



# THE DISPATCHER

*The Journal of Philly NMRA*

*January 2022*



*TRAIN DISPATCHER, 1918.  
A woman training to  
become a railroad  
dispatcher at the  
Pennsylvania Railroad in  
Philadelphia. Photo  
courtesy of Granger.*



# THE DISPATCHER

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



January 2022

*PhillyNMRA.org*

Volume 29, No. 1

## In this issue...



### Student Trips on the WP 15



### Retirement Village Model Railroading, Pt. 3 22

ONLINE NAVIGATION: Click on any page to be taken there. Click on any footer to return here.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 3 Division News<br>New Members          | 20 Glenside Train Show Report                |
| 4 February Meet Maps<br>Upcoming Events | 26 On the Road/Feeney                        |
| 5 Form 19<br>Division Officials         | 37 Cup o' Joe/Walters                        |
| 6 AP Report                             | 39 New Jersey Division Car                   |
| 7 November Meet Report                  | 42 South Mountain Mini-Con                   |
| 14 Division Organization<br>Hobby Shops | 43 RPM - Valley Forge                        |
| 17 Video Vigilante/Fagan                | 44 NMRA/MER Publications<br>NMRA Conventions |
|   | 45 Division Apparel                          |
|   | 46 Golden Spike Application                  |

## THE DISPATCHER

**Submissions:** *THE DISPATCHER* welcomes any model railroad- or railroad-related material. Members are encouraged to send in articles, letters to the editor, reviews, etc. The editors reserve the right to, when necessary, paraphrase portions of the text in order to fit the space available.

**Next Issue:** March 2022. Due out approximately March 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Deadline for submissions: March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Online Subscription:** Free. Make sure the Clerk has your current email address and that you keep your info updated at [nmra.org/members](http://nmra.org/members).

**Print/Mail Subscription (b&w, first 8 pages):** \$10.00 per year or \$2.00 per single issue. Send all print subscription applications, renewals, address changes, and payment to the Editor. Make checks payable to "Philadelphia Division, NMRA."

## EDITORIAL STAFF

### Editor

Howard Kaplan  
P. O. Box 55  
Newtown Square, PA 19073  
267-586-3797

[howard@phillynmra.org](mailto:howard@phillynmra.org)

### Contributing Editors

Jeff Witt, Rob Hinkle, Earl Paine,  
Eric Dervinis, Kevin Feeney,  
Bill Fagan, Joe Walters MMR

### Contributing Authors

Paul Welsh  
Rick Melcher

**Proofreader:** Gail Kaplan



## February Division Meet in Horsham

On Saturday, February 19, 2021 the Philadelphia Division will be meeting at a new venue, the Horsham Township Community Center, located at 1025 Horsham Road, Horsham, PA 19044. We'll be in Meeting Room A. Doors open at 8:30am with the program starting at 9:00am. Maps on page 4.

The program will consist of two clinics. The first will feature Director Mike Dettinger, the de facto Philly Division clinician. The clinic is titled, "A Hardware DCC Install in a Legacy DC Locomotive."

Fortunately, Mike will not be doing much talking (that alone is reason enough to attend) as he will be doing a complete DCC decoder install on a legacy locomotive. Just a brief introduction on selecting a candidate locomotive, selecting a decoder, and a walk-through of the installation process.

Then the soldering iron will heat up, the camera will switch to the workbench, and the installation will begin. A DCC decoder will be installed in a locomotive with no DCC plug, and that only ever ran on DC—from start to finish! Please note that some prep work may be done ahead of time in the interest of staying within the allotted time frame. Once finished, our newly DCC-enabled locomotive will be handed over to Dan Mycio for use in the second clinic.



By now there is little doubt that most division members can recite Mike's bio by heart, but we'll repeat it for those newcomers. Mike is what you might call a "fringe" modeler...or "a little of this and a little of that." If it's odd or obscure, he'll model it and put a decoder in it and/or animate it. He has authored numerous articles on his projects, most recently a log cabin made from toothpicks. His latest preoccupation is with N-scale T-TRAK modules, having recently presented a clinic on a Japanese powered N-scale railcar with cab-view camera mounted inside. He also recently discussed everything you'd want to know about modeling corn and rail joiners.

Next up will be, "The TCS DCC and LCC Ecosystem, Throttles, and Boosters and Command Stations, Oh My!" by Dan Mycio. The video face of TCS (Train Control Systems), Dan Mycio will show off TCS's universal wireless throttles (UWT100 and UWT50) and their ease of use with any command station. Dan will also give demonstrations of TCS's own new booster and command station.

During the demonstration, Dan will take the newly decoded DCC locomotive chipped by Mike and put it

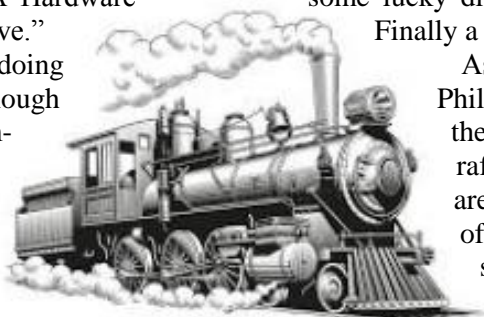
through its paces. Dan will also be handed a sealed envelope with DCC-related programming tasks for this new locomotive, and will then configure it to the envelope's specifications.

Be sure to grab a door prize ticket, as this clinic locomotive will be placed on the door prize table for some lucky division member to take home and enjoy.

Finally a decent door prize!

As usual we'll have coffee, donuts, and Philly soft pretzels. Other activities include the white elephant table, door prizes, 50/50 raffle, and a model display table. Members are encouraged to bring projects in any stage of completion to display and discuss if desired.

We have at least one excellent layout lined up for the afternoon tour and hope to have more. Hope you can make it!



## Division Apparel is Back

The Philadelphia Division is happy to announce that we will now be offering our line of apparel and other items from a new service where members will be able to purchase items directly online or by phone/mail order. Our new dealer is Daylight Sales, an embroiderer on the west coast who specializes in railroad-themed apparel and items. They source the shirts themselves, embroider our logo directly on them, apply a name if desired, and sell directly to the customer. This allows the division to exit the clothing business and concentrate more on its central mission—that of model railroading. The owner, Luis, will be happy to help you with all your PhillyNMRA clothing needs. See page 44 for more details.

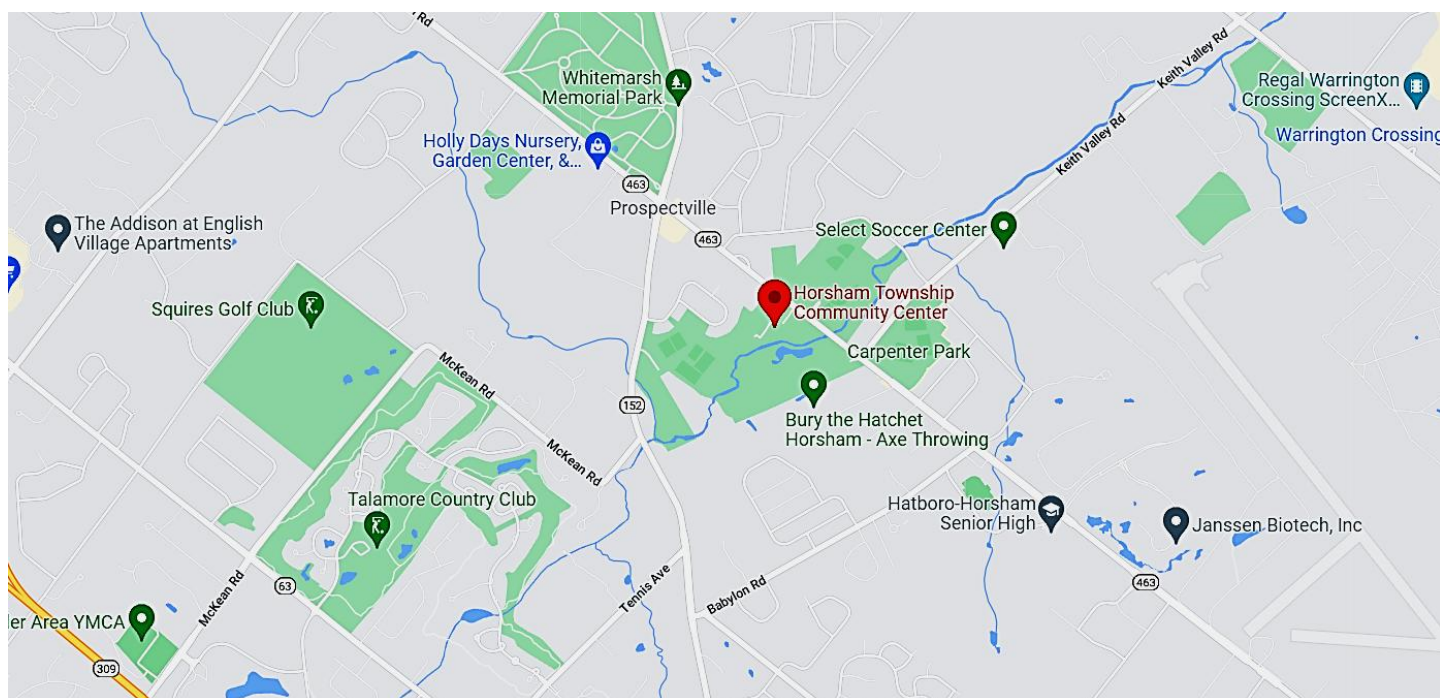
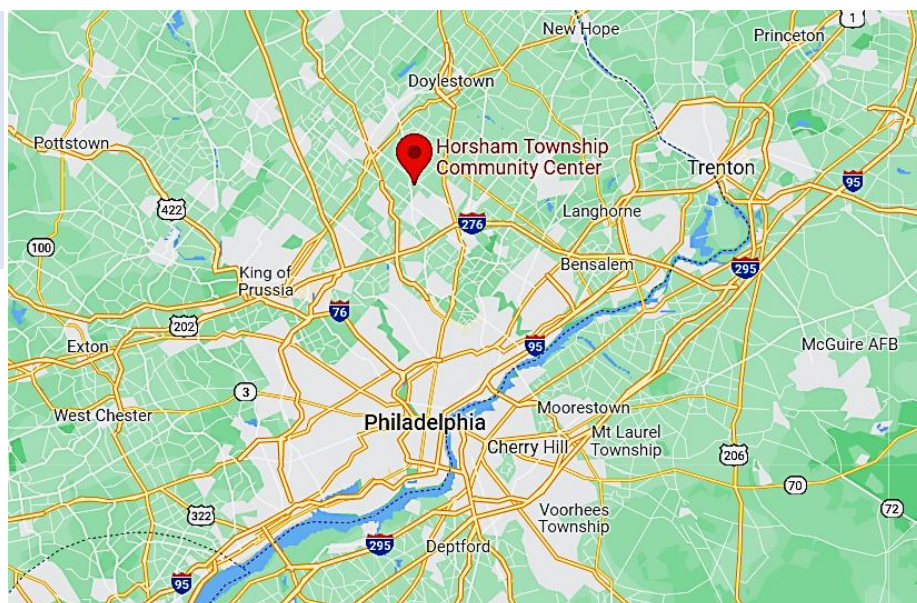
### WE WELCOME OUR NEW PHILLY DIVISION MEMBERS

