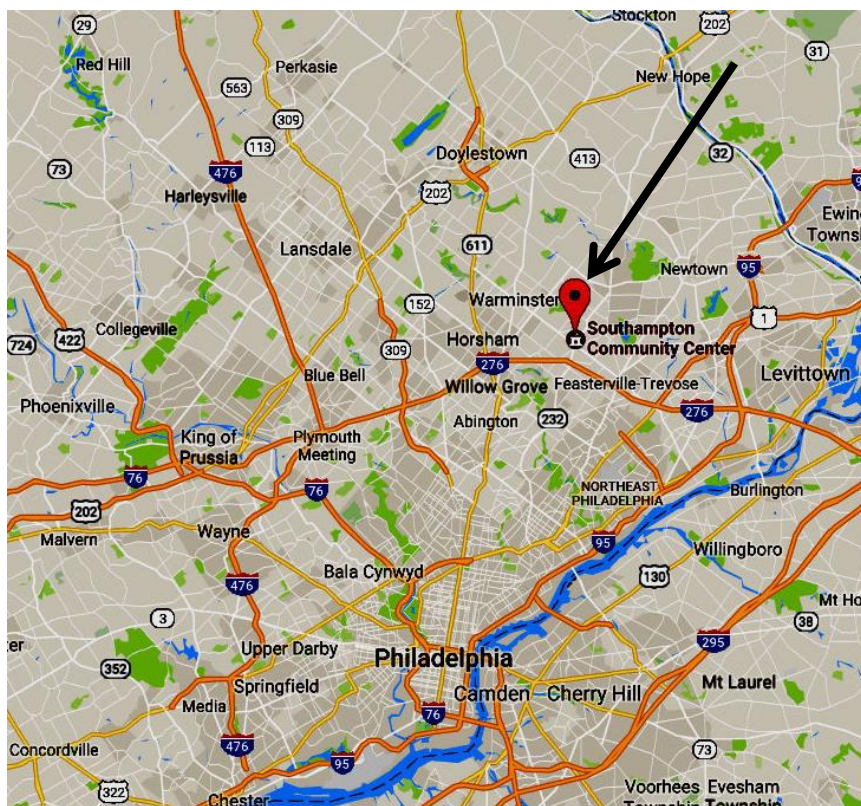
From East:

- PA TPK Exit 351/Bensalem - Take US-1 South
- Immediately exit right onto PA-132 W/E Street Rd 5.4 mi
- Cross PA-232, 2nd right onto Willow St.
- Turn right onto Willow St. 0.1 mi
- Turn left onto Moyer Rd. 157 ft
- Turn right onto Willow St. 0.2 mi
- Destination will be on the right

From West:

- PA TPK Exit 343/Willow Grove – Take US-611 North 0.1mi
- Take first right (after Sonic on right) – Mill Rd.
- Head southeast on Mill Rd. 0.9 mi
- Cross PA-263/Old York Rd. Name changes to Warminster Rd. 1.8 mi
- Turn right onto E. County Line Rd. 0.3 mi
- Turn left onto Newtown Rd 1.0 mi
- Turn right onto PA-132 E/Street Rd. 1.7mi
- Turn left onto Pennsylvania Ave. 0.1 mi
- Turn right onto Moyer Rd. 184 ft
- Turn left onto Willow St. 0.2 mi
- Destination will be on the right

Southampton Community Center
913 Willow Street
Southampton, PA 18966



Planning Ahead – Division Meets & Other Upcoming Events

March 23–25, 2018

RPM–Valley Forge
 Desmond Great Valley Hotel
 Malvern, PA

April 5-8, 2018

East Coast Santa Fe Modelers Meet
 Delaware Valley University
 Doylestown, PA

April 7, 2018

Philadelphia Division Meet
 Southampton Community Center
 Southampton, PA

May 5, 2018

Susquehanna Division Meet
 Bricktown Model Railroaders Assoc.
 Mount Union, PA

May 12, 2018

New Jersey/Garden State Division Meet
 Camp Evans/Info Age Museum.
 Wall, NJ

June 9, 2018

Philadelphia Division Meet
 Philadelphia First Church of the Brethren
 Wyndmoor, PA

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

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New members: New members receive one complementary printed copy.

Subscribers: If the date on your address label is circled or highlighted, please renew for uninterrupted service.

Discounts for NMRA Members at Local Hobby Shops

Be sure to patronize the following hobby shops that are now offering discounts on model railroading purchases to NMRA members:

Iron Horse Hobby Shop

60 South 6th Street
Reading, PA 19602
610-373-6927 ironhorsehobby.com
10% discount with \$10 min purchase

Henning's Trains

128 South Line Street
Lansdale, PA 19446
215-362-2442 henningstrains.com
10% in addition to already discounted prices

Nicholas Smith Trains

2343 West Chester Pike (PA-3)
Broomall, PA 19008
610-353-8585 nicholassmithtrains.com
10% discount (excludes O & G items)

Trainpops Attic

400 Mill Street
Bristol, PA 19007
215-788-2014 trainpops.com
10% discount

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ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS, SALE ITEMS & ORDER FORMS, NMRA NEWS, AND MORE!**
www.phillynmra.org

THE MER WANTS YOU!

NEEDED: Candidates for the positions of President, VP, Secretary, and Treasurer are up for election in 2018.

WHEN: The deadline for self-nomination is May 30th, 2018.

Any MER member can nominate him or herself by contacting and supplying to any member of the nominating com-

mittee the required photo and a 200 word (max) statement outlining his/her qualifications or desire for the position by May 30. Additionally, candidate may supply a 500 word statement for placement on the MER Web site.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Jack Dziadul (jackdziadul@gmail.com)

John Janosko (johnajan@embarqmail.com)

Bruce Barrett (greenjeeps2@yahoo.com)

If you are interested in giving something back to the hobby you thoroughly enjoy, this is your chance.

Successful completion of 3 years in any of these positions counts toward most of the requirement for the AP "Association Official" certificate.

Please respond in one e-mail to all three committee members to insure reception of your nomination!

Deadlines and Schedules for 2018 Nominations and Balloting

By-laws changes adopted in 2016 require the publication of deadlines and schedules for nominations and balloting for every year to be published in the first issue of The Local of that same year. The dates schedule for nominations, ballot and election results may be found in Executive Handbook, Section 5, Policies, Article VI. Here they are:

May 30, 2018 -- 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 7 -- 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 07/07 (the 7th 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 that record supplied to the MER, and the MER officials have not been informed by NMRA National of a valid renewal of membership by 07/07 (the 7th of July), such individual will not receive a ballot nor be permitted to vote in that year's election.

August 1, 2018 -- Deadline for mailing paper ballots to members and for commencing electronic voting. Could be mailed earlier depending on other deadline requirements.

September 4, 2018 -- Deadline for electronic voting, also last day as shown by postmark for mailing paper ballots.

September 8, 2018 -- Deadline for receipt by Balloting Committee of paper ballots sent by mail.

September 15, 2018 -- Deadline for Balloting Committee to transmit results to President the Director overseeing this committee, and the Business Manager.

September 22, 2018 -- 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 10, 2018 -- Deadline for publishing election results on MER-NMRA website.

