



THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

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

May 2011 Volume 18, Number 3



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

A Joint Meeting between the Philadelphia Division of the NMRA and the Spring East Coast Santa Fe Modelers Meet

*On the Campus of Delaware Valley College
Doylestown, PA May 6 & 7, 2011*

Note: NMRA participation will not begin until Saturday Morning. NMRA members, however, are still welcome to attend the Friday night activities assuming that they will be registering Saturday morning.

NMRA members must pre-register to have their admittance paid by the Division -See details on page 3

Friday, May 6

3:00 – 5:30 PM -Meet in the Music Room (next to the Coffee House), 2nd floor of Student Center, set up meeting room, ECSF Registration, AV equipment, sale table set up and display of auction items & sign up for Sales Tables. At the end of the evening we will have to move all of the set up and display to the coffee House for Sat.AM Sales tables will be secured during the overnight hours.

5:30 – 6:45 PM -**Dinner**

7:00 – 8:00 PM - **Clinic - Steve Priest:** Working with Manufacturers to create Santa Fe prototypes

8:00 – 9:00 PM - **Clinic - Don Borden:** 3800 class prototype development by John Thompson and Don Borden

Everyone is invited to **Don Borden's** Cajon Pass Layout after the clinic.

Saturday, May 7

8:15 – 9:00 AM - Registration, set-up model displays, additional sales tables, AV Equipment, Auction Tables

9:00 AM - **Welcome to our 18th ECSFM meet, Doylestown, PA**

9:10 - 9:50 AM - ECSFM Business meeting, adoption of by-laws, director elections and product announcements

- NMRA – **Clinic – Mark Wallace** – “The layout room or Railroading without Raising the Roof

10:00 – 10:45 AM - **Clinic - Steve Priest:** HAS Online, SF preservation

10:50 – 11:30 AM - **Clinic - Dick Bronson:**

12:00 – 12:30 PM - Browse the sale and auction tables

12:30 - 1:15 PM - **Lunch**

1:30 – 2:30 PM - **Clinic - Steve Priest:** ATSF 3 Shop Scrapbooks, Cleburne, San Bernardino, and Albuquerque

2:45 – 3:45 PM - **Clinic - Josh Shedaker:** Quantum Q-3 Sound Decoders

4:00 – 5:30 PM -Auction (90 min)

5:30 – 7:00 PM -**Dinner:** Please contact Pat McTeigue if you will be staying for Dinner (see page 3)

7:30 – 8:30 PM - **Clinic - Steve Priest:** Life and Death of the Emporia Subdivision

8:30 – 9:00 PM - Clean-up



Everyone is invited to **Don Borden's** Cajon Pass Layout after the clinic.



Modeling on a budget...

In the perfect world, each of us would win a lottery and have unlimited funds to spend on our hobby.

Dream on!!! ...but in reality, only a very few model railroaders have substantial or unlimited funds to spend. The "rest of us" must keep a keen eye on our modeling budget and often must prioritize and/or delay hobby-purchasing decisions.

To exacerbate this fact, the costs involved in building and maintaining a layout are usually directly proportional to the size of the attempted project. On medium and larger layouts, the cost of such necessities as track ballast and trees can often be overwhelming, before one even thinks about that new sound equipped locomotive purchase.

In the next several issues, we will be presenting a series of "budget" articles by Division members. The purpose of this series (or thread, if you will) is to share ideas, materials and techniques which can reduce the costs of the hobby.

It is hoped that Division members (and others) will contribute to the thread individual cost saving examples that can benefit us all.

Thus far there are only 2 pending articles in this category (both authored by myself), but I am aware of several more in the planning stages.

If you don't feel like creating an entire article, why not email the kernel of your idea (or some photos) to the Dispatcher? We will help create an article from your thoughts and ideas. It is now possible to publish many accompanying color photos in the online section to support your ideas.

So bring them on!!! Contact info is located in our masthead immediately to the right of this column. See you at Del Val College in May! Regards, Earl

2011 Election Information

This year there are four seats (of the seven) on the board of Directors up for election. Superintendent Greg Shindledecker has charged Board Member Pat McTeigue with the task of handling nominating committee duties. Pat will be contacting the current four board members to see if they will run for reelection. In addition, he will be searching for members at large willing to run. New blood is always a good thing in any organization. Please contact Pat if you are interested in serving. His email and phone contact info can be found on page 3.

