



# THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

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

April 2012      Volume 19, Number 2

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



## SECOND ANNUAL JOINT NMRA/ECSFM MEET KICKS OFF MAY 4<sup>TH</sup> AND 5<sup>TH</sup>

**TED YORK, TOM MADDEN AND RAMON  
RHODES TO APPEAR AS CLINICIANS**

### PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE EXTENDED

The Philadelphia Division will once again combine with the East Coast Santa Fe Modelers for a joint meet to be held on the campus of Delaware Valley College in Doylestown, PA.

The meet commences Friday evening May 4<sup>th</sup> and ends Saturday evening May 5<sup>th</sup>. 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.

Pre-registration has been extended for Philly Division members until April 30th.

In addition to the planned clinics, Ron Patzer's outstanding Erie-Lackawanna layout will be open for inspection Saturday afternoon.

Andy Sperandio will be unable to attend the meet (as previously announced) due to a serious medical condition requiring surgery. Andy is looking forward

to appearing and presenting at a later meet after his recovery. All of the members of both the ECSFM and the Philadelphia NMRA send our best wishes to Andy for a speedy recovery.

A special thanks goes out to Tom Madden and Ramon Rhodes for stepping in as replacement clinicians with very short notice. Both are outstanding presenters. Both Tom and Ramon have selected topics for their clinics which will be of interest to both Santa Fe as well as East Coast modelers.

Details and tentative schedule are located elsewhere in this issue of *The Dispatcher*.

## NMRA PHILLY DIVISION PRE-REGISTRATION

### NOTE:

**Philadelphia Division Members in good standing will have their registration paid by the Division**

**Division PRE-REGISTRATION is required for having your registration paid.**

**You may pre-register by contacting Board Member Pat McTeigue at:**

**Email: [tonightowl1@comcast.net](mailto:tonightowl1@comcast.net)**

**Phone: 215-441-8407 (leave a message if Pat doesn't answer)**

**Pre-registration deadline has been extended until April 30th**

## DIVISION ELECTION NOTICE

Per the Philadelphia Division By-Laws, 3 of the 7 Board of Directors positions are up for election this May. There are 4 candidates running for those 3 positions.

This issue contains an election statement and bio from each of the 4 candidates as well as an official ballot (pages 4 and 5).

The ballot contains mailing directions and must be postmarked no later than April 30th.

In lieu of mailing a ballot, members may bring them to the May joint meet at Del-Val College.

Please help guide the division by exercising your responsibility to vote.



Greetings everyone!

As a former division clerk I had the task of contacting those who had let their NMRA memberships expire. I urged them to "rerail."

Many of the expirations were oversights and my contact reminded them to send in their dues. Many others, however, were indeed dropping their memberships.

The most common reason I heard for dropping was that the benefits received from membership were not worth the cost of renewing.

The NMRA has done much to publicize the benefits of membership on the national level, but I concentrated on local benefits.

I am happy to report that much has changed in that regard in the Philadelphia Division!

\* I was recently able to purchase division hopper cars at an attractive division members-only discount.

\* I attended the joint NMRA-Santa Fe meet last May with my entry fee subsidized by the division.

\* I now have free access on-line to an expanded Dispatcher in color.

\* Philly Division membership is now included in NMRA national membership at no charge.

\* I have enjoyed the help and advice of many local NMRA modelers who are happy to share their knowledge through the Member Aid Program.

Now more than ever, I feel that I am getting a great return on my NMRA investment and plan to continue membership well into the future. My only regret is that I didn't take advantage of these benefits far earlier than I did. I spent way too many years in the armchair!

Our current clerk, Marl Wallace, now does an admirable job with this task, and the content of this column will hopefully make his task easier.

See you at Del-Val! ...Earl

## Superintendent's Memo



### How I Got a Free DCC Throttle!

When I started my current job – my real job, that is – back at the beginning of 2011, my new boss bought me a wireless DCC throttle. I just didn't know it at the time.

What he really got for me was an iPhone so that he could keep tabs on me and send me e-mail anywhere I happened to be. Then one night at a round robin get together fellow division member Rob Hinkle told me about the wonders of JMRI and how I could use my new iPhone as a throttle. Forgive me if you already know all this.

JMRI (Java Model Railroad Interface) is free, downloadable, open source software that allows you to use a Mac, PC or Linux computer as an interface to your railroad. There are modules in it that you can use to program decoders, create a PC based dispatcher panel, operate signaling, and a host of other capabilities.

Visit the web site at <http://jmri.sourceforge.net/>. You will find clinics and other resources to walk you through the various capabilities of the software. I found my WIFI Throttle Lite free app by browsing the iPhone app store. It downloaded in 20 seconds.

Paul Cappelloni uses JMRI software using his old, retired PC connected to his DCC system through a USB cable. The iPhone connects to his wireless router and Tah Dah! You're running trains on his layout from your phone. I-Pads, Androids and other smart phones also work. JMRI supports most of the major brands of DCC systems.

I'm just getting my feet wet, but I'll be glad to pass along what I find out as I begin to use it.

Happy Railroading! John

## THE PHILADELPHIA DISPATCHER

Official publication of the  
Philadelphia Division,  
National Model Railroad Association  
<http://www.phillynmra.org>

### Editor

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**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:** Jun. '12. Due out approx. Jun 12. Deadline: May 15, 2012

**On-Line Subscription:** Free  
Make sure the Clerk has your current email address.

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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."

