



THE DISPATCHER

The Journal of PhillyNMRA

December 2019



Display at the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum in Hamburg, PA featuring the CTC panel of the Reading's Lebanon Valley Junction Tower. Other curiosities include a small Conrail panel from Indiana (top center) and a control box (lower left) labeled CP Grove – a device used by SEPTA near Willow Grove, PA. Photo by Howard Kaplan.



THE DISPATCHER

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



December 2019

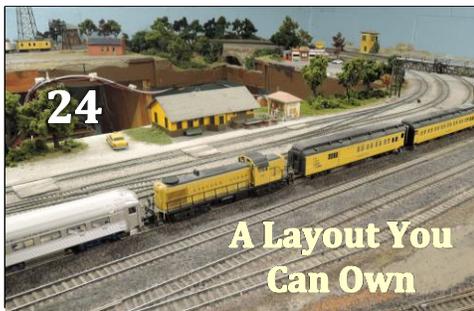
PhillyNMRA.org

Volume 26, No. 6

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on the MNR**



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THE DISPATCHER

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.

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From the Super...

I've grown to dislike the commercial holiday season. It seems to appear sooner each year blending into a Labor-Day-Halloween-Thanksgiving-Christmas event. And let's not forget the post-holiday sales. Shopping has become part of the holiday where stores don't even wait for the turkey to cool off to offer that giant screen TV for a price you can't pass up or the air fryer that makes all of those unhealthy things that you'll promise to give up after the new year.

I remember as a child the wonder and anticipation of that special day; I had made a list of things that I hoped for and tried to be extra good during that time. The stores were decked out after Thanksgiving and everyone seemed to look forward to families getting together to share the holiday season. We did art projects in class and attended special programs in school about the holiday. We practiced Christmas carols and dressed in funny costumes in church. My parents would get out the holiday decorations that were stored under the basement stairs, while the tree and trains were left for Santa and his elves to put up on

Christmas Eve.

When I came down the stairs there was a magnificent Christmas tree all decked out with lights, ornaments, and tinsel, with an American Flyer train set running underneath. That train set was the signal that the holiday had really arrived for me. Yes, I was glad to receive the other toys and clothes, but it was that American Flyer that made it for me. Later I would advance to a Gilbert HO set and pass the American Flyer to my brother. This Gilbert set formed the basis for my modeling foundation for a lifelong interest that has brought me to where I am today. I was able to model at that scale myself and create a layout to my liking.

Well, I have a solution for the holiday crazies. I head on up (the attic) to my layout and do some work on it. We all know that it will never be finished. There is always the need for a cluster of trees in that corner or a streetscape needs a few more people or that troublesome turnout still needs attention. So trains are now not just for Christmas, but a year-round thing, and isn't that what Christmas should be—a year-round thing? Happy Holidays to you and your family.

Charles



From the Editor...

Welcome to our winter/holiday edition of *The Dispatcher*. This issue we present part two of Glyn Thomas's

Minnesota Commercial on operations. This should be of particular interest to small layout owners who might lament the lack of operating potential. Glyn easily dispels that myth—layouts don't get much smaller than his.

We also revisit Chris Ruhl's Lincoln Lines. Sadly, Chris passed away this year and his layout must be removed from the home's basement. You may recall that we published Chris's article in August about hand laid track. In this

issue (online version) we revisit the layout in more depth that will serve as a testament to his modeling talent as well as an advertisement for a layout available for acquisition.

We are also happy to present a new column by Kevin Feeney focusing on his convention and train show adventures.

As always, we continue to welcome contributions—articles, columns, musings, documents, photos, cartoons—on anything regarding model or prototype railroading, historical or current day.

Happy Holidays and hope to see you all in January.

Howard

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Jersey to Host Joint January Meet in Merchantville

On Saturday January 11th, 2020 we return to the Grace Episcopal Church, 7 East Maple Street, Merchantville, NJ 08109, where the New Jersey Division will host our next meet. The time is 9:00am with doors opening at 8:30. Directions and maps on page 5.

For those interested, the original Merchantville train station—now a restaurant—is located a block away on the corner of N. Center and Chestnut Streets. It was built in 1881 on a line from Pemberton to Camden, later becoming part of the PRR and PC railroads with passenger service continuing into the late 1960s.

Our morning program will begin with Jersey's **Fred Willis** revisiting the basic principles of scratch building structures working with photos. Fred found additional practices in structure construction that add to making structures that better reflect the structures in the photos. In addition to the updating of these techniques, Fred found that adding details brought life to his structures, telling a story to the viewer. Those details also included weathering the structures to show the effects of Mother Nature on them.

In recent years, Fred won first place, structures, at two Mid-Eastern Region conventions, a significant accomplishment because of the intense competition of other submitted structure entries to the competition. Fred will discuss techniques for building better entries and how to increase your score not only for the contest, but also to earn merit awards. Modelers can also apply these techniques and approaches to improve all modeling activities, thereby earning merit awards in other categories.



Next will be Philly Clerk, Mark Wallace presenting part two of his ongoing series of clinics about Model Railroad Operations and Dispatching from a Prototypically Functional Approach. Mark will review the principles of his approach, previously presented in part one, so all will be prepared for this further discussion of operations dispatching. Reducing the number of “rules” the prototype uses to a select number necessary for model railroad operations allows model railroaders to experience realistic prototypical operations sessions. So, whether your pike is a humble effort or you operate on a

large club layout, Mark's approach to operations applies. Don't miss this one.

Mark Wallace, Clerk of the Philadelphia Division, is a railroading enthusiast and OpSig member who spends much of his time operating on various layouts as well as trying his hand at dispatching. While earning hours towards the AP Dispatcher certificate, Mark has observed that the



“idea” or “form” of dispatching seems to be modeled more so than the “function,” of what railroad dispatchers actually perform within a railroad's “Train Control System.” Some basic research and study on the job's function boils down to just a few basic tasks.

Our Jersey hosts are always accommodating with plenty of coffee and donuts, while we naturally supply the Philly soft pretzels. In addition, there will be door prizes and swap tables (to reserve contact Bill Grosse, 609-532-3431, w.grosse.jr@optimum.net).

The afternoon fare consists of several impressive New Jersey layout open houses as well as that of our own Glyn Thomas, which happens to be the topic of the featured article this issue. Maps and directions to the layouts will be available at the meet. Hope to see you there!

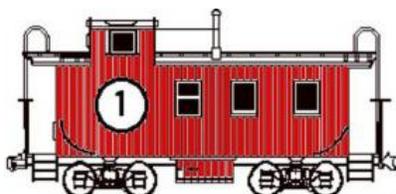
MER 2019 Convention Coverage

By virtually all accounts, the Liberty Bell Special convention was very successful. Many thanks go out to all who contributed to that end—especially to those who attended. Coverage can be found in the online section.

November Open Houses

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2019 open houses—to all who opened up their layouts and to the visitors! We couldn't do this without either group. Numbers were up from last year. If you were not part of the event in 2019, please consider joining in 2020.

This event would not be successful with outour state coordinators: PJ Mattson, Earl Paine, and Fran Giacomia, as well as our webmaster, Karen Darling. Next year, Dennis Blank, Jr. will join the team to manage the western Pennsylvania layouts. — Joe Walters, MMR

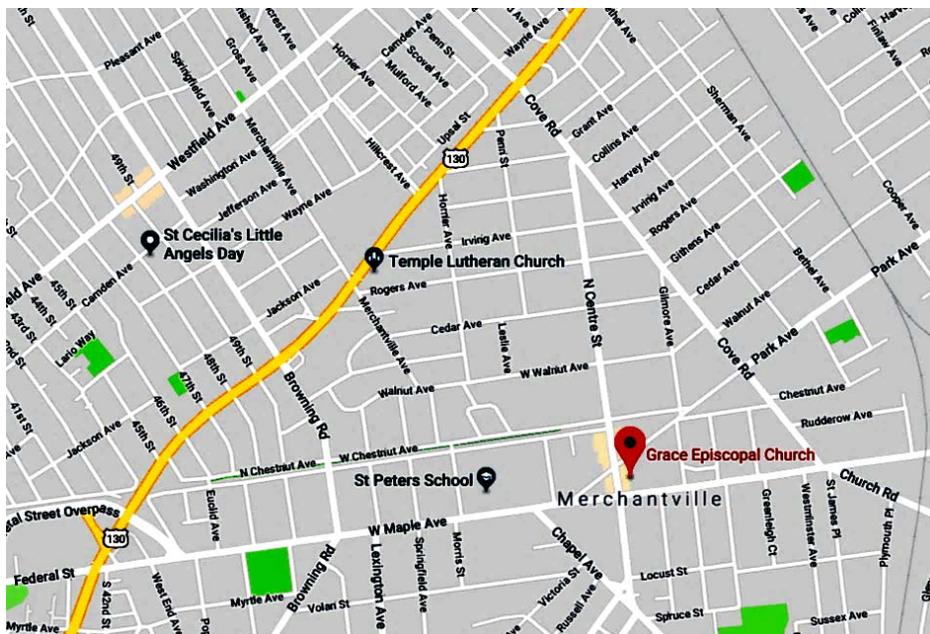


Directions to the January Meet

From the Delaware Memorial Bridge or Commodore Barry Bridge – I-295 N to Exit 26/I-76 W to US-130 N. Approx 3.5 miles turn right on Maple Ave. for about a mile. Church is just past Center St. on left.

From PA Tpk, Burlington-Bristol Bridge, Tacony-Palmyra Bridge and other points north – Take US-130 S to NJ-90, continue south on US-130 following directions below.

From Betsy Ross Bridge (NJ-90) – Take US-130 S about 1 mile. Left on Cove Rd. Third street on right is Center St. – bear right. Follow about ½ mile to Maple Ave. Turn left. Church is on left.

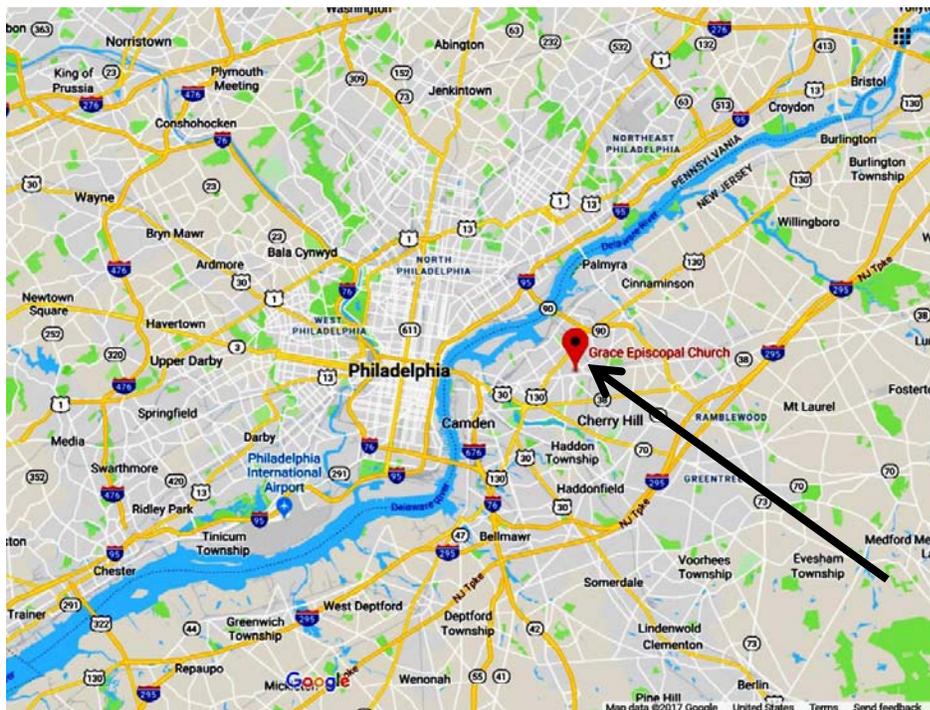


Grace Episcopal Church
7 E. Maple Ave.
Merchantville, NJ 08109

Parking is in the lot behind the church which is accessible from both Maple Ave. and Park Ave. There is additional parking in the lot on Park Ave.