Bio's on those running will be included in the next issue of The Dispatcher as well as a tear out ballot to be sent in via US mail. Division members will also be permitted to vote at the September meeting in Coatesville. The new Board members will be named at the end of the September Meeting.

Steve Salotti earns AP Certificate



At the recent March Meet, MMR Rich Newmiller presented former Dispatcher Editor and well-known modeler Steve Salotti with his AP Author Certificate.

Steve continues to make progress on his layout and has obviously started the journey towards earning his Master Model Railroader Award. We wish him the best in that endeavor!

THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

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

Editor
Earl Paine
4325 Wendy Way
Schwensville, 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. The editor reserves the right to, when necessary, paraphrase small portions of the text in order to fit the space available.

Next issue: July, '11. Due out approx. July 15. Deadline: June 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 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
531 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@verizon.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

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

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

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

**Special thanks to the Valley Forge RPM....**

Many of you may not be aware that the Valley Forge Railroad

Prototype Modelers meet is closely tied to our Division. Our own Paul Backenstose leads a committee of mostly Philly Division members to organize this excellent meeting every two years.

The RPM meets are extremely well attended and provide knowledge from a veritable Who's-Who of premier modelers.

Although the RPM meet is conducted as a Division function, it is autonomous in its planning and execution. As a way to give back to the Division last year, the RPM-Valley Forge committee agreed to purchase a video camera for us with some of the proceeds from the last meeting. If you've attended a recent Division meet, you may have noticed Val Pistilli using it to record our presenters.



For the technically-minded, the camera is a Sony 12 Megapixel HandyCam (model HDR-CX550) Hi-Def camcorder. Here are some of its other specs:

- 1080i Camcorder
- CMOS sensor
- 0 lux minimum illumination
- MPEG-2, AVCHD
- Image stabilizer
- Automatic white balance
- Automatic and manual exposure modes-Built-in flash
- Face Detection
- Remote control
- 64 GB memory
- SD Memory card compatible
- Autofocus

This is an excellent machine and, on behalf of the Philadelphia Division, I would like to thank the RPM-Valley Forge committee for the generous gift.

Greg Shindledecker

May joint meet pre-registration, dinner seating and sales tables info...

Pre-registration: As of April 12, 33 Division members have preregistered for the May 6 & 7 joint NMRA/Sante Fe meet. You must be an NMRA member (as well as a member of the Division) to avoid entrance fees. If you have not yet pre-registered, please email or phone Pat McTeigue to get on the list. Pat's contact info is listed below.

This pre-registration is non-binding! It is still possible to register at the door for those who might decide to come at the last minute.

Saturday Dinner Seating: Those members desiring to dine with the group should also contact Pat McTeigue. The organizing committee would like a number so that they can set up tables in advance.

Sales Tables: NMRA members can set up sales tables either on Friday evening or upon arrival Saturday morning. Tables set up Friday night will be secured during the overnight hours.

Pat McTeigue contact info: Phone is 215-441-8407. If Pat can't answer, leave your name/message on his voice mail. Pat's email address is <mailto:tonightowl1@comcast.net>. The Division thanks Pat for his willingness to be our "phone registrar"

Classifieds

This is a new free benefit to Philadelphia members. Feel free to e-mail the Editor with model railroad related items you are either looking for or are willing to sell. Last issue member Joe Bergmaier posted a classified in this section and got responses before the printed versions were even mailed out.

Earl Paine is seeking Proto 1000 RDC-1 (not RDC-2 or 3) models in Reading paint. 610-831-9466



If it's November, it must be Model Railroad Open House Month. That is the common knowledge in the Delaware Valley.

You might be wondering why I'm talking about November at this time of the year. Well, it's because the NMRA wants to increase the recognition of November as Model Railroading Month, and they are wondering what we as local modelers are doing to support the growth of the hobby.

To that end, I'd like to give you some history on the Model Railroad Open House List and how it exists today, and request your participation this year as either a visitor or a layout owner open for visitation.