Josh Kusiak, Quakertown, PA  
Joseph Raphun, Roslyn, PA  
Michael Binder, Feasterville, PA  
Allen Kozin, Lansdale, PA  
Fred Patrick, Clayton, DE  
George Schmidt, Wilmington, DE  
Christopher Weyer, Glen Mills, PA  
Sean Cox, Villanova, PA  
Mark French, Lansdowne, PA  
Robert Biamonte, West Brandywine, PA  
Andrew Signore, Wayne, PA

## Maps for the February Meet

### Horsham Township Community Center - Meeting Room A

1025 Horsham Road  
Horsham, PA 19044  
(215) 643-3131  
[www.horshamrec.com](http://www.horshamrec.com)



## Planning Ahead – Division Meets & Other Upcoming Events

### February 19, 2022

Philadelphia Division Meet  
Horsham Twp. Community Center  
1025 Horsham Road  
Horsham, PA 19044

### March 24–27, 2022

RPM–Valley Forge  
Desmond Hotel Malvern  
1 Liberty Boulevard  
Malvern, PA 19355

### April 9, 2022

Philadelphia Division Meet  
Henrietta Hankin Branch Library  
215 Windgate Drive  
Chester Springs, PA 19425

### June 11, 2022

Philadelphia Division Meet  
Alverthorpe Park  
515 Meetinghouse Rd.  
Jenkingtown, PA 19046

### August 7–13, 2022

NMRA Convention “Gateway 2022”  
Marriott Grand, St Louis  
800 Washington Ave.  
St Louis, MO

### September 17, 2022

Philadelphia Division Meet  
TBA  
TBA

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





## From the Super's Desk

Happy New Year! After the past few years we can only hope that 2022 is better for all of us. Hopefully, we will get to the other side of this pandemic.

I would like to thank our outgoing clerk, Mark Wallace. He has served with distinction on the board for 11 years. He has been an outstanding asset in his role as division clerk. You did a great job, Mark! We appreciate your service.

Due to Mark's stepping down, we now have a vacant seat on the board of directors, and as a result of that, the office that Mark occupied, clerk, is also vacant. This seat is up for election in June of 2022. That leaves six

months left in the term. We are looking for someone to fill that vacancy as acting clerk. Remember, being on the board allows you to accumulate hours towards your volunteer certificate. While this does not obligate you to run for the board election in June, you may want to consider volunteering as a test run for the next six months. You may find it to be very rewarding. If you are interested please contact either myself or another board member.

I hope to see you at our next division meet. It will be February 19, 2022, in Horsham, PA.

I have renewed hope that this year will find us more happiness, and pleasure in our model railroading.

*Joe*



## From the Editor's Desk

Welcome to our January edition of *The Dispatcher*. In this issue we present an article on a remarkable model railroad—one that uses automation to enable prototypical operation.

And if you happened to miss the last meet, Assistant Super Rob Hinkle and Director Jeff Witt have joined forces to provide a comprehensive November meet report. Rob has also supplied us with his excellent photos.

The meet report has traditionally been written by the division clerk. As Joe mentioned in his column, we currently have a vacancy in that office and we're looking for a bright, new prospect to fill Mark's shoes, at least temporarily. Keep in mind that not only will you receive AP Volunteer credit for serving, but writing the meet report earns you Author credit, as well. This is a great way to serve the division while giving yourself a

well-deserved pat on the back.

Now this next part will sound like a broken record (for those who remember what that is...or was) since I mention it almost every issue, but it is important. Whatever project you're working on—for example, a model, your layout, or any railfanning past or present—might I encourage you to write about it and submit the article to *The Dispatcher*, as they are always needed.

One idea I've noticed while perusing the publications of other divisions is that of a column "reporting" either current-day or old-time railroad news. If anyone would care to attempt something like that, I would be very appreciative. And if you have any other ideas...I'm listening.

And, or course, remember that whatever you end up writing, as soon as your article is accepted you will receive AP Author credit.

*Howard*

## DIVISION OFFICIALS

### Superintendent/AP Committee Chair

Joe Walters, MMR  
840 N Gwynn Ct.  
Bear, DE 19701  
302-521-5884

[josephfwalters@yahoo.com](mailto:josephfwalters@yahoo.com)

### Assistant Superintendent/Ops/

Rob Hinkle **Social Media**  
1755 Slayton Dr.  
Blue Bell, PA 19422  
610-279-2394

[robhink@gmail.com](mailto:robhink@gmail.com)

### Clerk / Membership

Vacant

### Treasurer/Item Donations

Kevin Feeney  
1447 Wheatsheaf Ln.  
Abington, PA 19001  
203-246-1675

[ic4277@yahoo.com](mailto:ic4277@yahoo.com)

### Directors at Large:

#### Clinics Chair/Door Prizes

Mike Dettinger  
972-795-1348

[detting@comcast.net](mailto:detting@comcast.net)

#### Publicity

Chip Stevens  
774-823-2681  
[ReadingChip@yahoo.com](mailto:ReadingChip@yahoo.com)

#### Venues

Jeff Witt  
267-261-3229  
[jlwitt@yahoo.com](mailto:jlwitt@yahoo.com)

### Achievement Program Coordinator

Earl Paine  
4325 Wendy Way  
Schwenksville, PA 19473  
610-831-9466  
[earlpaine@verizon.net](mailto:earlpaine@verizon.net)

### Layouts / Video - Bill Fagan

215-675-4098  
[bfagan777@hotmail.com](mailto:bfagan777@hotmail.com)

### Webmaster - Howard Kaplan

267-586-3797  
[howard@phillynmra.org](mailto:howard@phillynmra.org)



The AP coordinator and AP committee chair positions are now being filled by Earl Paine and Joe Walters, MMR respectively. As a team, Joe and Earl stand ready to support any division member in his pursuit of the Achievement Program. Despite the COVID shutdown, Joe and Earl remained actively involved by increasing the numbers of Philly modelers receiving AP certifications. In addition, the division's "video vigilante" (Bill Fagan) continues to visit home layouts throughout his travels, and has originated multiple golden spike awards, which pave the road for AP certificates. Bill continues to seek layouts to visit and document.

We are pleased to report that four AP certificates were awarded during the COVID shutdown.

- Chip Stevens, Author
- Mike Dettinger, Volunteer
- John Seibert, Volunteer.
- Howard Kaplan, Author

Several more applications have been submitted and approved at the local level, and are in the region approval process, which usually takes a week or two. Stay tuned for those awards!

