



# THE DISPATCH

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



October 2019

*PhillyNMRA.org*

Volume 26, No. 5

## November Meet Returns to Wilmington

**O**n Saturday November 9, 2019 we return to the Community Center at the Brandywine Town Center, 4050 Brandywine Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19803. The time is 9:00am with doors opening at 8:30. Directions and maps can be found on page 3.

Our morning program begins with **Master Model Railroader (#644) Joe Walters** presenting his clinic titled *"Building the UP Rotary Snow Plow."* Joe will discuss how he built the Union Pacific's rotary snow plow #076. The prototype was constructed in 1950 and was last used in 1977. It is unknown whether it is still in service. The model was constructed with sheet styrene and resin cast parts using photos of the right and left sides. The model has a working blade that is operating off a 9-volt battery and a slow-motion motor, and has a completed underside. The plow was an entry in the contest at the recent Liberty Bell Special MER Convention.

Born in Northeast Philly, and now living in Bear, Delaware, his career consisted of experience in the mechanical departments at the Reading Railroad, Conrail, and Amtrak. Over a 32-year period he has held jobs as a car inspector, car repairman, foreman, general foreman, manager, and assistant superintendent. If anyone can describe or explain the ins and outs of a piece of railroad equipment, it's Joe. You'll also find Joe's regular column, "A Cup o' Joe" in the online section of our full length issues.



A relatively recent member of the NMRA and Philly Division, Joe has already presented many clinics and this past summer earned Master Model Railroader #644, for which he was recognized at the Liberty Bell Special MER convention. We heartily congratulate him on his achievement. His own model railroad will be open to attendees in the afternoon.

Next, **Mat Chibbaro**, author of Kalmbach's *Model Railroading in Small Spaces*, will present a PowerPoint of the same title filled with photos of his many small layouts. Space-saving ideas to be presented include sectional, modular, shelf, fold-up, roll-away, dual use, interchangeable inserts, and layouts in furniture. If you have told yourself you have inadequate space for a layout, this clinic will convince you otherwise.

Mat Chibbaro works as a fire protection engineer with OSHA, lectures on the topic, and as one might expect, is a volunteer fire fighter. His interest in model railroading began with the Raritan River Railroad, a shortline in Milltown, New Jersey, which led to a natural interest in small layouts. He has been a model railroader and woodworker for several decades, spending most of the last 15 years with Northern Virginia N-Trak. He lives in Maryland with his wife and two children.



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.

Originally this meet was to have included a special commemoration of the Division's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As a result of our hosting the MER convention, there was not enough time to adequately plan a program and celebration. That has been postponed to the spring or summer 2020 meet.

The afternoon fare consists of two Division member layouts as well as open house layout tours courtesy of ModelRailroadOpenHouse.com. Check that website for schedules and maps. Maps and directions to some of the nearby layouts will be available at the meet. Hope to see you there!

## Liberty Bell Special MER 2019 Convention is History

**I**t seems as if it was only yesterday that we were trying to decide on a name for the convention, and before we knew it, it came and went. After many years of not hosting any events, the current crew, lacking any significant experience, managed to pull it off. And the positive reactions among the attendees and those involved in its production were very gratifying. We thank all those who were instrumental in making it happen as well as all the attendees and hope everyone enjoyed and enriched themselves. More coverage will appear in the December issue.

*(Division news continues on bottom of page 2)*

## Form 19



### From the Super...

This column will be a sort of a recap of the events leading up to the Liberty Bell Special MER 2019 Convention.

Publicity for the convention began at last year's convention in Rockville, MD, where Chip Stevens presented a PowerPoint of what to expect at the Liberty Bell Special. His work continued throughout the year injecting news of the convention in local and national railroad publications.

The committee met perhaps every other month to review progress.

Karen Confer took care of the banquet menu. We wanted to make sure that everyone would be served quickly and with enough to eat. She handled it beautifully with a railroad-themed menu that even included a gluten-free option.

Bill Fagan, Mark Wallace, and John Seibert spent countless hours coordinating the open house layouts, operating sessions, and clinics respectively making sure that we had enough even if there were cancellations.

Kevin Feeney and his wife, Carol, did a bang-up job of handling the white elephant.

Howard Kaplan managed a haber-

dashery of hats and shirts in a rainbow of colors and styles while composing the two convention booklets and the signs as well as the convention website.

