



THE DISPATCHER

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



April 2019

PhillyNMRA.org

Volume 26, No. 2

*** ELECTION ISSUE ***

Greetings, NMRA members! This special Election 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. Any NMRA member 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.

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 8, 2019 Division Meet to be held at the Newtown Township Building, 209 Bishop Hollow Road, Newtown Square, PA 19073. 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.

As of this time, nominations are closed. Below and on the following pages are the statements of each of the candidates running for office. As this election is uncontested (the number of candidates equals the number of open positions) we will dispense with voting by ballot. At the business meeting the Clerk will put forward a motion to elect the slate of candidates by acclamation.

Aside from the election, this mailing serves to introduce you to the Division should you not be aware of its existence, and also to inform you of upcoming events, a schedule of which can be found on page 3. A summary of the June 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, phillynmra.org.

Candidate Bios/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 scale modeling 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 up 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. 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 of our division as your assistant superintendent for four years and have served as your superintendent for the past two years. If reelected to the board I will continue to work on this and to provide meaningful and entertaining programs for all our members.



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 about 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 experi-

ence 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.



Chip Stevens

Eighteen months ago I transferred regions and divisions in the NMRA. Originally in the HUB Division of the Northeast Region, I became part of Philadelphia and Mid-Eastern. It's been a pleasure to meet so many new railroad acquaintances as we get acclimated to new neighborhood and new surroundings.

One of the things I brought from my former division was a belief that if you are going to be in an organization, membership by itself is not enough; you should participate and give back time others have spent bringing the division to its present state. Up north, I was Region Secretary. That job gave me insights into how divisions were run, how they varied, and how they did things. The variety of approaches can easily be translated into Philly Division matters and approaches as they are not all the same.

In pursuit of the Master Model Railroader designation, I have earned the Association Volunteer certificate largely through working within this division. Some of you may recognize the attached photo as the face behind the camera filming division meetings for the last many months. Rounding out my Author certificate, I am currently serving as Publicity chair for the upcoming King of Prussia convention this October. I plan to stay active with the division when I put down my pen and keyboard come October. And with house tasks nearly complete after our move, I am FINALLY starting my freelanced empire based in the transition era somewhere in Pennsylvania.

If the division so chooses, I would be honored to become a member of the Board and continue my participation in division affairs.



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, and ultimately begged my parents for a subscription. 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.

When I left for school, my younger brothers got hold of that layout and not surprisingly it didn't last long. And then I became one of those folks who talks about building a layout but somehow never gets around to it. 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 newly-revived Philadelphia Division and began attending their meets.

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 now editing *The Dispatcher*. Barring impeachment, I will continue to carry out my duties with diligence and work toward helping the Philadelphia Division and the NMRA and promote the same enthusiasm over trains and model railroading that I experienced growing up and still enjoy to this day.

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 2019. Due out approx. May 15th. Deadline: May. 1st.

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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Planning Ahead – Division Meets & Other Upcoming Events

<p>June 8, 2019 Philadelphia Division Meet Newtown Township Building Newtown Square, PA</p>	<p>July 7–13, 2019 NMRA National Convention Little America Hotel Salt Lake City, UT</p>	<p>September 7, 2019 Philadelphia Division Meet Convention Prep for Volunteers The Judge Group, Wayne, PA</p>
<p>October 10–13, 2019 MER Convention “Liberty Bell Special” Crowne Plaza Hotel King of Prussia, PA</p>	<p>November 9, 2019 Philadelphia Division Meet Brandywine Town Center Wilmington, DE</p>	<p>January 2020 New Jersey/Philadelphia Division Meet Grace Episcopal Church Merchantville, NJ</p>

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

Philadelphia Division to Host 2019 Mid-Eastern Region Convention “Liberty Bell Special” in King of Prussia

The Philadelphia Division will be the host for the MER 2019 Convention known as the “Liberty Bell Special” to be held October 10–13, 2019 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 209 Mall Blvd., King of Prussia, PA 19406. This is shaping up to be a very special event with lots of activities planned.