Division Shirts & Patches



Short Sleeve Polo



Division Patch



Short Sleeve Button-Down Work Shirt
(name can be added)*



Long Sleeve Button-Down Work Shirt
(name can be added)*

* Name and patch positions reversed for shirts with pocket

ORDER FORM ON NEXT PAGE

For more information check out these websites and search for the appropriate model number:

Port Authority - www.portauthority.com

Polos: K500, K500P (pocket), K500LS (long sleeve), K500LSP (long sleeve w/pocket)

Button Down: S508 (short sleeve), S608 (long sleeve)

Gildan - www.gildan.com

Sweatshirts: Pullover (G180), Pullover w/hood (G185), Zip-up w/hood (G186)

Philadelphia Division Apparel Order Form

All apparel comes in **black** (the official Division color), with Division patch sewn and ironed on, and, if desired, first name embroidered

POLO: Port Authority "Silk Touch" 65/35 polyester/cotton, soft, comfortable, lightweight, virtually wrinkle-free, available in short or long sleeves, with or without pocket (K500, K500P, K500LS, K500LSP)

BUTTON-DOWN SHIRT: Port Authority "Easy Care" Twill, 55/45 cotton/polyester, available in short or long sleeves, both with pocket (S508, S608)

SWEATSHIRT: Gildan "Heavy Blend" 50/50 cotton/polyester, available in crown-neck pullover, pullover hoodie, and zip-up hoodie (G180, G185, G186)

Note: Larger sizes are available—just ask

Size	Price (subject to change)								
S-XL	16	18	21	23	21	21	13	17	21
2XL	18	20	23	25	23	23	15	18	23
3XL	20	22	26	28	25	25	17	19	26

Name		
Address		
City, St, Zip		
Phone		
Email		
Signature		
Mail to: PhillyNMRA Sales 620 Edmonds Ave., Drexel Hill, PA 19026		Questions: 610-626-4506 phillynmra@gmail.com

	No pocket	Pocket	Long Sleeve	Long Sleeve + pocket	Short Sleeve	Long Sleeve	Pullover	Pullover Hoodie	Zip-up Hoodie				
	Polo				Button-Down		Sweatshirt			First name as you'd like it to appear (if desired - add \$5 each shirt)	Qty	Price	Total
1													
2													
3													
4													
5													
											Patch @ \$3 each		
											SHIPPING: Shirts @ \$5 + \$2 each additional shirt Patches @ \$2 any quantity (ships free with shirt order)		
											PICKUP: Future meet or by special arrangement		
											Free		
Make check payable to: PHILA DIV NMRA							We accept PayPal —email for invoice: phillynmra@gmail.com				TOTAL		



Bill Fagan:

The Video Vigilante



I've been videoing model railroads for a few years now. Visiting layouts in California, Idaho, Maryland, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware – 146 layouts and 621 videos on YouTube. Here are some of the most recent:



← **Sundance Central MRRC –**
Sundance Central Railroad in Odesa, FL is comprised of four different railroads, an Fn3 scale and three On30 scale. The Fn3 is made up of 43 modules and is battery operated; the Silverton & Central On30 comprises 8 modules. These are moved as needed in a tractor trailer to train shows and conventions as far west as Portland, Oregon. The Muskrat Ramble and the Dolly Varden Mine are also modular, but usually remain at the home location. Railroad was started in 2004 and has 6 members with unsurpassed modeling skills. A must see if you are in the area.

John Trout →
HO Scale, Easy DCC, 15x40, 40 years in the making



← **Patcong Valley MRRC**
Located in Richland, NJ. HO Scale, Digitrax DCC, 56 years old in various locations, 24x70. 30 members running 5-8 trains at the same time with an average of 25 cars, highly detailed.

Tom Langford's Atlantic & Central Rwy →

Tom Langford's Atlantic & Southern Railway located in Orlando FL. HO Scale, 2 level (soon to be 3). Modeling central Florida in the fictional Tahope Country. 24" wide in a 20x50 train shed with a 10-level ovalix (new word for an oblong helix). Excellent scenery and building. Digitrax DCC with TCS WOW decoders.



← Curt Webb's PRR, Bellevue Subdivision

Curt Webb's Bellevue Sub Division PRR located in White Haven, FL. HO scale, is a 10x20, 42" high with operating signals, over 100 cars and 12 engines. 6 years in the making. Digitrax Zepher DCC.

Tom Wilson's Pennsylvania & West Virginia RR →

Located in Davenport, FL, HO scale. Lenz DCC, 18 years in the making. 2 levels. Lower level is the P&WV and the upper level is the Union RR connected by a helix. Op sessions require 9 operators and take 4-5 hours.



**Burlington County Model
Railroad Club** →

HO scale, NCE DCC control

On our layout we have not attempted to model any particular real-life scenes, but rather, typical railroad trackage and places, adapting them to fit the space we have available. And we do not attempt to model any one railroad exclusively. The locomotives and cars are lettered to represent real railroads—though many no longer exist—as



well as fictitious railroads. We call our miniature railroad the Rancocas Valley Lines, which is appropriate for this area. The original idea for this layout is to represent portions of a railroad that goes from tidewater to mountains, running through the typical station and industrial area of a large city, then countryside, while serving those industries that would use rail shipments.

We do not model a specific time period. This allows us to run steam locomotives and the latest diesels. But we try to run cars and locomotives of an era together, avoiding 1990s era cars being pulled by a steam locomotive. (And by the way, they're engines or locomotives, not "choo-choos"). We try to keep 4 trains running at all times on the main line and regularly send trains into siding or yards and bring out different ones. This requires 4 operators and a dispatcher for the main line operation, plus one operator at the freight yard, and one at the coal dumper.

The locomotives and cars are owned by the individual members, and the layout—the bench work, track, and scenery—are owned by the club. Each member contributes his/her effort according to personal talents and what phase of the hobby most appeals to that member. For example, the rotary coal dumper was custom built by a member who has substantial mechanical abilities. The electrical wiring and control panels are done by members who understand such things, and would rather do that than create trees and mountains. Generally, the buildings are constructed from kits and some have slight adaptations to better fit their location on the layout.

You can see these videos and other layouts on the Philly Division website: PHILLYNMRA.org—just click on Cab Ride Layout Videos.

If you want to see future videos send me your email address and I'll put you on the distribution list. Do you want your railroad or a friend's railroad videoed? Email me at bfagan777@hotmail.com.

More to follow in the next issue of *The Dispatcher*.

Enjoy,

Bill



Superintendent Bill Grosse and his Jersey members prepare for the morning session



Attendees peruse the swap tables



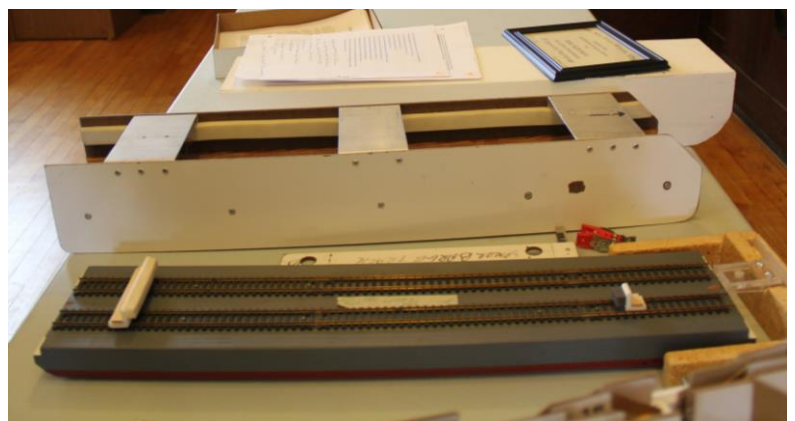
Yep, it happened again. Howard Kaplan spilled coffee all over the front table paperwork. We can't take him anywhere.