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## MAY JOINT MEET SCHEDULE FIRMS UP

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(note: schedule and topics subject to change)

### Friday, May 4

3:00 to 5:00 PM. - Registration of ECSF attendees, set up of sales tables, networking.

**Note: NMRA members may attend but must register the following morning.**

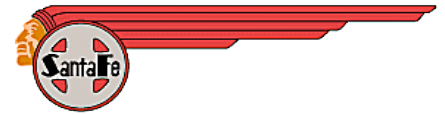
5:00 to 5:30 PM. – **Dinner:** In the Pub

#### - Evening Clinics:

5:30 to 7:00 PM - **Norm Stenzel:** (Titan decoder part 1)

7:15 to 9:00 PM - **Tom Madden:** (Pullman cars)

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



### Saturday, May 5

7:00 to 8:00 AM – Registration (**NMRA members** and ECSF members)

8:00 AM – Welcoming comments.

8:15 to 9:45 AM – ECSFM business meeting in Coffee House,

**NMRA business meeting and election in the Music Room.**

#### Clinics:

9:50 to 10:50 AM – **Ted York:** (Layout Building Part 1)

11:00 to 12:00 PM – **Tom Madden:** (to be announced)

12:00 to 1:15 PM – **Lunch:** Pizza served in Coffee House Room. Registrants are also free to attend informal talks with the clinicians. Ramon and Tom in the Music Room. Ted and Norm in the Coffee House Room.

#### Afternoon

1:15 to 2:45 PM – **Auction:**

#### Optional:

**Layout tour** of Ron Patzer's outstanding Erie-Lacawanna Layout – More info on this layout in the on-line section of this newsletter. Maps to be passed out at the meet.

#### Clinics:

2:45 to 4:00 PM – **Ted York:** (Layout Building Part 2)

4:10 to 5:15 PM – **Ramon Rhodes:** (Modern Containers)

5:25 to 6:25pm – **Dinner:** In the Dining Hall.

#### Evening:

6:25 to 7:25 PM – **Norm Stenzel:** (Titan Decoder Part 2)

7:30 to 8:45 PM – **Ramon Rhodes:** (to be announced)

8:45 to 9:45 PM – Cleanup and load out.

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

**NOTE TO PHILLY NMRA MEMBERS .....** The pre-registration signup deadline has been extended until April 30<sup>th</sup>. NMRA members **MUST** pre-register in order to have their admission paid by the Division. (Philadelphia members in good standing only) Those not pre-registered will have to pay a \$25.00 fee at the door.

**Call or email Pat McTeigue before April 30<sup>th</sup>!**

**Phone 215-441-8407 email: tonightow11@comcast.net**

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## Candidates Bios and Statements

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### Joe Bergmaier



My interest in railroading began when I was only a couple of years old. At that time we lived with my grandmother in Kensington on 2<sup>nd</sup> and Susquehanna. The block behind us was American Street and the Reading Railroad. My father used to take me over to watch them switch trains and tie up traffic on all the east-west cross streets. When I was 6, we moved to Bucks County and our house was a block from the PRR New York mainline and we had a clear & unobstructed view from our living room window. I grew up watching GG-1s in their full splendor. We used to call them “ghosts” because they came and went so fast.

A few years later, my father let me help him build the layout in the basement and that’s when I started becoming a model railroader. I helped with the benchwork and laying of the flex track, built some cars from kits and even built some buildings. Today I’m using that same framework on my layout and still have a couple of the cars. My dad collected brass when it first came out and I was lucky enough to inherit his entire collection.

I started my own collection after I got married and have been involved with model railroading since then. I was a member of Cheltenham for almost 20 years until my day job consumed all of my free time. I still tinkered with the trains, built some kits and dreamed of the day when I had the time, space and resources to build my dream layout. But a funny thing happened – it turns out my dream layout is now quite different than what I imagined.

I’m a big fan of the Pennsy, Reading and B&O and my layout is being designed to incorporate all three of these roads. Since joining the NMRA, I’ve met so many great people that are constantly inspiring me to push the limits of modeling. They have invited me to see their layouts, and join operating sessions and round robin groups. It is a great gift to see how others approach this great hobby.

I would be honored to serve on the board in any capacity. If elected to office, I promise to work hard to repay those who have helped me, by helping others to succeed in achieving their dreams.

### Charles A. Butsch



I began my fascination with trains with the family set of American Flyer trains during the Christmas season. During my teen years I got a Gilbert HO train set and have been hooked on HO since.

That Gilbert set lay in an old toy chest for several decades, through architectural school, dating, and my early days of my marriage. It was not until my first daughter’s Christmas that I pulled the old Gilbert set out to make a simple circle around the tree. That was a quite a memorable Christmas. I had recorded the event on a tape recorder in the hopes of getting her first impressions of Christmas. The old train hum came through loud and clear much to my wife’s disappointment.

Flash ahead to 1998. I had completed all my major home renovation projects and had served for three years volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. It was time to satisfy my creative energies on something else. So started my ever-evolving train layout. It started in the basement as most layouts do, but ended moving to our third floor when other personages felt that I was intruding into their territories.