We Welcome Our New Philly Division Members

Jim Armstrong, Philadelphia, PA
Robert Gouge, Middletown, DE
Carol Bigham, Chalfont, PA
H. L. Godshall, Lansdale, PA
Mark Krueger, Media, PA



Planning Ahead – Division Meets & Other Upcoming Events

<p>January 11, 2020 NJ / Philly Division Joint Meet Grace Episcopal Church Merchantville, NJ</p>	<p>March 14, 2020 New Jersey Division Meet Switlick Park Hamilton Twp., NJ</p>	<p>March 26–29, 2020 RPM–Valley Forge Desmond Hotel Malvern, PA</p>
<p>April 4, 2020 (tentative) Philadelphia Division Meet TBA</p>	<p>June 6, 2020 (tentative) Philadelphia Division Meet TBA</p>	<p>July 12–18, 2020 NMRA National Convention Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark St. Louis, MO</p>

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



With the successful running of the 2019 MER Liberty Bell Special by your Philly Division, we are once again headed to the Community Center located along Naamans Road, just south of the vast Brandywine Town Center Shopping Mall in Wilmington, DE to celebrate National Model Railroading month. Having just finished up a large but enjoyable convention, this year's meet was not a joint meet as was last year, so the numbers were down, but the enthusiasm was still up! The morning's clinics were presented by Joe Walters, MMR and Mat Chibbaro.

First up was Joe who presented his "Building the U.P. Rotary Snow Plow" on that dynamic and exciting piece of M.O.W. used by the Union Pacific Railroad in extreme snow conditions. Joe had constructed or scratch built this project in conjunction with one of his AP certificates recently earned for his rating of Master Model Railroader. Yes, for those of you who missed it, Joe is our newest MMR (#644) having received that honor this past October at the Liberty Bell Special. His clinic was one more example of a model railroad project he dreamed, schemed, built, and documented. Then, as if that wasn't enough, he worked things up into a presentation and shared his project with the rest of us. He runs a tight ship! Joe's project ex-

plained the prototype's method of pushing a rail car with a spinning disc into a snow bank. That spinning disc has a complex construction itself that grabs the snow and propels it through a shaft while the frame, coupler, and brake hoses down below the rotary are shoved into the icy snow. His step by step building process included the helpful tip: Paint extra pieces of material with the paint you're using so you

don't have to go back to match the paint if something falls off the model or breaks. Joe used a battery-driven method to drive the rotary at slow speed as well as for lighting the model. Joe had entered the model in the convention contest and brought it this morning for a later demonstration.

Our "in-between-clinics" time was filled with Achievement Program certificate awards and other offerings. Our

Photos by Rob Hinkle



A familiar sight: Joe Walters (left) receives his clinician certificate from Superintendent Charles Butsch

Division's AP Manager Dave Messer, MMR first presented Association Volunteer certificates for two very deserving members, Rob Hinkle and Bill Fagan. Rob has been a Board Member since 2013, Assistant Super since 2017, also has also been in charge of ops and social media. His greatest claim to fame, though was serving as Chair of the recent Liberty Bell Special MER convention. The Division had not hosted a con-

vention for 13 years. With his experience in attending conventions, he led the Division to host what was arguably one of the most successful events in recent years.

Bill Fagan has been on the Board since 2016, chairing the layouts and working as part of the AP team. Bill could be considered one of the key catalysts for the advancement of the Division's Achievement Program. Through his visitations to video and photograph layouts, he has recognized modeling talent and has encouraged layout owners to become involved in the AP and complete paperwork for various certificates, or if not already an NMRA member, to join. It was Bill who lit the spark that set both Joe Walters and Glyn Thomas on their meteoric rise to Master Model Railroader.

And speaking of which, Dave Messer's next treat was the introduction of our two newest Master Model Railroaders, Glyn Thomas #632 and Joe Walters #644. Congratulations to both! But there was more. Despite earning his MMR, Joe Walters received one more certificate—his eighth—for Association Volunteer. In addition to the many clinics he has presented to our Division, Joe has served on the registration team at the recent and past MER conventions.

Two other recipients of worthy recognition were John Seibert and Howard Kaplan.

John has just stepped down from the Board of Directors after more than a decade's worth of service as Assistant Superintendent (2008-2011) and Superintendent (2011-2013)



L to R: AP Coordinator Dave Messer, Super Charles Butsch, recipients of the AP Association Volunteer: Director Bill Fagan and Assistant Super Rob Hinkle

plored the prototype's method of pushing a rail car with a spinning disc into a snow bank. That spinning disc has a complex construction itself that grabs the snow and propels it through a shaft while the frame, coupler, and brake hoses down below the rotary are shoved into the icy snow. His step by step building process included the helpful tip: Paint extra pieces of material with the paint you're using so you

as well as the coordinator of clinicians for our many meets. In addition, John lined up over 90 clinics for the Liberty Bell Special—a record number for any MER convention in recent memory—and M.C.d the convention banquet! John will be continuing to assist with Division activities while he builds his N-scale version of the Reading's W&N branch in his basement. With heartfelt gratitude for his years of dedicated service, John was presented with the Division's Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation.

Howard is the 2019 recipient of the NMRA's President's Award for Service to the Division. This award is solicited by the respective Regions each year to discover a person who has provided exemplary service to his division. When many of us were asked, the person we thought of was Howard. He has been devoted to the Division in so many ways beyond just doing the job of Treasurer. An NMRA member since 1981 and Division member since 1993, Howard has an encyclopedic knowledge of many of the layout owners and things about their layouts. Adding to his officer's job of Treasurer, he is Division Webmaster, apparel coordinator, and has recently assumed Editor of the Division's newsletter, *The Dispatcher*, as well as continuing to update its look and feel. By the way, I believe our Division's newsletter to be among the best nationally of any model railroad publication available today!

Howard also redesigned the Division logo and introduced the PhillyNMRA brand that has become so recognizable. He produced the outdoor signs at each meet directing you to your destination. He was the designer and webmaster for the Liberty Bell Special. In addition to his extensive involvement in Division activities, Howard is a dentist and runs his own practice. Let me say, good work does not go unnoticed and we all congratulate and support him. The next time you see him, congratulate him and ask, "So how can I help?"

Our next clinician was Mat Chibbaro who visited us from Silver Springs, MD. His topic, *Model Railroading in Small Spaces*, is also the name of the book published back in 2011 by Kalmbach as part of its series of *Model Rail-*

roaders' How-to Guides. Model railroading is more than the temporary holiday display of trains that disappears after the holiday decorations are put away. Model railroading has an air of being permanent. Beginning with his design for an early holiday train display, Mat shared many examples of layouts built into coffee tables, end tables around the back of a sofa, modules, modular sections, and movable layouts. One could consider these the creative opposite of the "plywood pacifics"—around-the-room layouts that inhabit the other end of the layout design/build spectrum. He showed many examples from his book with enriching stories for his many photos, cutting diagrams, and actual methods of model building. Mat is the real deal model railroadingwise; he

builds structures, decorates rolling stock and locomotives, designs and builds track, designs or builds intricate scenery, and powers his railroads. He does not yet do DCC. I was moved to buy his book and (shameless plug here) enjoyed the ideas and methods that I am using in my own modeling efforts. His clinic was a breath of fresh air on how to get a lot into a very small area.

After Mat's presentation, a short Show & Tell where modelers took a few moments to explain or show their efforts to the group. We really appreciate the interesting variety each modeler brings to their work. Keep it coming.

Charles Long—former winner of many prior raffles—was once again (!) the lucky winner of the 50/50 raffle. As in the past, he generously donated his proceeds back to the Division. Congratulations, Charlie, and we all want to know your secret! The meeting ended shortly before noon.

For the first time in over a year and a half, there was no MER 2019 Committee meeting freeing us all up for some additional lunch time and layout visiting. With November being Model Railroad Month, the Open House Layout Tour event provided several layouts to visit (including those of the coordinator, Joe Walters, MMR and fellow Division member John Trout) —a wonderful way to observe, study, and get to know other model railroaders.

Although Earl Hackett could not attend, we thank Earl for once again securing the wonderful Town Center venue. Thanks again to our clinicians Joe and Mat, and all of our model railroading friends who joined us. We hope you enjoyed yourselves, and on behalf of the Division, extend warm wishes for a Happy Holiday season filled with many wonderful people and things including model railroading! Our next meet will be on January 11, 2019 where we will join the New Jersey Division on their territory at the Grace Episcopal Church in Merchantville, NJ. See you then!



Retiring Director John Seibert (left), displays the appreciation certificate for his many years of dedicated service on the Division Board

AP Report

by Dave Messer, MMR



I am very pleased to report that Bill Fagan and Rob Hinkle have received their AP Volunteer certificates, in large part because of their efforts working on a very successful MER Liberty Bell Special Convention. Congrats and thanks for their service! 📌

**MORE MEET
COVERAGE
ON PAGE 16**

Modeling the Minnesota Commercial Railway

Part 2: Control and Operations

by Glyn Thomas, MMR

Photos and graphics by the author

Most modelers consider a 4' x 8' layout just a step up from “round the Christmas Tree”—a train running around in circles at breakneck speed. Fun, but boring after a few minutes. So, just how complex can you make operations on a layout of this size? It turns out it can be quite complex, even with a track plan as simple as my Minnesota Commercial (MNNR) layout.

