



THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

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

September 2010

Volume 17, Number 4

SEPTEMBER 25th JOINT DIVISION MEET

We are pleased to announce our September meeting, which will be held jointly with the Susquehanna Division in the Allentown area.

Complete details, directions, layout and clinic descriptions, are published within this issue.

We are hoping to attract many of our 300+ members, who don't regularly attend the meetings, to enjoy our activities in Allentown.

This is one not to be missed!!

DIVISION EXEC BOARD REORGANIZES

Your Executive Board met over the summer to reorganize after the May election. The seven-member board made the following unanimous personnel and committee changes:

VOTING MEMBERS

Super – Greg Shindledecker
Asst. Super – Joe Bergmaier
Clerk – Mark Wallace
Paymaster – Brian Good
Dispatcher Editor – Earl Paine
Member at large – Pat McTeigue
Member at large – John Seibert

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

AP Coordinator – Dave Messer
Secretary – Rich Newmiller
Layout Tours – Pat McTeigue
Membership – Mark Wallace

We are indeed fortunate that our new committee chairs have stayed aboard!

NMRA UNVEILS NEW LOGO AT 75 YEARS

This year's national convention, held in Milwaukee, marked the 75th anniversary of the NMRA.

Part of the celebration involved a "re-branding" of the NMRA with the release of the new nmra.org logo and the renaming of Scale Rails magazine. This new logo, many members feel, better represents the changes reflected in the organization as it moves firmly into the digital age.

Local reaction has been mixed to the logo, but most applaud the national's willingness to address the need for change.

Extensive coverage of these and other changes can be found both on-line at www.nmra.org as well as in the NMRA magazine (formerly Scale Rails).

Many Divisions are starting to change their own local logos to reflect the change.



yet been changed.

Our Division logo remains unchanged. It is used in the above header and has not as

MIDEAST REGION 2010 CONVENTION DETAILS

Mark your Calendars: Sept 30 through October 3rd. Details about the MER Region Convention are printed within this issue and in the on-line section.

<http://mer.nmra.org/MERConv/MERConv.html>

DISPATCHER DEBUTS NEW ON-LINE FEATURES

The Executive Board has authorized the Dispatcher Editor to expand this Newsletter with on-line content.

The first eight pages will still continue to be printed and mailed to those members who maintain a paid U.S Mail subscription with the Clerk.

Additional pages will appear in the on-line areas accessed at our website located on the web at <http://www.phillynmra.org>.

The most current as well as past newsletters are located there. Click on "newsletters" at the bottom of the main page.

On-line newsletters are free to all members. Notification of the release of each issue is by email, so **make sure the clerk has your most recent email address.**

Publishing on-line will permit us to post additional photos and articles, which would normally have to be edited out of the printed version due to lack of space. The door is also open for the posting of videos of Division happenings as they are developed.

Let a board member know your opinion of these changes as we move forward into the digital age.

DIVISION POSTS FINANCIAL REPORT

Our Treasurer, Brian Good, has released a financial report of our current fiscal position. It can be found in this issue's on-line section.

Greetings All!

This is my first issue as Editor of the Dispatcher since taking over from Steve Salotti. I will have plenty of opportunity in the future to contribute my own thoughts and ramblings to this column, but it seems fitting this time around to devote my space to the following letters to the Editor...

Dear Editor,

You are picking up a hot engine, one that has been running smoothly for 13 years. Good luck.

The just retired editor Steve Salotti is wrapping up 20 years of involvement in the Philadelphia Division. Without his energy, hard work and creativity, the Division would have been a much less interesting group. Prior to the National Convention in 1993, Steve, Mike Hazzard and John Nawn teamed up to reinvigorate the division. They started regular meetings, found a new editor Nathan and promoted the Valley Forge Express. Later this author joined them as Clerk for a few years. Steve added the editor's title in 1997 when Nathan went off to college. He kept it for 13 years -- that is an amazing record.

Since Steve is a modest person, most members might not notice his involvement at so many different levels. He co-chaired the Brandywine Junction and Keystone Junction regional conventions. At countless meets, he provided a new clinic, often a practical hands-on from his own railroad. He opened his railroad at many meets after spending the morning working. He arranged for his church to host the division often. He served as Assistant Superintendent, Clerk and Editor at different times. Plus Steve wrote a trainload of great articles

to fill the Dispatcher, mostly when nothing came in over the transom.