I now have a man cave (as Earl Paine describes it) on our third floor with heat and A/C comforts. It started as a 5’x8’ platform and has grown to extend the full length and width of the 15’x30’ space. The center ridge of the ceiling is a whopping 6’ 1”, which is fine for my 5’ 8” stature. I recently locked into modeling the Reading Railroad just north of Tamaqua in a fictional town of Himmelville, Pennsylvania.

I have several grandkids who have shared my interest in trains over the years; my one grand daughter has even pulled wires for the new DCC system. I think it’s important to share our interest in railroading with the younger generations, not only because we enjoy, it but also because railroading is still an important means of transportation for America’s goods and people.

Our membership can and should be reinforced with the inclusion of the younger generation. I would hope that an effort would be made to replenish and expand our ranks before there are none to follow us.

### Mark R. Wallace



For these last two years, it’s been my privilege to serve you as clerk of our division. In that role, I have met and gotten to know many of you through our meets, ops, clubs or at various layouts I’ve visited. As a member of the NMRA and Philadelphia Division since 2006, my continuing goal is to strengthen the role the Division can play as your “personal” contact point for model railroading.

For as long as I can remember, I’ve been interested in railroading as a railfan and a modeler. An architect in private practice, I enjoy designing layouts using computer aided design programs and kit bashing models. As a member of the Western Maryland Historical Society, I continue studying their line’s infrastructure and rolling stock. I model a small portion of the WM in HO scale and guest operate on one of our member’s layouts.

Having dismantled a fifty year old 16 x 6 ft., 3-rail layout, my son and I have been building, as time permits, a larger HO layout that will incorporate scenes and operations of the WM. My son is a student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, and as



## Wallace Bio continued.....

the club president of the legendary RPI Model Railroad Club, spends Saturday afternoons refurbishing their layout. That connection has given me some good ideas as well as opportunities to operate with their extended club!

I am aware of and appreciate the wide variety of scale modeling that our members build and operate. Through our division's meetings and programs, I see a great opportunity to educate and immerse both members and non-members into the exciting possibilities that model railroading has to offer. Growing our membership and maintaining a healthy, welcoming organization where modelers can share techniques and new ideas, is vital to sustaining our active community of railroad modelers.

### Pat McTeigue



My model railroading interest was rekindled in 1983 when my stepson got an HO layout on a fold-up, styrofoam platform. The following Christmas it was moved onto a 4x8 sheet of plywood. He lost interest by February, but I did not. I joined the North Penn Model Railroad Club in Lansdale, Pa. and enjoyed the camaraderie and opportunities to learn techniques in all the skills needed to build a smooth running railroad with realistic scenery. I was an office holder in the club for a couple years. During this time, I joined the NMRA and eventually became a life member. In '92 I decided to go back to school to upgrade my Associates to a Bachelors degree. During this period, the club had to vacate the home it had enjoyed for many years. Half of the members decided to find a new home for the club and the others decided to form a round-robin. I went with the round-robin group. We are still active and now have several layouts that we are running operations on.

In 2004, after an early retirement package, I offered to help Steve Salotti on the 2006 NMRA Convention. He accepted my offer and I ended up being the chairman of the Layout Tour Committee. The committee members did a fabulous job, which resulted in many great tours. Dave Messer let me take on some responsibilities for marketing and promotions for the convention. Working with the model railroading magazine editors and layout owners, we managed to get several articles published to highlight layouts that would be on our layout tours. We also got extensive support and free filler advertisement space from Railroad Model Craftsman magazine. It's a plug they deserve.

On October 10, 2006, I was in a near fatal auto accident on my way to an operating session. As a result of the accident, I'm blind and some of my joints make strange noises, but that hasn't stopped me from being active in model railroading.

I've enjoyed the past two years on the board, working with a dedicated team and championing benefits for our members.

It will be my pleasure to continue serving on the board to help our division accomplish its current goals to improve the membership experience and plan for the future.

--- PRINT OUT (IF NECESSARY) AND CUT HERE -- PRINT OUT (IF NECESSARY) AND CUT HERE ---

## 2012 Philadelphia Division Board of Directors Ballot

Please vote for no more than 3 (three) names.

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Joe Bergmaier	_____	Charles Butsch	_____
Pat McTeigue	_____	Mark Wallace	_____

\*\*\*\*\*

Detach and send ballot to Clerk Mark Wallace, 665 Bonny Brooke Ave,  
Collegeville, PA 19426  
(or bring to the May Meeting)

POSTMARK NO LATER THAN APRIL 30th

## 2012 RPM A SUCCESS



Figure 1 - Paul Backenstose and Andy Hartman at the registration desk

Once again, the RPM – Valley Forge Meet was a success for all concerned. Record attendance, outstanding clinicians, superb modeling and an outstanding organizational committee all combined to make the event one of the best. In addition to sponsoring the event in support of the RPM Committee, the division was able to sell many of the Reading hopper cars from this year's car project. Look for more extensive coverage of the event in the next issue of *The Dispatcher*.

In addition, stay tuned to the various model railroad podcasts this month. Some of the better-known podcasters including Craig Bisgeier and Mike Rose were in

attendance and will most likely be reporting out.