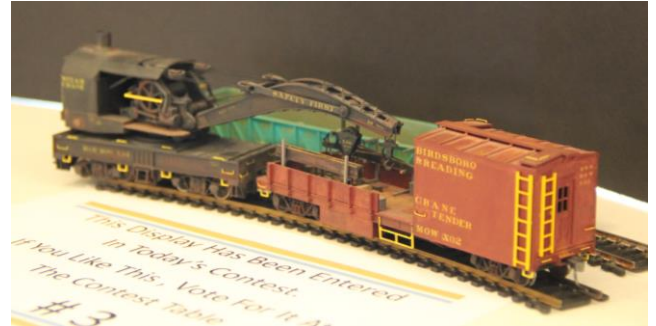
Materials used in Bob Koury's tree clinic



Car float displays from Pete Suhmann's clinic



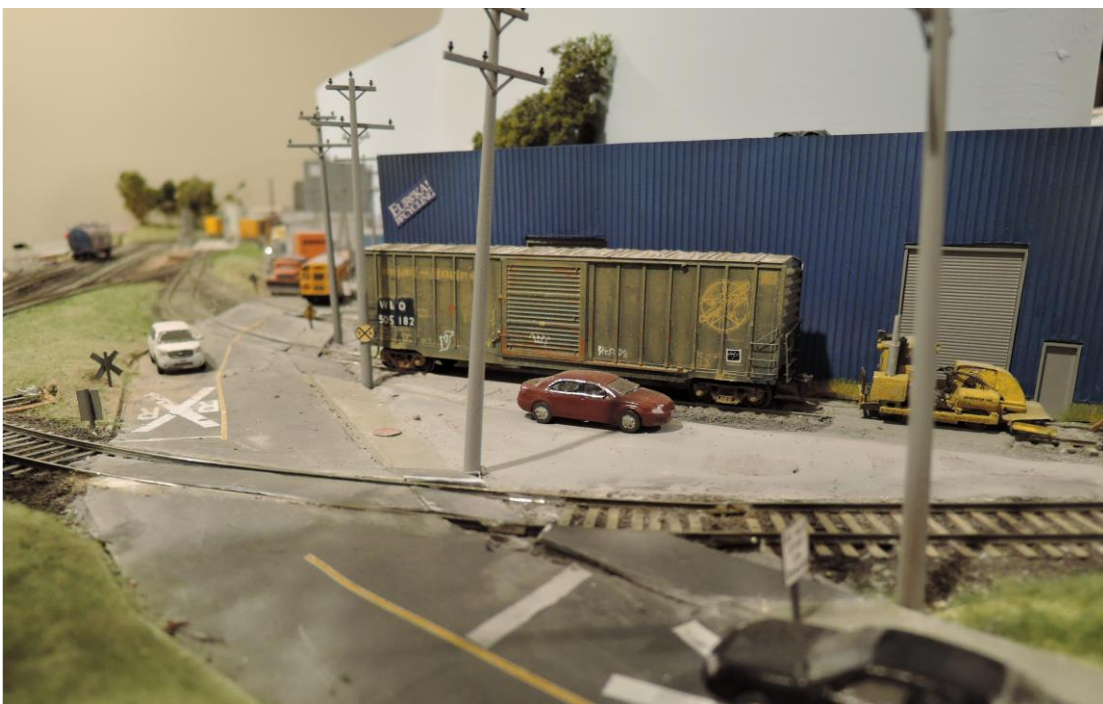
Contest Entries – Maintenance of Way Equipment



Jersey member Jack Menaker's display model



RETURN



Glyn's Hennepin Branch is based on the modern day Minnesota Commercial Railroad



RETURN

The Secret Advantages of Three-Rail – *continued from page 6*

Modification Path for M.T.H. RealTrax

M.T.H. RealTrax

In order to modify the track sections, begin by removing the knockouts located at both ends of the track.



RealTrax is a three-rail track system developed by M.T.H. Electric Trains designed for improved durability and simplicity of laying track.

1. RealTrax has all three rails electrically isolated out of the box, so we can move right to step two, which is to isolate the interface. At this time, you can knock out the two knockouts closest to each interface. This will be where the three-conductor terminal interfaces will be installed.

2. The interface for RealTrax takes the form of phosphor bronze clips that are attached to the rail underneath the roadbed and held in place with a plastic pin. To isolate, cut the top of the plastic pin and cut the phosphor bronze as close to the rail as possible. This step is repeated on both ends of both outer rails. Leave the center rail alone. When you are done, you will have a collection of four clips, which we will use again.

3. Use electrical tape to cover the exposed rail where the clip was connected. Cut the pin flush with the surrounding plastic and drill out the center with a number 50 drill. Since the plastic is soft, the 1/8" 2-56 screw will actually cut its own threads into the plastic when you screw down the clips in a future step.

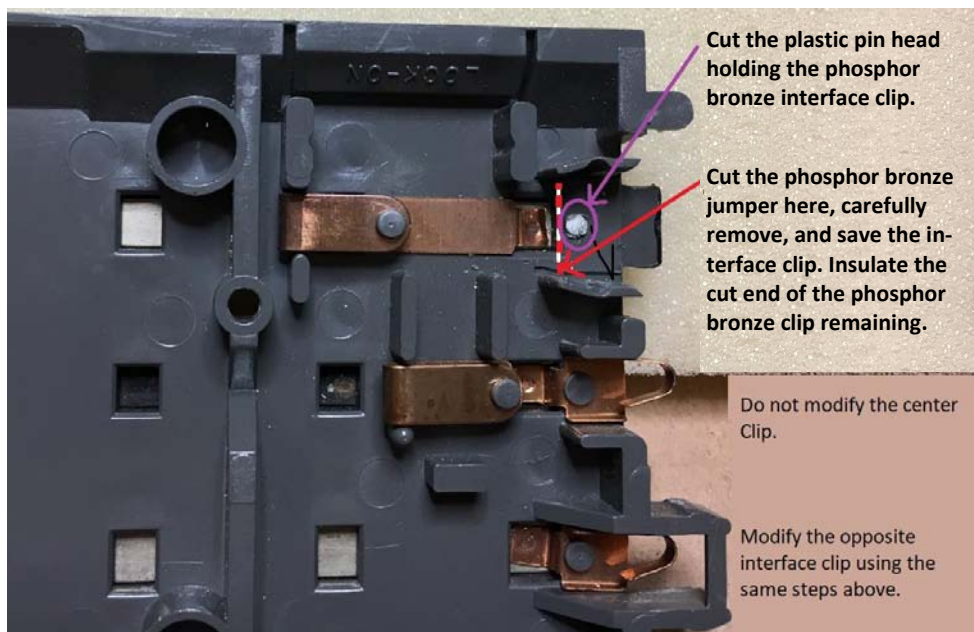
4. Using a length of wire a little longer than the length of the track, solder two of the phosphor bronze clips together. Solder a single 2" piece of wire to only one of the two clips that was just soldered – this little piece of wire will be used to connect to the terminal. This step needs to be repeated for the other two clips. I would strongly recommend using a different wire color to join the second pair of clips.

5. Solder a 2" piece of wire to the center rail and solder another 2" piece of wire to the isolated rail.

6. Using 1/8" 2-56 screws, screw both clips of the soldered clip assembly in place over one rail. Using the other wire and clip assembly, screw the clips in their former location on either side of the other rail. Note that the dangling short wire should be on the same end of the track as the wire attached directly to that rail.

