



# THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

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

November 2006  
Volume 13, Number 5

The Philadelphia Division is pleased to announce that they will be holding a joint meet with the New Jersey division on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be held at the Brandywine Town Center Community Building, which is located north of Wilmington Delaware just south of the Pennsylvania State line. This will be our 3<sup>rd</sup> year at this excellent location, and it is always well attended. For directions please see page 7 of this issue of The Dispatcher.

The doors for the meeting will open at 9:00 AM, with the meeting scheduled to begin at 9:30. Our speakers for this meeting are presenting an interesting variety of topics for your entertainment and education.

After giving an extremely informative clinic on DCC Decoder installation, we have asked Karl Siefert to return again this year, but to continue where he left off last year, with a discussion on installing sound decoders. Karl has many years experience installing decoders, and had many tricks and tips to share with the audience last year. There was so much interest the second clinic was canceled and the discussion on DCC decoders continued for the rest of the meet! So here is your opportunity to get

those nagging questions about DCC sound answered.

The second clinic will be presented by a member of the New Jersey division. At press time a final decision on what the presentation will be had not been made, but from the list of possible topics I saw they were all good!

Our contest for this meet will be Interlocking towers. These interesting and once numerous railroad structures were once an important part of the railroad scene. Surprisingly, participation in the contest at the September meet was very minimal. The division hopes many more will bring items for this popular vote contest.

There will also be many of our usual activities, including door prizes and the popular 50/50 drawing.

After the meet, there are many fast food and other types of restaurants located within minutes of the Brandywine Town Center Community Building.

November is National Model Railroad Month, and the northern Delaware area is a hot bed of activity. After the meets conclusion, there are many layouts open to visit throughout the area. We will have a limited number of the open house lists available, so if you have your

own copy please bring it along, or stop at one of the many hobby shops in the region and pick up a copy. Layouts are open from late October until the end of November. See you in Delaware!

## Important Request!

The Philadelphia Division would like to hold a meet in the Bucks County area. We have a tentative date of January 13<sup>th</sup> 2007, but need to find a suitable location. We could move the date a little if necessary. Are you a member of a church or fraternal organization that has a hall that would hold at least 60 people? If so, we would like to talk to you as soon as possible. In the past we have been to Bucks County three times, but we would like to start having meets there on a more regular basis to help us better serve our membership.

If you know of any space available please check on the dates and contact any board member. Contact information is on page 2 of this issue of The Philadelphia Dispatcher.

Once again the old calendar has worked its way back around to November, and you all know what that is: National Model Railroad Month! (Seems we have a month, week, or day for just about everything anymore! What will they think of next?) Throughout the area and the nation groups will be holding open houses, meetings and sales to promote this grandest of all hobbies. I know the last time I was in the hobby shop I saw the large pile of open house lists sitting on the counter. I grabbed a copy for myself, hope you will too. There are a couple of layouts I need to get out and see this year.

Ok, so this is a shameless plug. I'm on the list again this year, and you are all invited to stop by on any of the dates listed. For your convenience, they are Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup>. All dates the time is from 12:00 Noon until 5:00 PM. For those who came to the September meet (which was very well attended) sorry I wasn't able to be open, complications on the home front.

There has been a bit of progress on the railroad this year. I started out working great guns anticipating the national convention, but convention responsibilities quickly put a damper on railroad time. And as soon as the convention was over there was a graduation followed by a wedding! Since then we've had a son move (with guess who's help), and a bunch of other stuff that will go unmentioned. But finally things are beginning to slow down.

Progress can be a dangerous thing. A long time ago I thought the track work at Passaic Junction where the Susquehanna interchanges with the Erie was

less than ideal. First, this was a major interchange in 1949, and the absence of track capacity limited the number of cars I could route there. In addition, there was a local industry that required a run around move on both mains to accomplish. If a crew was inefficient or didn't notify the dispatcher when they were done with both mains, it could drastically limit the amount of traffic that could go through this busy location.

So the idea festered for a long time, I could move the dummy interchange, add a small storage yard, and include a short run around track. Soon after the convention I made the decision, the only way to get it done was to cut main, and then I had to finish it. Progress was slow due some of the many interruptions mentioned earlier, but at least things were moving.

But now, since I was working in that area, I noticed an empty spot on the upper deck just above the interchange. Gee, a small cabin would look great there. So off to the files, and sure enough, there was that article I'd saved many years ago. And then there is that unfinished stream bed under the truss bridge, and there are a couple of different water effects I want to try. And by the way, I'll need a bunch more trees to blend the cabin into the scene, not to mention around the new interchange track.