Mark your calendars for the 2014 event. Next year (2013) the event will be held in Pittsburgh. Kudos to the RPM Committee and all of those involved with the presentation of the event. Photographs by Val Pistilli



Figure 2 - Rich Newmiller, MMR presents

## DIVISION CAR AND SHIRT SALES TAKE OFF

At the March Division Meet (RPM – Valley Forge) sales of the Division car offering kicked off. Sales were steady throughout the meet with the discounted pricing for division members being well received. The new division shirt was also debuted and all agreed that they are attractive. Some orders were taken at the meet and orders can now be submitted using the order form printed below.

The car offering will be advertised (with shipping charges) and made available for remote sales via both online and through *The Dispatcher*. Stay tuned....



### DIVISION SHIRT ORDER FORM

The shirt is a black, cotton/polyester knit polo with the division logo on the left chest and, if you desire, your first name embroidered on the right chest. Shirts may be ordered at most meets or anytime by mail. Multiple orders for non-identical shirts should be placed on separate forms.

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

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

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Shirt Size:    S    M    L    XL @ \$15    2X @ \$17    3X @ \$19    Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name added?    No    Yes @ \$3 ea.    Name as you'd like it to appear: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: \_\_\_\_\_ Shipped @ \$5 + \$2 ea add'l    \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up from Howard\*    \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up at next/future meet\*

Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_    Make checks payable to: **PHILA DIV NMRA**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* You will be contacted when your shirt is ready to be picked up.

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

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## Directions to the May 5th Joint Meet

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

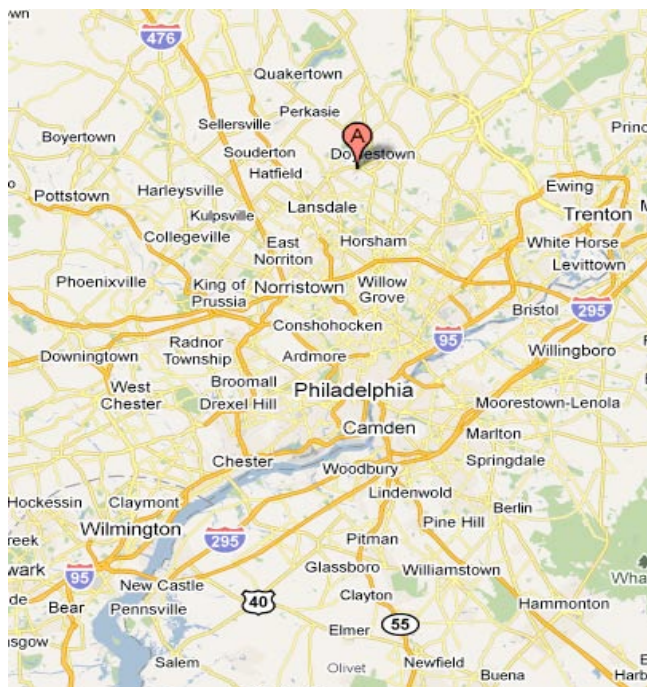
### From the South, East and West:

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 1/3<sup>rd</sup> 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).



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## A Strange Tale

... by Dave Messer

I was recently doing some cleaning on my layout, and when I reached the narrow gauge enginehouse that serves the quarry, I noticed some strange material around it. Removing the roof, I found the men's washroom inside neatly stuffed with sunflower seeds and evidence of small rodent droppings in the locomotive inspection pit. I should note that the clearance to get into the washroom, which is only about inch square, is even smaller, less than 3/4." In thinking about this, I remember a couple of years ago I had a problem with a nest of mice in the woodpile in the garage, and hearing them in the walls, which drove the cat crazy. At least one of them evidently found its way into the basement and onto the layout, where it stashed a supply of bird seed, also stored in the garage, in a place for safekeeping. I proceeded to set traps baited with peanut butter and ended the lives of nearly a dozen, one of which evidently never returned to consume his stash.

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## In upcoming issues ....

- Basement waterproofing from a model railroader's perspective
- Report on the Cheltenham Hills Model Railroad Club
- Division member layout updates

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## 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.

<b>May 4-5, 2012 – Division Meet</b> Delaware Valley College A repeat of the joint meet with the East Coast Santa Fe Modelers (see page 5)	<b>Saturday, May 12, 2012</b> NJ Division May Meet Knights of Columbus Hall, 15 East Lacey Rd. Forked River, NJ 08731	<b>September, 2012 – Division Meet</b> Delaware / Montgomery County Date and location to be announced.
<b>July 27 – August 4th</b> National NMRA Convention Grand Rapids, Michigan <a href="http://www.gr2012.org/">http://www.gr2012.org/</a>	<b>Oct 18-21, 2012</b> <a href="#">MER Convention</a> Hilton Garden Inn, Suffolk, VA	The Dispatcher will be happy to display hobby related dates submitted by members

# The Philadelphia Dispatcher

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

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**4325 Wendy Way  
Schwenksville, PA 19473**

Inside:  
ELECTION BALLOT  
Candidate Bios  
May Joint Meet

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. 6<sup>th</sup> 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 MORE**



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# Yearly Division Report to NMRA

submitted by Superintendent John Seibert

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## Meeting Times and Dates

The division meets 5 times a year in January, March, May, September and November. It chooses a Saturday well in advance and publishes the meeting times and location in its newsletter as well as announcing it at prior meets. The meetings start at 9:00 AM and run until noon. In the afternoon we typically have 2 or 3 members' layouts open for "open house." We rotate the location of each meeting so that we have one each in Delaware, Bucks Montgomery and Chester counties. Ironically, very few of our members actually live within the city of Philadelphia.

