



Philadelphia Division
Mid-Eastern Region
National Model Railroad Association
Board of Directors Election



Greetings, NMRA members! This Board of Directors Election Ballot has been mailed to all Philadelphia Division members. Any NMRA member residing in the Pennsylvania counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, or Philadelphia, or anywhere in the state of Delaware, is automatically a member of the Philadelphia Division.

Who is eligible to vote: Paid-up Regular members, Life members, and Sustaining members.

Who is ineligible to vote: Lapsed members, Railpass members, Family members, and Student members.

The ballot is also available on the home page of the division website at <https://www.phillynmra.org>. The online posting includes the candidates' bios and statements as well as a ballot you can print out should you misplace this one.

Each spring the division holds elections for open positions on our board of directors. The division bylaws direct us to elect a total of seven board members for two-year terms, four positions of which on odd years, and the other three on even years—so this year there are four positions open. The board members then elect four officers from among themselves, while the remaining three serve as directors at large.

As of this time, nominations are closed. Each eligible division member who has provided a working email address will receive a link to an online ballot through the Election Buddy program. You may choose to vote either electronically or by mailing in a paper ballot (located below). If you vote electronically, any paper ballot received will be discarded. Candidate bios/statements can be found on the next page.

The election results will be announced at the June meet, and will be posted on the website and published in the August issue of *The Dispatcher*.

In addition to the election, this mailing serves to introduce you to the Philadelphia Division should you not be aware of its existence, and also to inform you of upcoming events, a schedule of which can be found on the last page along with highlights of our upcoming June meet.

Division Personnel	
Superintendent / AP Committee Chair	
Joe Walters, MMR 840 N Gwynn Ct. Bear, DE 19701	302-521-5884 josephfwalters@yahoo.com
Asst. Superintendent / Ops / Social Media	
Rob Hinkle 1755 Slayton Dr. Blue Bell, PA 19422	610-279-2394 robhink@gmail.com
Clerk / Membership	
Charles Long 227 Locust Rd. Fort Washington, PA 19034	215-247-1951 prtptc17@navpoint.com
Treasurer / Item Donations	
Kevin Feeney 1447 Wheatsheaf Ln. Abington, PA 19001	203-246-1675 ic4277@yahoo.com
Directors at Large	
Clinics/Door Prizes – Mike Dettinger	
detting@comcast.net	972-795-1348
Member Outreach – Steve Wysowski	
swysowski@gmail.com	860-329-2055
Venues – Jeff Witt	
jlwitt@yahoo.com	267-261-3229
Achievement Program Coordinator	
Earl Paine 4325 Wendy Way Schwenksville, PA 19473	610-831-9466 earlpaine@verizon.net
Layouts/Video – Bill Fagan	
wfagan@comcast.net	215-675-4098
Webmaster – Howard Kaplan	
hakaplan@rcn.com	610-626-4506

----- CUT HERE AND MAIL OR VOTE ELECTRONICALLY -----

2025 Philadelphia Division Ballot		
Name:		Mail to: Charles Long, Clerk 227 Locust Rd. Fort Washington, PA 19034 Questions: Contact an official (right sidebar above) POSTMARK NO LATER THAN JUNE 3, 2025 NOTE: Copies of the ballot can be downloaded and printed from the division website, https://www.phillynmra.org
Email:		
NOTE: Only paid up Regular Members, Life Members, and Sustaining Members may vote. Lapsed Regular Members, Railpass Members, Family Members, and Student Members are not eligible to vote. Please vote for up to four (4) candidates for Board of Directors. If you vote electronically, any written ballot received will be discarded.		
_____ Rob Hinkle	_____ Jeff Witt	_____ Steve Wysowski
_____ Alan Silverblatt	_____ Mike Junod	Write-in:



Jeff Witt

As you likely know from *The Dispatcher* or attending meets, I have been serving as a director at large since 2021, in charge of securing venues for our meets. I'm asking for your vote to allow me to continue to serve for the next two years in whatever capacity the larger BOD determines is appropriate per the division bylaws.