Steve, Enjoy your retirement and keep building -- the railroad is calling you into the basement. And thank you Steve for many many jobs well done,

Eric Dervinis
Philadelphia Division Clerk (ret)

A response from our Super:

Hi Eric,

This is a really thoughtful note. Steve is really such a rare jewel and we have greatly valued and benefited from his contributions through the years.

Steve has a special place in my heart. When Angel and I were visiting a home layout at an MER convention in Lynchburg many years ago, we were parking the car and up pulls Steve and some others from the Division. I was new to the Division and had not attended a meeting yet, but Steve saw that I had a Pennsylvania RR tag on my car and introduced himself. He invited us both to his house for the November open houses.

Long story short - we showed up during the open house and he recognized us, greeted us warmly and handed us throttles! That personal interaction hooked me for good! And now I'm on my second term as Division Super!

Kind Regards,
Greg Shindledecker

What more can we say? On a personal note my thanks go out to Steve for all his guidance and advice during the recent Editor transition.
See you in Allentown!
Earl

THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

Official publication of the
Philadelphia Division,
National Model Railroad Association
www.phillynmra.org

Editor
Earl Paine
4325 Wendy Way
Schwenksville, Pa, 19473
earlpaine@verizon.net

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: Sept. '10. Due out approx. September 15. Deadline: August 15.

Print Subscription: \$7.00 per year.

On-Line Subscription: Free

Address all print 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." Please provide e-mail address to the clerk.

Division Personnel:

Superintendent
J. Gregory Schindledecker§
1454 Oakwood Road
Coatesville, PA 19320
greg@shindledecker.com

Assistant Superintendent
Joe Bergmaier
Fillman Road
Downingtown, PA 19335
mojo@bergmaier.com

Clerk
Mark Wallace
665 Bonny Brook Ave.
Trappe, PA 19426
mwallace665@verizon.net

Treasurer
Brian Good
578 Hawthorne Lane
Harleysville, PA 19438
b3good@comcast.net

Achievement Program Coordinator
Dave Messer, M.M.R.
263 Mingo Road
Royersford, PA 19468-3112
dmesserpr@comcast.net

Board Members at Large
Pat McTeigue
tonightowl1@comcast.net
John Seibert
johnhseibert@comcast.net

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

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

The enjoyment of Model Railroading is derived in a large part by the friendships we make through the hobby. Sure, we enjoy operating, model building, finishing a scene on the layout. Some of us even enjoy designing a layout. But when you come right down to it, there's a lot more fun derived when you operate with friends, show off that model to others, and open your layout to be viewed by others.

Many of my oldest friends were made and maintained through the hobby. I still talk weekly and exchange email daily with several buddies that I met when I joined the Baltimore Society of Model Engineers at age 18. I've known them now for almost 40 years. We literally grew up together, and our lives and our families are intertwined.

Fast forward to somewhere around 2005 and my desire to re-enter the hobby after raising kids and completing a long, active role with Boy Scouts. A warm greeting from Steve Salotti and others from the Philly Division

while attending an open house in (I believe) Lynchburg set me on the course to meet and make many new friends in the area. Dave Messer sealed my fate when he invited me to be part of IJ2006. I was plugged in to the best group of guys one could ever hope for.

And it continues. With every new Board of Directors that is assembled and RPM, Division meetings and other conventions, I meet new people and develop new relationships through the hobby. My wish for this coming Model Railroad "season" is for everyone to find this comradery through our hobby. If you happen to know a lone-wolf modeler, hound them (gently) until they at least try out a Division meet once or twice. With the quality of the program and the friendly people they will meet, it will definitely be worth their while! See you at the next meet!

Greg Shindledecker
Division Superintendant

Division Sunoco Tank Car Project Report

by Earl Paine

Can you say the words "SOLD OUT"? They are exactly the words used on the Division web site to report the success of the Sunoco tank car project. Under the guidance of AP Chairman Dave Messer, the board selected a commonly seen, yet Philadelphia based Sunoco tank car prototype for the project.