Before operating the layout, I needed to install the control system. The layout was small enough to motorize all the turnouts with Tortoise switch machines. These were initially powered by a separate 12V power supply intended for a computer and “jumped” for model railroad use. I also initially reused the MRC Prodigy

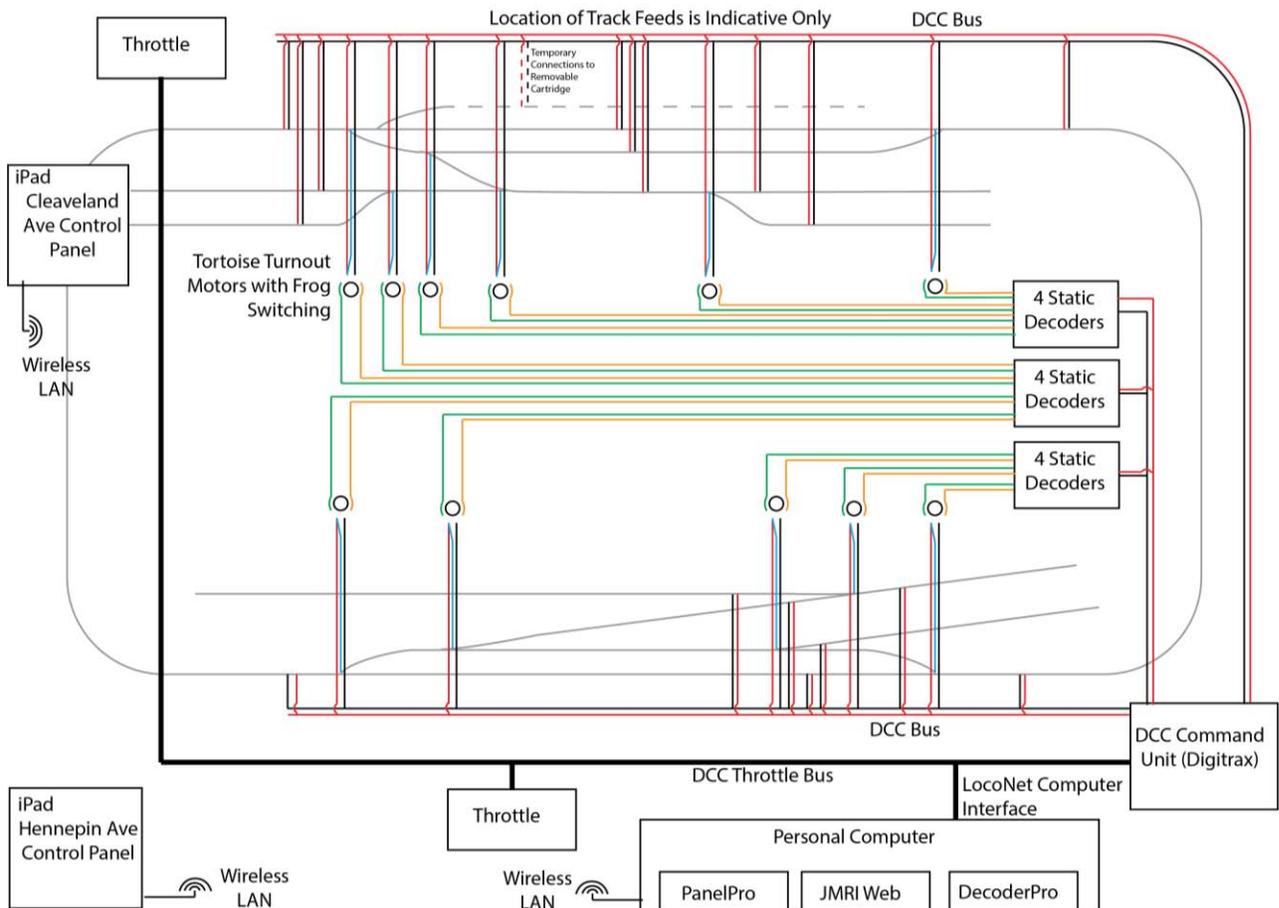
Advantage DCC command unit from my CNJ layout. However, I was interested in upping the ante on controls with computerized control panels and the MRC computer interface was too rudimentary.

Out went MRC, and in came a Digitrax Zephyr command unit with additional tethered throttles. The Digitrax is connected to a MacBook using the Digitrax PR3 computer interface. I ripped out the 12V DC turnout wiring and connected all the turnouts to Digitrax DS64 static decoder banks.

The control panels themselves were designed using the NMRA’s JMRI Panel Pro software (thanks to the St Albans Model Railroad Club team for pointing me in the right direction for this). I then used Panel

Pro’s built-in webserver to “publish” the panels on my local network. I attached permanent first- and second-generation iPads in mounts on both sides of the layout. By browsing to the Panel Pro webserver, I now have “touch-to-change” interactive control panels.

IMPORTANT NOTE: if you are using older iPads for control panels, the newest version of JMRI that you can use is 3.10—JMRI 4.10 doesn’t work with the older iPads (and this isn’t in any of the literature!) I also sometimes use the WiThrottleLite iPhone-based throttle software, but this usually isn’t necessary and is more a “nice to have” to impress non-model railroaders.



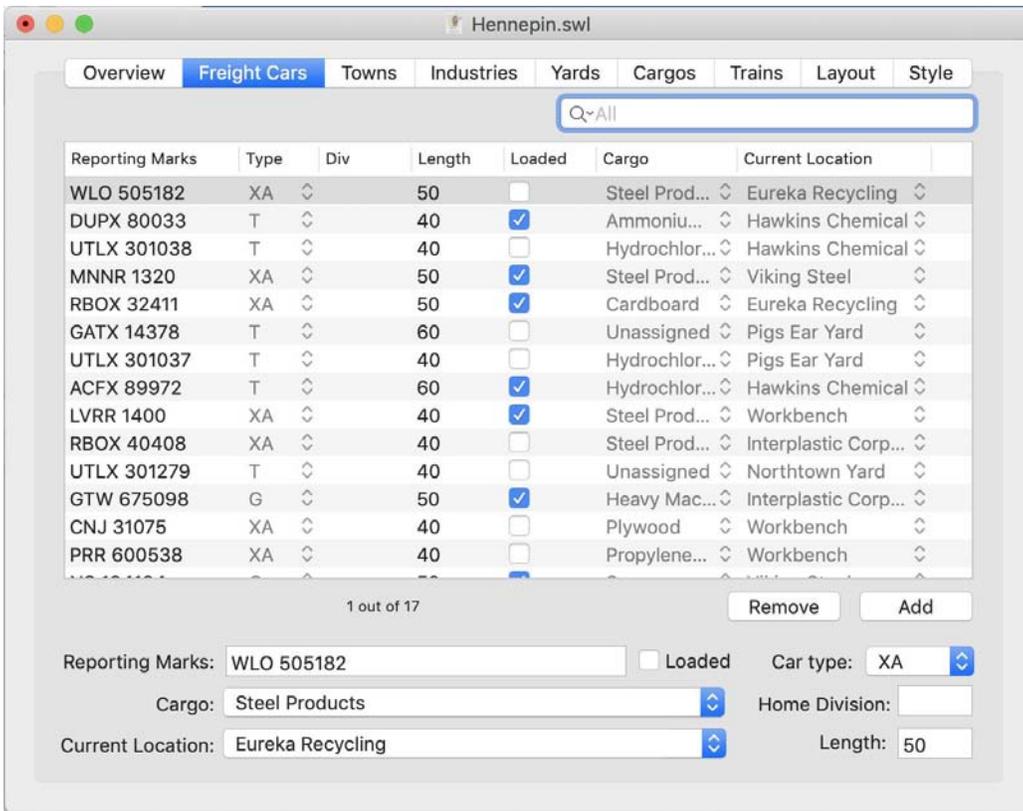
With the layout operational, I could now turn to developing a layout operating scheme. To be realistic, I need to operate trains in a point-to-point fashion, switching industries out and back along the branch. I decided it was likely that the MNRR would switch the industries on a “trailing

and it has now been incorporated into the SwitchList package.

To use SwitchList, it’s necessary to set up any industries as locations in the order that they will be worked. On a small layout it’s also necessary to set up some off-layout locations as sources and destinations for freight

movements are defined between off-layout and on-layout locations, including an indication of what type of car is required.

The final step is to define scheduled trains to operate over the line. On the real MNRR, train 52 is the scheduled weekday service from



Midway Yard over the Hennepin Branch. I needed more than one train, so I created definitions of 52A, 52B, and 52C each operating from a different originating yard (cassette). SwitchList is set up on the MacBook in the model railroad room with its own webserver (separate from the PanelPro webserver), so switching instructions are available on the iPad control panels.

Highball! To start an operating session, I instruct SwitchList to generate new train manifests for the three trains, then I pull up the instructions on the iPad control panel and assemble the train with suitable power in a cassette on a workbench next to the layout. I originally chose to limit the number of cars on the layout to the size of the cassettes, which meant I didn’t

switch” basis, meaning that the train would switch two industries on the way out (Viking Steel and Interplastic), and two on the return (Eureka Recycling and Hawkins Chemical).

In line with many modern railroads, I operate on a track warrant and switch list operating scheme. My household generally operates with Apple Mac computers and I found a Mac-compatible, free model railroad dispatching software package called SwitchList to generate switch lists. It comes out of the box with a number of switch list formats, but at the time didn’t have an example that exactly matched my needs—I wanted it to give explicit instructions for each industry, i.e. pull any cars that need to be picked up, and then drop any replacement cars. I wrote my own template to structure the list in this way,

movements. A special case on my layout was the cassette system that is used to add and remove trains on the layout—I built three cassettes from aluminum channel and named each after an MNRR-connected yard: Pigs Ear, Midway, and Northtown.

Each cassette is a location in SwitchList and is used as an intermediate spot for forwarding to off-layout locations. Continuing setup, each car on the road is entered into SwitchList with its current location. Freight

assembly, but now consider that the variety of additional cars is worth the effort of composing the trains.

I connect the cassette to the layout and follow the switch list to switch each of the industries. The train eventually returns to the yard (cassette), with the locomotive in front and the cassette is returned to the workbench. With the train safely home, I report it as “complete” on the SwitchList console, and the car locations are updated.

Glyn Thomas is a prolific modeler with two layouts, one representing the CNJ in the Lehigh Valley and the other being the topic of this article, the modern-day Minnesota Commercial Railway. He has recently earned Master Model Railroader #632. His railroad will be open following the meet on January 11, 2020. Don't miss it!



Repeat for the other trains and that's an operating session.

I don't usually bother with the track warrants, since the layout generally works "one engine in steam" as us

Brits would say. However, if I have a few operators, I can issue separate warrants for Hennepin Avenue and Cleveland Avenue in order to have two trains in operation. Depending

on the size of the train and the skill of the operators, each train will take 10-20 minutes to work, so a full session is between 30 minutes and an hour—not bad for a small layout. 

Switch list for 52B

161 West Tidewater Ave. Moose Falls MN 50120	<u>Minnesota Commercial Railroad</u> John Doe, Chairman and President	Tel. 213-555-1203 St. Paul: 310-767-2676 Fax 310-767-2677
---	---	---