7. Mount a three-conductor terminal in the area opened up by the knockout. Repeat at the other end.

8. Looking at the side of the track and starting with the terminal closest to the interface, connect the clip assembly. The middle terminal connects to the middle rail. The isolated outer rail connects to the remaining terminal. Rotate the track 180 degrees and repeat the wiring pattern.

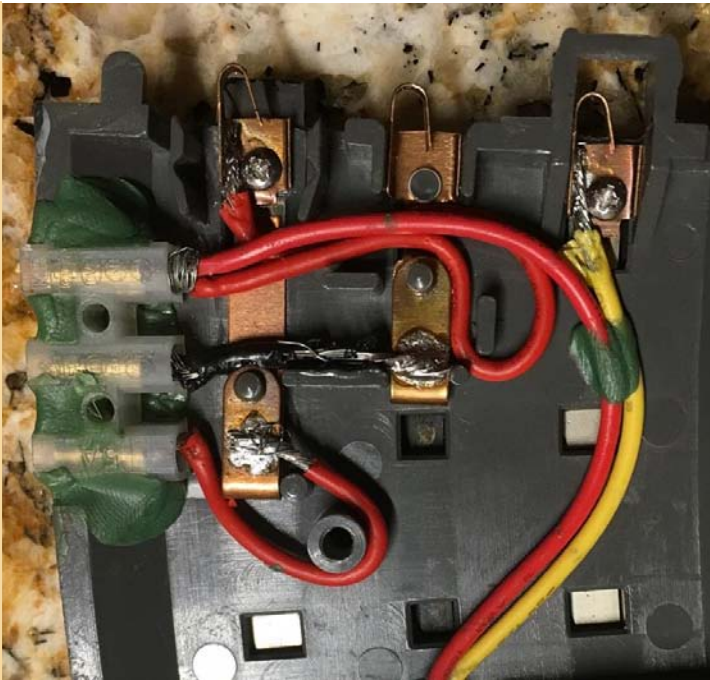


Modified Track

2-56 1/8" screws hold the phosphor bronze interface clips.

The two interface clips at the left end of the track are connected by the red wires and accessed via the top terminal.

The two interface clips at the right end of the track are connected by the yellow wire and accessed via a terminal on the opposite end of the track.



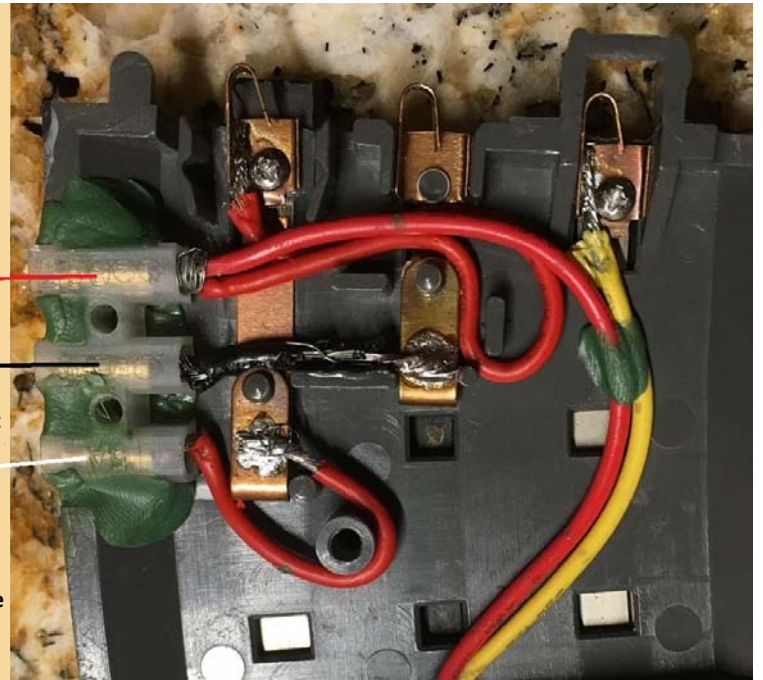
Modified Track

Interface Terminal Access to adjacent track.

Access to the middle rail

Access to the rail at this end of the track

A similar terminal strip is located at the other end of the track to provide similar access for the opposite rail



9. At this point the track is ready for testing. Use a continuity tester to touch the interface points against the rails.



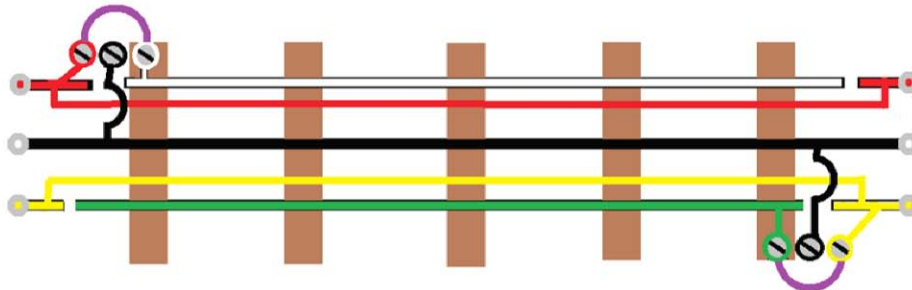
Plain Old Track, Triggers, and Traps

If you were to place a freshly modified track section on a layout without any configuration, the train will stop on that track section and just sit there. Nothing happens.

Each modified track section can be configured as a stock track section, a “trigger” section or a “trap” section. I will explain the functions of triggers and traps, but first it makes sense to configure a newly modified track section to behave as a normal, plain Jane, vanilla track section. This technique is useful for troubleshooting unexpected track issues or whether a section that you modified in advance just needs to behave as a regular track section. All that is required is to simply place jumpers between the interface terminals and the isolated rail terminals at both ends of the track.

Run-Through Track

Modified track can be converted to regular track if required by placing two jumpers that reconnect the isolated rails back to their respective interfaces by jumpers.

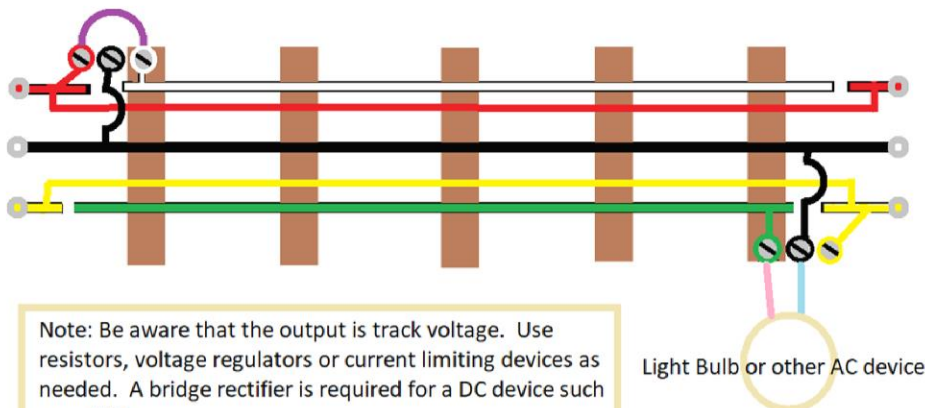


For block detection and the associated ability to activate a device while a train is in the block, the modified track section needs to be configured as a trigger. The white rail is jumped to the interface, just like the plain track configuration. However, the green rail is used as a normally open, non-latching SPST switch. The wiring is going to be a little different—the indicator light bulb or other device is wired to the green rail and the center rail via their respective terminals.