Within the past year we have had a joint meet with the East Coast Santa Fe Modelers group at Delaware Valley College in May. Our meet in September was at the Graystone Society building, the former headquarters of Lukens Steel in Coatesville, PA. In November we moved to the Brandywine Town Center in Wilmington DE for a joint meet with the New Jersey Division. In January the New Jersey Division reciprocated by hosting a joint meet at Haddon Township High School across the river from Philadelphia. Just last month we held our bi-annual Railroad Prototype Modelers meet: a weekend-long event held at The Desmond Hotel in Malvern, PA. Our next meet is planned for May again with our friends the East Coast Santa Fe Modelers group.

## List of Officers plus AP coordinator. Contact information

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## Achievement program highlights:

One AP achievement within the past year: Earl Paine: Association Volunteer. We do have several people working towards various AP certs.

## Planned Activities from the past year

This past year we have had joint meets with the New Jersey Division and the East Coast Santa Fe Modelers group. We will be doing this again in 2012 as these joint meets were well received by our members. They start on a Friday evening and last until Saturday evening with some open houses on Sunday.

We have had repeated attendance at our meets over the past few years by many residents of the lower counties in the state of Delaware. We supported their petition to the MER in 2011 for inclusion into our division. The entire state of Delaware is now part of the Philly Division.

Special projects or working with other organizations. Division Car: HO scale RDG HTv offset side hopper car in 6 different unique road numbers. Offered for sale at discounted prices. Manufactured by Kadee.

Continued on next page.....

## Yearly Report Continued .....

We continue to support various local model railroad clubs through publicity in our division newsletter, the Dispatcher. We also report on progress of individual members layouts plus news within the model railroad community.

We have assisted our RPM Committee in planning and running their Valley Forge RPM meet held March 23 to 25 at the Desmond Hotel in Malvern, PA. This is becoming a well-known event among modelers up and down the East Coast. There was a record number of presenters and attendees at 280.

**Any successful or new ideas that your division has tried that might be helpful to other divisions.** We have procured, through money earned by car sales and the RPM, state-of the art audio-visual equipment. We have our own laptop, digital projector, portable wide-screen, and high resolution camera. The camera in particular has proven itself to be invaluable to allowing the audience to get a close-in view of a hands-on demonstration.

We successfully held a remote clinic whereby the clinician was not actually present at the venue at the time, but gave it from a remote location. The presenter was the MER's own Marshall Abrams who, along with a few members of the division, wrote an article for the NMRA magazine on giving clinics remotely. This broadens the availability of clinicians.

### **Where in your opinion could the MER provide support to your division.**

Provide more communication within the model railroad community as to the MER and division's existence, activities, and overall benefits of NMRA membership. After all, this is a grass roots type organization.

Nurture and support an active pool of clinicians who volunteer to rotate throughout the MER in presenting quality clinics. This can be enhanced; there is now a proven ability to give clinics remotely so that clinicians do not have to travel every month to a different division. The capability exists to give clinics to multiple remote venues simultaneously, thus giving broader exposure to the clinic with less strain on the presenters.

John Seibert, Superintendent  
Collegeville, PA  
610-489-7780

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## NATIONAL CONVENTION



<http://www.gr2012.org/>

Quite a bit of news came out of the Winter NMRA Board of Directors meeting last week. I'm going to split it between this edition of the InfoNet News and next month's, to make sure you get a chance to see everything.

### ***News from the Board meeting:***

- Tom Draper, manager of the National Train Show, reported that the **number of booth sales** for the show at Grand Rails 2012 is currently at the same level it was at this time last year for the show in Sacramento.
- After a necessarily short search by the NMRA Canada Nominating Committee, Clark Kooning volunteered for an appointment as **NMRA Canada Director** when Don Hillman stepped down from the job for health reasons. We wish Don all the best, and thank Clark for his willingness to serve at the last minute.
- Financially, **the NMRA ended 2011 in very good standing** and is currently rebuilding some of its funds from which it had borrowed in the past. In addition there is currently enough money in the budget to hire an IT professional to repair, maintain, and update the NMRA website.
- The **NMRA has announced an agreement of cooperation** between itself and the [Hasea.com](http://Hasea.com) Model Railroad Association (HRMA) of China, a community of over 100,000 railfans and model railroaders. The HRMA, a relatively young organization, is interested in learning how the NMRA is organized, and will promote NMRA standards in China. Members of both organizations will be able to enjoy the many benefits of each. A press release and story will appear shortly in *NMRA Magazine*.
- The Board is in the initial stages of studying **electronic balloting** as a way of both saving on postage and encouraging additional member participation.

More Board meeting news next month!

### ***And some other news:***

- The Grand Rails 2012 website at [www.gr2012.org](http://www.gr2012.org) now has these new features:
  - A page for the Layout Design Special Interest Group
  - The Operations Special Interest Group Sign-up sheet
  - PDF copies of all of the traditional Registration forms
  - A complete list of all of the extra fare events and tours
  - A schedule of days and times for most scheduled events
  - More Sidetracks events for the non-rails
  - The Silent Auction schedule
  - The contest room schedule
- Have members who are interested in the Achievement Program? Yours truly was interviewed on **The Model Railway Show** about it. Trevor Marshall talked to me about my road to MMR, and the hurdles and joys of taking it. Episode 32 is available for listening or downloading now at **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** or through iTunes, and will be available through The Model Railway Show's online archives after March 1.