In their recent travels, Joe and Earl have identified **no less than four** area modelers who qualify for five or more

AP certificates, including one who has completed enough to attain MMR status on a single visit! When asked why they have not submitted applications, the common answer among the four was that paperwork requirements were hindering their motivation to move forward. Paperwork! The difficulty of AP paperwork preparation has been overblown in recent years, and the "AP thrust of 2022" will be to encourage applications.

Joe and Earl have agreed to help with, and encourage, all modelers to get their paperwork done and arrange an AP visit for scoring purposes. They are looking for help in that process from a third up-and-coming modeler interested in getting involved with those visits and related judging.

Most regions and divisions have a team of three or more adjudicators who help with the judging and we'd like to follow suit.

Over the past 2 years, COVID restrictions and quarantines have allowed many modelers to work on their railroads more than they usually would have during pre-COVID times. The recent spike in the omicron variant, has once again forced many to stay home, and as a result, it is felt that there will be a flood of AP applications in the coming months. Please don't hesitate to contact Joe, Earl, or Bill with any questions, or to request a layout visitation for a preliminary evaluation. Don't let paperwork get in the way of a potential surge of Philly Division AP awards! **T**

## AP Help Needed

**T**he AP Program in the Philly Division is looking to expand! Since the passing of Dave Messer, Earl Paine and Joe Walters have assumed his duties, but are in need of help. You do NOT have to be an MMR or have multiple AP certificates to be involved. All that is needed is an interest in and knowledge of the program, and the willingness to learn and join the team.

Joe and Earl will assist and train any interested modeler in learning how to judge in the AP program, using the NMRA approved matrix system, to arrive at an accurate judging number. Training will consist of accompanying AP judges when evaluating layouts or individual models, at first on a trial basis. As judging skills, and knowledge of the program develop, the modeler will join the AP team as a regular. If you are considering applying for future AP awards, there is no better way to learn what is expected! Contact Joe or Earl if interested.

## Division Clerk Needed

**A**nyone willing to step in as an acting clerk for the division until the June election is asked to contact Superintendent Joe Walters. Your help would be very much appreciated.

## Call for Nominations

**E**very spring, the Philadelphia Division holds its annual election for board of directors. There are seven total Board positions, three (3) of which are open for election or re-election this year. The term is for two (2) years. The Board then elects officers from among the directors.

This is your chance to take an active role in the operation and direction of the division. Board members are expected to attend board meetings (every two months on a weekend afternoon) and all meets—or at least aim to. Candidates must be Philadelphia Division members (residing in within

the division boundaries) in good standing. Those wishing to run should submit a bio and photo to the the editor, Howard Kaplan, and contact a member of the nominating committee: Kevin Feeney, Rob Hinkle, Jeff Witt, and Chip Stevens.

If elected office is too big a step, consider volunteering to chair or work on a committee. Any participation counts as credit toward your AP Volunteer. **T**







November found us back in Wilmington as has been our tradition for our November meet for many years now. Doors were opened at 8:30 am and division members and guests started arriving soon after.

The meet was called to order by Superintendent Joe Walters a little after 9am, Joe's first order of business was to present plaques of appreciation to Karen Confer for her work on the 2019 MER convention and one to Charlie Confer on behalf of the Reading Company Technical and Historical Society's modular layout which was displayed at the 2019 convention.

Jeff Witt was our first clinician presenting his argument for "The Case for Building Turnouts and Hand-laid Track." Jeff discussed the system and tools that FastTracks has developed, discussed about the benefits of building your own turnouts. Jeff mentioned that when building a certain number of turnouts it is more cost effective to build your own instead of purchasing the commercial versions. He presented a very detailed cost analysis of using FastTracks jigs to build your own turnouts. FastTracks jigs are precision engineered and therefore have a premium price tag. Jeff pointed out that the price of the jig can be amortized across the number of turnouts that are built. On Jeff's layout, he was able to build turnout for under \$7.00 each, including the amortization of the FastTracks jig and materials.

Next Jeff listed all of the tools that are needed, mentioned some optional tools, and then walked through the construction of a turnout along with helpful tips and tricks. Building your own turnouts can be a very relaxing as well as a learning experience. By building your own turnouts, one will discover the underlying turnouts mechanics and as a bonus, FastTracks created turnouts can be used to fulfill many NMRA AP program requirements.



*Director Jeff Witt presents his clinic*



*Superintendent Walters addresses the crowd*

After a short break John Siebert received his AP certificate for Associate Volunteer, John has been involved with the Philadelphia Division for many years now, serving on the division board in the past including time as the division superintendent.

Out second clinic was given by Mike Dettinger on "This Rail Joiner Changed Model Railroading." This was a very interesting clinic on the humble rail joiner, more specifically the Kato UniJoiner. Mike looked at the challenges presented by the use of sectional track over time. Mike looked into Gilbert's Scene-A-Rama and All Aboard systems. Although not a commercial success, these products inspired a number of portable modular display layouts.

The Kato UniJoiner provides both a mechanical and electrical connection between sections. This revolutionary rail joiner would go on to facilitate the creation of the T-TRAK modular standard. Mike had an operation al T-TRAK display on hand, so the group could see

Jeff also suggested that it would make sense to create a FastTracks jig lending library, so members could try their hand at producing their own turnouts. If you are interested in a hands-on FastTracks turnout building session or creating this lending library, reach out to any PhillyNMRA board member.

For more information on FastTracks jigs:  
<https://www.handlaidtrack.com/>.



*Former Super John Siebert (left) receives his AP Volunteer certificate from AP Coordinator Earl Paine*

the rail joiner that started a model railroading revolution.

During a video clip, Mike was “photo bombed” by one of his daughter's ferrets, and the question of whether the ferrets interact with the trains was asked. The answer is yes: <https://youtu.be/v1qT0QsbS0I>

For more information on T-TRAK: [https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/t-trak\\_documentation-september\\_19\\_2019\\_final.pdf](https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/t-trak_documentation-september_19_2019_final.pdf)

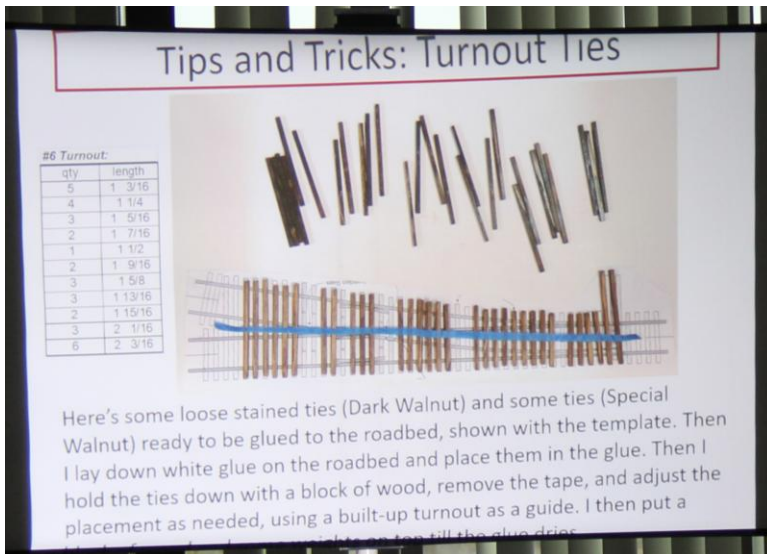
For more information on Kato Unitrack and the Kato Unijoiner: <http://katousa.com/>

Next after our 50/50 and door prize drawings we had our show and tell of some excellent models, Mike had some T-TRAK models and Jeff was demonstrating some of the aspects of the FastTracks system that he had talked about in his clinic.

After the meet ended there were a number of available open houses as part of the November open house schedule.