As of this time we have 55 clinicians lined up, some delivering more than one presentation—clinics that cover the gamut in the realm of model and prototype railroading. Home and club layout tours represented by all scales and genres number about 43 with even more expected. And then there are the operating sessions—opportunities for attendees to operate on various home and club layouts including the two modular layouts which will be on display in the hotel.

We have lined up a very special prototype tour—a train ride and tour of the facilities of the Colebrookdale Railroad in nearby Boyertown. Lunch is included, and drawings will be held for lucky individuals to ride in the cab.

In addition, there are numerous on-your-own tours; the Valley Forge tourism bureau has a website/publication chock full of activities locally and across the entire Philadelphia region. And of course, those native to the area are well aware of the mecca of shopping and restaurants that is King of Prussia.

All NMRA conventions include a contest room and this one is no exception. Feel free to enter any model or photo you’re proud of or your models for AP judging.

No MER convention is complete without a Saturday night banquet of sumptuous food and entertainment. We will be featuring a keynote speaker of reknown in the model railroading community, after which award ceremonies will be held.

Two excellent modular model railroads will be on display:

those of the Reading Company Technical and Historical Society, and the Free-Mo modular group. In that same room will be manufacturers’ displays and booths for several Special Interest Groups (SIGS)—expected are Layout Design, Civil War, and Steel Industry.

We will be hosting a white elephant room to sell your unwanted items, as well as both a silent auction and door prize event with items provided by various hobby manufacturers and dealers. And if that isn’t enough, we will be holding a train show with manufacturers and dealers selling their wares. This event will also be open to the public.

Since this event occurs over Columbus Day weekend, we have arranged for the hotel to add additional room nights before and after the weekend for those wishing to extend their stay. There are several tourist railroad excursions taking place during and after the convention, such as Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern, Lehigh Valley Gorge, and Strasburg Railroad. See the convention website for info on these and other train rides at libertybellspecial.org/on-your-own.

As you can see, this promises to be a wonderful time for the whole family, and we encourage all NMRA members to register and attend. Think of it as a vacation where you can save on travel costs.

Of course, an event of this magnitude requires many volunteers to pull it off successfully—and yes, we are in need of many. While we still welcome more clinicians (even from out of the area) layout tours, and operating sessions, where we really need help is with general floor volunteers, chipping in an hour or two (or more, if you can) to help out in one of the in-hotel activities.

One possibility which is truly win-win is to volunteer to serve as a clinic monitor—the person who introduces the clinician (we’ll provide the script) and keeps check on the time. You help out and at the same time get to attend one of



your desired clinics.

Also, for those interested in the Achievement Program, remember that helping out counts toward your Volunteer certificate (and/or Author, if presenting a clinic).

We urge our Philly members to register and participate to make the LBS one of the best regional conventions ever.

For all information, please consult the Liberty Bell Special website at LibertyBellSpecial.org or MER2019.org. For those without internet access, please get in touch with one of the officers—their contact information appears in the sidebar on page 2. They'll be happy to help you out with paper forms or whatever you need.

<p>JUNE MEET HIGHLIGHTS</p> <p>DATE: Saturday, June 8, 2019</p> <p>LOCATION: Newtown Township Building 209 Bishop Hollow Rd. Newtown Square, PA 19073</p> <p>DOORS OPEN: 8:30am</p> <p>MEETING BEGINS: 9:00am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Business Meeting/Elections - Clinic: Scratch Building the Sperry Rail Car - Clinic: The Function of Dispatching - White Elephant Table – sell/buy stuff - Display Table – bring your models/projects - Door Prizes - 50/50 Raffle – Take a chance to win half the pot - Division shirts and patches for sale - Coffee, tea, donuts, and Philly pretzels - Afternoon: Newtown Square RR Museum, open house layout tours, StARR Club open house and optional op session <p style="text-align: center;">Come and join in the fun!</p> <p>Complete details in the upcoming May issue of <i>The Dispatcher</i> or on the Division website at http://www.phillynmra.org/</p>	
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- Candidate Statements

Inside:

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