And so it goes, one thing leads to another, which leads to another, and on and on it goes. But hey, at least I'm making progress on the railroad!

Happy Railroading,

Steve

## THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

Official publication of the Philadelphia Division, Mid-Eastern Region,

National Model Railroad Association

### Editor

Stephen F. Salotti  
46 Meadow Road  
Collegeville, Pa, 19426  
(610) 489 1940

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

**Next issue:** January 2007. Due out approx. Jan 1. Deadline: December 10.

**Subscription:** \$7.00 per year. Address all subscription applications, renewals; address changes, etc. to the Clerk. If the date in the upper-right corner of your mailing label is highlighted, your subscription will expire soon. Please pay at the next meet or mail payment to the Clerk. Make checks payable to "Philadelphia Division, NMRA."

### Division Personnel:

#### Superintendent

Dick Foley  
2021 Wallace Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19130  
215-232-4926

#### Assistant Superintendent

Jim Dalberg  
529 Foxwood Lane  
Paoli, PA 19301  
(610) 648 0089

#### Clerk

Stephen F. Salotti  
46 Meadow Road  
Collegeville, PA 19426  
(610) 489-1940  
jmsfca@netzero.com

#### Treasurer

Dick Landt  
561 Beck Road  
Souderton, PA 18964

#### Achievement Program Coordinator

Dave Messer, M.M.R.  
263 Mingo Road  
Royersford, PA 19468-3112  
(610) 948-2191

#### Module Team Foreman

Tom Cancelmo  
238 Jackson Avenue  
Lansdowne, PA 19050  
(610) 259-7216

#### Mid-Eastern Region, N.M.R.A.

Fred Miller MMR Business Manager  
8960 Challis Hill Lane  
Charlotte, NC 28226-2686  
(704)-752-5138

#### National Model Railroad Association

4121 Cromwell Road  
Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119  
(615) 892-2946  
Dues: \$33.00 per year,

### Your invitation to Fame!

Producing this newsletter can be both a rewarding and frustrating task. The reward is when the final product goes to the printer and it is full of valuable information. The frustration is facing a blank screen with a blank mind. With each issue the challenge is filling these pages with meaningful content. In a word, we need your articles!

If you have a topic you would like to see covered please let us know. Or if you would like to author one, even better! Any articles you write can be used as points toward your Author certificate in the

achievement program. Articles can be any length. Also, if you have any great modeling tips you would like to pass along send them to the editor and they can be used as fillers for those small spaces at the bottom or middle of a page.

So sharpen that pen (or keyboard) and get those creative juices flowing. If you need guidance on any part of the process please feel free to contact the editor (see page 2 for contact information).

If you have an idea but would like help developing it, contact the editor and he will be glad to get you started.

---

### Hercules Cement Cars now on Sale!

---

The Hercules cars are now available by mail! To get one for yourself, please contact Val Pistilli at the following address:

Val Pistilli  
308 Walnut Street  
North Wales, PA 19454-3323

Please make sure to mention in your correspondence that you want the Hercules car, since Val also handles sales for the GATSME club.

The cars are \$15.00 each for one and \$14.00 each for two or more. They will also be available at future meets as long as the supply lasts. Please include \$5.00 shipping and handling.



---

### Important Subscription Information!

---

It is once again time for all division members to check their subscription date. If your label shows 2006 or earlier, you need to renew your subscription by the end of 2006 in order to continue receiving The Philadelphia Dispatcher newsletter. We will not be sending renewal notices, but will include a subscription form in the last two issues of the Dispatcher for the current year. Please mail the form to the Clerk, or bring it to any division meet to renew. We hope all members will renew early in order to continue receiving their newsletter. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask any board member. It is also important to note that due to the cost of printing and postage, the Division can no longer afford carry those members who do not renew promptly. Your name will be moved to an inactive list.

---

### New Subscription /Renewal Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

NMRA #: \_\_\_\_\_ MER #: \_\_\_\_\_ Div. #: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription: \$7.00 per year. Please mail to the Clerk or bring to the next meeting.