*If you have any questions or comments about any of the above, please send them directly to a Director or Officer. You'll find those addresses at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) or in NMRA Magazine.*

*And if you're changing email addresses, please let me know at this email address: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.***

-Gerry Leone, MMR --- NMRA Communications Director

As I promised last month, here's the remainder of the news that came out of the winter Board of Directors meeting, held February 8 & 9, 2012, in Las Vegas.

### ***News from the Board meeting:***

- The NMRA has a new **Development Department Manager**, charged with seeking out new donation sources and methods, and coming up with ways to expand our fundraising potential. Alan Anderson of Salt Lake City, UT, volunteered to fill the slot, which had been vacant for several years. In his full-time job, Alan works with a Salt Lake City area chamber of commerce.
- 
- The "**Cruise Convention**" idea was officially declared "not popular enough to pursue." Initial estimates, dictated that the idea receive approximately 800 firm commitments from NMRA members, and only about 300 were received via the survey, which was printed several times in *NMRA Magazine* and also sent to Sacramento convention attendees.
- The NMRA is in the final stages of selecting a **volunteer Marketing Department Manager**. To date, several professional candidates have responded to a "help wanted" ad in *NMRA Magazine*. The Marketing Director will help the NMRA identify ways to retain and re-rail members, as well as recruit new ones.
- Jenny Hendricks, NMRA Administration Director, reports that the number of **RailPass members who convert** to Regular members has reached the 80% mark. Congratulations to all of you whose hard work has made this goal a reality! Maybe we should try for 90- 100%?
- The Celebration of Models in Grand Rapids will introduce a **new contest award** in memory of Dean Freytag, the "Dean of Styrene" and former national Contest Chair. The award is funded by a donation given to the NMRA in memory of Freytag and is named "The Dean Freytag Industrial Structure Award." The winning structure will be selected by the Contest Chairman.

### ***In other news:***

- **White River Productions**, the company that prints *NMRA Magazine*, announced that it has purchased the assets of the now-defunct magazine, *Model Railroad News*.
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- NMRA Secretary Bob Gangwish reports that the **updated version of the Executive Handbook** is now posted on [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) and can be downloaded.
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*If you have any questions or comments about any of the above, please send them directly to a Director or Officer. You'll find those addresses at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) or in NMRA Magazine.*

*-Gerry Leone, MMR  
NMRA Communications Director*



Welcome to the April 2012 InfoNet News eblast!

- Fundraising has begun for the **"Magic of Scale Model Railroading" gallery** at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento, CA. As your members will probably recall, this gallery will introduce the Museum's 600,000 annual visitors to the hobby, as well as give them a sense of its history. One of the highlights of the gallery will be actual portions of the finest model railroads ever built. The Museum has donated the space rent-free to the NMRA for the purpose of promoting the hobby. It's estimated that the cost to build the exhibit will be approximately \$750,000, and no NMRA dues or monies will be used; instead, it will be entirely funded by donations. To date, over \$100,000 has been raised, and an anonymous donor has agreed to match donations, up to \$250,000.
- Any NMRA member (or non-member, for that matter) who would like to donate to the funding of the gallery should send his or her tax-deductable donation to NMRA Headquarters at 4121 Cromwell Road., Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119, and mark it "Gallery donation."
- In the February edition of the *InfoNet News* we reported the **agreement of cooperation between the NMRA and the Hasea.com Model Railroad Association of China**. This July we'll be seeing the first fruits of that "Hands Across The Ocean" agreement as a group of teenage Chinese modelers and railfans visits California with the purpose of seeing layouts, prototype trains, and the California State Railway Museum. Several Pacific Coast Region members are helping to organize this 2-week event.
- Grand Rails 2012, the upcoming NMRA national convention, has announced their **commemorative convention car**. Grand Rapids, Michigan, was once known as The Furniture Capital of the World, and appropriately the model was inspired by a postcard photograph of a turn-of-the-last-century furniture manufacturer's wood-sided boxcar. This replica, produced by Accurail, comes complete with a Grand Rails 2012 logo "poster" which can be applied by the modeler. Visit [www.gr2012.org](http://www.gr2012.org) to see a shot of the prototype.
- The folks at Grand Rails 2012 have posted a **preliminary clinic schedule** for the convention in PDF format, downloadable at their website. Among the clinicians are NMRA Worldwide Director Tony Koester, Jim Six, Jim Sacco, and a group of clinics by the Layout Design Sig.
- **Grand Rails 2012 is looking for volunteers** who'd be willing to donate an hour or two of their time at the convention doing things like contest room security, helping with registration check-in, silent auction set-up and tear-down, and bus loading. If you're interested and have an hour or two you'd like to donate, contact Mark Baldwin, Vice Chair of Volunteers. Just use the "Contact Us" link on the Grand Rails 2012 website at [www.gr2012.org](http://www.gr2012.org).