Over twenty years ago, Bruce Friedman started managing a list of fellow modelers that existed in Northern Delaware that would open for visitors. This gave the Northern Delaware modelers a chance to visit each other's layouts to keep up with the progress and changes each had made. It also gave new modelers a chance to meet others with a common interest. The inspiration gained by these new modelers would hopefully result in the growth of the hobby.

The list was originally printed in hard copy form on 8 1/2 x 11 paper using both sides. The layout list contained the November schedule and included the modelers name, address, scale of the layout along with the date and time they chose to be open.

Each modeler supplied a 4x4 inch map for getting to their home from main roads in the area. On the handout pages there would be four maps on each side. The list was then duplicated and delivered to hobby stores in the area for distribution to their customers.

This process was so successful that word of mouth about the list dramatically increased the number of layout owners willing to open their layouts.

Bruce's original list contained twenty layouts. Over the ensuing years, the list steadily grew in number as well as in geographic scope. During 2010, there were over 200 layouts on the list. According to Bruce, there have been, on average, around 105 open layouts per year.

Currently, the list covers layouts from Eastern shore Maryland (and Baltimore) north to the Delaware border, Delaware itself, Southeastern PA (west to Harrisburg), and southern New Jersey including the Trenton area.

As the number of layouts grew, the size and costs of the handout packet increased and it was also becoming more difficult to distribute. At the height of printed schedules, there were close to 3000 copies distributed and they were still running out!

Recently, the decision was made to replace the printed copies with a website. In addition to the elimination of hard copy printing costs, there was an interest in appealing to younger modelers who are far more web oriented. The website address is www.modelrailroadopenhouse.com

Bruce said, "Our sponsors who paid for the printing of the schedule and maps were mostly hobby shops and they were closing at a rapid rate, so our distribution system and sponsors were going away." Donations are still accepted and appreciated to pay for the website which still has its costs.

On the website, the layouts are linked to a Google Map so that you can see where the layouts are individually located, as well as their physical relation to each other on a given day. Visitors can download the schedule and use Google map's "directions feature" to plan their visitations.

The Philadelphia Division of the NMRA intends to help the effort through the production of flyers that will be distributed to the hobby stores. This flyer will contain some introductory text, point readers to the website address and display photos of some of the layouts. It will not contain individual maps.

It is hoped that this year, modelers will bring with them some friends and family to generate some more interest in the hobby.

If you would like to participate as a layout owner opening your layout for display, registration directions and contact information will be made available in the July Dispatcher, or you can view it on the website.

Registration information is collected from August 15th to September 15th and made available to all on October 1st.

The last weekend of October is usually reserved for Garden Railroads to take advantage of the weather. Every day of the month of November is available and supported for Open Houses. The following scales are included: N, HO, HO3, S, O 2 rail, O 3 rail, On3, G indoor and Garden.

If you have participated in the past, you know how enjoyable it is to have fellow modelers stop by and check out and discuss your layout. This year, I'm hoping more of you will open again to show your progress, and on your non-open days, get out and visit some layouts that you haven't seen for some time. From what I've heard, Model Railroads are never done; they are always changing.

I hope I've stimulated some thought about your participation in the Open House Schedule next November. If so, you have a lot of lead-time to get ready. Enjoy and have Fun!

Track Ballast on a Budget

by Earl Paine



My “plywood pacific” Reading RR Layout was finally ready for the addition of much needed scenery. Ballasting the track was the logical starting point.

The cost of ballast for many feet of double track main using commercial ballast products was a shock! I investigated Woodland Scenics and several other ballast suppliers. The cost of individual packages of ballast quickly added up into the hundreds of dollars. I also looked at bulk purchases (by the gallon) through suppliers such as Arizona Products and Smith and Sons. The bulk costs are indeed cheaper but still formidable! Ballasting the track might take years!

During a recent visit, however, to my Ace Hardware store (Harleysville, PA), I noticed a product called Seaport Blue Screening. This was located outside the store among the landscaping stone products. This is the stuff that hardscapers use to fill in around slates in patios (among other uses). Could this be a source of budget ballast? I had to find out.