Manifest for train (52B)
Valid 11/27/2018 07:39
Scheduled work at Northtown Yard

[] Pick Up XA **IC 11594** Cardboard from Northtown Yard

Train departs Northtown Yard with 1 cars, 50 feet

Scheduled work at E Hennepin Ave. Westbound

[] Pick Up XA **MNNR 1320** Steel Products from Viking Steel

Train departs E Hennepin Ave. Westbound with 2 cars, 100 feet

Scheduled work at Cleveland St. NE Westbound

[] Set Out XA **IC 11594** Cardboard to Eureka Recycling

Train departs Cleveland St. NE Westbound with 1 cars, 50 feet

Scheduled work at E Hennepin Ave. Eastbound

[] Pick Up T **ACFX 89972** Hydrochloric Acid from Hawkins Chemical

Train departs E Hennepin Ave. Eastbound with 2 cars, 110 feet

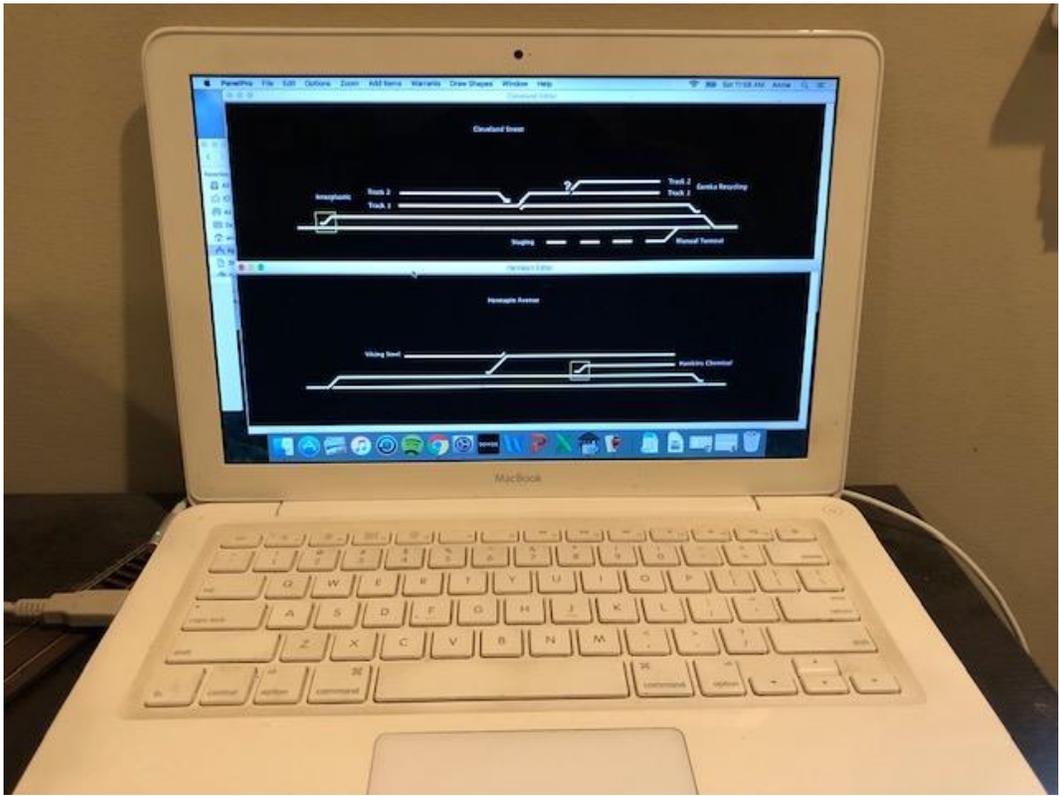
Scheduled work at Northtown Yard

[] Set Out XA **MNNR 1320** Steel Products to Bloomington, MN via Northtown Yard

[] Set Out T **ACFX 89972** Hydrochloric Acid to Voorhees, NJ via Northtown Yard

Train terminates.

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



Philadelphia Division of the NMRA, Inc.

(A Nonprofit Organization)

Financial Report

for the Year Ended June 30, 2019

Respectfully Submitted by Howard Kaplan, Treasurer

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES		
INCOME		
MER Dues Rebate		\$261
Non-dues Program		248
Fundraising		201
Interest		39
Total Income		\$749
EXPENSES		
Program		\$925
Total Expenses		\$925
Net Loss		(\$176)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		\$24,182
Inventory Asset		222
Total Assets		\$24,404
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES		
Total Current Liabilities		\$0
FUND BALANCES		
Unrestricted		\$24,404
Total Fund Balances		\$24,404
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances		\$24,404

Division Organization

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (elected)

OFFICERS

Superintendent – Charles Butsch (2021)
Assistant Superintendent – Rob Hinkle (2021)
Clerk – Mark Wallace (2020)
Treasurer – Howard Kaplan (2021)

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Mike Dettinger – Clinics (2020)
Bill Fagan – Layouts (2020)
Chip Stevens – Publicity (2021)

AUXILLIARY OFFICIALS (appointed)

AP Coordinator – Dave Messer MMR
AP Committee Chair – Earl Paine
Newsletter Editor/Webmaster – Howard Kaplan



PhillyNMRA

COMMITTEES/DUTIES

EVENTS

Clinics – Mike Dettinger*
Layouts – Bill Fagan*
Venues – Howard Kaplan
Refreshments – Charles Butsch, Bill Fagan
Door Prizes – Mike Dettinger
Clinic Video – Chip Stevens
Audio – Howard Kaplan
Signs/Printed Materials – Howard Kaplan
Certificates/Awards – Howard Kaplan
Publicity – Chip Stevens*

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Earl Paine*, Bill Fagan, Joe Walters MMR,
Glyn Thomas MMR

MEMBERSHIP

Member Outreach – Charles Butsch, Bill Fagan
Membership Records – Mark Wallace

OPS

Rob Hinkle*

MEDIA

Social Media – Rob Hinkle
Webmaster – Howard Kaplan
Newsletter – Howard Kaplan*, Earl Paine, Mark Wallace,
Bill Fagan, Joe Walters MMR, Kevin Feeney
Layout Video – Bill Fagan
Photography – Rob Hinkle, Howard Kaplan, Bill Fagan,
Rob Ischinger, Mark Wallace

SPECIAL PROJECTS

John Seibert

DIVISION APPAREL

Howard Kaplan

SCOUTING

Joe Bergmaier

* **Chairman**

Interested in helping out? Contact a Board Member or Chairman

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

10% discount (excludes O & G items)

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

trainpops.com

10% discount

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

henningstrains.com

10% in addition to already discounted prices



Bill Fagan: *The Video Vigilante*



Photos by Bill Fagan unless otherwise noted

Below are some videos of layouts that I've recently visited. I've videoed layouts in California, Idaho, Maryland, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. 170 layouts with 724 videos and 2050 followers on YouTube with 1.1 million views.



← **Jim Hart's Lima, Wawa & Concordville.** (Demolished) 1950's central PA. HO/HOn30 steam and early diesels, most with sound. Layout is walk-in, no duck unders, "G"-shaped, DCC control. Layout photos have appeared in Walthers catalog; *Philadelphia Inquirer* also did an article with photos. Layout features mountains, tall wood bridges, stone arch bridges, a large town, steel mill, large engine facility; 2 turntables, 2 roundhouses, and a staging yard. Layout is 55" off the floor for eye-level perspective. Passenger & freight trains.

Rick Bickmore's Harrisburg Terminal RR. HO scale modeling
Harrisburg to Rockville, MD.

Video:

<https://youtu.be/SFyGQyHmFD8>





← **Bob Dietrich's East Penn Traction Company** (Demolished) HO Scale traction railroad. Trolleys galore.
Video: <https://youtu.be/y4VTd19zLPQ>



HOWARD KAPLAN

Ted Fort's Paoli Local →
HO scale RR. Narberth to Paoli circa 1944. 20'x20' 4 track main line with 85 buildings mostly custom made, 110 vehicles, 152 figures, 21 engines and 170 cars. DC using Tech II power supplies. Catenary in progress.
Video: <https://youtu.be/NM54hiJR2Qs>



HOWARD KAPLAN

← **Nick Brownberger's PRR**, HO Scale, Digitrax DCC with JMRI. All switches are hands laid and computer controlled.
This is a portion of level 1 of 5 future levels. Search for Nick's drone view video that shows the entire first level under construction.
Video:
<https://yuotu.be/Sv18L-ma-Cc>
<https://youtu.be/tdLwFTe3mfk>

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 Charles Butsch greets the audience and presents the first clinician



Joe Walters MMR presents his clinic on building a rotary snow plow



Newest MMRs: Glyn Thomas #632 (far left) and Joe Walters #644 (far right) receive congratulations from AP Coordinator Dave Messer MMR #115



Clinician and author Mat Chibbaro (left) displays his appreciation certificate



Director Bill Fagan, Carol Bigham, and Ron Bigham enjoying themselves



Layout hosts display their appreciation certificates: Joe Walters MMR (2nd from left) and John Trout (right). In the background, the Super, and Layout Chair Bill Fagan





Pow-wow: Super Charles Butsch, AP Chair Earl Paine, Alden Smith, Charlie Long, George Phillips, Glyn Thomas MMR



Howard Kaplan leafs through Dave Messer's latest book while Glyn Thomas and Mark Krueger talk in the background



Rob Ischinger (left) checks out Mat Chibbaro's book as other attendees peruse the swap tables



Former Supers John Seibert (left) and Joe Bergmaier chat with the gang at the front desk



Show & Tell

Mark Krueger discussed his C&NW steam locomotive and rolling stock...



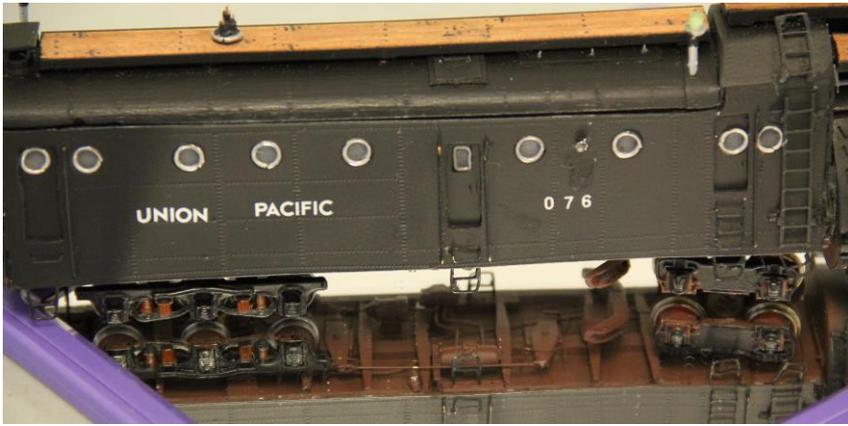
The C&NW 0-6-0 is a stock Life Like P2000 USRA undecorated model that I painted and weathered with Tamiya and Model Master paints. The lettering comes from an old Champ decals set. I also added figures, Kadee couplers and a real coal load.

The ore car(s) (can't remember if brought more than one) are Walther's Michigan Ore cars. I painted the wheels with Rust-o-leum and weathered the cars, wheels and trucks with Model Master paints and pan-pastel chalks.

The locomotive and cars are intended for my Michigan Upper Peninsula Iron-Ore hauling pike based on the C&NW, DSS&A, and LS&I railroads.



Joe Walters's Rotary Snow Plow



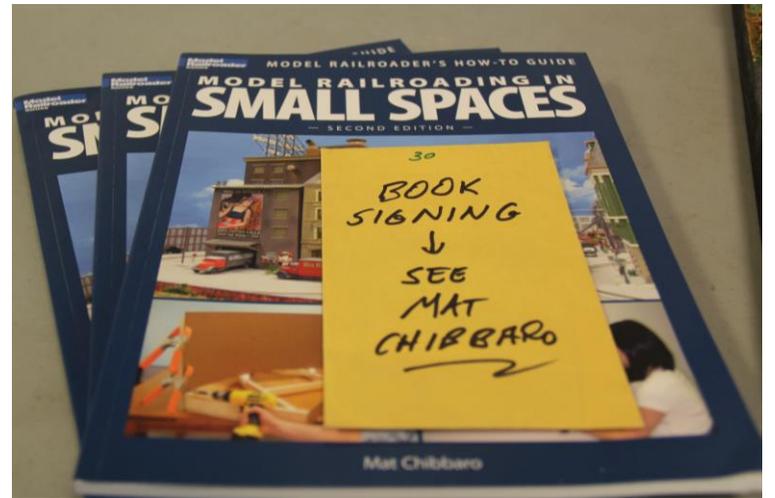
Joe's model won the popular vote Favorite Train award at the 2019 MER Convention.



Mat Chibbaro

Mat Chibbaro presented his clinic titled "Model Railroading in Small Spaces." He brought copies of his book for purchase and one of his portable layout inserts.







Above: Activity at the swap tables while Alden Smith (left) sees someone he recognizes.