*If you have any questions or comments about any of the above, please send them directly to a Director or Officer. You'll find those addresses at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) or in NMRA Magazine.*

*And if you're changing email addresses, please let me know at this email address: **NMRA-infonet@earthlink.net***

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## MAY JOINT MEET LAYOUT TOUR

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The following is an excerpt from an email sent by board member Pat McTeigue describing Ron Patzer's outstanding layout. Ron's layout will be open for inspection on Saturday from 1 to 4 pm. It is a "must see."



*"I'm sure Ron told me the dimensions of the basement but I did not record them and cannot recall them. If I had to guess, I would say 24 X 40. He has two famous viaducts modeled on the railroad: in the crew lounge is the Nicholson Viaduct and out in the large room is the Starrucca Viaduct. I can remember the Nicholson Viaduct and can tell you, photos do not do it justice. It is amazing. It is certainly one of the best pieces of modeling I have seen.*

*He covers a large time period, which is 1945 to 1970. That period includes the evolution of the roads modeled being the Erie and the DL&W which merged into the Erie- Lackawanna.*

*The origin and destination of the layout are Hoboken, NJ through Chicago, IL. Towns modeled are Scranton, PA, Binghamton, NY, and Elmira, NY. Port Jervis Yard is modeled.*

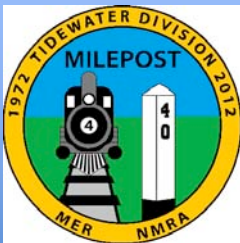
*There are three helixes that have sidings in them to serve as staging locations. The helixes are also used to put distance between towns. This way, the tail end of the train is not in the prior town as you are working the current town.*

*The layout is now DCC. Eighty engines have decoders, fifty of which are sound units. Most sound units are Tsunamis. A few are BLI and Genesis.*

*Infrared detection is used to determine if staging tracks are occupied. Status is displayed on control panels.*

*Occupancy detection is being installed for roadside signaling. This project is still under way.*

*An article was done on Ron's layout in Model Railroader back in late 2006."*



### **Mid-East Region, NMRA Fall Convention Milepost 40**

**October 18<sup>th</sup> to October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012**

**Convention Hotel:**  
Hilton Garden Inn  
100 East Constance Road  
Suffolk, VA 23434



**The following two pages report on the Susquehanna Division's upcoming meet and open houses.**  
**We are cross-posting information between the two divisions as a courtesy!**  
**For many Philadelphia Division members, Easton is a short drive.**

**Note: Any NMRA member from any division is permitted to attend all NMRA events!**

## **Saturday, April 28, 2012**

### **Easton Area Visits**



Photo by John Frantz

The division will host a clinic on The Coal Industry and visit Easton area layouts on Saturday, April 28, 2012. More details can be found on page 3 of this newsletter or on our website.

Banner photo courtesy of Christopher Muller, SteamPhotos.com.

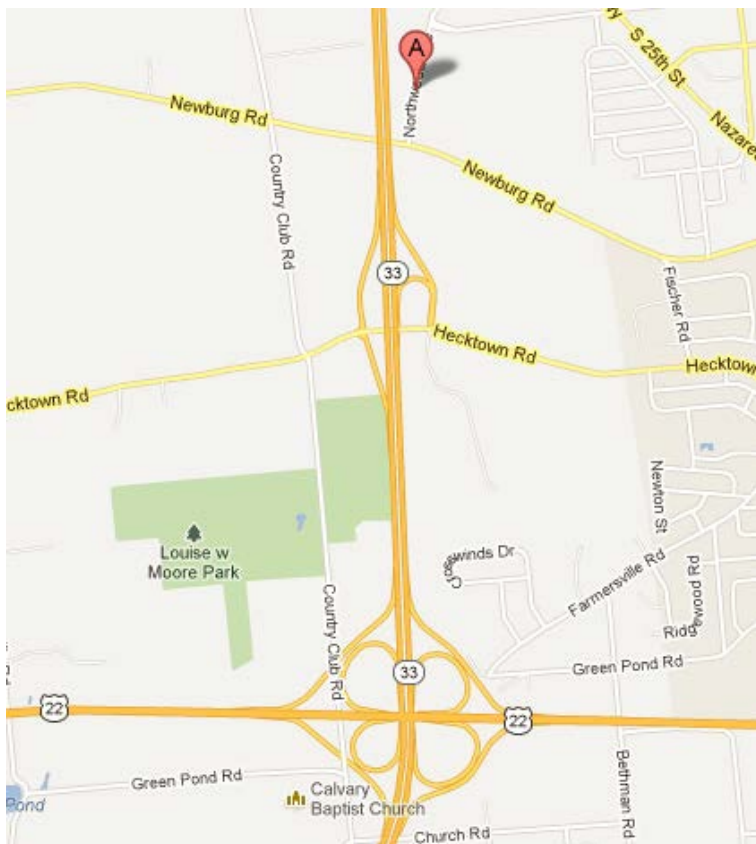
## **SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION EVENT**

### **Easton Area Visits - Saturday, April 28, 2012**

Dave Tillman, our clinician recently retired from Detroit Edison in Michigan, but continues work for them as an independent contractor. His talk is about the "Coal Industry" he has extensive knowledge from working on various power plants across the country. His layout will also be open so you can experience first-hand the clinic presented in the morning.