This offering was the first project issued in ready-to-run format with a resulting higher price point. The Division Exec Board decided to move forward with this format based on recent trends in the industry, which indicate a move towards high quality ready-to-run rolling stock and away from kits. The cars were offered in eight different numbering schemes to promote multiple purchases.

The Board decided that division car projects were to be viewed as a service to the membership, rather than as a fundraiser. As a result the pricing points, as well as the discounts for multiple cars, were designed to cover costs plus a very small profit.

The project has been a resounding success. Many Division and non-division members are now owners of this car. A pleasant surprise has been the number of modelers purchasing multiple cars. Webmaster Val Pistilli did yeoman work as the coordinator of shipping, and other members helped man sales tables as needed. Thank you all.

The Board is in current discussions, again under Dave Messer's guidance, for a future Division project, which will hopefully be as successful as this one. Stay tuned.....

Mid East Region Report

All Division members should have by now received the election ballots in the mail late in August. Ballots must be returned postmarked by September 7th. That date is very close to when you will be receiving this issue of the Dispatcher, so if you haven't mailed in your ballot, please do so.

All is in readiness for the MER Region convention "Princeton Junction" on September 30 through October 3. Look for more detailed coverage in this issue. On-line info exists on the web at:

<http://mer.nmra.org/MERConv/MERConv.html>

See this issue's on-line area

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

**for NMRA National News and additional info
on the Princeton Junction MER Meet**

Sept 25, 2010, Allentown Area Joint Meet

The Susquehanna Division will host our next joint meet with with morning clinics at the Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church followed by afternoon open houses. Clinics will begin at 9:30 AM. The church is located at 1151 South Cedar Crest Blvd. Allentown, PA 18103. The church is located in the Lehigh Valley 1 mile south of Dorney Park just off Exit 55 on I-78. The church property is on the opposite side of route I-78/ PA 309 from the Lehigh Valley Hospital.

Directions

From the North and West: Take PA route 309 South / I-78 East to Exit 55 (Cedar Crest Blvd.) At the light at end of ramp go left onto Cedar Crest Blvd. At the next intersection (2nd light), go right. The entrance to church is on the right about 200 feet.

From the East and South: Take PA route 309 North/I-78 West to Exit 55 (Cedar Crest Blvd) At end of ramp veer right onto Cedar Crest Blvd. At next light go right. The entrance to church is on the right about 200 feet.

Clinics

We will have two clinics beginning at 9:30 AM. They will be "Reading T-1's" by Dale Woodland and "Railfanning the Reading as a Teenager" by Jim Hertzog.

Afternoon tours will be (listed by OPENING time):

Larry Reynolds' PRR Altoona Area (12:30 PM to 3:30 PM)

Jim Hertzog's Reading Shamokin Division (1:00 PM to 5:00 PM)

Gale Smith's Lehigh Valley (1:00 PM to 4:00 PM)

Lehigh & Keystone Valley Model Railroad Museum (2:00 PM to 6:00 PM)

Addresses and directions will be available at the clinics, and directly from Jeff Warner closer to the event. More details on the tours can be found throughout this issue. **There is no need to pre-register for this event.**

September 25, 2010 Allentown Open Houses

Larry Reynolds' PRR Altoona Area

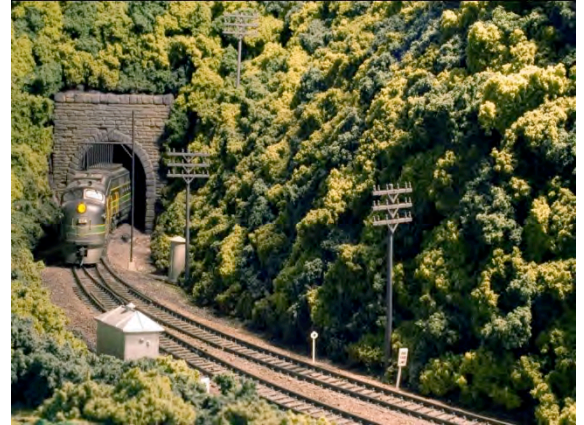
The Altoona area of the Pennsylvania Railroad is an HO model railroad emphasizing heavy mainline running. The area modeled is from Huntingdon, PA, to Tunnelhill, PA. The model railroad features a 310-foot mostly four track mainline with the scenery 100% complete. There is a large yard at Altoona requiring four crew members and a small yard at Tyrone requiring but one man. Additionally, there are one or two helper crews and a minimum of six road crews required. The operating schedule features a total of 36 trains; six mainline passenger trains, one local passenger train, twenty-four symbol freights and five local freights. The railroad is completely signaled. Traffic is controlled by two dispatchers using CTC in another room in the house. There is a third operator that controls all movements in and out of the active railroad. The era represented is roughly 1953 with plenty of steam and first generation diesels. The model railroad is controlled by radio Digitrax DCC. This model railroad has been recently featured in the August 2010 issue of Model Railroader Magazine.