**Director and Clinics Chair Mike Dettinger with his latest doohicky**



**A slide from Jeff Witt's hand-laid turnout clinic**



**Jeff Witt (L) receives his clinician certificate from Superintendent Joe Walters, MMR**



**The super explores model railroading on a cellular level— now that's a really small scale!**



**Superintendent Joe Walters, MMR bestows upon clinician Mike Dettinger his clinician certificate**





*The super makes his announcements; when JF Walters speaks, people listen!*



*Member Karen Confer receives a certificate of appreciation for her many contributions in the MER 2019 convention*



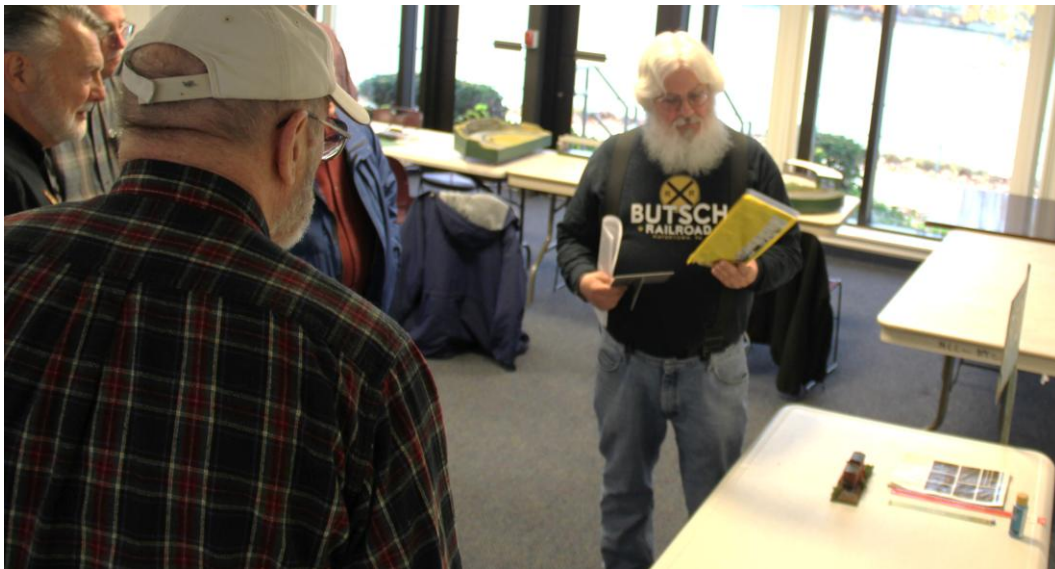
*Treasurer Kevin Feeney always has something to say—this time it's about the upcoming train show.*



*Member Charlie Confer accepts an appreciation certificate on behalf of the RCTH&S modular group for their participation in the MER 2019 convention*



*Super Joe Walters (L) (on the receiving end for a change) being thanked for having his layout open by layouts chair Bill Fagan*

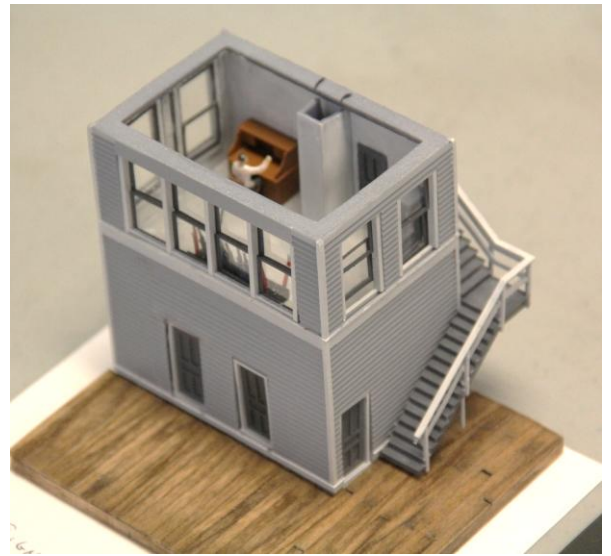


## Show & Tell

*Former superintendent Charles Butsch describes to an attentive audience his most recent projects, seen in the three photos below: Signage Made Easy, and Portable Clamp-Style Signals*







*Earl Hackett—master of casting, milling, and 3D printing—describes his latest C&O project: Signal Cabin, White Sulphur Springs, WV, as built, 1912. Scratch built with 3D printing.*



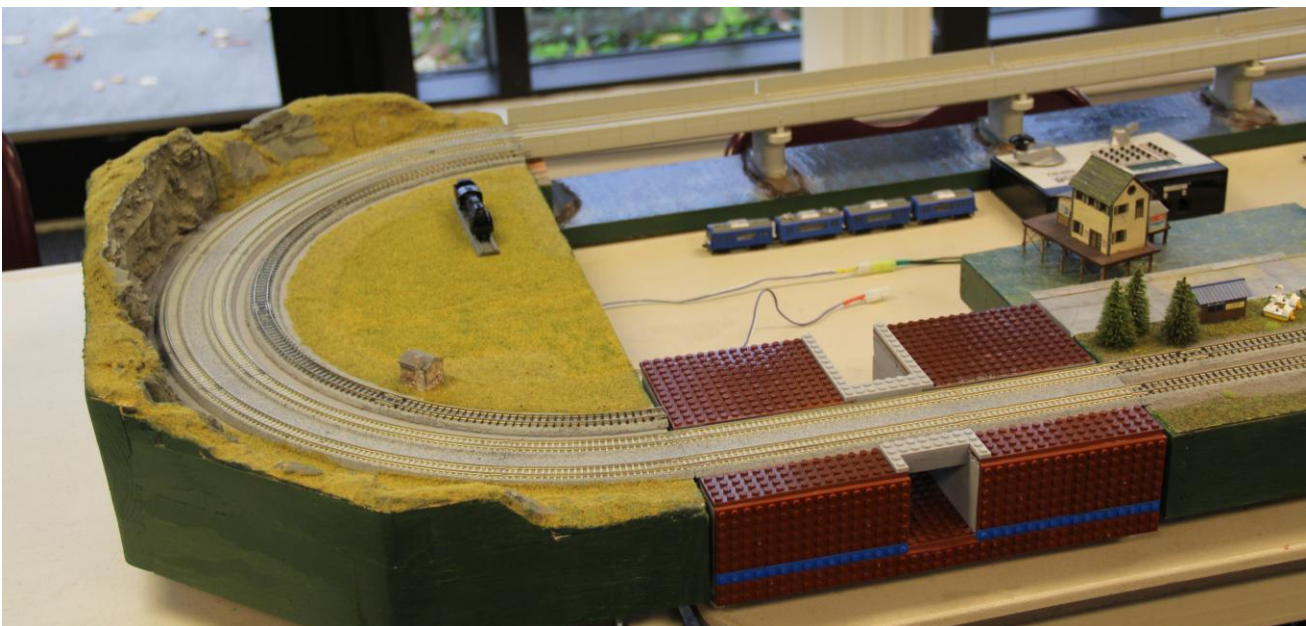
*During Show & Tell, Jeff Witt continues the demonstration he began with his clinic*







*Mike Dettinger shows off his ever popular N-scale T-TRAK modular layout*







*Joe Walters MMR shows off his scratch-built 200-ton wreck crane, the subject of a previous clinic he gave*



Division Organization

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (elected)

OFFICERS

- Superintendent – Joe Walters, MMR (2022)
- Assistant Superintendent – Rob Hinkle (2023)
- Clerk – Vacant (2022)
- Treasurer – Kevin Feeney (2023)

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

- Mike Dettinger – Clinics (2022)
- Chip Stevens – Publicity (2023)
- Jeff Witt – Venues (2023)



AUXILLIARY OFFICIALS (appointed)

- AP Coordinator – Earl Paine
- AP Committee Chair – Joe Walters, MMR
- Newsletter Editor/Webmaster – Howard Kaplan

COMMITTEES/DUTIES

EVENTS

- Clinics – Mike Dettinger
- Layouts – Bill Fagan
- Venues – Jeff Witt, Bill Fagan, Howard Kaplan
- Refreshments – Bill Fagan, Joe Walters MMR
- Door Prizes – Mike Dettinger, Kevin Feeney
- Clinic Video – Chip Stevens, Rob Hinkle
- Certificates/Awards/Printed Materials – Earl Paine, Howard Kaplan
- Publicity – Chip Stevens

MEMBERSHIP

- Member Outreach – Joe Walters MMR, Chip Stevens
- Membership Records – Vacant

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM - Earl Paine, Joe Walters MMR, Bill Fagan, Chip Stevens

OPS – Rob Hinkle

ITEM DONATIONS – Kevin Feeney

MEDIA

- Social Media – Rob Hinkle
- Webmaster – Howard Kaplan
- Newsletter – Howard Kaplan, Earl Paine, Bill Fagan, Joe Walters MMR, Kevin Feeney, Chip Stevens
- Layout Video – Bill Fagan
- Photography – Rob Hinkle, Howard Kaplan, Bill Fagan, Rob Ischinger, Mark Wallace

DIVISION APPAREL – Howard Kaplan

Hobby Shops

Be sure to patronize the following hobby shops that are now offering discounts on model railroading purchases to NMRA members:

Henning’s Trains  
128 South Line Steet  
Lansdale, PA 19446  
215-362-2442  
henningstrains.com  
10% in addition to already discounted prices

THREE BIG BENEFITS OF NMRA MEMBERSHIP:

15% OFF

25% OFF

45% OFF

Those are the discounts that manufacturers and hobby shops in our Partnership Program are giving us right now. Partners like Micro-Mark®, Model Rectifier Corporation®, Badger Airbrush®, Unreal Details®, Hot Wire Foam Factory®, Logic Rail™ Technologies. And over 30 more companies. It's savings that can actually pay for your membership!

And are you taking advantage of our other big benefits? Like 150+ national convention clinic videos. Or over 15 hours of "how-to" videos produced by the biggest names in model railroading videos. Or our directory of model railroad layouts all over the world that you can visit. The list goes on and on.

If you haven't visited [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) lately, you're missing out on some really great stuff. Starting with a boatload of discounts!