The green rail is isolated. The device is connected to the live center rail, but there is no reference for the circuit and the device remains inactive. The green rail is energized when the uninsulated metal wheelsets of the train enter the track section. The potential of the white rail is provided to the green rail via the wheelsets and becomes available to activate the connected device. The green rail is de-energized when the train exits the track section. Since we are expos-

Trigger

The white rail is tied to the transformer by the jumper inserted between the white rail and white interface. The device to be triggered is tied to the green rail and the middle rail. As a train enters the track section, the non-insulated metal wheelsets short the white and green rails, which energizes the connected device. When the train exits the track section, the short is removed, and the device is de-energized.



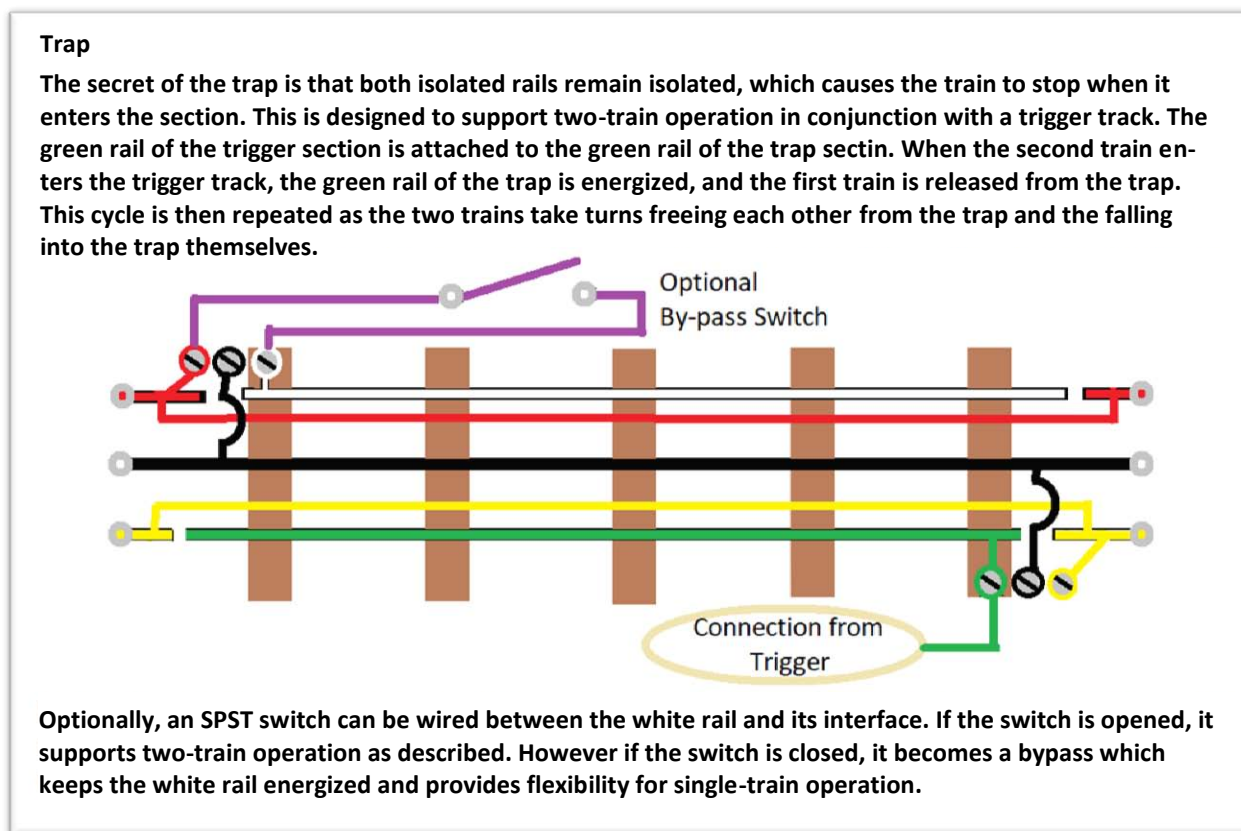
ing AC track power at the terminals. It is important to consider the power ratings and voltage needs of the connected device. For example, to light an LED, a bridge rectifier and pull-up resistor would need to be inserted into the output circuit.

The trigger section opens up a world of animation possibilities. One common example that springs to the forefront is grade crossing lights. The problem is that a single-track section may not provide the desired lighting characteristics. The crossbuck will light after the train blocks the road and the lights may go dark when the train clears the track. In this case, the block to operate the crossbuck needs to be longer.

By placing four or five modified tracks together configured as triggers and chaining the isolated green rails together, a longer triggering area is created. If the crossbucks are centered around the middle track section of this block group, the train will activate the crossbucks when the front of the train is two track sections away. The crossbuck will remain lit until the back of the train travels two track sections away in the other direction. Again, we are able to trigger a bidirectional grade crossing using only wires.

Building on the trigger configuration and introducing the elements of train control, we can create a trap section. There are two main differences between these configurations. The first is that the green rail becomes an input. The second is that the white rail is total isolated. In the absolute simplest case, all that is required is to connect the green rail from a trigger to the green rail terminal. The other five terminals are open.

In this configuration, the trigger and trap are paired to run two trains on a single loop of track. Operationally, the distance between the trap and the trigger in the direction of travel should be shorter. This allow for greater flexibility for trains that travel at different speeds. If the trigger and the trap were equidistant, the two trains would need to travel at the same speed in order to prevent collisions.



To add greater flexibility, as an unconnected white rail only supports two-train operation, a SPST switch can be placed between the white rail and the white interface. When the switch is on, the trap is disarmed and single-train operation is supported. When the switch is turned off, the trap is set and the next train is trapped at the station.

The Fifty-Cent Tour of the Demonstration Layout

For my demonstration, I will set a small oval loop. The tour starts from the straight track section closest to the viewer. This is configured as a “trap”—this straight section is where the trains will make brief station stops during two train operation. A bypass switch is installed to allow single train operation as desired.

Moving in the direction of train travel, there is a three-curve section group that is configured as single trigger. The three isolated green rails are tied together so this trigger group will control a lighted crossbuck. When a train is present on any of these three sections, the crossbuck is lit. The crossbuck itself is a DC circuit—so the requisite bridge rectifier and voltage protection is in place.

On the other side of the complementary straight section, about halfway into the curve, a second trigger is configured. Dependent on train sizes and speeds, this trigger may need to span multiple sections. This curved trigger section provides the means for the second train to release the train caught up in a trap. The demonstration layout is configured for unidirectional operation, however there is no reason why a second trigger couldn't be placed on the other side of the trap track.