The screenings are a medium gray in color and come in 50 pound bags at way less than \$10! The bag contains a mixture of fine gray aggregates sizing from approximately 1/8 inch down to a fine dust. In addition, there are a few larger lumps. I came home with a single 50-pound bag.

The experimentation began on a warm day using kitchen strainers donated by my wife. The material came out of the bag wet and I spread it out in a 1-inch thick layer on a trash can lid in the sun. Within an hour the product had dried out and sifting began. As a part of sifting, I checked the material with a magnet. None of the material was magnetic... so far so good.



I used 2 buckets to sort and separate the textures. After about 45 minutes I had 25 pounds of HO sized ballast and another 25 pounds of coarser aggregate. My O scale neighbor

(Lionel Hi-rail) made off with the larger supply to use on his layout and reported great success. I noted on his layout that the color had darkened somewhat from using the normal thinned white glue approach but was still useable as medium gray main line ballast.

My own HO experience proved to be more problematic. The HO sized ballast had a good deal of fine dust mixed in with the larger aggregate. After spreading on the main line, the gray dust coated the ties preventing them from being seen as brown/gray...

everything seemed to be gray! Several of my round robin crew very much liked that effect, which portrayed a less, maintained main line. I, on the other hand wanted to portray a more manicured, well maintained main line with the ties showing more of their color through the gray ballast.

I initially attempted to flush out the fine dust by adding water to the ballast in a jar, shaking it up, and then pouring off (decanting) the top layer of gray water containing the dissolved dust. After drying, the dust problem was only slightly reduced and the process was abandoned.

After trial and error testing, a solution was discovered in the installation process. After the application of “wet water” and/or alcohol (both were tried), a solution of thinned white glue (3 parts water to 1 part glue) was soaked into the ballast. This is a well-

Editor’s note: Many additional color photographs supporting this article can be found in the on-line section of this issue.

known method championed by many others. My application, however, had to deal with the dust.

After the glue was added, a final pass of a 1-inch stiff-bristled brush dipped in fresh water was made across the tie top surfaces holding the brush at a 45-degree angle. The next day, the ties were exposed from the ballast just to my liking. The texture of the resulting ballast was very much the same (or smaller than) commercial HO fine grit ballast. It showed well in photos. But there was still a minor coloration problem.

After studying color photos of the stretch of prototype trackage I was modeling (Reading main line in Norristown, PA in the 70’s), I noticed that the model ballast had darkened more than the prototype’s dirty gray. The result also did not display the presence of lighter colored (limestone or granite) stone mixed into the prototype’s ballast giving it that speckled salt and pepper look.

Using matte medium instead of white glue lightened the gray slightly, but not enough to solve the overall color problem, and the ballast still lacked the presence of the lighter stone mentioned above.

The problem was solved by mixing in a modest amount of light gray commercial (Woodland Scenics) ballast. This increased the cost slightly, but a little went a long way. I added just enough to provide that speckled look to the ballast after drying.

..... Continued on page 7



The Layout Room or Railroading without Raising the Roof

By Mark R. Wallace AIA, NMRA, Phila Div Clerk.

Whether you're starting a new layout or taking a second look at the room where your layout is located, we'll review basic or not so basic aspects of the room where your layout resides. Planning the layout is an extension of your house's 'Recreational Space' and not just a 'Man-cave.'

We'll poll those present to see where different people are locating their layouts. We'll review location options in the house, what the layout's relation to the building really is and when the layout truly becomes a built-in and when it's not.

We'll examine aspects of the layout's construction or operation that suggests more than just model train watching. Things like calculating aisle widths, circulation, finishing the room,

reviewing electrical power and lighting aspects, as well as humidity and other environmental considerations that will all aid in the planning, building and operating the layout.

We'll use as an example a typical 4'x8' layout in the middle of a room or an alternative 1'-4" x 24' around the wall version, to see how these choices can aid in realizing your railroad.

We will cover popular uses of building materials such as rigid foam insulation and explore some often-misquoted safety issues that their use has raised.

As an practicing architect, planner and fellow railroad modeler (both building and as an operator), considering unused space with a client for use as a possible recreational space designed for a model railroad, always gets a "pause or a second look!" Taking it a step further in this 30-minute presentation with questions and answers might help you.