---

## Concrete

---

### Concrete:

1. Constituting an actual thing or instance; real: *a concrete proof of his sincerity.*
2. Pertaining to or concerned with realities or actual instances rather than abstractions; particular (opposed to GENERAL): *concrete ideas.*
3. Representing or applied to an actual substance or thing, as opposed to an abstract quality: *The words "cat," "water," and "teacher" are concrete, whereas the words "truth," "excellence," and "adulthood" are abstract.*
4. A concrete idea or term; a word or notion having an actual or existent thing or instance as its referent.
5. A mass formed by coalescence or concretion of particles of matter.
6. An artificial, stone like material used for various structural purposes, made by mixing cement and various aggregates, as sand, pebbles, gravel, or shale, with water and allowing the mixture to harden.
7. Some people's minds are like concrete, all mixed up and permanently set.

OK, now to the real purpose of this article.

As we build our model railroads one frequently discussed theme seems to be "what is the best color to simulate concrete". I know I have had that discussion on several occasions, and have tried a number of different color combinations to get the "perfect" look. To my eye Floquil concrete just doesn't look right. There seems to be too much gray in it, looking more like just poured concrete that hasn't set yet. I have also tried using it mixed with other colors like Reefer White or Antique White. While these are good, they still just don't satisfy my eyes.

One color I like is Poly Scale concrete mixed about 50/50 with either Reefer or Antique White color. The problem I have with this is trying to spray the stuff. No matter what I've tried, the Poly Scale paint seems to dry in the air gun, especially during long spray jobs. While it does work, cleanup can be a lot of work.

A recent thread on the Buildings and Structures group I belong to covered this topic, and a number of different techniques were posted. Are any of you familiar with any of these, or do you have a technique of your own you have developed? With the large number of towns the Susquehanna passed through I have many opportunities to paint concrete. And with so many options I don't have enough time to try them all. I would like to hear from a number of you. When the responses come in I'll edit them together into a follow up article in a future edition of the Dispatcher. I prefer the text to be sent electronically for ease of editing, but will take it by snail mail as well. Please send your responses to: [jmsfca@netzero.com](mailto:jmsfca@netzero.com) or the address listed on page 2 of this issue.

Now here are a few of the messages that were posted. First, the question:

Does anyone use a concrete colored paint suitable for the foundations and trim of plastic-type buildings? I tried Floquil and it is sort of a greenish gray. Yesterday I tried Poly-S and it comes out a medium gray that really doesn't even look like basement concrete. To me, a concrete paint should look like the sidewalks in front of most homes or the foundations of those homes. It should be like sandy pale white or sandy beige, not a medium gray that just doesn't look all that pleasing to the eye, at least for me.

Thanks. Ken

You might want to look at the other Floquil colors. The not only have concrete but they also have aged concrete and one called foundation. The foundation is more of a beige color if I remember correctly.

Bob Wintle  
Parsons, Ks.

I have tried Apple Barrel Colors 20575 Sandstone, Craft paint; looked ok to me you can change the tone by what your undercoat is. I found it at Wall-Mart in the art dept.

Jay

Try Tamiya Deck Tan XF-55.  
Markus

---

## More Concrete

---

I have found Delta Ceramcoat Acrylic paint the best for concrete. For old concrete I use Sandstone, which has brown in it, and Mudstone, which is more on the gray side for new concrete. Mix it with white to get the color tone you want. I use Mudstone on station platforms and wash it with India ink to show dirt and age. You can buy it in Michael's Craft store for about 75 cents per 2 ounces. It sure beats the RR paints by color and price. Doc

You might want to try Ceramcoat "Antique White" and weather it with grey chalks. I use the "sandstone" for concrete all the time. Ceramcoat is the greatest thing since sliced bread. The only place it's not so good is on metal.

I have found Delta Ceramcoat Acrylic paint the best for concrete. For old concrete I use Sandstone, which has brown in it, and Mudstone, which is more on the gray side for new concrete.

Unpainted concrete industrial buildings are common in New Zealand, and when I wanted to paint one that I had modeled I simply found one that was handy to me and went there on a Sunday morning - few people around to ask silly questions - with a bundle of color charts from the local paint stores and found paint that matched. For the record I used Resene grey nurse for the overall grey and then dabbed on a dark grey called Resene Zeus with a dabbing sponge, gradually building up the color until it looked right. The colors probably don't mean a thing to anyone outside New Zealand, and possibly Australia, but they can be seen on the Resene website. To compliment this I found a piece of concrete wall that wasn't covered in graffiti - it was around the Auckland zoo - took a photo of it. I then made several photocopies of the ensuing print on thin matt paper (cheap and nasty stuff). I have used this to "concrete" a wide variety of things such as bridge abutments, building foundations, walls, etc, on my 0 scale layout, and they actually look very good. After all, why go to a lot of effort to make something look like a photo, when the actual photo will do.