Like many of us, Lionel trains around the Christmas tree are my earliest memories of model railroading. This was followed by a year-round Lionel platform. But what really caught my interest was my dad's stillborn HO layout, which never got far, but had enough track for a boy to push cars around on. Then, when a little older, I discovered his stash of magazines, which contained the magic and art of John Allen. I and my brother Steve were hooked! An N-scale layout in my early teenage years and an HO 5x9 in the '80s followed. Career and family obligations kept me in the armchair until my daughter graduated college and moved out, freeing up a bedroom for my next layout and current project, the freelance Taggart Transcontinental.

I joined the NMRA in 2003, but didn't start attending meets until much later. When I did, I realized what I was missing! The friendly faces and enthusiasm for the hobby of our division members keeps me coming back. Along the way, I have seen some incredible craftsmanship and met the creators whose talent humbles and inspires me. With encouragement from the late Dave Messer and Earl Paine, I earned three AP certificates (Civil, Electrical, and Scenery) in 2018. I have been able to share my admiration for John

Allen by giving clinics for our division, the New Jersey Division, at the 2019 MER Convention, and at last year's joint meet with the New Jersey Division. I also presented a clinic in November 2021 on hand-laid track, as well as three clinics at the MER Altoona convention in October 2023. I've also helped represent the division by volunteering at several train shows.

My candidacy brings no particular agenda with it, other than to help the generous volunteers who have given so much for so long with the many tasks and obligations they have, and to learn from them so that the division can build a deeper "back bench" for the future. Although there are those who feel that the NMRA is no longer relevant to the hobby, I vehemently disagree. I believe this is a "big tent" hobby, and that while social media is a great asset, it is not a replacement for real human interactions. The NMRA plays a major role in promoting and creating opportunities for these personal interactions.

On a personal note, I retired in September of 2022 from my role as a senior member of technical staff at ON Semiconductor, where I designed integrated circuits and drove design methodologies. I have been married for 44 years, and have a grown daughter and son who have left the nest. I own and run two John Allen tribute websites, "gdlines.org" and "gdlines.info," as well as actively participating in a groups.io G&D group and a G&D Facebook group. Sometimes I find time to work on the Taggart Transcontinental, too! My progress can be viewed at

<http://witt-family.com/LayoutConstruction.htm>. Thanks for reading.



Steve Wysowski

I recently moved to Royersford, PA from Bristol, CT.(5 years ago). I was a CT public school educator—a teacher, then principal, and finally took on the position of commissioner of CT high school athletics. Did a long stint as an adjunct graduate professor at two CT universities. Retired in 2020. Earned a PhD along the way.

Currently I volunteer at the Colebrookdale Railroad as a conductor/engineer, and also serve as the education program director. I have been doing some speaking engagements for them throughout the area. I previously worked at Essex Steam Train in CT at the same positions.

I am the former secretary of Farmington Valley Railway Society where I operated and scratch built historical structures for the club's HO-scale layout. I also was a member of the Nutmeg Division of the NMRA where I did some presentations.. I have written for and been published in NMRA publications, and currently serve on the NMRA's Conformance and Standards Committee.

I believe in remaining active in this wonderful hobby

and I strongly believe in influencing and educating young as well as older adults about model railroading. I enjoy presenting workshops and writing about our wonderful hobby. My passion began at an early age with my American Flyer setup and has continued here in the present. I enjoy scratch building and I have shared some of my experiences in workshops and articles and will continue to do so. As an educator I have brought many young men and women into the hobby with special model building programs. I have published, on the NMRA website, articles about getting involved in the hobby, building structures, and selecting motive power. I am an active member of the Royersford Modular Railroad Club; I think many of you have seen me with the club at various train shows.

There is a wonderful bond between us and there exists great support for each other in this hobby. This hobby fuels our passion for trains but allows us to experience so much more. I personally am grateful for the support I have received as a newcomer to the area and want to continue to pay it forward as an active member and director who serves this division.