Above right: Super Duper! Former Super John Seibert (left) chats with front table crew while Former Super Joe Bergmaier (center) and current Super Charles Butsch catch up on division happenings

Right: More supers! This time Tim Himmelberger (left) from Susquehanna checks out the vendor tables along with John Seibert (center) while Vendor Kevin Feeny (right) enjoys a pretzel while keeping a watchful eye on those suspicious supers



The NMRA President's Award for Division Service

by Charles Butsch, Superintendent

Howard Kaplan has been a member of the NMRA since 1981 and a division member since 1993 (membership was separate back in those days). He was elected to the division's board in October 2011 where he volunteered to take over the vacated position of treasurer. He continues to serve in this capacity presently where he diligently keeps track of our finances, reporting the status at each board meeting

In August 2016 he took over the additional responsibilities of division webmaster where he revamped and expanded our connection to the division, region, and national. If that was not enough, he became co-editor and publisher of the division's newsletter, *The Dispatcher*, in August 2016. Here he assisted Earl Paine, our editor at that time, in producing an ever expanding publication that has received national attention for content and quality.

In August 2018 Howard became editor of the *The*

Dispatcher when Earl Paine became AP Committee Chair. No, he did not give up his previous responsibilities but continued to serve the division. He encouraged other members to participate by writing articles for the newsletter to further their involvement.

Howard's devices go beyond titles within the division. He is there helping me set up chairs and equipment, putting out the signs, and helping to man the registration desk for our division meets. He has even been a major contributor of the Liberty Bell Special Convention where he composed the two guide

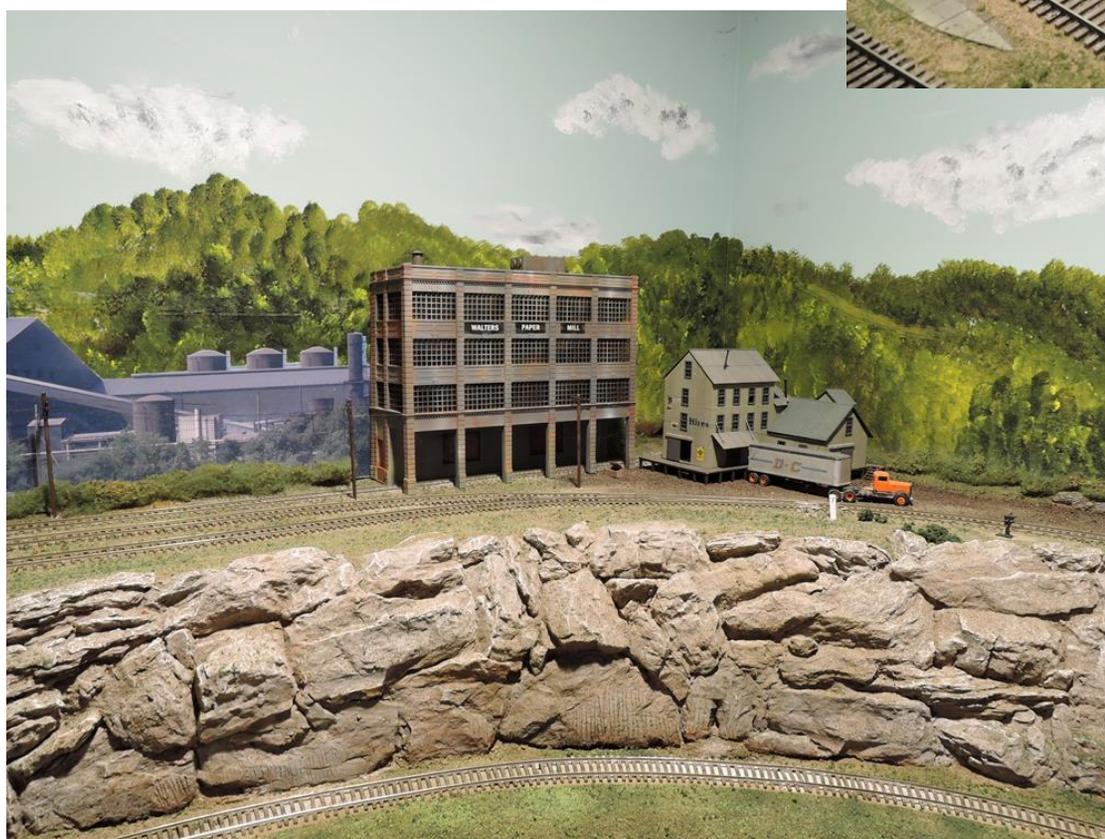
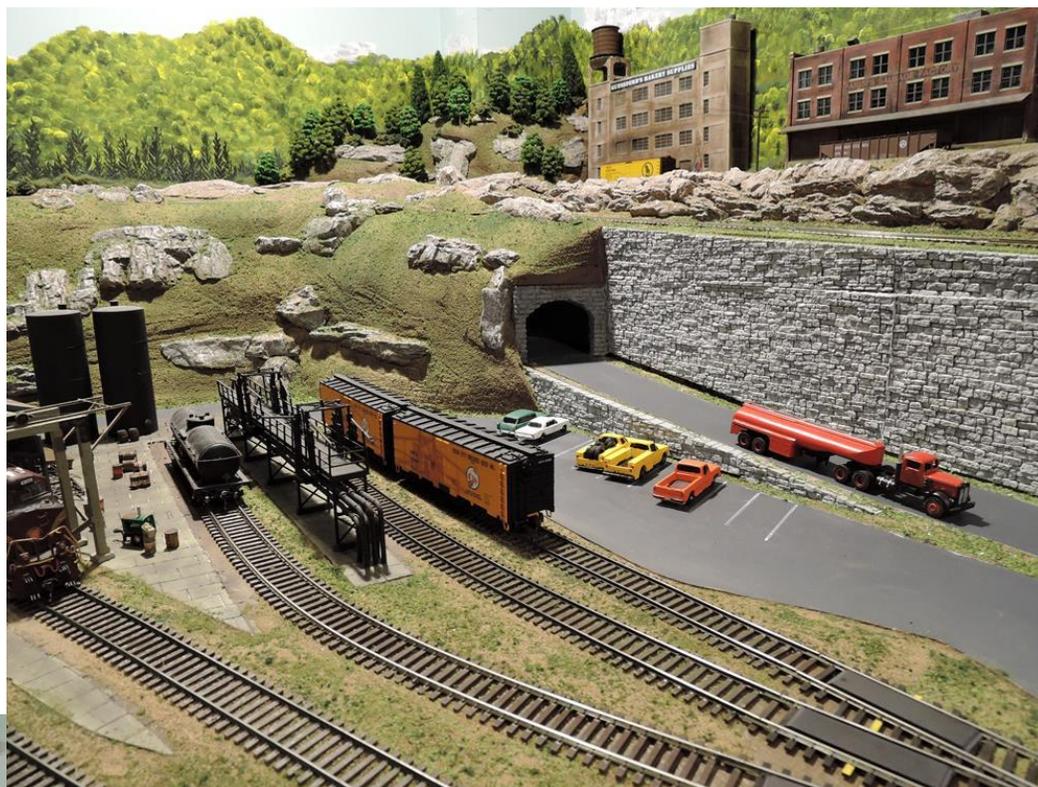


books and the signs, as well as creating and managing the convention website and store with its clothing of various sizes and colors.

With all of this Howard has a dental practice and a wife that require his attention.

Please join me in congratulating Howard for the award that he wholeheartedly deserves.

John was one of the layouts featured on the Liberty Bell Special Convention layout tour back in October. He was kind enough to host again for the Division at the November meet. It's a beautifully detailed depiction of rural sections of the PRR in Pennsylvania from the 1940s through the '60s.





Joe's layout features lots of interesting railroad action as well as structures built from rubber-mold castings. His layout has been featured many times in The Dispatcher, but this time is special as we congratulate him on achieving his Master Model Railroader, which he received at the Liberty Bell Special Convention in October.





Volunteer...

Volunteer? Volunteerism? You hear these words often in the division, regional and national level. What are they looking for? From what I have noticed the last few years, it looks different at each level. I recently was awarded my Association Volunteer certificate in the Achievement Program. I know a little about volunteering, having worked two regional conventions, along with volunteering in three divisions in four states.

What have I learned? There is plenty to do, and that is where the fun begins.

What can you do?

There are large and small tasks that happen at each division meet before the first clinic. Setting up chairs, tables, and the overhead screen that will be used for the clinics. If you arrive early, you can meet your division members on a personal level, make new friends and be a productive member while enriching yourself in ways you can't imagine. The convention that just passed was a fine example of volunteerism at its best. Board members working together solving problems, and others working in contest, registration, sales, and clinic areas were all involved in making this a great event. If you attended the Liberty Bell Special you



know what I am talking about. If you missed this event, please consider volunteering for the next convention. There are many ways for you to get involved.

You could give a clinic. You might want to bring finished projects that you are proud of. You might just want to start by giving a small speech to the members.

I know that I have been enriched by getting involved with NMRA. Can you give more of yourself? This is a question only you can answer. It is my belief that you will have a more positive experience in the organization if you put yourself out there. Experience has shown me that by participating when and where I can, I have made many new friends, while also increasing my list of valuable contacts in the hobby. These

contacts share their expertise and their enjoyment of trains with me.

I intend to continue volunteering in the organization. Will I see you?

Well, time to go; the cup is low. Till next time.

Joe

The Lincoln Lines – A layout you can own

by Howard Kaplan

Photos by the author unless otherwise noted



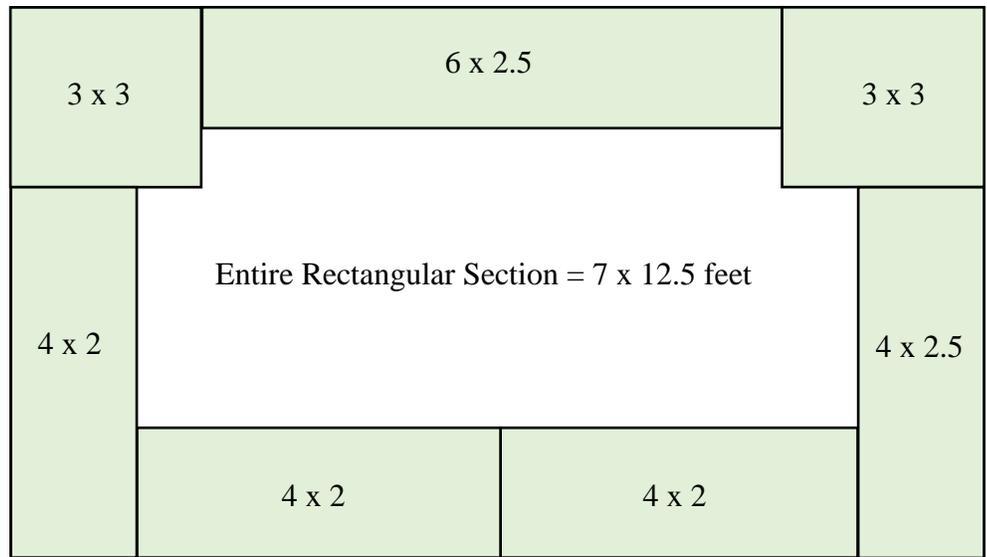
CHRIS RUHL

Those who read the article we published in the October issue on handlaying track by Chris Ruhl are by now familiar with this man's modeling talent and meticulous approach to trackage. Sadly Chris died this past summer as a result of an automobile accident, so his layout is available to acquire.

Chris worked on this layout for 15 years. It is in HO scale, measures 7 x 12.5 feet with an 8 x 1.5 foot yard tail. The main layout is comprised of seven sections that are bolted together and can be readily dismantled for moving. The measurements of each section are shown on the schematic. Chris used plywood sheets as legs, but could easily be replaced or augmented with 2x4s with T-nuts to adjust elevation, which I believe he used in one location.