We make it more fun.

THE NEW NMRA MODEL RAILROAD DIRECTORY

IS NOW ONLINE and READY TO USE!

Now whether you're at home or traveling, you can contact other NMRA members for a layout tour, to talk trains, or even to join in an op session! There are maps, descriptions, photos, videos, and more. And it's only available to NMRA members.

Visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org), log in as a member, and click on "Model RR Directory" to see layouts in your area or to list your own layout (as long as it's an operating home or garden railroad). Join in the fun!

We make it more fun!



# Student Trips on the WP

by Paul Welsh

When I hired out as a fireman on the Western Pacific in Salt Lake City, I found myself racing some other guys to get in my ten student trips before they did, for the highest position on the seniority list. It was 1959, when firemen still rode the diesels and there was no training (other than the student trips), no rule book exam, and I didn't even have to take a physical. But there would be no pay until the student trips were complete and I got on the board.

Most of the trips were in the freight pool running between the Rio Grande's Roper Yard in Salt Lake City, and Wendover, Utah (on the Nevada state line), and that's the call I would be getting almost all of the time as an employee. There were no WP switch jobs at Roper (switching was handled by the Rio Grande) and the guys at the top of the seniority list held the few prized regular jobs, including the California Zephyr, the Zephyrette RDC, and the daily TV (Tooele Valley) Local.

My call would come any time, day or night, and I had 1-1/2 hours to show up at Roper. After my crew moved the engine from the ready track to the train, it would be an hour or more before our train would leave Roper. The carmen had to "lace up" the air hoses, oil the journals and inspect the cars, and the train had to be charged with air. At the same time a WP brakeman walked the train checking for

## Wendover, Utah

Wendover Airport is a former Army Air Force base that was given to Wendover City in 1977 and continues as a public airport.

During World War II, it was a training base for B-17 and B-24 bomber crews. It was also the training site of the 509th Composite Group, the B-29 unit that carried out the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A portion of the original bombing range is now the Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR) which is used by the Air Force for live-fire training. (Wikipedia).

hand brakes. Finally an "air test" was conducted to verify that the air brakes on all the cars were working. We rolled along the west side of Salt Lake City for about five miles to the WP/Rio Grande/UP interlocker at Grant Tower where we turned west toward the desert.

The road locomotives were always four-unit EMD FTs and once we cleared Grant Tower, the fireman would take me through the units, checking that they were all on line and pulling, and that everything looked okay. We would do that every 30 minutes or so. They showed me how to restart a unit if a ground fault kicked it off line and I learned the essentials of the operating rules by listening to the crews' idle conversation. After a layover in Wendover I would catch an eastbound back to Salt Lake. That was my training for the freight pool.



*"A Meet on the Salt Flats"*

*I painted this many years after the event. We had been standing in a siding for about 1/2 hour, just after dawn, and I was on the ground to inspect the approaching train, following standard procedure. An unforgettable and exciting event for me so I decided to capture it on canvas. Sharp-eyed folks will notice that I took a little artistic license on this and made the covered wagons F7s instead of FTs and put three geeps behind them instead of two FTs.*

The fireman, engineer, and head brakeman got comfy padded seats up front and I got a wooden bench set against the bulkhead. I spent most of my time standing up front so I could see out, but most of what I saw was the Utah Salt Flats. Most of the time we were on single track, but occasionally took a siding for a freight going the other way (see the painting). There were no towns or settlements of any kind between Salt Lake and Wendover, and the few road crossings were infrequently used industrial access roads.

Wendover didn't have a yard so it was really just a crew change point. They had a short layover in Wendover, then caught a freight train back to Salt Lake—that was their “turn.”

The “crew lounge” in Wendover was a wooden barracks-like building with a few wooden chairs and a well-worn wood table, always occupied by a card game—with money. There weren't even any magazines, or a coffee pot in the room. I spent my layover time by watching the card games in spite of the fact that the Nevada side of Wendover had a busy downtown with a large casino. It was too far to walk, there was no free transportation, and I could lose my return trip if I went.

I had one trip on the TV Local and a student brakeman on the trip mistakenly lined the switch for the main line after we entered an industrial siding with our GP7, with the caboose sitting on the main line. That locked us in because the switch could not be thrown while the main line was occupied...with our caboose. While we waited for the

signal maintainer to come out from Roper and unlock us, I saw the Zephyrette appear at a signal about a half mile up the track and soon saw its conductor stomping down the main line yelling at our conductor, “Don't you know you're holding up a first class train?!” A fist-fight nearly erupted when our conductor insulted him with, “That doodlebug's no first class train.” But nothing could be done until the maintainer showed up so we settled into the caboose and had a cup of “caboose coffee” (coffee grounds and water boiled in an old coffee can with a wire handle).

I took one trip from Wendover to Winnemucca, Nevada, which was the next division point over. The Southern Pacific ran parallel to the WP on much of this section, and they shared each other's tracks, so I saw a lot of main line action. In Winnemucca, I took a “student trip” on their lone switch engine, an Alco S-1. We never switched any cars, but the fireman took me along while he attended to a potted plant business he owned. We went to a dirt side street with about four or five small frame houses, each with a heavily made-up lady sitting on a chair behind a big picture window. We went into a couple of them and checked on the palm trees and other plants he maintained for them, then headed back to the yard to complete our shift.

After I completed my student trips, the WP “turned me” (declined to hire me) without explanation. I heard later that one of the other student firemen, who I had beat in the seniority sweepstakes, was the WP trainmaster's nephew. Duh!

But sometimes disappointing events turn out to be for the best. I worked my way through college on night switch engine jobs on the Rio Grande, something I could have never done working in the WP pool. Besides that, I shudder to think about how it would have been to spend my working life getting 1-1/2 hour calls at any time day or night, with nothing to look forward to than hours of monotony on a 100-mile ride across the desolate salt flats, only to sit in that WP layover shack for maybe hours, then more boring hours getting home. There was a reason the Army Air Force put their secret bombing range out there.

The Union Pacific eventually bought the WP and the employees went on the bottom of the UP board. The Rio Grande bought the much bigger Southern Pacific (they called it the Southern Pacific, though). Then the UP bought the Southern Pacific and continues to operate Roper Yard.



*The gorgeous Rapido model of the Zephyrette RDC (Photo courtesy of Rapido Trains, Inc.)*





## **Bill Fagan:** *The Video Vigilante*



*Photos are snapshots from videos by Bill Fagan*

Below are examples of some impressive layouts that I've visited. I've videoed layouts in California, Idaho, Maryland, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. 174 layouts with 753 videos and 2575 followers on YouTube with 1.344 million views.



### **Don Bell's Interstate RR**

Don's HO-scale layout is based on the coal hauling Interstate Railroad located in the southwestern tip of Virginia. It is centered around the large yard in Norton, VA. Several other railroads connect here including the L&N and N&W. Staging tracks provide a space for trains to run west to Corbin, KY (L&N) and east to Roanoke, VA (N&W). Another destination out of Norton is the Clinchfield Railroad's Miller Yard, modeled as a medium sized yard with engine service facilities.

Clinchfield trains run from here to staging representing Spartanburg, SC and Elkhorn City, KY. Control is provided by Digitrax Simplex and Duplex throttles as well as smart phones or TCS UWT-100 throttles through Wi-Fi/JMRI communication. The single decked layout, started in 2014, is about 90% complete and uses car cards and waybills for car movements. About 14 trains run in a typical op session including way freights, turns and unit coal. See video here: <https://youtu.be/JZ0gCQrd4J0>

### **Keystone N Trak**

Keystone N Trak is a modular N scale railroad. They have a permanent layout at their head-quarters and a traveling modular layout that is taken to shows. See video here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsuD\\_PNsxs0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsuD_PNsxs0)



## **Dan Pantaleo's BNSF RR**

Dan Pantaleo's N scale railroad represents a scenically striking section of the prototype BNSF Hi Line Subdivision from the early-to-mid 1990s through the early 2000s. West to east trains (first video) depart from Cut Bank Yard, pass through East Glacier (Glacier Park), are protected by snowsheds, cross the iconic Goat Lick Trestle, proceed through Essex, cross the Middle Fork of the Flathead River, continue through Glacier National Park, Columbia Falls, and Whitefish, Montana. Regional freights do work at the sidings in East Glacier, are worked by the MOW switcher crew at Essex, and deliver and pick up loads in Whitefish with the help of the Whitefish Shifter.

In Whitefish the local switcher services the prototypical industries of Plum Creek Lumber and the Columbia Falls Aluminum Corp. as well as other incidental businesses. Both the Plum Creek and Columbia Falls Aluminum prototypes have since shut down operations. The Essex MOW crew takes track maintenance materials from regional freights and both wood and concrete tie work trains from the Essex MOW yard to the MOW spur at Summit (the location of the Continental Divide) and other locations keeping the track in good order, the snow sheds under repair and returning empties back to Essex for pick-up by the next regional manifest.