Evan

And here it gets interesting, when people started talking about spraying the Ceramcoat paint (editor)

I have used nothing but hobby acrylics in my airbrushes and I like it a lot. I thin with automotive windshield anti-freeze (as a lot of users do). I highly recommend its use. They also make a thinner for airbrush use, it is just called "Acrylic Thinner" from the "Painter's Helper" line. The bottle says start with a 50/50 mix and add more thinner as necessary. I have not personally used this yet. Bill

Yes, it works in the airbrush, at least my Testors Aztek, it needs to be thinned, use the windshield washer stuff. The problem most modelers have is they use the small compressors, acrylic paint needs 40 to 45 pounds of pressure and the little ones can not reach that. I use a

nauling hot dog compressor works fine. By the way I spray Scale Coat without thinning. Harold Huber

I use acrylics all the time in my air brush. I thin with distilled water and clean airbrush with Windex, which does a great job. Never had a problem, but you must clean right away when you are finished spraying. I cannot use solvent based paints because of health problems. Don

I'm also a big fan of the Delta Ceramcoat paints for most of the reasons already mentioned; availability, price, wide color selection. I use them almost exclusively now. They airbrush just fine thinned to about a 4:6 ratio water to paint. I will have to try the windshield wiper fluid; I have not done that before. I clean up with hot soapy water and a nail brush to loosen any drying paint in the parts. I also spray clear water through the brush immediately after using it to avoid problems with paint drying in the mechanism. I use a Paasche H single action brush.

I have found coverage is much better, consistent and less likely to rub off or chip if the paint is applied over an automotive primer coat. I just use the bomb cans from Home Depot which work fine. I would be interested in finding out about a decent and easily obtained primer I could airbrush on instead.

## Bits and Pieces

Powdered Graphite rubbed on items like a bulldozer blade or farm plow gives it the look of worn metal. I have used paint like silver then weathered it with rust, mud and grimy black. After these dry, brush on the graphite and see what it does.

Need to get plaster into a tight location? Use a children's medicine syringe. These are available for very little cost at your local pharmacy. Make a small thin batch of plaster, mix it until very smooth and draw it into the syringe. Place the nozzle in the area you want to fill and carefully squeeze it into the area until it

is filled. Depending on the setting speed of the plaster you are using you will need to work quickly. I have used this technique around retaining walls and to fill gaps between rock castings. It is quick and easy, and helps to reduce the mess that can sometimes happen when working with plaster.

One more thing, as soon as you are finished, draw water through the nozzle several times by placing it into a bowl of water and moving the plunger back and forth until it is clean. You all know what happens with plaster if it sits too long.

**The following promotion is from the National office, but the Philadelphia Division is a winner too when we add new members. Feel free to copy this and get as many new members as possible.**

# Bring in a friend. Bring home a locomotive.

## Sign me up as an NMRA member and enter me in the drawing!

\_\_\_\_\_ Regular NMRA member: \$36/year, all rights and benefits but no *Scale Rails*

\_\_\_\_\_ Regular NMRA member: \$48/year, all rights and benefits including *Scale Rails*

*Other membership package options are available. Visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) for details.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name of referring NMRA member (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Referring member's NMRA# & expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to receive your Region's newsletter. Just \$6 for the first year!

*Payments must be made in U.S. FUNDS ONLY. Make checks payable to NMRA. We also accept MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Discover.*

Credit card

Security code on back of card

Expiration     Cardholder signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Year

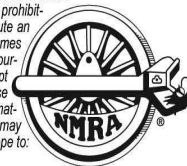
**Mail to:**  
**NMRA Membership Contest**  
**4121 Cromwell Rd.**  
**Chattanooga, TN 37421**

From November 1 through January 31, when you get someone to sign up for a new NMRA membership you'll both come out winners! Each month we'll draw names of three new members. Those new members and the NMRA members who referred them will each win their own Atlas®, Kato®, Bachmann® or Life-Like® loco.

And even if your friend doesn't bag a prize, as a new NMRA member they'll still come out a winner because they'll have all the benefits of the greatest model railroad organization in the world.

So pass along this sign-up form along to a non-member today! Then start polishing those rails.