Sept 25, 2010, Allentown Area Joint Meet (continued)

Jim Hertzog's Reading Shamokin Division

Welcome to my rendition of the Reading Railroad's upstate Shamokin Division. The HO scale basement model railroad fills a 30 by 40 foot basement and features the popular steam to diesel transition era during the early 1950's. A 300 foot double tracked mainline replicates train operation between the towns of Tamaqua, PA, and Shamokin, PA. The point to point trackplan also has visible east-end staging at Reading and west-end staging at Newberry Junction. Interchange is represented with the Lehigh & New England (LNE) at Tamaqua, the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) at Shamokin, and the Jersey Central (CNJ) at Haucks. Areas of interest along the mainline are the 3 yards at Tamaqua, Gordon, and Shamokin as well as 2 secondary coal yards at Saint Nicholas and Locust Summit. The model railroad also features 15 coal mines and loading facilities, which contribute loads during an operating session. Although three helper districts are modeled, the focal point of the model railroad is the steep Locust Summit grade where steam helpers are mandatory.



In addition to plenty of symbol freight traffic, the railroad features several passenger runs including the King Coal and the joint CNJ/RDG Williamsporter. Naturally coal trains abound with many picking up raw coal at the loaders. The scenery is basically complete with real anthracite used as a scenic element. Many line-side structures are modeled after the prototype complete with the brown and cream corporate colors. The model railroad is run using a Lenz DCC systems with many locomotives equipped with sound. Cars are forwarded using a color coded waybill systems and all trains run under a dispatcher's control with verbal train orders. The model railroad will be featured in Great Model Railroads 2011.

Gale Smith's Lehigh Valley

This 24' x 24' multi deck HO scale model railroad features the Lehigh Valley double track mainline between Allentown Yard and Rockport Tunnel. Operations include 8 track staging at east end (Jersey City) and 11 track staging at west end (Wilkes-Barre). The model railroad is double decked with 4 3/4 turn helix in one corner. Three yards are modeled (Allentown, PA; Catasauqua, PA; and Lehigh, PA) with multiple coal mines and local drills out of all yards. Interchange trains are modeled for the Reading, Central of New Jersey, and Lehigh & New England. Control is radio Digitrax DCC. Both 1960 era and 1972 era are used for separate sessions. Operations are color coded car cards and waybills with verbal dispatcher control over 14 channel radios. A telephone system is used for the yards. Scenery is 50% complete.



Lehigh & Keystone Valley Model Railroad Museum

The Lehigh & Keystone Valley Model Railroad Museum is a 4,000 sq ft prototype layout based on the Lehigh Valley, Reading, Central of New Jersey, Lehigh & Hudson River railroads that ran through the Lehigh Valley in the 60's and 70's. The viewed portion runs from West Portal, NJ, to Harrisburg, PA, to the west and to Lehigh, PA, to the north. The layout has a 15 track staging yard with a helix on one end and a 3 track helix is also included at the other end of the layout. NCE is the DCC control system. Detection and signals are in progress. A 16 ft X 28 ft addition is now in progress.



NOTE: The museum is also open to the public on this day. If you let the person at the counter know you are with the NMRA, admission will be free (donations are still accepted).