The Eureka Local takes empties farther west from Whitefish delivering them to the prototypical Thompson River Lumber Company and Knife Creek Aggregate and Gravel (shown in the eastbound video), returning lumber loads to Plum Creek Lumber and spotting gravel loads at Whitefish for pickup by regional manifests. East Glacier, Essex (home of the historic Izaak Walton Inn) and Whitefish are Amtrak stops serviced by the prototype westbound Amtrak train #7 and eastbound train #8 Empire Builder and are run on the layout. Dan also runs a "retro" Great Northern excursion version of the Empire Builder (flyover video). While prototype eastbound (second video) manifests and unit trains typically originate in Spokane and Pasco, Washington or Sand Point, Idaho and points further west, east bound freights on the layout depart from the semi-fictitious Eureka yard.

These trains run the layout in reverse terminating in the Cut Bank yard doing work at each of the major operating points. In operating sessions east- and west-bound freights are simultaneously run often interspersed with the Empire Builder. Once in a while a stray Montana Rail Link (MRL) "oil can" or grain "Exploder" will create challenges for dispatchers. Two passing sidings get a lot of use. The layout is Digitrax DCC duplex running on Kato Unitrack with powered Kato switches. Video here: [https://youtu.be/2\\_lwZfmsJU](https://youtu.be/2_lwZfmsJU)





### Steve Salotti's New York, Susquehanna & Western

Steve's 300 ft. HO-scale main line layout is based on the NYS&W in 1949. The moderately large double deck layout represents portions of the line from Edgewater and Jersey City west to the interchange with the Lehigh & New England at Hainesburg Jct. All major interchanges are included, and the computerized freight forwarding system seeks to duplicate the actual traffic patterns for the period modeled.

Many of the freight and passenger cars are detailed resin and plastic kits and the proportion is being adjusted to represent actual proportions as new information comes to light. All major track work is complete and scenery is well under way. Timetable & Train Order is used for train control, with phones for communication to the dispatcher. Control is by Digitrax. See video here: <https://youtu.be/OIRrMLYUIRY>



You can see these videos and other layouts on the Philly Division website: [phillynmra.org](http://phillynmra.org)—just click on Cab Ride Layout Videos. If you want to see future videos send me your email address and I'll put you on the distribution list. Do you want your railroad or a friend's railroad videoed? Email me at [wfagan@comcast.net](mailto:wfagan@comcast.net). More to follow in the next issue of **The Dispatcher**.

Enjoy,

*Bill*



The Philadelphia Division and the Rockledge Model Railroad Museum (RMRM) hosted a successful train show in Glenside on December 4, 2021. Until 2019 an independent group of volunteers ran the Hatboro Train Show and when they bowed out, they left a void in the Philadelphia area.

Philly Division Board Member and RMRM member Kevin Feeney championed the train show to both groups. He has attended hundreds of shows around the country. His concept was to start with a smaller hall displaying mostly vendors and a few modular railroads. Both organizations agreed and the planning began.

Kevin surveyed the northern and western suburbs. He identified the Knights of Columbus Hall in Glenside as a convenient location. They host many events and had the tables that we need. A contract was signed and a deposit paid. The hall has a 45-space parking lot and plenty of on street parking. No food was available but Wawa was a block away. Pizza, diner, and other food options were nearby.



Publicity kicked off with free advertising in White River Publications (*Railpace*, *RMC*, etc.). Both groups promoted it on their web sites. The RMRM Facebook page had many postings and a few Facebook ads were run. Ten signs were ordered from a local shop and placed on the streets the day of the show. The vendors themselves promoted their tables on their own web sites and social media.

The day of the event, dealers started to arrive at 7:30 AM, waiting for the guy with the key to the hall. They lined up their carts by the door. The key guy was a little late, but once he arrived, the vendors flowed in. This was not their “first rodeo” and they set up quickly. We moved some tables and added a few more. By nine, most dealers were organizing their

tables. By 9:30 a few attendees had arrived and were held in the lot until the show opened at 10.

Division board members Bill Fagan, Joe Walters, and Mike Dettinger helped with the setup and registration table. Jeff Witt was our door man keeping things in order. RMRM member Dean Fowler directed traffic at the Limekiln Pike entrance. RMRM members Bill Howard and Bob Custer were busy all day in many roles. RMRM Treasurer Andrew Koniers took the afternoon shift at the registration table. RMRM boards members Guy Frick, Jim Finnegan, and Doug Baer lent a hand. Your author directed traffic in the lot and answered questions. Most common was “Where is the door?”. The building has three doors onto the parking lot.



(L to R) Division officials Rob Hinkle, Bill Fagan, and Mike Dettinger helping to manage the show

Starting at ten, we had a constant flow of attendees and the show was quite busy. Total adult admissions were 200 with about 50 children. Visitors were steady until 2:30 when the dealers started to break down. The show closed at 3 PM and by 4 PM the last dealer was packed up and out of the hall. The dealers were pleased with the results and expressed interest in next year. From the parking lot, I saw most people heading back to their vehicles with bags. They were smiling and happy to find some bargains.





*The Knights of Columbus Hall*

The Philly Division and RMRM are most grateful to the Keystone N-Trak Club members for bringing and displaying their T-TRAK modular railroad. Many thanks to the volunteers in both organizations that helped out before, during and after the show. We appreciate the dealers that believed in us. Two hundred and fifty attendees confirmed this was a good idea and helped advance the hobby of model railroading.

The date for 2022 had not been selected. Some larger halls are under consideration. We will post details on the web site and Facebook page as soon as we have a contract.



*Attendees admire Mike Dettinger's world-renown T-TRAK layout*



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Scam emails have been reported requesting money for division or charitable purposes. No one from the Philadelphia Division will ever request money for gift cards or any other type of funds. These emails are completely fraudulent and should be ignored. If you're not sure, DO NOT REPLY to the email in question. Contact the official using a contact form on the website, or his email address as listed in *The Dispatcher*.

# Model Railroading in a Retirement Village: Ann's Choice & Elsewhere Model Railroad Club, Part 3: Facilities and Rolling Stock

by Rick Melcher

Photos by Howard Williams

- Layouts: There are four permanent layouts—one in each of the three clubhouses and one outdoor layout. Also an O-gauge trolley layout under construction. In addition, we build a large holiday layout this time of the year.
- Scale: Two of the three clubhouse layouts are HO, one clubhouse has S, the outdoor layout is G (1:22.5), and the holiday layout and trolley layout are O/3-rail.
- Construction: All the indoor layouts are on plywood and are flat—no levels. However the holiday layout has an upper deck using 027 Lionel track while the lower level has traditional O track.
- History: From the information I've been able to gather, the club started with three members around November 2003. One member had a small N-scale layout in his apartment and it grew from there as it was mounted above an O-gauge layout built in the original Village Clubhouse. In 2005, another of the three members was able to get a portion of a large O-gauge layout started in that same location and he donated the layout to the club. Then in subsequent years, an additional, large HO layout was constructed in the Liberty Clubhouse, but the room was needed and the space it occupied was lost, so a smaller layout was constructed near the stairs. Some S-gauge rolling stock was donated and that layout was constructed in the Keystone Clubhouse. The space in the Liberty Clubhouse was almost lost and taken over

## Editor's Note:

Earlier this year member Rick Melcher approached the division and other modelers with a checklist on maintenance and repair of the rolling stock of the model railroad club of Ann's Choice, the retirement village to which he and his wife had moved. My intention was to first provide a background of the model railroad club before delving into his document.

Last issue we looked at the club's current layouts. This time we'll pick up with part three of the series which shows photos of the village's facilities and rolling stock. Since so much time has passed since the introduction to the series, I am reprinting Rick's outline of the thoughts behind and execution of the layouts.

by others so an O-gauge trolley layout was set up in the space to keep others from claiming the real estate! At one point there was also an O-gauge layout in what is called the Rose Garden building, which is for a higher level of medical care. I believe that layout is no longer present.

Thinking behind them: From the answers I received I inferred that there had not been much planning or thinking involved, but rather the intention to just create some animated displays which us older residents would enjoy watching and recalling the memories of our youth.

Structures: Most of the layouts have plastic buildings, but the outdoor layout has mainly scratch-built, wooden structures.



















# ON THE (RAIL) ROAD WITH KEVIN FEENEY

## CONVENTIONS – SHOWS – TRAVEL

### BIG BOY - North Platte Nebraska - August 5-8, 2021

When I read that Big Boy UP4014 was coming to the North Platte, Nebraska Rail Days, I immediately said, "I'm going." However, it is not easy to get there. The only flights there are on UAL via Denver. I had been there once before and flew to Omaha and drove 280 miles. So, I looked at the flights and rental car prices there. The flights were okay, but the rental car was absurd. Looking at a map, I saw North Platte is actually closer to Denver (just 260 miles). Turns out my DEN flights cost less (but got more miles) and I was able to find a reasonably priced rental car at Hertz through Expedia.