The track, of course, is all handlaid on pine

roadbed—what appears to be code 83 and 70, and beautifully ballasted. There are 18 Tortoise switch machines, and a variety of scratchbuilt, kit-built, and kit-bashed structures. There are operating PRR-style signals with Bruce Chubb's C/MRI detection circuits, the entire layout being controlled by a home-made CTC machine, using Rix components for the face panel. Wiring is neat and organized. What drives the electronics is a program written in BASIC on a C/MRI interfaced PC. Loco control is via NCE DCC. Chris had started out as a computer programmer, moved on to IT, and ended up as the electronics security specialist for SEPTA.



In addition to the layout, there is a variety of rolling stock, locomotives—including a considerable amount of brass, much of it his father's—books, and tools and equipment.



Not only would this be a wonderful layout or addition for an individual model railroader, but would be ideal for a religious or other non-profit organization desiring to start a club or have a layout for display.

Additional photos can be found [here](#) on the Division website and in the October's issue of *The Dispatcher*.

For further questions or information, please contact Rita Ruhl at rhruhl60@verizon.net or 267-298-9320.

8 x 1.5







with Chip Stevens



I was at breakfast in a local diner recently and overheard a shocking (to me) conversation. Three gentlemen about my age (makes them really old) were discussing their home computers and the problems they were having with them. Most of the problems they discussed stemmed from a simple model railroad practice: maintenance.

I have a ritual that dates back to my early exposure to personal computers and using them for business. I use Friday for the ritual, but the key is having a set day and sticking with it.

Friday morning, before any thing else on the PC is done, I run a thorough virus scan of the hard drive on the machine. So far, that frequency has served me well enough. You may want to do that more often depending on how much time you spend online. Most viruses come from sources on the internet, so think accordingly.

After any clean up that may result from this first step, I back up the entire hard drive to a separate, free standing hard drive. Guard that backup just as you would a prized brass locomotive. As a part of our relocation a few years ago, I made a complete hard drive backup and subsequently gave access to it to a third party performing remote access maintenance on my computer. Don't do as I do, do as I say, and don't ever give anyone access to that full backup. You may be left with no backup as I was and lose a lot of information you don't really want to part with.



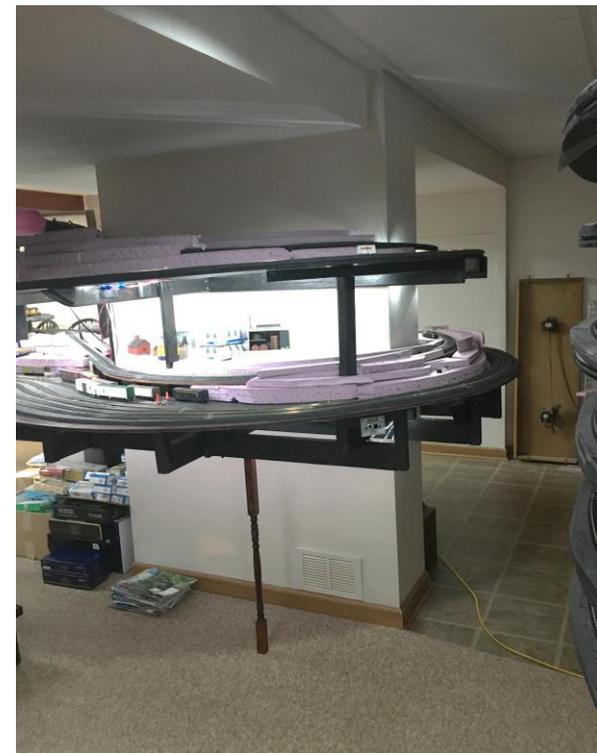
Both my house PC and the old PC I use for train-related "stuff" are Dell PCs. There may be other good machines out there, but using the old "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" concept I've had excellent results and performance from Dell, so I stay with them. Dell has a free maintenance program on their website called Support Assist. The program checks for software updates, stale files, and some other useful system checks. Be careful how often you run the Assist as one of the checks is a hard drive scan. Any time you run a complete drive scan, you are causing a wearing run over the disk face.

Check your PC's website for a similar program if you're not a Dell user.

If you're thinking about the external backup mentioned earlier, buy as big a drive as you can afford. Storage prices have come down to almost cheap, and the next PC you buy will have more basic hard drive capacity than you now have. More (storage) is definitely better in this case.

As you can see, I'm a Windows OS user. I've been told by others that Apple's operating system (OS) is less prone to virus problems than Windows. Other than watching my wife use her Mac OS, I have no experience or opinion on the subject, but I do know that Macs can accumulate old files and share some other problems with Windows. And I know all too well from her experiences that Mac's need backing up too.

Best wishes for the Holidays. Make a resolution now to do your regular PC maintenance in 2020. 📌



Ron's PRR layout is now fully operational and his scenery is well under way. The theme of Ron's layout is the 4-track PRR main line in the Cassandra Pass area of western Pennsylvania. His goal was to replicate the drama of the area which he frequently railfans.

Upper left: Ron's refinery scene takes shape

Upper center: Ron operates a train headed for Cassandra on his second level.

Upper right: Ron uses foam as his scenery base and is making rapid progress

Right: This photo captures the drama of a PRR train cresting the hill at Cassandra. The main actually traverses the aisle allowing extremely realistic eye level views of Cassandra.





ON THE (RAIL) ROAD WITH KEVIN FEENEY

CONVENTIONS – SHOWS – TRAVEL

BRITISH REGION CONVENTION

One of the benefits of NMRA membership is the ability to attend NMRA events literally worldwide. In late September, I attended the British Region convention held in Aberdeen Scotland. This was not my first BR convention. I attended one in 2004 in England, as well as, an early 2000s spring event in England’s Lake District. To date I have attended conventions in 13 of the NMRA’s 18 regions and plan to attend the Australasian Region’s convention in June 2020.

Compared to the recent MER convention that we just hosted, the BR conventions are much smaller in size and scope. This is not surprising in that the BR only has a few hundred members. However, the BR publishes a nice, full-color magazine, the *ROUNDHOUSE* six times a year (<https://www.nmrabr.org.uk/roundhouse-magazine>).

The convention was held in an older hotel next to Aberdeen’s airport. Aberdeen is the third largest city in Scotland and its airport is the busiest heliport in the world as it services the nearby offshore oil and gas fields 24/7. The convention took its name from the locally quarried stone that was used in the construction of many 19th century buildings there.

The convention started on Friday Sept. 27th with optional tours of a whiskey distillery and Aberdeen’s Central Train

Station. Clinics were offered later Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning. I gave one about Class I railroads that I had given previously in the US. After my clinic, I opened a suitcase and held my own white elephant sale making almost £40.

There were 75 attendees. In the past, the registration fee for BR conventions was all inclusive covering the event, room, and meals. This convention was a la carte, though they offered optional dinners on Friday and Saturday nights in which almost everyone participated. After the dinner on Saturday, there were some awards and BR business.

For most, the highlight of the event was a small train show with several dealers, module layouts, and swap tables. UK modelers typically don’t have home layouts. There were supposed to be two open on Sunday, but the members were out working on the offshore platforms.

My wife and I spent a whole week in Scotland. We visited Glasgow and Edinburgh, looked for Nessie, cruised Loch Lomond, rode the train line across the Scottish Highlands featured in the Harry Potter movies, and visited a whiskey distillery and a cooperage company. American Airlines had nonstop summer service from Philly to Edinburgh and our fares were a real bargain, at only \$545 each round trip!





EAST GREENVILLE TRAIN SHOW

On Saturday November 16, 2019, I drove to the Upper Perkiomen Valley to attend this show, hosted by the North Penn S Gaugers {NPSG} in the local fire hall. I arrived just after 9AM to find both the parking lot and the show floor full. Admission was a mere \$3.

The center of the hall was dominated by a large, modular S gauge layout. S is a minority scale (I prefer that term vs. gauge) but is much more prototypical than Lionel. American Flyer rolling stock was generally built to a true 3/16"-to-a-foot scale and uses 2-rail, standard gauge track, plus there is an abundance of 1/64 vehicles available.

I would say there were about 40 dealer tables, mostly with AF or Lionel trains. Several dealers were wearing ATMA badge holders, no doubt from the previous weekend's First Frost Show in Allentown. There was some HO on almost every table, and I came home with a few bargains. The Colebrookdale Railroad and the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania had tables as did the local Perkiomen RR Historical Society. Part of the 20-mile long Perkiomen Trail parallels Route 29 just south of East Greenville.

NPSG maintains a website and a Facebook page. Their next show in East Greenville is Saturday, May 2, 2020. 



The Liberty Bell Special 2019 Mid-Eastern Region Convention was held from October 10-13th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in King of Prussia. About 250 people attended from all over the Region as well as from other Regions. It featured 90 clinics, 56 clinicians, 48 layouts, 3 ops layouts, 2 modular layouts, and a vendor room featuring some of the premier dealers and manufacturers in the hobby. In the contest room on display were entries to the NMRA for judging both for AP merit awards as well as the contest itself. The sales room featured the white elephant tables, door prizes, and a silent auction.

On Saturday evening, the awards banquet was held to honor those who had won contests, those who had achieved AP mileposts, such as our newest MMRs, Glyn Thomas and Joe Walters, those who had contributed service to the MER. The meal, consisting of a railroad-themed menu, was plentiful very tasty indeed.

The general concensus among those who attended was that they really enjoyed themselves and found it very rewarding.

We'd like to thank all of the attendees, as well as all those who volunteered to man different rooms and tables and to those who assisted in the clinic rooms. We want you to know that without your help, this convention could never have run as smoothly as it did, and the folks in those rooms were duly impressed with and grateful for your dedication and help.

Convention Committee: Alan Silverblatt, Alden Smith, Bill Fagan, Charles Butsch, Charles Long, Charlie Confer, Chip Stevens, Earl Paine, Howard Kaplan, Joe Bergmaier, Joe Walthers MMR, John Siebert, Karen Confer, Kevin Feeney, Mark Wallace, Mike Dettinger

MER: Eric Dervinis, Executive Convention Chair; Kirk Bateman, Registrar; Jim Fisher, Assistant Registrar; Scott Ungar, Convention Treasurer

Clinicians: Marshall Abrams, Mike Baker, Craig Bisgeier, Dennis Blank, Dick Bronson, Chuck Davis MMR, Ralph DeBlasi, Eric Dervinis, Mike Dettinger, Larry DeYoung, Gil Fuchs, Steve Funaro, John Gallagher, John Greene, Michael Groves, Earl Hackett, Aric Hartle, Jim Hertzog, Tim Himmelberger, Ron Hoess, Kevin Hunter, Rick & Maureen Hunter, Nick Kalis, Brian Kampschroer, Kurt Thompson MMR, Bernard Kempinski, Phil Kinsey, Dan Mycio, Steve Koffel, Rich Mahaney, Marty McGuirk, Alan Mende, Fred Miller MMR, Lance Mindheim, Rich Newmiller MMR, George Phillips, Val Pistilli, Mike Prokop, Thom Radice, Ramon Rhodes, Steve Salotti, Bill Sartore, Bill Schaumberg, Brian Sheron MMR, Greg Shindledecker, Alden Smith, Bob Sprague, Glyn Thomas MMR, Mark Wallace, Joe Walters MMR, Fred Willis, Jeff Witt, David Yale, Bob Zeolla, Kaylee Zheng

Layout Hosts: Steve Wolfhope, Shannondell Club, Ed Skuchas, Steve Salotti, Dave Messer MMR, Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Earl Paine, Dan Pantaleo, Bill Erskine, Ed Gotwals, Charlie Long, Ted McLean, Cheltenham Hills Club, Steven Smith, GATSME/Rockledge MRR Museum, Kevin Feeney, Ted Fort, Norma Toll, Al Zollers, Michael Junod, Pat McTeigue, Tim Coe, Nick Brownsberger, Abington Club, Robert Hoffmann, Alden Smith, St. Alban's Club (StARR), Bill Blackburn, Mike McBride, Beatty Lumber, Ken Rideout, Joshua Blay, Glyn Thomas MMR, Bob Zeolla, Nick Logothesis, Ken McCorry, Ron Hoess, Bill Kachel, Bruce Friedman, Earl Hackett, Don Richard, Bob Koury, Joe Walters MMR, John Trout, Carl Huth, First State Club, Bill Lane, Russell George

Ops Hosts: Steve Salotti, Bob Zeolla, St Alban's Club (StARR)

Vendors: CMR Products, Dwarvin Enterprises, Eric Craig, Funaro & Camerlengo, Hunterline Products, Bethlehem Car Works, Lerro Productions, Micro-Mark, Nick and Nora Designs, Train Control Systems (TCS).