Putting it into Operation

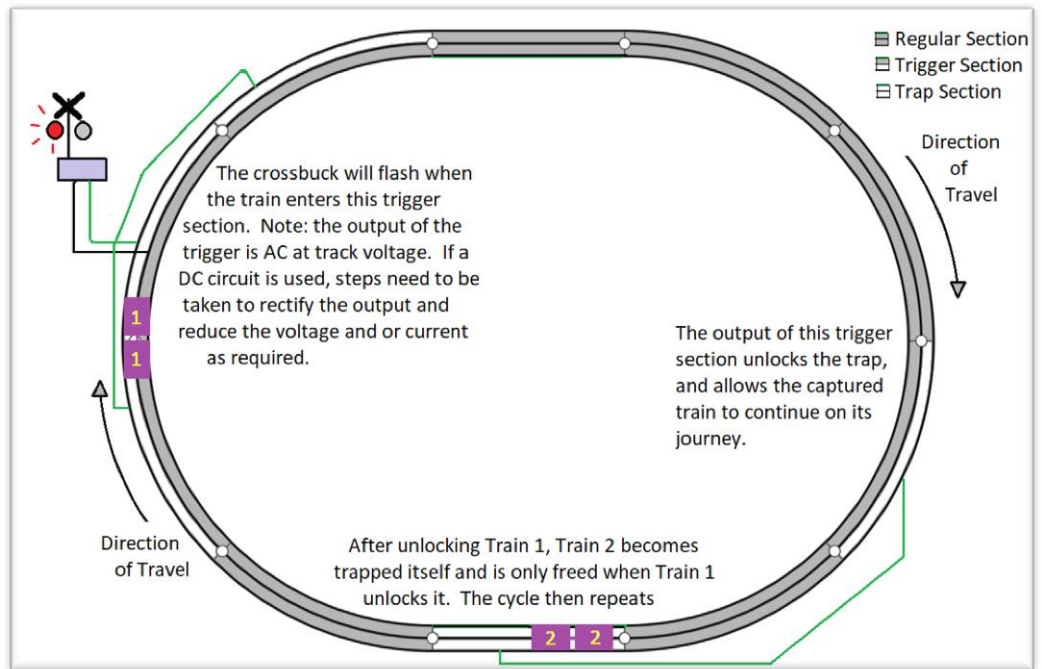
To start the two-train operation, both trains need to have their “E Units” locked. (This does not refer to the EMD E-unit diesels.) Typically, this is a switch on the locomotive. AC trains will by default run in one direction. The original E Unit was a mechanical device to allow the train to reverse direction. Modern E Units are electronic but function the same way. When unlocked, the E Units interprets a power change as a signal to change direction. The E Unit will cycle through four states: Forward-Neutral-Reverse-Neutral, on each interpreted state change signal. When the E Unit is locked, the locomotive is locked to consistently travel in one state.

To start, put train one on the trap section. Train two should be placed just in front of train one with only two hard fast rules: train two cannot start on the trap section and train two has to be behind the trigger that releases the trap. Apply track power to start train two slowly. When train two crosses the trigger, train one will be released. And this cycle will repeat.

Be aware that both trains will more than likely travel at different speeds. If the speeds are too mismatched, the possibility for a collision increases as does the chance of the faster train crossing the trigger before the second train is trapped. The trains can be sped up as desired, but always observe two or three full cycles before leaving this animation unattended.

To revert to single train operation, remove one of the two trains and turn on the white rail toggle. This switch essentially converts the trap into a trigger. The remaining train will happily run around the loop until the decision is made to put the second train back on.

Thank you for joining me on this rail journey into three-rail territory. These concepts can be adapted to any electrical active three-rail system, including live overhead catenary or outside third rail. The built-in animation potential exists regardless of the physical location of the third rail. 🚂



RETURN

**National Model Railroad Association
Mid-Eastern Region
2018 Convention**

Crossroads of the MER



***Clinics ▪ Silent Auction ▪ Banquet Speaker—Lou Sassi
Contest & Modular Layouts ▪ Operations Call Board
White Elephant ▪ Contest & Display
Banquet & Awards ▪ Prototype & Layout Tours***

**October 4-7, 2018
Rockville Hilton Hotel
1750 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852**

***For the most up-to-date information visit:
<http://www.potomac-nmra.org/MER2018/>***

Railroad Prototype Modelers Valley Forge

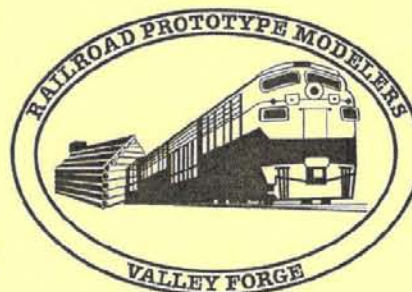
Sponsored by a 100% NMRA Club

March 23-25, 2018

at the

**Desmond Great Valley Hotel & Conference Center
Malvern, PA**

**Clinics
Model Displays
Vendor Rooms
Sunday Home Layout Tour**



**INFORMATION AND UPDATES
RPMValleyForge.com**

OR

Paul Backenstose
103 West Uwchlan Avenue
Downingtown PA 19335
(Please include an SSAE for a reply)
prrpaul@aol.com or (610) 269-2763

INTERESTED IN PRESENTING A CLINIC?

Jim Dalberg
jedalberg@aol.com or 610-648-0089

VENDOR INFORMATION

Steve Salotti
salotti.steve@gmail.com or 610-489-1940

Announcing our 26th Annual Spring



East Coast Santa Fe Modelers Meet



April 5, 6, 7, & 8, 2018 in Doylestown, PA

Student Center of Delaware Valley University

700 Butler Avenue, Doylestown, PA 18901

<http://www.delval.edu>

You can find all of the Meet information and much more by visiting us on the web at: or
<https://sfrhms.org/>

Thursday Evening, April 5 - Railroad Open House at Nick Brownsberger's PRR
(large) layout

Friday, April 6

- 8:00 AM - Breakfast at Perkins
- 12:00 to 1:30 PM - Lunch at Perkins
- 2:00 to 4:30 PM - Registration, set up of sales tables, networking.
- Dinner:**
- 4:30 to 5:30 PM. - In the University Dining Hall
- Clinics:**
- 6:00 to 7:00 PM - Richmond Bates: "Illinois Northern Railway".
- 7:15 to 8:30 PM - Dick Makse: "Strong City and Osborne Subs".
- 9:00 PM – On - Everyone is invited to **Don Borden's** Cajon Pass Layout after the clinics.

Saturday, April 7

- 7:00 AM - Breakfast at Perkins
- 8:30 to 9:00 AM - Registration
- 9:00 to 9:50 AM - Welcoming comments and ECSFM business meeting
- Clinics:**
- 10:00 to 11:10 AM - Tom Madden, Pullmans of the Santa Fe, Prototypes
- 11:20 to 12:30 PM - Eric Hiser: "The Gila River Canyon: Santa Fe's Other Gorge War".
- Lunch:**
- 12:30 to 1:15 PM - Lunch with TCS: New Throttle/Command Station presentation
Pizza in the Coffee House, Presentation in the Music Room
- 1:15 to 3:30 PM - **Auction**
- Clinics:**
- 3:30 to 4:55 PM - Video presentation with Stan Kistler
- 5:05 to 6:00 PM - Tom Madden: Pullmans of the Santa Fe, Modeling
- Dinner:**
- 6:00 to 7:00 PM - In the University Dining Hall
- Clinics:**
- 7:00 to 8:30 PM - Richmond Bates: "The Santa Fe in Galesburg, Illinois"
- 8:00 to 9:00 PM - Eric Hiser: "Santa Fe Transportation Function"
- 9:00 to 9:45 - Cleanup and load out.
- 9:45 PM - On - Everyone is invited to **Don Borden's** Cajon Pass Layout after the clinics.

Sunday, April 8

- 8:00 AM - Breakfast at Perkins

REGISTRATION: ECSFM Members \$25.00 before March 15th, 2018
\$35.00 after March, 2018

Send checks payable to "ECSFM" to:

Mike Davis
960 Placid Court
Arnold, MD 21012
mjdavis55@gmail.com

HOTEL: Main St. Inn (ex Days Inn)

625 North Main Street
Doylestown, PA 18901
(215)-348-9222

Reservation name: "East Coast Santa Fe Modelers"

Block reservation ends Mar 1st

There will be a display of models with a prize for the best display.



[Click here](#) for the link to the latest issue.



[Click here](#) for the link to the latest issue.