On Thursday 8/5, I drove to Jenkintown, parked the car, and took SEPTA to PHL for my 4:30PM flight to DFW (Dallas-Fort Worth). The plane was a 787-8 and I had a nice window seat in premium economy. Turns out the plane was flying that evening to Santiago, Chile. I arrived on time at 7PM CDT and saw that there was a delayed flight to DEN. I tried to get on that, but it was full so I waited for my flight @8:50PM CDT. The flight was fine and landed a few minutes early @9:30PM MDT. However, the DEN airport is huge and it took 15 minutes to get to the gate. It took almost half hour to exit the plane, walk through terminal A, take the train to/from the gates (the automated guideway transit system) to the Landside terminal and walk to where Hertz picks up. The 25-year-old, Landside terminal is being renovated and it is not easy to get around. The Hertz facility is located about 2 miles west of the airport. I was dropped off at 10:15PM and got into a long line. There were only two agents available and one spent at least 15 minutes with one group where about every other word from the woman began with F. She was trying to rent a car without a credit card, which did NOT happen.

I finally got my car—a Chevy Spark, and then got in line to leave the Hertz facility with about a dozen other cars. Finally, by just after 11PM, I was on my way to Ft. Morgan, Colorado, about 75 miles to the northeast on I-76. I booked a hotel there and arrived about 12:15AM. On Friday, I was up really early and on the road to North Platte (185 miles) by 7:30AM MDT. With a food stop, the drive took over 3 hours, but North Platte is CDT so I lost an hour. I drove to the Golden Spike Tower which is a few miles west of North Platte proper and next to the bigly UP Bailey Yard, the world largest.



I had paid for a VIP package (\$25) in advance and had a reservation for the 3PM yard tour. I asked the woman at the check-in tent about Big Boy's arrival and she said still between 2:00 and 2:30PM. I then asked if I could change my tour to 11AM on Saturday—no problem. I asked her where was a good place to see Big Boy arrive. She told me to drive to Hershey—I just traveled here from PA and she is telling me to go to Hershey? But this was Hershey, Nebraska, about 12 miles to the west. I made a quick trip to the top of the tower and took the next pictures with my phone after discovering my older DSLR camera was missing the CD film card. I quickly drove into town and tried to buy one, but no luck.





Then I headed to Hershey. Until recently, the road through its downtown crossed the UP mainline. It was replaced by an overpass just west of town and a large steel walkway, which that day had scores of folks on it waiting to see Big Boy. Soon I could see a headlight and then it came into view—the steam engine, three tenders, two tool cars, seven old two bay hoppers (learned later they filled with sand to help with the braking), and a UP caboose. Whoosh and it was gone. I drove back to the tower and was able to get back on the 3PM tour.



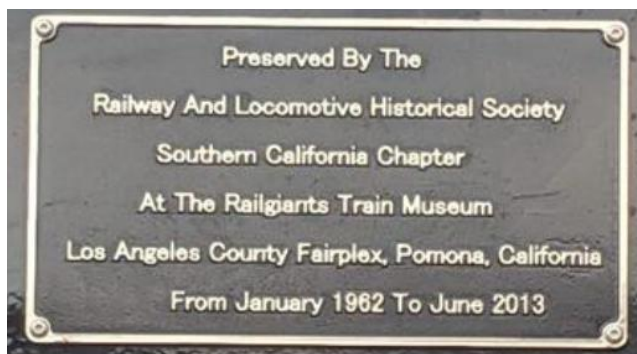
This was on a nice coach bus hosted by a UP manager who trains new “trainmen.” The tour took 1.5 hours and covered the arrival and departure tracks, the two humps, the run-through tracks, refueling facilities, and the huge locomotive shop with perhaps 200 stored engines. On the tour, we saw the burned-out hulk of an auto rack. Earlier this year, it was full of new Tesla cars when one of the car short circuited and caught on fire. The lithium-ion batteries in the cars burned for three days!

Back at the tower, I learned my VIP pass included a reception at 5PM. I used the intervening time to go back up the tower (free all weekend with my pass). After the food, I headed to downtown to see Big Boy and then drove to the nearby Cody Park Railroad Museum that has two well-preserved UP engines #3977 Challenger 4-6-6-4 and Centennial #6922. Finally found my no-name motel and called it an early night.





Up early on Saturday and back to Big Boy where the gates were open so I could get close to it.

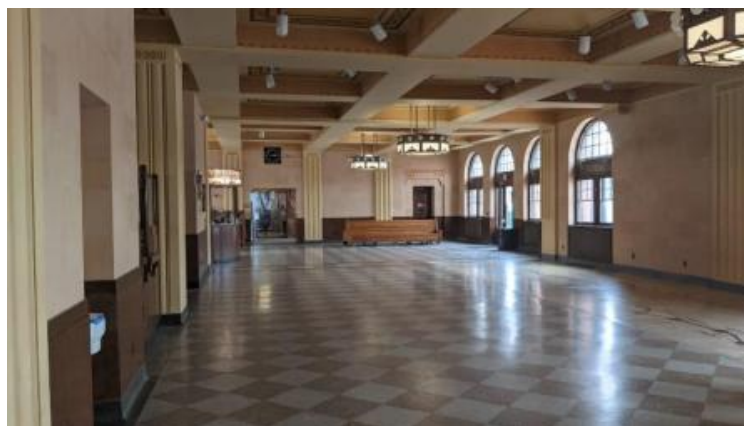
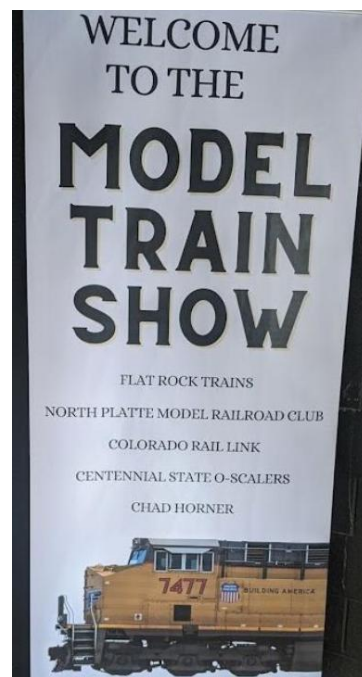


A UPRR person was giving away hats and the train crew was giving away a 4014 pin. Then breakfast at a local classic metal diner after which I drove to the train show. I had stopped here briefly on Friday. The show had several modular layouts and about 15 sellers. I brought a few things for me and of course there were some real bargains that I brought for resale to help pay for the trip. The night before I realized that I would be done early on Saturday and wondered what to do the rest of the day. As I checked into my motel, I saw a brochure for Cheyenne, WY and problem solved. About 11AM CDT, I left for Cheyenne, which was some 220 miles west (3'15") on I-80. I stopped for lunch in Sidney, Nebraska and had a runza—the local version of a steak sandwich. It had

meat and cabbage inside of a fresh baked roll. Cheese was optional. Must be an acquired taste!

I arrived in Cheyenne about 1:30PM MDT and headed to the former UP Depot. I spent some time walking around the large and empty waiting room before going into the museum.

There was lot to see there so I took my time but then an employee said they were closing at 3PM. I had thought it was 3:30. So, I speeded up. I was surprised to see a large HOn3 layout upstairs in the museum.







Also, upstairs was a viewing area. Across the tracks, is the historic 1926 roundhouse that houses UP's historic fleet.



Just up the street is Wyoming's state capitol. When I got there, the building was locked but the nearby Wyoming State Museum was open till 4:30PM. The museum covered many things including the UPRR and coal mining in the Power River Basin which were the most interesting to me. I headed to get gas and stopped for an hour just west of the downtown to train watch.



For dinner I went to Sanford's Grub & Pub, a funky, memorabilia-filled place. Carol and I had eaten here back in March 2020. I had the stack burger. Since I was in no hurry, I drove back to Denver on US-85 instead of I-25. For a good part of the trip, the highway ran next to a UP line so I made a few stops. Stopped for a chocolate shake at Sonic and by 10PM I was back at Hertz and returned the car.







For the flights, I earned 5293 Elite Qualifying Miles [EQMs] and 4064 actual award miles. Just 4079 more EQMs, and I will have achieved Platinum Pro status for the first time, albeit because of several gimmicks—reduced 2021 requirements, including Q4 2020 activity and special bonuses this year. Next trip was to the NRHS's Annual Convention in Milwaukee on August 23rd.

## Triple Play - Hat Trick - Threeppeat

TRAIN SHOWS ARE BACK! In August I attended THREE shows in an eight-day period. The first was a Greenberg Show at the New Jersey Expo Center in Edison, NJ. It was a one hour 15 minute drive up US-1 on Sunday, August 15<sup>th</sup>. I had not been to a Greenberg Show in years and expected it to be mostly Lionel, but boy was I surprised. There were a good mix of vendors and several layouts. I came home with a bunch of bargains.