More on Netherworld Forces

by Dave Messer, MMR

Since the publication of my short article in a previous issue of *The Dispatcher* on Tool Creep and Netherworld forces causing loss of small parts, I have to report that there has been a convergence of the two, perhaps in revenge. Specifically I have experienced the *loss of several small tools, including my most trusted pair of tweezers*. Fortunately, this has been temporary, but still suspicious because they suddenly appeared in locations that *I could not have left them*, at least not consciously. Apparently others have experienced the loss of critical small parts, because an article in the January issue of RMC suggests the use of cut-off round toothpicks fitted with an adhesive disk glued to the flat end to pick them up. With the array of forces working their mischief, the disks would lose their adhesive qualities precisely at the wrong moment.

The article even mentioned modelers dropping an identical part to the lost one as a guide to where to look for the first one, a practice to which I would never admit, because as the author notes, that would usually result in the loss of two parts.

Now I'm in Big Trouble!

As this is being written, I misplaced my best tweezers once again.

While searching for them, I knocked a historic Bennington Scale Models New Haven coach to the floor, requiring major repairs, and while using the backup tweezers (with blunter tips) to do some decal work, I managed to mess up that project as well!

We can all agree that model railroading is fun, but beware, there are forces out there working to disrupt a peaceful session at the workbench.

Valley Forge RPM Committee sets 2012 Dates

Plans are well under way for the 2012 Valley Forge Railroad Prototype Meet at the Desmond Hotel in Great Valley. This RPM has gained a fantastic reputation over the past several years and 2012 should be even better.

The usual March end of month date was unavailable at the Desmond, so the dates will be **March 23-24-25, 2012**. Mark your calendars now so that you won't miss the event this coming year. Additional coverage of the event will be forthcoming in future Dispatchers.

VIEW THE DISPATCHER ONLINE !! ADDITIONAL PHOTOS, NATIONAL NMRA REPORTS, ...MORE

May 7 Meet Directions

Delaware Valley College is located on route 202 just south of Doylestown, PA.

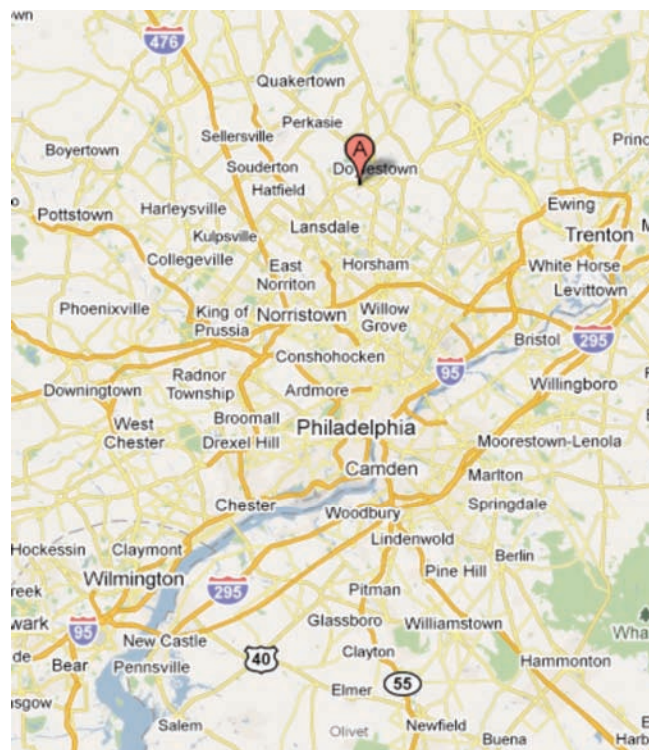
From the south east and west:

Use the Penna Turnpike – exit at Willow Grove. Proceed on 611 North to Doylestown bypass. Follow the bypass to route 202 South (not north) exit at Doylestown Hospital. Follow 202 South 1/3rd mile to Del Val College on the left at Iron Bridge Road.

From the north: Use 611 south to Doylestown bypass. Exit onto 202 South at Doylestown Hospital. Follow directions above.

Local directions: Enter the Del Val campus at the main entrance on route 202. The Student Center is the second building on the left as you enter. Use the parking areas to the right (towards the stadium).