Alan Silverblatt

Like many modelers, I started out as a kid with just a Lionel HO set featuring a short freight train, a loop of track, and a power pack. Growing up in and around Pittsburgh, where passenger service had all but disappeared, I was fascinated by trains but had very little opportunity to actually ride them.

Mostly I just watched from afar, as freight trains serviced the steel mills and other local industries.

When I was seven, we moved to a suburban house that was just a couple of miles from the main line of the Union Railroad, a Class III switching operation that still serves some of the few remaining steel mills in the Monongahela River valley. One time I almost got my father in a bit of trouble when we were challenged for trespassing, after I'd made him stop the car so we could inspect a gondola parked on one of the Union's sidings next to a back road we often used.

After college, around the time Amtrak was just beginning to take over Penn Central's passenger service, I took the overnight train from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia to visit friends. It was one of the few times that I'd been that close to trains, and I really didn't have a handle on how physically imposing they are up close. When my train finally pulled around the curve and entered the station, I was absolutely floored by how big and loud the F-unit was as it passed a few feet away from where I stood on the platform.

I eventually moved to Philadelphia to become a caseworker for the Philadelphia County Board of Assistance. I worked several other jobs over the next few years, and then moved back to Pittsburgh to attend law school. After practicing law for a while and realizing the profession wasn't for me, I parlayed my then limited programming experience into my final career: IT. After stints doing technical sup-

port and managing a law firm's computer operations, I realized I needed a credential to advance in the field, and so I returned to school one last time to get a degree in Information Science. But even with the degree, good IT jobs were scarce in Pittsburgh, and I was by then approaching mid-life and still single. Since it seemed there would be more personal and professional opportunity for me in Philadelphia, I decided to move back after landing a job with a small software company in Delaware County. In the more than 30 years since then, I've done a variety of IT work: training, support, writing and mostly programming.

I finally retired in 2022. My life is still busy and full (but at a milder pace than before), and every day I'm reminded of an off-hand remark my father made to me after he'd been retired for many years: "I'm so busy now I don't know how I ever had time to go to work."

About 15 years ago, my fascination with trains resurfaced, and I started attending train shows and buying N-scale rolling stock, motive power, track, buildings, etc. Eventually, I found out about the NMRA and joined, but didn't know any other members. After a long email exchange with Howard Kaplan, I began to attend meetings. I still have the HO set from my childhood, displayed on a shelf in my man-cave. I've worked on N-Trak modules as part of a now-defunct club, and last year built my first T-Trak module. While my N-scale layout has been in the planning stages for some years, I'm hoping to finally start construction on it some time soon. I also host a rock and blues show a few times a month on a local community radio station, play in a classic rock band, and do some very part-time IT consulting.

I believe my varied work experience, and my undying fascination with railroads, will be an asset to the Division. I look forward to continuing our outreach to currently unaffiliated modelers (and potential modelers), and developing new engaging activities.



Rob Hinkle

I have been a model railroader since a very young age when each Christmas would involve a setup of a Lionel set around the tree. I visited a number of tourist railroads and museums growing up that influenced my interest in trains, as well as reading numerous library

books about railroads. I drifted into and out of the hobby until I joined the NMRA in 2001. I attended my first NMRA national convention in Philadelphia in 2006 and have been a regular at conventions since then. During the summer of 2008 I joined a round-robin group and started attending local

division meets gathering valuable knowledge and meeting great people. The experience I've gained between the round-robin and division meets has been influential in the layout and operations planning of my currently-under-construction layout based on the Reading Company's Lebanon Valley Branch. My goal for the division would be to look to expand membership and attendance at the division meets. I think the division has a lot of members that are willing to help each other out and I think we need to look towards social media sites to draw in members (young and old) who are getting back into the hobby and aren't sure what the NMRA and the Philadelphia Division can do for them.