Netherworld Forces

by Dave Messer

I have always considered model railroading in general, and model building in particular, to be a time of relaxation. During my professional career, I was often faced with deadlines, especially during the intense times when we were preparing submissions to the Food and Drug Administration for approval of a new drug. However, I have found that there are two “Netherworld Forces” that can interfere with that state. I will call them “Tool Creep” and “Parts Flight.” Tool Creep is the phenomenon where tools gradually impinge on the workspace until one is down to literally a square foot, or less, in which to work (see image). One always wants to have the necessary tools handy, but this is extremely annoying. I find that I have to periodically either push them back out of the way, or return them to my Lazy Susan tool holder and start over. Parts Flight is a more insidious phenomenon that is all the more so because it is impossible to predict (and prevent), except that it is guaranteed to occur at the most critical times. Small parts, in my case usually held in tweezers, suddenly fly in all directions, never to be found. I sometimes end up crawling around on the floor looking for a critical part, but it almost never can be located. One wonders where they go, perhaps to the nether world! Thankfully many kit manufacturers include duplicates of some components, but if not one is forced dig into the parts bin or fabricate a new one.

I have no solutions to taming these forces, other than to maintain a supply of extra parts, but it does help to be aware of them.



Remember, *Model Railroading is Fun!*

Around The Division - Club News

Hershey's Mill Railroad Club by Mark Wallace

Shortly after the 4th of July, I had a chance to visit Hershey's Mill RR Club on a recent visit that coincided with one of their open houses. It was one of the hottest days of the summer, but inside it was cool and there were running trains!

The Hersheys Mill Club is located in the Sullivan House that dates from several centuries ago. They meet upstairs where they have constructed an HO layout using four separate rooms. The rooms were packed with young children (visiting their Grandparents or Uncles perhaps) and all seemed thrilled to watch the trains running; a wonderful way to interest young people to the possibilities of model railroading. I had a chance to meet their president Paul, who explained the club has been going strong since 1997 with present membership at 14. Paul would be moving soon, but he was enthusiastic about the future of the club.



Their theme is a 'Pennsy, Mid 50's transition theme.' The layout is built on benchwork with the track work running between three of the rooms with the fourth room set aside for turning trains, staging and a workshop. The layout can be operated 'point-to-point' or continuous. During the open house, they were running approximately 5 different trains.

Specifics; The mainline is over 100 feet in length. Minimum radius is 18 inches, though 22 inches or larger is the norm on the main. Switches are #8 and #6 Pecos or Shinoharas with insulated frogs. Code 86 & 100 track. There is a roundhouse facility on the layout with plenty of switching opportunities for operations. They converted to DCC about three years ago using NCE. By complying with NMRA standards for weight and wheels, they can operate trains as long as 44 cars. They operate a variety of locomotives representing different railroads of the theme's era. This rail-fan caught various trains representing the B&O, NYC, Reading, LV, and of course, the PRR. Equipment and rolling stock is either donated or came from various estates. There are some interesting pieces.

Each room is named for a Division; the Schuylkill, the Hershey and Goshen. Scenery wise, one room contains the previously mentioned roundhouse as well as a good-sized town complete with streets and buildings. Another room contained small factory siding, an area where a re-enactment of the battle of the Brandywine was taking place with hundreds of painted figures of soldiers, artillery and onlookers. There were some sizable and sophisticated bridge structures, a viaduct and tunnels. The scenery is hydrocol or similar type of hardcoat over wood benchwork.



The club is one of the many programs open to residents of the Hershey's Mill Community. Although a gated community, the club is open to anyone. They meet on Tuesday afternoons and will vary their activities from work sessions to operating sessions.



MORE PHOTOS APPEAR ON-LINE

Editor's Note:

This is the first in a series of reports from the various clubs in our Division. Former Board members report that in the past, a much closer relationship existed between our Division and area clubs than exists today. In an attempt to rebuild those relationships, we are reaching out for club "liaisons" to report ongoing news here in the Dispatcher.

Division Webmaster Val Pistilli will be reporting next month from the GATSME club in Fort Washington. We have also heard from the Logan Club in Souderton.

Contact the Editor (or any Board Member) if you know of club personnel throughout the Division who would be willing to work with us!

The Philadelphia Dispatcher

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

4325 Wendy Way
Schwenksville, PA 19473

Inside:

Sept Division Meet
Princeton MER meet
Hershey Mills RR
Division News
On-line content

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.

Iron Horse Hobby Shop

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

Herb's Hobbies and Crafts

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

Bussinger Trains

Old Ambler Station, Ambler
10-12% off retail

Nicholas Smith Trains

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

Lin's Junction

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

Phila. Div. Mid Eastern Region, NMRA, Inc.