Enter the Student Center from the center courtyard entrance. The Meet is on the second floor to the left of the entrance (Music Room).



Budget Ballast

...continued from page 5 (additional photos on-line)

Surprisingly, the addition of the lighter colored product resulted in a seemingly brighter gray overall, which was an acceptable replica of the prototype photos. Success!

This material is not a solution to replicating the very light (almost white) ballast used on some well known class 1 railroads, nor is it effective in replicating a cindered yard, but it is very cost effective! I did not try dying or coloring the material to change its natural color, but maybe someone else might experiment further!

The product could also easily be sifted further with a finer mesh strainer (or pantyhose material) for even smaller aggregates representing a finer HO or N scale ballast.

I any case, I (as well as my wallet) am well satisfied with the results. I can spend the savings on other areas of the railroad. I am always on the lookout for cost effective materials and techniques based on commonly found materials.

Planning Ahead ---- Division Meeting 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.

May 7, 2011- Division Meet Del Val College, Doylestown, PA Joint meet with East Coast Santa Fe Modelers. Pre registration requested (see page 1 and 3 of this issue for more details)	May 13-14 – National Trolley Meet Greater Philadelphia Expo Center Oaks, PA – Clinics, layout tours Contests, displays, more	March 23-24-25, 2012 – Valley Forge RPM Meet Desmond Hotel, Great Valley, PA Additional Coverage to appear in subsequent Dispatchers.
Sept. 17, 2011 Division Meet Coatesville, PA. More information to follow in future Dispatchers. Clinics, layout tours, contest.	November 12, 2011 – Division Meet Wilmington Town Center Joint meet with New Jersey Div. More information in future Dispatchers	The Dispatcher will be happy to display hobby related dates submitted by members

MAKE SURE THE CLERK HAS YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS

The Philadelphia Dispatcher

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

4325 Wendy Way
Schwenksville, PA 19473

Inside:

May Joint Meet Info

November Open House

Budget Ballast

Netherworld Forces

2012 RPM Info

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

VIEW THE DISPATCHER ONLINE !! ADDITIONAL PHOTOS, NATIONAL NMRA REPORTS AND

Get Well Wishes! – The Dispatcher has been informed that long time division member Win Gross is recovering nicely from his recent surgery. He is staying with his sister during recovery. We wish him well!
Cards can be sent to: 758 Smokestown Rd, Denver PA 17517

AROUND THE DIVISION



Clinician Harry Kyriakodis delivering part 2 of his clinic covering the history of the Central Philadelphia rail corridors.



Rich Newmiller, MMR delivered the second fine clinic on the details of building his award winning sawmill model.



Center and bottom left: Over 30 members and guests enjoyed the March meeting held in Montgomeryville. John Wertan and Nick Brownsberger opened their in progress layouts for review after the morning clinics.



Here we see Don Borden the night he drove the golden spike on the main line on his extensive Cahon Pass layout. This is a rare photo of Don without a cut on his head from working between the levels of the railroad ☺

NMRA National News and Announcements

March NMRA InfoNet News

Hi, Presidents & Superintendents --

Welcome to March, and besides the usual Madness, there's a boatload of NMRA news this time around.

NOTE: Forward this email to your newsletter editor and officers, mention it in your editorial, bring it up at meetings. Your members like to know what's going on at National!