Earl Paine took care of our AV as well as serving as a contest judge.

Kirk Bateman, Jim Fisher, and Joe Walters handled the registration functions expertly, also making the ID tags and stuffing the envelopes that attendees received at the registration desk, which they manned along with other helpers during the convention.

I personally sought out the volunteers who made the convention easier to navigate with their lime green shirts or vests. This task showed me what was great about the Division and the neighboring divisions. When help is needed, NMRA members (and even their spouses and relatives) are there to help out and participate.

Last, but not least, the Region officials, headed by President Kirt Thompson and the MER board provided support, which we greatly appreciated. Most of all we thank all of you who joined us in King of Prussia to make The Liberty Bell Special a truly special event.

Hope to see you in November.

*Charles*



### From the Editor...

Given the hectic schedule of the recently ended Liberty Bell Special MER convention, this will be an abbreviated issue of *The Dispatcher*, focused on informing members of the November meet and other upcoming events.

Our regular issues resume in December with the usual bevy of feature articles, columns, meet coverage,

AP report, etc. In addition, we'll provide full coverage of the convention, including recognition of all those hard-working individuals who were instrumental in making it happen.

Personally, I had a great time seeing everyone and meeting so many new people. Hope you all enjoyed yourselves, too. See you in Wilmington.

*Howard*

## Convention Website to Remain Active

The Liberty Bell Special website ([libertybellspecial.org](http://libertybellspecial.org)) will continue to be active for another year. Any clinics, handouts, or links for which clinicians have granted permission will be accessible. Updates will be posted on the left sidebar of the home page. Convention apparel continues to be available at the store and via order forms at the meets.

*(Division news continues on page 4)*

## THE DISPATCHER

### Editor / Publisher

Howard Kaplan 610-626-4506  
620 Edmonds Ave.  
Drexel Hill, PA 19026  
[howard@phillynmra.org](mailto:howard@phillynmra.org)

### Contributing Editor

Earl Paine

### Proofreader: Gail Kaplan

**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:** Dec. 2019. Due out approx. Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>. Submission deadline: Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>.

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

### Division Personnel:

#### Superintendent / Member Outreach

Charles Butsch 610-446-2375  
227 Mill Road  
Havertown, PA 19083  
[cabutsch@gmail.com](mailto:cabutsch@gmail.com)

#### Assistant Superintendent / Ops /

Rob Hinkle Social Media  
1755 Slayton Dr.  
Blue Bell, PA 19422 610-279-2394  
[robhink@comcast.net](mailto:robhink@comcast.net)

#### Clerk / Membership

Mark Wallace 610-454-9510  
665 Bonny Brook Ave.  
Trappe, PA 19426  
[mwallace665@verizon.net](mailto:mwallace665@verizon.net)

#### Treasurer / Webmaster

Howard Kaplan 610-626-4506  
620 Edmonds Ave.  
Drexel Hill, PA 19026  
[hakaplan@rcn.com](mailto:hakaplan@rcn.com)

#### Directors at Large

**Layouts / Video** - Bill Fagan  
[wfagan@comcast.net](mailto:wfagan@comcast.net) 215-675-4098

**Clinics** - Mike Dettinger  
[detting@comcast.net](mailto:detting@comcast.net) 610-280-7528

**Publicity** - Chip Stevens 774-823-2681  
[ReadingChip@yahoo.com](mailto:ReadingChip@yahoo.com)

#### Achievement Program Coordinator

Dave Messer, MMR 610-948-2191  
263 Mingo Road  
Royersford, PA 19468-3112  
[dmesserpr@comcast.net](mailto:dmesserpr@comcast.net)

#### Achievement Prog. Committee Chair

Earl Paine 610-831-9466  
4325 Wendy Way  
Schwenksville, PA 19473  
[earlpaine@verizon.net](mailto:earlpaine@verizon.net)