Floor and Clinic Volunteers: Rob Ischinger, Ron Bigham, Dick Lush, Al Zollers, Cliff Chillemi, Joe Gorman, Nick Brownsberger, Agnes Fagan, Catherine McPhillips, Carol Feeney, Nancy Ischinger, Carol Bigham, Eileen Ert, John Gallagher, Michele Chance, Ron Baile, Pat Flash, John Steitz, Phil Peters. Unfortunately many names were lost in the shuffle, and we sincerely apologize for this. If you do not see your name listed (other than in a previous category), please contact the [editor](#) and we will gladly add it and repost this issue.



Registration



Jim Fisher and Kirk Bateman at the registration table



Joe Walters, MMR at the registration table



Vendors



White Elephant/Sales/Door Prizes/Silent Auction



Carol Feeney manned the cash register for the entire convention and tallied the totals and disbursements

Modular Groups – New Jersey Free-Mo



New Jersey Division's HO Free-Mo Modular layout. Leader Mike Prokop (left) discusses the car float area with Philly's Charlie Liggett



Modular Groups – Reading Co. Technical & Historical Society



Displays

Dick Bronson of RR-Cirkits with his display



Mike Dettinger and Barry Rosier set up their N-scale T-Trak layout

Dennis Blank displayed one of his latest projects



Contest Room

Philly Division Member Mike Taber's Western Maryland U-Channel Hopper, winner of the Philadelphia Division New Modeler Award







New Jersey Division 50th Anniversary Car

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

All cars are ready-to-run.

**We have produced the car in two numbers to
commemorate our 50th anniversary:**

1968 & 2018

**The car has reporting marks NJDX, black
with white lettering and data for the 1950s.**

The cost is \$35.00 each

OR

a set of both numbers for \$65.00.

**The cars are available now. Checks should be
made payable to “NJ Division”**

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

(Photos on next two pages)

Website: <https://njdivnmra.org> for questions

Name_____

Address_____

City, State and Zip code_____

Telephone_____ Email_____

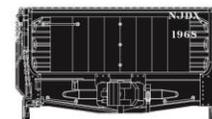
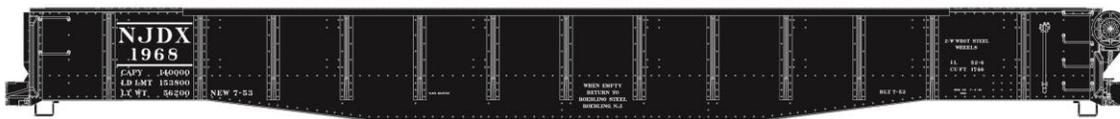
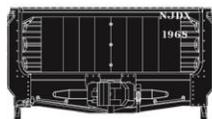
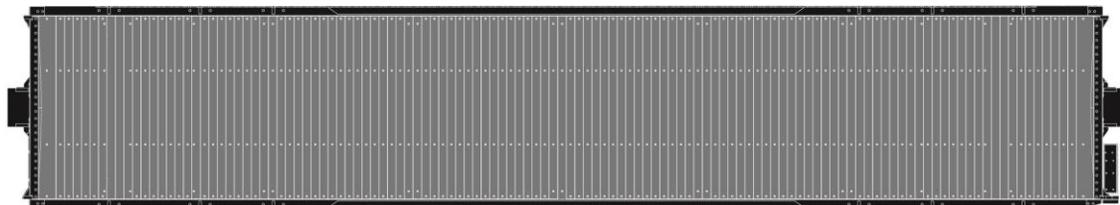
See Tangent website for more info support@tangentscalemodels.com

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





LOOK SOUTH IN 2020

MID-EASTERN REGION 2020 CONVENTION CAROLINA SPECIAL

OCTOBER 15TH – 18TH 2020

Crowne Plaza Charlotte, Executive Park
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

Carolina Southern Division is proud to be
hosting the MER 2020 Convention

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

Convention activities will include:

- A wide selection of model railroading clinics, including by some nationally recognized names in the hobby
- Tour of the North Carolina Transportation Museum Back Shop and other non-public areas
- Tour of the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum
- Tour of Wade's Train World in Brookford, a layout maintained by the CSD
- HO, S and N scale operating layouts in the Convention Hotel
- Home layout tours in the area, to include The Piedmont & Western and NYC Piney Fork Branch, which were both cover stories in *Model Railroader*
- Operating Sessions

START THE REGISTRATION PROCESS AT THIS LINK:

<http://carolinasouthern.org>

South Mountain Division / Mainline Hobby Supply 8th Annual Mini-Con

Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania, April 18, 2020, NMRA, MER South Mountain Division and Mainline Hobby Supply host it's 8th annual Mini Con at the Blue Ridge Fire Hall, 13063 Monterey Ln., Blue Ridge Summit, PA. Come enjoy from 9 AM to 4 PM, this one-day free event one block north of Main Line Hobby Supply, consisting of prototype and modeling presentations, formal and informal clinics, modular displays, and interaction with your fellow hobbyists and beginners. This no admission charge, wheelchair accessible, educational event is open to the public for the promotion of the hobby of Model Railroading.

Submitted by Don Florwick, DJFlorwick@comcast.net, Phone 717-414-0660 for the South Mountain Division, Mid Eastern Region, <http://www.smdnmra.org/>.

Railroad Prototype Modelers Valley Forge

An NMRA Sponsored Event

March 26, 27, 28, 29, 2020
at the

Desmond Great Valley Hotel & Conference Center
One Liberty Boulevard, Malvern, PA

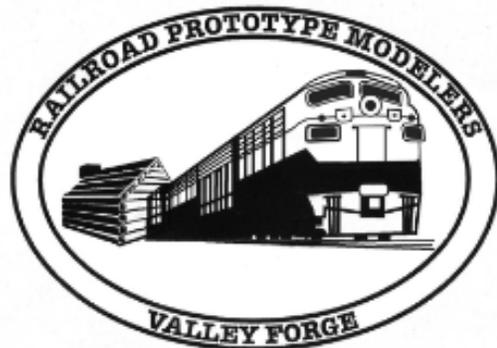
Friday Operating Sessions

Clinics

Model Displays

Vendor Rooms

Sunday Home Layout Tour



Information & Updates
RPMValleyForge.com

or

Paul Backenstose
103 West Uwchlan Ave.
Downingtown PA 19335
(Please include an SASE for a reply)
(610) 269-2763

Interested in Presenting a Clinic?

Fred Alston
rpm-vf-clinic@outlook.com

Vendor Information & Ops Sessions

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



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



The **Local**
A PUBLICATION OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION OF THE NMRA



[Click here](#) for the Nov/Dec 2019 issue

[Click here](#) for the Jan/Feb 2020 issue

Upcoming NMRA Conventions



NMRA 2020 St. Louis

2020

<http://www.gateway2020.org>

NMRA 2021 Santa Clara

2021



NMRA 2022 Birmingham UK

2022

<http://www.nmra2022uk.org>

Holiday Season Model Railroad Open Houses

November 2019 - March 2020

Side 1 of 2

Abington Lines Model Railroad Club

Admission Free, Donations Appreciated

Location: **2066 Second Street Pike (PA Rt 232), Richboro, PA 18954** (2 miles north of PA332, on the right)

Phone: (215) 598-7720 Website: <http://www.abingtonlines.org> Scale: HO (standard, narrow gauge & traction)

Information: Come see multiple trains with digital radio control and sound, operating on our 20' x 60' two-track mainline exceeding 1,000 feet in length. Enjoy the scenery depicting the PA rolling hills. Marvel at our trolleys, life like village, detailed buildings, operating roundhouse, industrial switching areas and waterfront complete with rail car ferries. Also enjoy our extensive narrow-gauge section with old time operating engines.

Open 12-4 PM on Dec. 7, 8, 14, 15, 28 & 29; Jan. 4, 5, 11 & 12; Feb. 1, 2, 8 & 9

Black Diamond Society of Model Engineers Admission - \$5 Donation Appreciated; 12 & under free

Location: **900 E. Macada Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18017** (we share an ample parking lot with St. Thomas' UCC)

Phone: (610) 867-2591 Website <http://www.bdsme.org> Scale: HO, O (scale and 3-rail), On30 and S.

Information: Come see 2 floors of multiple trains in continuous operation with Legacy, Bluetooth, DCS and DCC systems and plenty of smoke and sound. Organized in 1965, join us as we mark 55 years of model railroading! The first floor 650 square foot display nicely blends O, On30 and S scale action. The 2nd floor 800 square foot HO display showcases trains traveling thru rolling hills, rugged mountains and industry, and past parks and towns. We suggest those with children under 40 inches tall bring a step stool.

Open 1-4pm on Dec. 7, 8, 14&15; Jan. 4, 5, 11&12; Feb. 8&9

Burlington County Model Railroad Club

Admission Free, Donations Appreciated

Location: **Basement (right side), Burl. Co. Footlighters Playhouse, 808 Pomona Rd, Cinnaminson, NJ 08077**

Phone: (856) 733-0010 Website: <http://www.bcmrc.org> or find us on Facebook! Scale: HO

Information: We call our miniature railroad the Rancocas Valley Lines based on our physical location in NJ. We represent portions of a freelanced railroad that goes from tidewater to mountains, running through the typical stations and industrial areas of a large city, then countryside, while serving industries. We run 5-8 trains simultaneously on a double track mainline along with several other trains operating in various yards using an NCE DCC system along with JMRI. We ask that adults bring a step stool for children under 40 inches tall.

Open 12-5 PM on Nov. 30, Dec. 1, 14, 15, 28, 29; Jan. 4, 5; Feb. 8, 9, 15, 16

Coopersburg Area Society of Model Engineers/C.A.S.M.E. - Admission Free, Donations Appreciated

Location: **Basement of Borough Building, 5 North Main St. Coopersburg, PA 18036**

Website: <http://www.casme.org> Scale: HO

Information: Our layout dimensions are 35' x 44' and when finished there will be more than 3500 feet (58 scale miles) of track and over 100 switches. A computer assisted dispatching program using JMRI software, controlling our Digitrax DCC system, allows up to 12 trains to be operated through beautiful scenes and past operating signals over the layout.

Open 12-5PM on Dec. 7, 8, 14, & 15; Jan. 4, 5, 11 & 12

Cheltenham Hills MRC

Admission Free - Donations Greatly Appreciated!