- **Notice to Central District and Canadian members:** Due to the ballot address problems reported earlier, the deadline for returning Central District and Canada District Director ballots has been extended by two weeks. The new postmark deadline for these ballots is April 15. Remember that the pre-printed address on the provided envelope is incomplete. Here is the correct address: **NMRA Ballot Committee c/o Skingco Services, LLC 33530 1st Way S. Suite 102 Federal Way, WA 98003-7332** We regret any inconvenience caused by this error.
- We're still looking for stories of what your Division or Region does for **National Model Railroad Month**. Write a 200-word summary and send it to me at this email address. Thanks.
For some ideas of what others do for National Model Railroad Month, take a look at the Division Business Car column in back-issues of *Scale Rails*.
- **Notice of 2012 elections.** The following NMRA Officers and Board of Directors positions are open for election in 2012: President, Vice President-Administration, Vice President-Special Projects, Eastern District Director, Pacific District Director, and At-Large North America Director. Please check the NMRA Executive Handbook located at http://www.nmra.org/national/organization/nmra_organization.html for the extent of the districts affected and qualifications. All candidate names for consideration by the Nominations Committee shall be submitted to Didrik Voss, davoss@pvmtengr.com, no later than June 15, 2011.
-
- The **Summer Board meeting** will be held prior to the Sacramento x2011 Convention on Thursday, June 30, 2011. The meeting is usually held at the Convention hotel, but the exact start time and room number will be announced when available. Remember, it's the responsibility of Region and Division officials to pass along this information to members.
- The NMRA is looking to identify and recognize any **model railroad clubs that were formed in 1935 or earlier** that are still in existence. We would like the name of the club and when it was founded. A picture from the early years would be appreciated. Send the information to Dave Thornton - NMRA Vice President of Administration, Email DThorn5552@aol.com or mail to 2027 Jeffrey Drive, Troy, MI 48085-3816.
- The Board unanimously agreed that in the future **all merchandise sold by the NMRA**, including by Regions and Divisions, must conform to any applicable NMRA standards. Questions about certifying whether products conform to standards should be directed to Standards and Conformance Department Manager Didrik Voss at davoss@pvmtengr.com. In addition, Bob Amsler, the NMRA's legal counsel, says that the following language must be included in your merchandise contracts with your vendors:

All merchandise shall conform to all applicable NMRA Standards and this term is a substantial and material term of the contract requiring strict conformance. The manufacturer may either submit the product to the NMRA for conformance testing or the manufacturer may certify conformance by utilizing the procedures for self-certification pursuant to the process guidelines promulgated by the

Continued from on-line page 2

Conformance and Inspection Department of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. Any merchandise not conforming to the applicable standards will be non-conforming and rejected.

The model can be sent to the Standards & Conformance Dept. for certification testing. The final paint scheme of the model is not necessary. NMRA has also established a Self-Certification program in which the manufacturer may complete the appropriate paperwork, signed by a legal representative of the company, and send to the Standards & Conformance Department for issuance of an NMRA Conformance Warrant number. The paperwork will be provided upon request. The NMRA reserves the right to check the model upon delivery to ensure the model, in fact, does pass all applicable Standards. If you have any questions, direct them to Vice President Bill Kaufman at whk58@pacbell.net.

Here are some highlights of the Winter Board meeting, held in Las Vegas last month. For full details, see an upcoming issue of NMRA Magazine, or look in the "What's New" area of the homepage at www.nmra.org right now.

- **Jenny Hendricks was promoted to Chief Administrative Officer.** She's a true gift to the NMRA -- congratulations, Jenny!
- The Board authorized revising NMRA by-laws to make the **election of two vice presidents a permanent change.**
- Although the **Diamond Club** met its initial goal of \$75,000, we're still looking for additional donations so that more of our collection can be scanned and posted. The Online Archives site is up and running, and accessible via the link on the www.nmra.org homepage.
- The Board is investigating the feasibility of **occasional National conventions that are markedly different** from those currently scheduled.
- In an effort to **maintain contact with all NMRA members**, the Board is investigating various means of sending regular communications to the 4,000 NMRA members who don't subscribe to *NMRA Magazine*.
- The Board adopted one of two versions of **NMRANET standards** which were presented. It also approved two new tables to Standard S-7 to accommodate clearances for model railroads set in the modern era.
- Important announcements of the **scale model railroading exhibit** in the Gallery area of the California State Railroad Museum will be coming shortly. Those attending the National Convention in Sacramento will have a chance to see the Gallery exhibit area and proposal drawings.
- Lastly, my apologies to **John Lowrance and Fred Bock**, for screwing up their titles in the last InfoNet News. John is actually the Manager of the Education Department, and Fred is Assistant Manager.

-Gerry Leone, MMR NMRA Communications Director

Ballasting on a Budget Article Photos 1



The raw materials before and during the sifting process. The material will need to dry after opening the bag and spreading the material out. The material could have been sifted further using a smaller meshed strainer or even pantyhose.

Budget Ballast Photos 2



Budget Ballast Photos 3



HAVE 50 MODEL RAILROADING CLINICS RIGHT IN YOUR LIVING ROOM.