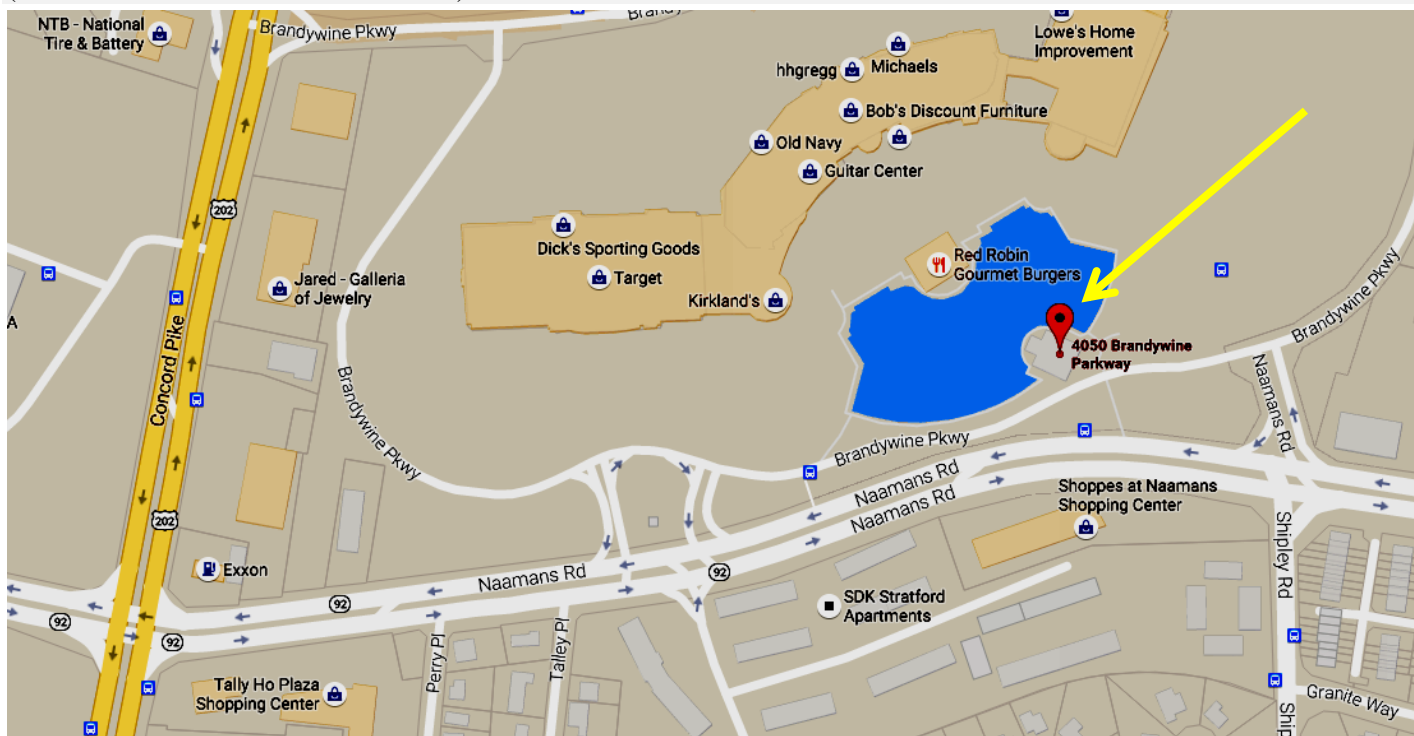
## Directions to the November Meet

The **Brandywine Town Center** is a large shopping complex located on an “ell”-shaped piece of property near the intersection of the Concord Pike (U.S. 202) and Naamans Road (Del 92). You may remember this as the former site of a race track. One leg of the “ell” joins the Concord Pike. The other leg joins Naamans Road. The complex includes the Regal Cinema, Lowe’s, Michael’s Arts & Crafts, Target, and many other stores. The main structure is surrounded by a maze-like parking lot which, in turn, is surrounded by a road which circles the perimeter.

The Center’s **Community Building** (our meet location) is a separate structure with a prominent central atrium. It is located next to a large decorative fountain, on the south side of the complex near the Naamans Road entrance.

**From Concord Pike (U.S. 202) going south** – a fraction of a mile south of the PA/DE state line, turn left into the Brandywine Town Center (the marker is the sign for Lowe’s and Target, among others). Follow the perimeter road in either direction until you see the Community Building (near the decorative fountain).

**From I-95 going south** – at the state line, there is a three-way split – I-95, I-295, and Naamans Road (Del 92). Stay to the extreme right, and take the exit to Naamans Road. At the top of the ramp, turn right (west) on to Naamans Road. After a little over four miles, turn right into the Brandywine Town Center (it is opposite Shipley Road, which comes in from the left only). Turn right on to the perimeter road, and then left into the parking lot near the Community Building (which is near the decorative fountain).