Location: **8000 Old York Rd. (Route 611), Elkins Park, PA 19027** (located in former Old York Rd. station)

Phone: (215) 635-9747 Website: <http://www.cheltenhamhillsmrr.org> Scale: HO

Information: Join us for our 72nd year! Highlights include 1750 ft. of track, 300 car freight yard, steam and diesel locomotive facility with operating turntable, and industrial yard. The centerpiece is our operating lift bridge, which allows trains to cross between parts of the layout. Our DCC control system allows us to run multiple trains on the mainline and yards with realistic sound. Wheelchair accessibility available by appointment—please call any Thursday evening to schedule this access.

Open 12-4 PM on Dec. 14 & 15; Jan. 4, 5, 18 & 19; Snow Dates: Jan. 25 & 26

Note: All Dates are Saturdays and Sundays unless otherwise noted. Not responsible for errors or omissions in the schedules.

Holiday Season Model Railroad Open Houses
November 2019 - March 2020
Side 2 of 2

GATSME MRRC - located at the Rockledge Model RR Museum.

Location: **323 Montgomery Ave. Rockledge, PA (corner of N. Sylvania & Montgomery Aves.)**

Websites: www.gatsme.com and www.rockledgemr.org Also see our Facebook page! Scale: HO

GATSME has renovated a 1920s mill building into a new permanent home. Featuring a 3000-square foot operating walk-through layout, which will include parts of the PRR Schuylkill Branch and the Reading Company's line to Shamokin, the museum also has displays of railroad & model railroad history **and is handicap accessible**. The layout is progressing, with over 700 feet of operating main line. Memberships are open, join us as we continue to grow!

Open 12-3 p.m. on Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14 & 15, Jan. 11 & 18, Feb. 8 & 9, then on the 2nd Saturday of each month. See our web sites or Facebook for additional news and events.

Keystone N-Trak

Admission & Parking Free - Donations Appreciated

New Location: 100 North Second Street, North Wales, PA. 19454. (GPS: 113 N. 2nd St)

Parking: Municipal Lot behind St. Luke's Church

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/keystonentrak> Scale: N

Information: Keystone is a modular N Scale club modeling to N-Trak international standards. This enables each member's modules to link to form model railroads at public and private events. We travel to various N scale events and are a participating member of The Eastern N Lines Partnership. New members are always welcome. Meetings are every Tuesday at 7pm. Please check our Facebook page for any last-minute schedule changes.

11am-4pm Nov. 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24; Dec. 8, 15, 21 22, 2019; Jan. 4, 5, 18, 19, 25, 26; Feb. 1, 2, 8, 2020; 10AM-2PM Dec. 14th, 2019

Royersford Modular Model Railroaders Admission – Greenberg's Train Show - Donations Appreciated

Location: **The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center 100 Station Dr. Oaks, PA 19**

Phone: (610) 888-4306 Website: <http://www.royersfordmodular.org> Scale: HO

Information: Movable modular railroad layout, on display at the Greenberg's train show.

Jan. 11 & 12 (10 a.m. - 4 p.m. both days). There is an admission fee to enter the Greenberg's show, which also includes other layouts, vendors and manufacturers.

Schuylkill Valley Model Railroad Club CLOSED FOR 2019-2020 SEASON

Location: **400 S. Main Street (rear entrance), Phoenixville, PA 19460; diagonally across from Library**

Phone: (610) 935 1126 Website: <http://www.svmrcc.com> Scale: HO (standard and narrow gauge)

Information: We will not be holding open house this year and would like to thank the people that have attended open house for the past 40 years. Currently the building is undergoing major renovations and we plan to be back on board in a year. Please refer to the website about any changes or upcoming events that we may hold or attend.

Thanks from the Schuylkill Valley Model Railroad Club!

Saint Alban's Railroad Fellowship STARR Admission Free - Donations Appreciated

Location: **Saint Alban's Episcopal Church, 3625 Chapel Rd. Newtown Square, PA (Under Thrift Shop)**

Website: <http://www.StARR-MRC.org> Scale: HO

Information: Layout fills 4000 square feet with 200 feet of 4 track mainline with working signals, 3 branch lines, large steel mill, coke plant, oil refinery, three working classification yards and a large passenger terminal. We use a Switch list system for freight and passenger operations that routes over 1100 pieces of equipment throughout the system. New layout sections constructed this year. The layout is controlled by DCC with computer enhancement. Special layout w/Thomas the tank engine for kids to operate.

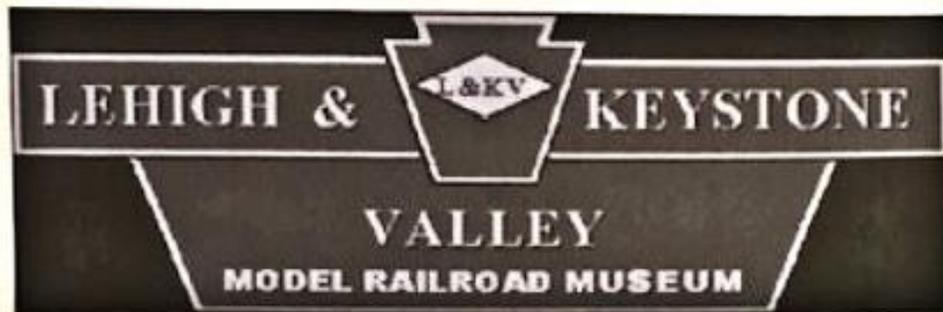
Open 1-4PM on Nov. 16, 17; Dec. 28, 29; Jan. 4, 5, 18; 19, Feb. 1, 2, 15, 16; 7-10PM on Dec. 26 & Jan. 2

Note: All Dates are Saturdays and Sundays unless otherwise noted. Not responsible for errors or omissions in the schedules.

The display in HO gauge depicts the route of the Lehigh Valley railroad during the period 1950 to 1970, from West Portal, NJ west to Harrisburg, PA. and north from Allentown to Pittston. Numerous passenger and freight trains equipped with realistic sound are running during museum hours.

Anyone familiar with the geographical area depicted will recognize landmarks which have been faithfully recreated from vintage photographs.

Model Train Show



705 Linden St, Bethlehem, Pa. 18018

Phone: 610-868-7101

E-mail: lvlou04@aol.com

2019 Christmas Open House

Schedule

Nov. 29, 30 1pm to 5pm
Dec. 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22 1pm to 5pm
Dec. 26, 27 5pm to 9pm
Dec. 28, 29, 30, 31 1pm to 5pm
Jan. 1, 4, 5, 11, 14 1pm to 5pm

Special Running Dates

Dec. 8, 9 All Steam
Dec. 21, 22 Thomas/ Friends
Jan. 4, 5 All Modern Trains
All Times are 1pm to 5pm



Operating Sessions

Like trains, don't have a layout, join our operating sessions. You don't need experience we will teach you. Come and have some fun. We hold monthly operating sessions. Call for more information



**Admission: \$7.00 Per Adult
Child 12 and Under FREE**

For Directions Check Our Website At www.lkvmodelrailroad.com

Like Us On Facebook At: www.facebook.com/lkvmrr

Division Apparel



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	

	Size	No pocket	Pocket	Long Sleeve	Long Sleeve + pocket	Short Sleeve	Long Sleeve	Pullover	Pullover Hoodie	Zip-up Hoodie	First name as you'd like it to appear (if desired - add \$5 each shirt)	Qty	Price	Total	
												Polo	Button-Down	Sweatshirt	
1	↓ Enter Size ↓														
2															
3															
4															
5															
(All shirts come with sewn-on patch) Additional Patches @ \$5 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			

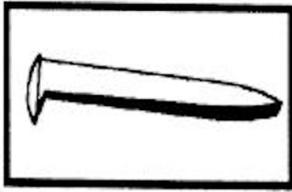
Liberty Bell Special MER 2019 CONVENTION APPAREL ORDER FORM (Descriptions and color chart on next page)

SIZE	↓ PRICE (\$) ↓										NAME					
3XL	36	34	39				39				ADDRESS					
2XL	34	32	37				37				CITY, ST, ZIP					
S-XL	32	30	35				35				PHONE					
XS		30		35		35		35		35	EMAIL					
		POLO		BUTTON DOWN				DENIM				SIGNATURE				
		WITH POCKET	NO POCKET	LADIES POLO	SHORT SLEEVE	LONG SLEEVE	LADIES SHORT SLEEVE	LADIES LONG SLEEVE	SHORT SLEEVE	LONG SLEEVE	LADIES SHORT SLEEVE	LADIES LONG SLEEVE	PAYMENT TYPE: _____ CHECK _____ CARD			
													CARD NUMBER:			EXP:
												COLOR	QTY	PRICE	TOTAL	
1	↓ ENTER SIZE ↓															
2																
3																
4																
5																
6																
		PREMIUM CAP (Two-toned)										Khaki/Hunter Green		\$17.00		
		COLOR CAP												\$15.00		
		PICKUP AT CONVENTION (Payment must be received by 8/31/2019 or other pickup arranged)												FREE		
		SHIPPING (If payment not received by 8/31/2019 or unless arranged as above): \$10.00 →														
		TOTAL														



Liberty Bell Special
CONVENTION APPAREL
COLOR CHART

		SILVER	NEON YELLOW	LIME	KHAKI	OYSTER	NEON PINK	KELLY GREEN	CAROLINA BLUE	BLUE	GOLD	GREEN	GREY	HIBISCUS	LAVENDER	LIGHT BLUE	LIGHT STONE	BANANA	MAGENTA	MAUI	ORANGE	PINK	RED	RUST	SUNFLOWER	TURQUOISE	STONE	YELLOW	MINT	
POLO	POLO/LADIES POLO									•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	POLO WITH POCKET									•			•										•				•			
BUTTON DOWN	SHORT SLEEVE									•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•			•	•		
	LONG SLEEVE									•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•			•	•		
	LADIES SHORT SLEEVE									•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•			•	•		
	LADIES LONG SLEEVE									•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•			•	•		
COLOR CAP		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•											•		•	•						
DESCRIPTIONS	POLO	A great-looking, cotton/polyester pique knit that is cool, comfortable, and wrinkle resistant. This shirt has a soft, silky feel against the skin. You'll love it! Liberty Bell Special logo on left chest area. Sizes S-3XL (XS-3XL for ladies version).																												
	BUTTON DOWN	A comfortable wash-and-wear shirt—thicker than a dress shirt—with a velvety feel that will make you want to wear it again and again. Cotton/poly blend. Wrinkle resistant. Liberty Bell Special logo on left chest. Sizes S-3XL (Ladies version XS-3XL, no pocket).																												
	DENIM	With sturdy construction, a generous cut, and soft garment washing, this great-looking, faded blue denim shirt is sure to become one of your favorites. 100% cotton. Liberty Bell Special logo on left chest area. No pocket. Sizes S-3XL (Ladies version XS-3XL, no pocket).																												
	PREMIUM CAP	This comfy, Port & Company premium cap comes in khaki with a hunter green bill that matches the Liberty Bell Special logo on the front. Pigment-dyed 100% cotton twill. Adjustable – one size fits all. Self-fabric slide closure with brass buckle and grommet. A really nice cap at a great price.																												
	COLOR CAP	This popular Port & Company cap comes in a variety of fun colors and features the Liberty Bell Special Logo on the front. 100% cotton twill (80/20 poly/cotton for neon colors). One size fits all. Hook-and-loop adjustment mechanism. A cap that really fits the bill.																												



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: _____