(a non profit organization)

**Financial Report
for the Year Ended June 30, 2010****Statement of Activities****Income**

Newsletter Subscriptions	\$272
Non Dues Programs	22,843
Investment Income	310
Total Income	23,425

Expenses

Non Dues Programs	12,837
Program Expenses	2,541
Total Expenses	15,378

Net Income(Loss) **\$8,047**

Statement of Financial Position**Assets**

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$28,088
Equipment, net	1,184
Total Assets	\$29,272

Liabilities and Fund Balances**Current Liabilities**

Accounts Payable	\$976
Deferred Income	368
Total Current Liabilities	1,344

Fund Balances

Unrestricted	27,928
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Total Liabilities and Fund Balances **\$29,272**

DIVISION FINANCIAL POSITION

NMRA National News and Announcements

This month's edition features some highlights of the NMRA Board of Directors meeting, as reported by Director Tony Koester and Vice President Dave Thornton. (Last month's InfoNet News contained the announcement of officer and department manager replacements and retirements.)

- **Paid registrations to the Milwaukee convention topped the 1,600 mark**, and all 345 booths at the National Train Show were sold. However public attendance at the Train Show was down from past years.
- Dave Thornton, 75th Anniversary Year Committee chair and current VP-Administration, announced that **Diamond Club donations were approaching the \$70,000 mark** -- only \$5,000 short of the initial funding requirement of \$75,000.
- Scanning of photos for **the Diamond Club project has already begun**. The project is spearheaded by Paired Rail Railroad Publications and Historical Archive Solutions (a division of PRRP). Members can see how the NMRA's photo archives will look by visiting another PRRP/HAS website for the Santa Fe at www.atsfry.com. The NMRA's system is expected to go into beta testing in November, and initial posting of images will occur in early 2011.
- **An anonymous benefactor has promised to donate \$250,000** toward the creation of a tribute to scale model railroading at the California State Railroad Museum. This donation represents approximately one third of the funding needed, providing that the amount is matched by other fundraising efforts. None of the National Model Railroad Museum's exhibit costs will be funded by NMRA member dues or non-dues income. A mockup of the proposed exhibit is expected to be available for viewing at the 2011 convention in Sacramento.
- The Board approved a motion to create **sub-districts within the British and Australasian Regions**, to serve emerging pockets of interest in NMRA membership.

Continued

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- The Board approved a motion to create **sub-districts within the British and Australasian Regions**, to serve emerging pockets of interest in NMRA membership.
- **A change was made to candidate nominating procedures**. The Nominating Committee must publish its report and recommendations no later than the annual summer Board meeting. Nominations by petition will be accepted no later than 30 days after the publication of the Nominating Committee report, and election timelines will be adjusted accordingly. Allowable length for official statements of candidate qualifications will be 500 words when published in *NMRA Magazine*, and 1,200 words when published by electronic means.

Welcome to the new NMRA logo...

and in many ways, the new NMRA. On its face this wheel-on-rail symbol represents the oldest of the NMRA's objectives: interoperability.

Yet, it also represents the future. It's a symbol of our willingness to keep pace with the changes all around us. Changes in our world, in our lives, in our hobby. While it honors the achievements of the past 75 years, it commits us to the continuation of those achievements in the next 75.



Most important, our new logo is a symbol of the NMRA's commitment to you. As your wants and needs evolve, so will we, with expanded content on our website, easier accessibility to the information in our Library, and programs designed to position us well for another seven-and-a-half decades.

"NMRA" now replaces "National Model Railroad Association" and becomes our brand, just as "NFL," "AARP," and "CBS" have become brands in their respective fields.

We've even renamed our magazine "NMRA Magazine" to further reinforce that brand. And our website, www.nmra.org, will become "your portal to more fun in scale model railroading."

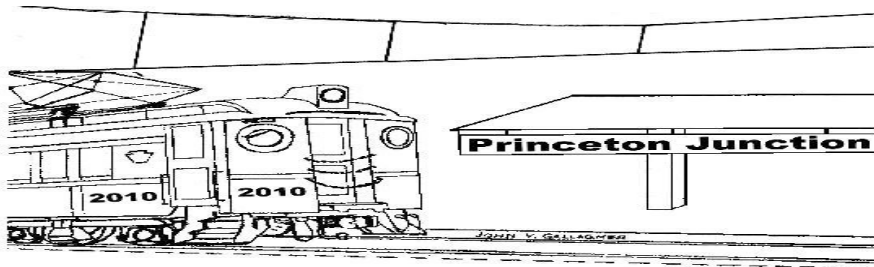
So as we move into tomorrow, think of our new NMRA logo as a symbol of our promise to you – and our promises to each other – that we'll all keep the hobby of scale model railroading alive, vibrant... and ready for the future.