The division will meet at the Trains and Lanes in Easton, PA on Saturday, October 22, 2011 at 10 AM. The store opens at 10AM, with our clinic starting at 10:30 AM. This is a very well-stocked hobby shop. Following the clinic, there will be free-time for browsing the shop and getting lunch on your own. In the afternoon there will be layout open houses in the area from 1-4PM. Layout Open House information will be provided at the clinic in the morning.

The address for Trains and Lanes Hobbies is  
3825 Northwood Ave  
Easton, PA 18045



From US Route 22, take PA Route 33 North. Get off at the next exit, Hecktown Road. At the top of the ramp, take a Right onto Hecktown Road, then make a right onto Country Club Road, a right onto Newburg Road and a left onto Northwood Ave. Trains and Lanes Hobbies will be on the left. Park in their lot. The clinic will be on their 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

For lunch, turn left onto Northwood Road, continue straight on Corriere Road, this meets up with the Easton-Nazareth Highway, and there are various food options available.



**A ROUND ROBIN PHOTO JOURNAL – WHAT NICK BROWNSBERGER WON'T DO FOR MODEL RAILROADING  
(THE PHOTO SAGA OF MOVING HIS 30 FOOT ENOLA YARD FROM ONE ROOM TO ANOTHER)**



**Figure 1 - The crew gets "stuck" in a too narrow opening!**



**Figure 2 - Same view from other direction. Everyone was ready to give up!**



**Figure 3 - Non-plussed, Nick gets out the reciprocating saw. What's in a wall!!!**



**Figure 4 - I hope this is not a bearing wall?**



**Figure 5 - A piece of cake ... er... wall**



**Figure 6 - Success!**



**Figure 7 - Nothing that a little tape won't cure. His wife didn't know.**



**Figure 8 - The relieved crew ready for a cold one**

Editor's note... Look for more coverage on Nick's new basement expansion endeavor in future issues of this newsletter. We are happy to cover any and all railroad related projects by our members. Send us your photos and information.



# New Membership Recruitment Program

As an aid to membership recruitment, NMRA recently instituted a six month "Railpass" trial membership program which costs the applicant \$9.95. Building on this idea, the MER is instituting a program whereby it will pay the \$9.95 Railpass fee for interested applicants in the MER. In other words, we are making available FREE six month Railpass trial memberships to encourage recruitment of regular members.

What's covered?

Same as Railpass—receive six issues of NMRA Magazine, three issues of The Local, eligibility to attend conventions and meets, eligibility to participate in contests.

What's not covered?

Same as Railpass—applicants cannot vote or hold office, and will not receive the New Member Pak from national (it's rather expensive).

Who can be recruited?

Anyone living within the MER who has not been a member of NMRA during the past two years.

How will the recruitment process work?

(1) The prospective member fills out the MER trial membership application form which was sent to all division superintendents (not the standard NMRA Railpass form) (2) The "recruiter" should also sign the form, and then forward it to: Fred Miller, MER Business Manager, 333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504, Charlotte, NC 28202-1961. (3) Fred will record the information he needs in his data base, and will forward the application to the MER Treasurer. (4) The Treasurer will add the necessary check and forward the application and check to the national headquarters in Chattanooga.

What happens after the member's six month trial period?

The Railpass trial member will receive a standard dues notice from national headquarters. We hope a substantial number of Railpass trial members will sign up to become regular members.

Are there limits on the program?

The MER initially allocated \$2,000 for this program. The Board recently allocated an additional \$1,000 to extend the program to the end of 2010, or when the funds are spent – whichever comes first. When and if we approach either limit, Division Superintendents and members of the MER Board of Directors will be notified. At that time, the program will be evaluated by the MER Board of Directors. If successful, we will try to continue it.

For questions?

Contact Fred Miller, MER Business Manager (mailing address is above, 704-332-1753, tractionfan@aol.com), or John Janosko, MER President (see contact information on page 2). □

## National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) Mid-Eastern Region Application for Free "Railpass" Trial Membership

YES, please sign me up for a free six month Railpass trial membership in the NMRA—which includes membership in the Mid-Eastern Region, and in my local Division. During this six month period, I understand that I may attend conventions and meets, and participate in contests. I will receive NMRA Magazine, the monthly national magazine, and The Local, the bi-monthly regional newsletter. I will not be eligible to vote, hold office, or receive a New Member Pak. I also understand that the \$9.95 cost of this six month Railpass trial membership is being paid by the Mid-Eastern Region. (Regardless of who pays, six month \$9.95 memberships are available only once to each person.) At the end of the six months, I may join NMRA, paying the regular active member dues. During the past two years, I have not been a member of NMRA.

===== Name: Street Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone: ( )

Email:

Scale(s): Date of Birth:

Signature of Applicant:

Signature of Sponsor: (Required) (A Regional or Divisional officer or board member)

=====

Date of form: 1/31/07

When this form is completed, mail it to:

Fred Miller, MMR MER Business Manager 333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504 Charlotte, NC 28202-1961

Do not mail it directly to MMRA headquarters in Chattanooga, TN.



## ONLY FROM THE PHILLY DIVISION!

Close up high-resolution photos of the 2012 Division car offering.

The cars are offered with 6 different numbers exclusive to the Philadelphia Division.

On-line sales details (with shipping costs) will soon appear in the Dispatcher and on the division website.

Photos by Val Pistilli