Just because you can't make it to a national convention doesn't mean you have to miss out. Right now the NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library has over 50 DVDs of clinics presented at national conventions from 2002 to 2010. All available to NMRA members for the cost of postage.

So you can see clinics on everything from decoders to design, tools to techniques, helixes to highways, and research to resin casting.

All from the comfort of your very own couch.

Visit www.nmra.org and go to the Kalmbach Memorial Library page for a complete listing.

Then, get that popcorn ready.



We make it even more fun.

www.nmra.org
423-892-2846





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: _____

OUR AP COORDINATOR IS DAVE MESSER
CONTACT INFO ON PRINTED PAGE 2

Introducing the best deal in model railroading.

Join the NMRA for 6 months for just \$9.95*!

Sign me up!

Fill out this form and include your payment. **U.S.:** Send \$9.95 (U.S.) to NMRA-Rail Pass Membership, 4121 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119. **Canada:** Send \$9.95 (Cdn) to NMRA-Canadian Rail Pass Membership, 69 Schroder Cres., Guelph, ON N1E 7B4, Canada.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Email _____

☐ Check

☐ Credit card

Credit Card # _____

Credit Card Exp _____

Signature _____

*Rail Pass offer is for new members and those who have not been NMRA members for two years or more. Individuals can join at Rail Pass rates only once; membership renewal will be at the regular membership rate. Rail Pass members can attend conventions and participate in contests, but cannot vote or hold office and will not receive a New Member Pak.

- Have easy access to one of the world's largest railroad libraries...which includes over 100,000 prototype photos, 6,000 books, and over 50,000 modeling, prototype and historical society magazines
- Experience the fellowship and fun of getting modeling help and discussing the hobby with other members in your area
- Receive reduced rates on special insurance for your layout or collection
- Get admission to local model railroad meetings & events
- Receive 6 monthly issues of *Scale Rails* magazine
- Have access to standards info and data sheets
- Be a part of programs like "Modeling With The Masters," the Pike Registry, Estate Counseling, contests, clinics, the Achievement Program and more!

Also available in Canada!



Visit www.nmra.org to see what you're missing!

**So much bang.
So few bucks.**

National Convention Information



EXTRA 2011 WEST

The Unconventional Convention
2011 NMRA National Convention
Sacramento, California
July 3 to 9, 2011



Connect with X2011 West

Anyone can see the X2011 West Facebook page, including all photos and videos - you don't have to be a Facebook member and you don't have to login to Facebook. Enjoy!



Convention Hotels

Sheraton Grand Sacramento
1230 J Street
(13th & J Streets)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Hyatt Regency Sacramento
1209 L Street
(12th & L Streets)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Improve your modeling with a few sheets of paper.

That's exactly what happens when you participate in the National Model Railroad Association's Achievement Program. One Merit Award here, another there, and pretty soon you're on your way to becoming a Master Model Railroader. All the while learning and having a ton of fun.

The Achievement Program is modelers helping modelers become better modelers and get the most out of their hobby. And it's yet another benefit of NMRA membership.

Visit www.nmra.org. Then improve your skills. And your hobby.



We make it even more fun.

www.nmra.org
423-892-2846



AROUND THE DIVISION



Two photos showing Joe Bergmaier's super-elevation methods. Look for future open houses and articles from Joe.



Earl Paine has finally started scenery using super trees and photo backdrops taken at the prototype location and "photoshopped" to color match the ground foam used in the trees. The photos were trimmed and replicated for use on the backdrop behind the trees.

Editor's note The Dispatcher seeks to offer on-line coverage of new and upcoming division layouts as many of our newer members are taking the "construction plunge". There is a lot to be learned from viewing layouts in their early stages. The builders also benefit from the wisdom experienced members as the builders share their design and operational goals. Feel free to submit photos to the Dispatcher of other new, or previously unknown, modeling endeavors. We have unlimited access to on-line space ...

AROUND THE DIVISION



John Wertan welcomes division members to his in-progress LS Railroad



Nick Brownsberger also opened his in-progress PRR layout for viewing. Of special interest was Nick's demonstration of his JMRI computer implementation of automatic hump yard car sorting.