Mike Junod

Like many baby boomers, my early model railroading influence started with the obligatory Christmas train layout. Mine was with American Flyer trains. My father soon transitioned to HO trains and as I grew older I helped set up the layout and eventually took over the job and the layout stayed up year-round. I became a “serious” model railroader with my first purchase of an issue of *Model Railroader* magazine in March of 1963. A subscription soon followed. I was introduced by a friend to the Abington Lines Model Railroad Club and have been an active member continuously since April of 1969. I have held just about every office in that railroad club. In 1986, as president, I organized the incorporation of that club as a non-profit corporation and purchased the current location of the club in Richboro, PA. I designed the current club layout and its predecessor, and built a majority of the hand laid track and turnouts. I am currently the Operation Committee chairman and chief dispatcher for the Abington Lines.

I always had a strong “sub-interest” in trolleys and I joined the East Penn Traction Club in the late 1970s. East Penn is the largest traction modeling group in North America and holds a National Trolley Meets every 2 years. I have been the president and vice-president of East Penn and I am currently the vice-president again. I also helped restore and operate trolleys along Delaware Avenue/Columbus Blvd. as a member of the Buckingham Valley Trolley Association (BVTA) until its closure and eventual movement to Scranton, PA. I was also on the board of directors of BVTA

as public relations director and I am still a trustee of the Electric City Trolley Museum Association (ECTMA), the successor organization of BVTA.

I grew up in a “railroad” family. My father worked as a locomotive fireman and subsequently locomotive engineer for 41 years on the Pennsylvania Railroad, Penn Central, and Conrail. His two brothers—my uncles—were a conductor and brakeman respectively and my grandfather was a conductor on the PRR. I worked in the signal department of Penn Central for my co-op assignments while attending Drexel University for electrical engineering. I enjoyed going to work with my father on the locomotives several times and “unofficially” operated them.

I model in two scales. I do HO railroad and traction as well as O scale traction. My home layout is an O scale trolley layout called “Mayfair Electric” named after my childhood neighborhood in Northeast Philadelphia. I am attracted to the traction “niche” of model railroading because the lack of ready to run equipment and supplies requires real modeling skills. I thoroughly enjoy designing and building hand laid track as well as stringing working overhead wire. I do “tedious” really well! I find it therapeutic.

At this point in my life, I find it most important to share the knowledge and skills I have accumulated over the years with a new generation of modelers. I find the NMRA and the local monthly division meetings a perfect forum for that. I have been a member of and held leadership positions in several model railroad organizations. With that experience base, I hope to continue to promote the hobby and craft of model railroading by membership on the Philly Division board.

JUNE MEET/PICNIC PREVIEW

DATE: Saturday, June 14, 2025

LOCATION:

Alverthorpe Park
Jenkintown Road and Forrest Avenue
Jenkintown, PA 19046

GATES OPEN: 9:00am

MEETING BEGINS: 10:00am

- Annual Business Meeting/Election Results
- Clinic(s): TBA
- White Elephant Table – sell/buy stuff
- Display Table – bring your models/projects
- Model Judging – notify us ahead of time
- Door Prizes
- 50/50 Raffle – Take a chance to win half the pot
- Bar-B-Q – Burgers, franks, drinks
- Afternoon: Layout visitation

Come and join in the fun!

Complete details in the upcoming May/June issue of *The Dispatcher* or on the division website at <https://www.phillynmra.org>

Division Meets & Other Upcoming Events

<p>June 14, 2025 Philadelphia Division Meet/Picnic Alverthorpe Park Jenkintown Road & Forrest Avenue Jenkintown, PA 19046</p>	<p>July 14–19, 2025 NMRA Convention “Station No.VI” Sheraton Hotel 21111 Haggerty Road Novi, MI 48375</p>
<p>September 2025 Philadelphia Division Meet TBA</p>	<p>October 16–19, 2025 MER Convention “Philly Express” Crowne Plaza Hotel 260 Mall Blvd King of Prussia, PA 19406</p>
<p>November 2025 Philadelphia Division Meet Brandywine Towne Center 4050 Brandywine Parkway Wilmington, DE 19803</p>	<p>January 2026 NJ/Philly Division Joint Meet TBA</p>

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