The actual address is 4050 Brandywine Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19803

GPS is not foolproof. Do yourself a favor and familiarize yourself with the route ahead of time.

## Planning Ahead – Division Meets & Other Upcoming Events

<b>November 9, 2019</b> Philadelphia Division Meet Brandywine Town Center Wilmington, DE	<b>December 7, 2019</b> Hatboro Train Show Keith Valley Middle School Hatboro, PA	<b>January 11, 2020</b> NJ/Philadelphia Division Joint Meet Grace Episcopal Church Merchantville NJ 08109
<b>March 26–29, 2020</b> RPM–Valley Forge Desmond Hotel Malvern, PA	<b>April 2020</b> Philadelphia Division Meet TBA TBA	<b>June 2020</b> Philadelphia Division Meet TBA TBA

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



In the year of 1965, two of my model railroad friends, Walt Leipold and Bill Wills, and I attended an MER-NMRA convention in Pittsburgh, PA. At that convention there were some problems with layout visits. People were on the list, but not open. At the MER business meeting on Sunday morning, we opened our mouths and volunteered to do a convention in Wilmington, DE. We thought we could do a better job than what we had just experienced.

When we got back home and talked with others in our round-robin group, they said that they could help and would work with us on a convention for the MER. The date given to us by the MER was fall of 1967.

Work was started to plan events for the upcoming convention. One of the items we discussed was how we would handle layout visits at our homes and where we could find more interested layout owners to also help out. The idea of having local open house visits before the convention would give us a better idea for handling groups of visitors in our homes. We decided to open our layouts and invite others to do so with us.

A list was started of layout owners that would open for Model Railroad Month, which at that time was in February. Jay Barnum volunteered to organize the list. The list was a success and our layouts were open for the first time in February 1966. This list has continued to be published and is still in existence as of today. The list as started was to be for local area layouts and to be distributed in local hobby shops. Our original intent was to invite model railroaders and not

the general public. The reason for that policy was to invite people who knew how to treat models and respect our work. Those participating in the first open house list included Walt Leipold, Bill Wills, Ken Donahoe, John Gotwalls, Dick Custer, Gary Mease, and Taylor Rogers.

After our first try at having our layouts open, and a very successful convention, we decided to continue open house visits on an annual basis. The list was coordinated by Jay Barnum and distributed in the area hobby shops. As years went by, people that had come also wanted to show their layouts and signed up for the following year. And so the list was off and running.

Over the last 49 years of our local layout visits, we have had over 30 people doing annual shows. Most of the older modelers have passed on or given up model railroading. I took over the coordination job from Jay and later Bruce Friedman took over after me. The list now contains layouts in four states and has grown significantly in numbers. Locally in the Wilmington area, the number of layouts on the list has declined.

2016 marked my 50th consecutive year of showing my layouts. I have made many changes over the years which include new layouts and switching from HO to O scale. I now have layouts in O, G, and On30. I am presently working on a new layout which will be running for the 2016 November Open House season. Hope to see you in November.

Ken Donahoe, October 8, 2015

### November Model Railroad Open Houses

Once again, Joe Walters is coordinating the November Model Railroad Open House event. Over 90 layouts in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland will be open during the month of November. Check the website at [ModelRailroadOpenHouse.com](http://ModelRailroadOpenHouse.com) for maps and times. Also see page 4 in the online section of *The Dispatcher* for the history of this long-running event.

### We Welcome Our New Philly Division Members

Ross Belavich, Pottstown, PA  
Colleen Belavich, Pottstown, PA  
Ramsey Chew, Philadelphia, PA  
Larry Mahoney, Folcroft, PA

### 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:

**Nicholas Smith Trains**  
2343 West Chester Pike (PA-3)  
Broomall, PA 19008  
610-353-8585

[nicholassmithtrains.com](http://nicholassmithtrains.com)  
10% discount (excludes O & G items)

**Trainpops Attic**  
400 Mill Street  
Bristol, PA 19007  
215-788-2014

[trainpops.com](http://trainpops.com)  
10% discount

**Henning's Trains**  
128 South Line Steet  
Lansdale, PA 19446  
215-362-2442

[henningstrains.com](http://henningstrains.com)  
10% in addition to already discounted