Upcoming NMRA Conventions



NMRA 2018 Kansas City

2018

<http://www.kc2018.org/>



NMRA 2019 Salt Lake City

2019

<http://www.nmra2019slc.org/>

New Jersey Division 50th Anniversary Car

Tangent Scale Models Bethlehem 70-Ton Riveted Drop-End Gondola in HO Scale

All cars will be ready-to-run.

**We are producing the car in two numbers to
commemorate our 50th anniversary:**

1968 & 2018

**The car will be NJDX, black with white
lettering and data for the 1950s.**

It will cost \$35.00 each

OR

a set of both numbers for \$65.00.

**We are accepting reservations now. All
reservations must be accompanied by a check
made payable to “NJ Division”**

They are selling fast so don't be left out!

The expected delivery date is late 2018.

(Photos on next two pages)

Name_____

Address_____

City, State and Zip code_____

Telephone_____Email_____

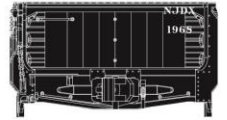
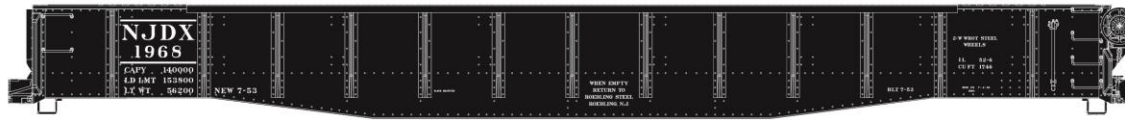
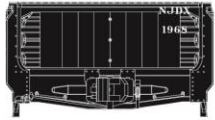
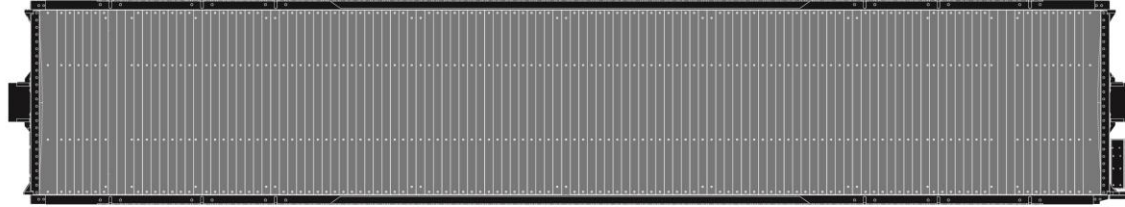
See Tangent website for more info support@tangentscalemodels.com

Return this form to NJ Division P O Box 8694 Trenton, NJ 08650

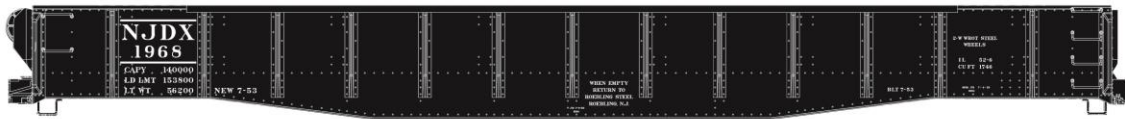


TANGENT
SCALE MODELS

Artwork for New Jersey Division 50th Anniversary Car



TANGENT
SCALE MODELS



Bricktown Model Railroaders NMRA Open House

We've added a new event to this year's Susquehanna Division calendar. Mark your calendars on Saturday, May 5th for the Bricktown Model Railroaders NMRA Open House.

The event takes place in Mount Union, PA. Mount Union is on the main line of Norfolk Southern, about 80 highway miles west of Harrisburg. In the last century, it was the largest shipping point on the Pennsy's Middle Division, because it was the site of three huge brick plants, also served by the East Broad Top narrow gauge. Hence the town's nickname: Bricktown.

Mount Union – still Bricktown to its citizens – is today the home of a vibrant model railroad community. Last fall the Bricktown Model Railroaders Association finalized the purchase of a 50-foot by 100-foot former warehouse – complete with railroad siding – as their new club headquarters. They've invited our division to come and learn more about their plans and to sample model and prototype railroading in Mount Union.



The new home of the Bricktown Model Railroaders Association

For several years, the Bricktown club rented space in a former Mount Union school building. Then, about four years ago, like many model railroad clubs housed in rented buildings, they were given short notice to vacate. Thus began the long and difficult process of finding another home. During that search, they completed the legal task of organizing themselves as a non-profit organization and established the challenging goal of purchasing their own facility. Like most clubs, they were well short of funds for an outright purchase, so they conducted a lengthy but successful contribution campaign which resulted in the purchase of the new home. They are now focused on refurbishing the building while also developing their layout plan.

We will visit their under-renovation facility, receive a presentation about their extensive modeling plans, learn about the substantial railroad operations centered in Mount Union many years ago, and explore a former large industrial site served by the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) and East Broad Top (EBT) Railroad.

The meet will be headquartered at the Bricktown Model Railroad Club and Museum, 300 West Small Street, Mt. Union. Doors will open at 9:00 am and the program starts at 10 am. Here's what you'll enjoy at the club headquarters (in addition to donuts and coffee):

10:00-10:30 Welcome and walking tour of club building and layout plans.

10:30-11:15 Profusely illustrated slide presentation by noted author and historian Bryan Donaldson on Mount Union and its railroad past.

Then we break and let you tailor your own afternoon from the following menu of activities around the Mount Union community.

9:00-4:00 On30 modular layout of George Sarra, in club building.

11:15-12:30 Walking tour of remains of Harbison Walker brick plant (once the largest of its kind in the world), adjacent to the club building

11:30-4:00 Outdoor large-scale layout of Doug Renninger (weather permitting).

11:30-4:00 Outdoor large-scale layout of Bud Parks (weather permitting).

1:00-4:00 Outdoor large-scale layout of Jon Clark (weather permitting).

1:00-4:00 Wade Woodcock's HO/HOn3 layout.

1:00-4:00 Jon Clark's On30 layout.

1:00-4:00 Mount Union Area Historical Society Industrial Museum

1:00-4:00 And rarest of all, a chance to tour the East Broad Top engine house in Mount Union, home to EBT 0-6-0 #3, a 1923 Baldwin steam locomotive.



East Broad Top standard-gauge 0-6-0 #3 will be on display



The former Pennsylvania Railroad freight station, now the Bricktown Senior Center

Lunch will be served in the former PRR Freight Station, now Mount Union's Senior Center. It will be available from 11:00 to 3:00 pm. The format will be cafeteria-style, featuring hot dogs with kraut, sloppy Joes, baked beans, potato salad, macaroni salad, ice tea, soda, coffee, and baked goods

And of course, expect lots of action on the Norfolk Southern main through the heart of town.

Several other great prototype and historic railroad attractions are also close by. Your May 5 visit could be a great starting point for a weekend or three-day getaway to several excellent and fun railroading opportunities.

For example, Horseshoe Curve, the Altoona Railroaders Museum, and Allegheny Portage Railroad National Park are just a little over a two-hour drive to the northwest. Cumberland MD, with the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad and extensive CSX traffic through town, is slightly over two hours to the southwest, and Harrisburg's Rockville Bridge and several large NS yards are just under two hours to the east.

So seriously consider making it a full, dedicated, railroad-focused getaway weekend by exploring the many railroading opportunities nearby.

We hope to see you in Bricktown!