**OFFICIAL RULES:** Contest open to U.S. residents only who are either National Model Railroad Association, Inc. (NMRA) members in good standing on November 1, or individuals who haven't been NMRA members for 2 years or more. Properly completed Membership/Entry forms must be received by 1/31/07 to be eligible. Names will be entered in drawing only after new membership has been fully processed. Renewals for existing memberships will not be credited as new memberships. NMRA officers and directors, paid or contracted NMRA employees and their immediate families are not eligible, nor are contest sponsors and business firms contracted by either the NMRA or those sponsors, their employees and their immediate families. Odds of winning random drawings are dependent on the number of eligible entries received. Contest void where prohibited by law. No substitution of prizes. Winners must execute an affidavit of eligibility and release, and agree that their names and/or likenesses may be used for advertising/publicity purposes by the NMRA without further compensation, except where prohibited. By participating, entrants agree to these rules and that the decision of the NMRA President in all matters relating to the contest shall be final. Winners' names may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to: NMRA, 4121 Cromwell Rd., Chattanooga, TN 37421.



---

## November Meet Directions

---

Getting to the meet location is actually quite easy. Curiously, describing how to get there is a little harder. But, here goes . . . . .

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 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).

---

## Schedules

---

The Philadelphia division is pleased to offer the following activity dates for your planning. If you have an item you would like included, please contact the editor. They will be included on a first come, first served space available basis.

**Joint Philadelphia & New Jersey Division Meet**, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. Brandywine Town Center Community Building (just off 202 right below PA/DE line) Clinics, contest, layout tours. Details elsewhere in this issue of The Dispatcher.

**Cheltenham Hills Model Railroad Club 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Congratulations!**

The following open house dates are given for your advance planning:

November 25 – 26, 2006

January 6 – 7, 13 – 14, 2007

January 20 – 21, 2007 (snow date)

All dates 12:00 – 4:00 PM

8000 Old York Road (at RR bridge)

(adjacent to Elkins Park Square)

Elkins Park, PA 19027

For more information:  
215-635-9747

**GATSME**. See a 50’ by 60’ HO & Hon3 Scale view of ‘50s railroading in the Northeastern United States. Many museum quality buildings and trains will be on display and operating. Located in Fort Washington, PA and open the following dates: December 16<sup>th</sup>, - 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006. January 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, & 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007. GATSME Lines open house in the basement at Prospect and Madison Avenues, 12 Noon to 4 PM. Admission by donation. For info: Ed Wilson at 215-646-2033 on Thursday evenings.

**StARR Open House**

Saint Alban’s Railroad Fellowship invites you to their open house at

3625 Chapel Road, Newtown Square, PA. 50’ X 80’ modular layout. Dates: 12/2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17 and 1/6, 7, 13, 14, 20, & 21. All dates open from 1:00 – 4:00 PM. For more information: (610)-356-0459

**Schuylkill Valley MRC** Open house. 400 Main Street, Phoenixville, PA. Dates: 11/25, 26, 12/2, 3, and 1/6, 7, 13, 14, 20, and 21. For more information call: (610)-935-1126

**January ’07 Philadelphia Division meet.**

Date and location to be announced in the next issue of the Dispatcher, or check the web page at: [www.phillynmra.org](http://www.phillynmra.org)

# The Philadelphia Dispatcher

Official publication of the Philadelphia Division  
of the National Model Railroad Association

---

46 Meadow Road  
Collegeville, PA 19426

Inside:     Division Meet  
              Concrete  
              And More!

X

Do you need to renew? If the date on your mailing label is highlighted, please renew promptly. Thank you for renewing promptly.

## **Discounts for Division Members at Local Hobby Shops**

**Be sure to patronize the area's hobby shops that are now offering discounts on model railroading purchases to members of the Philadelphia Division.**

### **Kenwood Model Hobbies**

8436 Perry Hwy, Rt. 19  
Pgh., PA 15237-5228  
10% discount (412)-364-2913

### **Iron Horse Hobby Shop**

60 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St. in Reading  
10% discount with \$10 min purchase

### **Jenkintown Train & Hobby**

Greenwood Ave & Leedom St  
Jenkintown, PA 19046  
**10% in addition to discounted prices**

### **Mitchell's Family Store**

2119 Concord Pike (202) in Wilmington DE  
10% discount on train department items

### **Main Line Hobbies**

2915 Hannah Ave  
East Norriton, PA 610-275-4340  
20% off list prices

### **Herb's Hobbies and Crafts**

200 W. State St. in Doylestown  
\$25 of free merchandise for every \$250 spent

### **Nicholas Smith Trains**

2343 West Chester Pike (3) in Bromall  
10% discount (excludes O & G items)

### **Lin's Junction**

128 South Line St.  
Lansdale, PA 194446  
5% in addition to already discounted prices

### **Bussinger Trains**

Old Ambler Station, Ambler  
10-12% off retail