Final Details for Princeton Junction 2010

By Bob Clegg 2010 Convention Chair

DETAILS! DETAILS! DETAILS! We now have finalized the last piece of the puzzle for the Princeton Junction 2010 MER convention, the Prototype tours!

The convention offers two prototype tours. First, on Friday morning we will travel to the Perdue grain elevator facility in Bordentown. Originally built for GLF in 1950, and run by Agway for many years, it is the last monopour concrete grain elevator in New Jersey. What is “monopour”, you ask? This massive structure was poured as a single unit moving the forms up the structure as the concrete began to cure. The effort was so great for the time that a concrete supplier that is still in business, incidentally, was established in the area for the sole purpose of supplying the concrete to build the elevator silos. Check out the picture in the advertisement elsewhere in this issue of The Local.



Now owned by Perdue, the grain elevator is still very active, with rail service daily by Conrail Shared Assets. We will tour the entire facility including a climb up the stairs to the head house to see the operation from the inside. Join the tour and hear the story of this historic structure! Please note that this is a working facility and hard hats and shoes

are required. Also note, there are no handicapped accommodations in the facility.

Our Saturday tour will take us across the Delaware to the New Hope and Ivyland Railroad where we will travel over the length of the railroad in a first class vintage dining car. The journey requires about 2 1/2 hours round trip. During our trip, we will enjoy the beautiful autumn color scenery of Bucks County, PA as well as a light lunch in that vintage dining car. When you make your reservation, be sure to specify your choice of sandwich. Chips and drinks are also included. Seating is limited so make your reservation early to avoid missing this great rail tour.

The self-directed home layout tours are always a big part of any MER convention and Princeton Junction 2010 is no exception. What is different is that we are offering some of these home railroads for your viewing on Thursday afternoon so that you may stop in and see them on your way to the convention. The names and addresses of these will not be published in keeping with the privacy policies of the NMRA, the region and the NJ Division, but after you register for the convention, a list and directions will be yours for the asking.

The convention also offers a large number of slots for those of you who enjoy the OPS sessions, operating trains on a host's railroad. With more than seventy of these slots available, if you ever thought you would like to try your hand in one of these operating sessions, take this opportunity to sign up and join the fun. Slots are available Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and even Sunday beginning after the MER meeting.

We will have clinics, too! Most will be presented twice, so you can get to see those you want and still do that tour or operating session! On Saturday afternoon a type of clinic that we have not before will be presented. We call them “Work in Progress” clinics. There will be eight to ten clinicians presenting clinics at the same time in the same room. You can move from one to another and join the discussions or move on to another as you prefer. Sounds like chaos, but it works really well. The NJ Division has done these at a division meet and they have been well received. General clinic topics will include everything from Animation to Weathering, Australian Railroads to Working with Styrene. There will be something for everyone regardless of level of skill in model railroading.

If you prefer, on Saturday, the Northeastern Fallen Flags RPM group will be holding their annual one-day meeting only about twenty minutes from the convention hotel. For those not familiar with the RPM (Railroad Prototype Modelers), it is a group loosely affiliated with the NMRA, but with no membership requirements. The format of their meets is similar to those of the MER and NJ Division. There will be more clinics and displays of members' models, but no judging. The admission fee is not included in the convention fare.

Saturday night's banquet will feature one of the NJ Division's favorite presenters. Mr. Mitch Dakelman will regale us with a slide show currently planned to feature the railroads of the New Jersey area in the '60s and '70s. This will be followed by a selection from his seemingly limitless video library of vintage railroad subjects. Come and join us for what promises to be a most enjoyable, if not completely exhausting, three days of tours, operating sessions, clinics, fun, and fellowship at Princeton Junction 2010! □

More photos from Hershey Mills Layout





Hershey's Mill
Railroad Club

Photos from our May Division Meet