JAMES RIVER RAILS Operations Weekend – October 2018

An Invitation to a Weekend of Model Railroad Operations

During the weekend of October 19 – 21, a team of modelers in the Richmond and South-Central Virginia area is hosting **JAMES RIVER RAILS, an Operations Weekend**. Layouts located in the Richmond, Williamsburg, Farmville, Appomattox, and Charlottesville, Virginia areas will be hosting operating sessions on Friday evening (October 19), Saturday morning and afternoon (October 20), and Sunday (October 21). The sessions are designed primarily for individuals with previous experience in model railroad operations, but everyone is invited to participate. If you enjoy model railroad operations, this promises to be a special weekend that you won't want to miss.



Individuals interested in participating in JAMES RIVER RAILS must sign-up in advance. There are a maximum number of positions available for registration based on the crew sizes of participating layouts and operating session scheduling, so you are encouraged to register early! A \$20.00 per person nonrefundable registration fee is being charged to cover event costs. The operations weekend is a not-for-profit event and any money remaining after event expenses have been covered will be donated to the James River Division of the NMRA. NMRA membership is not required to participate in the operations weekend.

JAMES RIVER RAILS

Operations Weekend

October 19 – 21, 2018



- Choose up to 4 operating sessions over 3 days on layouts located in the Richmond and South-Central Virginia area
- Model scenery including West Coast, Great Plains, and East Coast
- Train movements via TT/TO, CTC, sequence schedule, and more
- Operations ranging from mainline “fast paced and disciplined” to branch line “relaxed”
- All layouts DCC controlled – throttles will be provided
- Something for everyone!
- Advanced registration required

For More Information and Registration:
[**www.JamesRiverRails.org**](http://www.JamesRiverRails.org)

There is a convention coming to your neighborhood in 2018. Your NMRA neighbors, the Garden State and Hudson Valley Divisions, are hosting the NMRA Northeastern Region convention on September 13-16, 2018 at the Doubletree Hotel in Mahwah, NJ.

Mahwah gets its name from the Lenape Indian word, “mawewi” which means “meeting place” or “place where paths meet.” This area is also known as “The Crossroads”, where multiple highways intersect, making travel easy for all convention attendees. The Erie Railroad’s mainline between Jersey City, NJ and Chicago, IL passed through Mahwah. The railroad’s premier passenger train, The Erie Limited, traveled on this route with its E-8’s as the headend power, providing the inspiration for the convention logo. And, Mahwah is centrally located in the combined Garden State and Hudson Valley divisions.

The Doubletree Hotel provides quick access to many of the area’s highways, getting you on your way to your next operating session, tour, or non-rail destination. Breakfast is included in your hotel stay. But, if you are looking for lunch or dinner to maintain the energy level you will need during the convention, there are many area restaurants to choose from, including the hotel’s Boom Burger restaurant and several popular New Jersey diners. A list of restaurants and map will be provided in your convention program.

There are 55 clinic times planned for the convention in several formats. Peter Youngblood, one of the leaders of the NMRA’s “Modeling with the Masters” program, will be giving one of the program’s clinics during the convention. This program is very popular at NMRA National conventions, offering a hands-on learning experience in building a model. The convention will also have a “Works-in-Progress” session as part of the clinic program. For those of you not familiar with this format, it provides close-up demonstrations of modeling techniques. Multiple clinics are run simultaneously and repeatedly in the clinic room, giving the conventioners an opportunity to learn new skills, up close. The remainder of the clinic program will be filled with traditional classroom style clinics, covering railroad history, modeling techniques, operations, and many other topics.

A model railroad convention would not be complete without offering layout tours and operating sessions. The nation’s oldest model railroad club, the New York Society of Model Engineers, will open its club for the convention, featuring their O scale and HO scale layouts. Those of you that are interested in operating sessions will not want to miss Ted Pamperin’s HO scale C&O and HOn3 Mann’s Creek layout. The layout is set in 1943, is fully scened, and has a CTC system installed for a portion of the layout as well as ABS signaling. Many other layouts will be open for tours and operating sessions, for the convention.

In addition to layout tours, there are several prototype tours planned for the convention. The Sterling Hill Mining Museum will be a very popular tour for both rail and non-rail attendees. The mine produced over 11 million tons of zinc ore, is one of the oldest mines in the country, and was the last operating underground mine in NJ, closing in 1986. Between the Sterling Hill Mine and others nearby, 90 different mineral species have been identified as fluorescent and are highly regarded by collectors around the world. You will have the opportunity to tour this underground mine and see its vast collection of mining equipment and minerals. For information about the museum, visit their website at <http://sterlinghillminingmuseum.org/>.

For those interested in the non-rail program, a tour of Ringwood Manor is a must. The history of the property ties in with New Jersey’s iron industry and the prominent families that owned and operated them, dating to the Revolutionary War. The home and its gardens are a National Historic Landmark and more information can be found on the park’s website at <http://www.ringwoodmanor.org/>.

The planning for the Erie Limited Convention is well underway and Mahwah is the perfect meeting place. There are several ways of staying up to date with convention news.

The first way is by sending monthly emails through Constant Contact, providing readers with information about the convention. If you are not receiving the email and would like to subscribe, go to <https://tinyurl.com/ErieLimitedSubscribe> and enter your email address and optionally, your first and last names. At the end of the convention, your email address and name will be removed from the NER’s Constant Contact account.

You can also keep up to date with the convention plans by bookmarking the convention website found at ErieLimited.org or like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ErieLimited2018/>.

Meet you in Mahwah.



The Doubletree Hotel and location of Mahwah, NJ.

Photo by Fred Dellaiacono



The Erie Railroad's original Mahwah passenger station currently serves as part of the Mahwah Museum.

Photo by Bruce DeYoung



Jim Homoki presenting his Works-in-Progress clinic on adding wood flooring to gondolas.

Photo by Jim Walsh



The Lackawanna’s Phoebe Snow travels over the New York Society of Model Engineers’ O scale layout.

Photo by Mike Sullivan



A C&O Allegheny rolls through Thurmond, West Virginia on Ted Pamperin’s HO scale layout.

Photo by Ted Pamperin



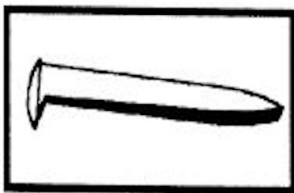
One of the entrances to the Sterling Hill Mine in Ogdensburg, NJ. The mine will be one of the prototype tours featured during the convention.

Photo by Chuck Diljak



Ringwood Manor will be one of the destinations as part of the non-rail convention activities.

Photo by Dmadeo



ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM GOLDEN SPIKE AWARD APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION FORM AND SEND TO YOUR REGIONAL OR DIVISIONAL AP CHAIR

Member's Name: _____ NMRA#: _____ EXP: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State/Prov: _____ Country: _____ Postal Code: _____

Date Submitted: _____ Region: _____

The Golden Spike Award will be awarded to any NMRA member who has completed the Qualifications Checklist, obtained the necessary signatures and who does not hold MMR status. It will be administered by the regional and divisional AP Chairs. AP regulations and definitions apply for scratch building and super detailing. To qualify for the award the member must complete the following checklist, obtain the signature of the divisional AP Chair or another NMRA member designated by the divisional Chair. The divisional Chair will submit the signed form to the regional AP Chair who will issue the Golden Spike Award certificate.

QUALIFICATIONS CHECKLIST:

1. Rolling Stock (Motive Power & Cars):

Display six units of rolling stock either scratch built, craftsman kits or super-detailed commercial kits.

2. Model Railroad Setting (Structures & Scenery)

Construct a minimum of eight square feet of layout including scenery.

Construct five structures either scratch built, craftsman kits or super detailed 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 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 control).

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

Witness: _____ Print Name: _____ NMRA #: _____

Regional AP Chair: _____ Region: _____