The second was another Greenberg Show the next weekend in Oaks, PA. I had arranged for a free table for the Philly Division and I spent most of the time manning the table on Saturday, August 21 with Joe Walters and Mike Dettinger. Mike had set up a small T-TRAK layout which made folks to stop by. I handed out flyers for our upcoming events including the 12/4 train show. I did not have time to walk the show floor, but did get some nice bargains at the adjacent tables. Other division officials manned the table the next day.





The third show was part of a PA road trip on Sunday August 21 with Eric Dervinis. This turned out to be a small one in Allenwood, PA run by the Central PA NRHS Chapter.



However, once in the area we railfanned in nearby Williamsport, PA. Unfortunately, Bowser, which is nearby, was closed that day.



Lycoming Valley locos painted in RDG second generation scheme





We saw the former RDG stations in Allenwood and White Deer where the NRHS chapter has a museum with several pieces of PRR & RDG rolling stock.



Ex-RDG Allenwood Station







On the way back we stopped in Northampton and had lunch here:





After which we drove by this:



## TCA - Philadelphia Show - Sunday 9/26/21

I have seen flyers for the local TCA shows in the past and normally these are one I would NOT attend. However, I went this time primarily to recruit dealers for our upcoming December 4<sup>th</sup> show.



Some may not be familiar with the TCA (Train Collectors Association). It was founded in Yardley, PA in 1954 and supposedly has over 30,000 members. In 1977, the TCA opened the National Toy Train Museum in Ronks, PA, right near the Strasburg Railroad. TCA is set up like the NMRA with local divisions; their Atlantic Division is the local one here and was the sponsor this show. Back when I was on the NMRA's board of directors in the early 2000s, there was some discussion of an affiliation with the TCA that would allow NMRA members to attend their events and vice versa, but nothing came of it.

Their Eastern Division sponsors the YUGE train show that is held semiannually (April & October) in the York, PA fairgrounds. The following one occurred October 21-23. For years the York shows were closed to the public, but now nonmembers are allowed in on Friday and Saturday with some halls, and Thursday still for members only. Another change recently made by the TCA is to allow anyone to join; formerly you had to be recommended by an existing TCA member to join. I went to the York Show once in April 2019. I would have gone again in October, but it was the same weekend as the MER convention.

The 9/26 show was held in an event center on Columbus Boulevard right on the Philly waterfront. It was easy to park and the admission was only \$5. I left flyers for our show on a table outside the main hall (I gave a different flyer to each of the dealers there). I entered the show room expecting to see mostly Lionel and was pleasantly surprised. There were about 120 tables and while it was mostly Lionel, there were HO and even N scale items everywhere. I came home with some HO cars, a Magnuson kit, and a bunch of historic public timetables for \$1 each. Their next show occurred on Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup> but bummer, I was away that weekend. 🐼







## The Amfleet Cars

When Amtrak was formed in 1971, it inherited equipment (rolling stock), locomotives and passenger cars. These came from dozens of different railroads. Most of this equipment was in poor condition. At that time, running passenger trains were not very popular nor financially lucrative. These roads kept the rolling stock running, but were not spending money on upgrades or equipment. Train breakdowns were common and passengers complained. After three years of trying to keep this equipment serviceable, Amtrak contacted the Budd Company with a request for new coaches.

The Amfleet era had arrived with the birth of the Amfleet high density coach. These coaches were constructed at the Budd Company plant in northeast Philadelphia. The coaches were equipped for HEP (head end power). They were a great improvement over steam. Few locomotives had HEP. That would soon change with the arrival of the electric locomotive, AEM-7. Budd



Figure 1

*Amfleet I (Courtesy of Amtrak Wiki)*

produced 492 Amfleet I cars. These were being used on all types of service east of the Mississippi River. Half of these cars found service on the Northeast Corridor.



Figure 2

*Amfleet I (Courtesy of Progressive Railroading)*



In 1980, Amtrak requested a second order of cars from Budd to be used for long distance service. They had fewer seats, which allowed more leg room for the long distance traveler. The new cars were designated Amfleet II. A visual difference would show that the Amfleet II only had one vestibule on the B end of the car. A hundred and fifty cars were constructed from 1980 until 1983. These were the last intercity passenger cars built by the Budd Company.

To think that the Amfleet I cars are 47 years old and still running is amazing! An FRA report in 2012, showed 473 Amfleet I cars are still in service. Only 19 cars were lost to derailments or wrecks. It is a testament to Budd's stainless steel body construction. The same report also stated that 145 of the Amfleet II were still in service the same year; only 5 had been lost.

My story begins in 1984 when I started with the Amtrak mechanical department. I was involved with these Amfleet cars for 20+ years. I worked on everything from wreck repairs to full blown overhauls. When I first started, an official informed me not to get too comfortable with these cars as they wouldn't be around in ten years. He knew little about the cars' longevity. And they remain a workhorse for Amtrak today.

In my next article I will discuss how maintenance started out in many different locations. Amtrak chose one location for all major overhauls and wreck repair. That was the Amtrak Bear complex, where the cars received the necessary overhauls to improve on time performance.

Well my cup is low, so it's time to go.

Till next time,

*Joe*



*Amfleet II (Courtesy of Chuck Stewart/Pinterest)*



*Amfleet II (courtesy of TrainWeb)*



## **New Jersey Division 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Car**

**Tangent Scale Models Bethlehem 70-Ton  
Riveted Drop-End Gondola in HO Scale  
All cars are ready-to-run.**

**We have produced the car in two numbers to  
commemorate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary:**

**1968    &    2018**

**The car has reporting marks NJDX, black with  
white lettering and data for the 1950s.**

**The cost is \$35.00 each**

**OR**

**a set of both numbers for \$65.00.**

**To have them shipped USPS Priority: \$9 for 1 car, \$10.75 for 2 cars**

**The cars are available now. Checks should  
be made payable to “NJ Division”**

**They are selling fast so don't be left out!**

**(Photos/drawings on next two pages)**

**Website: <https://njdivnmra.org> for questions**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip code\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone\_\_\_\_\_Email\_\_\_\_\_

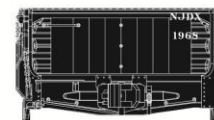
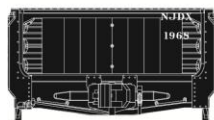
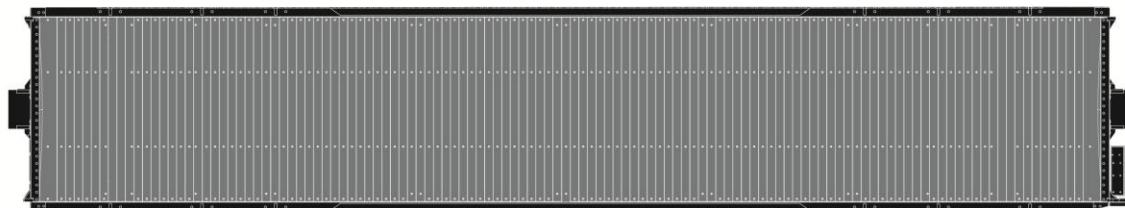
See Tangent website for more info [support@tangentscalemodels.com](mailto:support@tangentscalemodels.com)

Return this form to NJ Division, P.O. Box 276, Crosswicks, NJ 08515





# Artwork for New Jersey Division 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Car



**TANGENT**  
SCALE MODELS



## **South Mountain Division/ Mainline Hobby Supply Mini-Con**

**Where:** Blue Ridge Fire Hall, 13063 Monterey Ln., Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214

**When:** Saturday, April 23, 2022, 9 AM to 4 PM

**Admission:** Free!

**NMRA—MER South Mountain Division and Mainline Hobby Supply host its 8th annual Mini-Con at the Blue Ridge Fire Hall, 13063 Monterey Ln., Blue Ridge Summit, PA. Come enjoy from 9 AM to 4 PM, this one-day free event one block north of Mainline Hobby Supply, consisting of prototype and modeling presentations, formal and informal clinics, modular displays, and interaction with your fellow hobbyists and beginners. This free, wheelchair accessible, educational event is open to the public for the promotion of the hobby of Model Railroading.**

**Questions: Don Florwick, [DJFlorwick@comcast.net](mailto:DJFlorwick@comcast.net), 717-414-0660  
<http://www.smdnmra.org/>.**



# Railroad Prototype Modelers- Valley Forge

March 24-27, 2022

Desmond Malvern Conference Center

Malvern PA

Sponsored by a 100% NMRA Club

Friday Operating Sessions

Clinics

Model Displays

Vendor Rooms

Sunday Home Layout Tour



For information and updates

[rpmvalleyforge.com](http://rpmvalleyforge.com)

or

Paul Backenstose

103 West Uwchlan Ave.

Downingtown, PA 19335

(Please include an SASE for a reply)

(610) 269-2763

## Interested in Presenting a Clinic?

Fred Alston

[Rpm-vf-clinic@outlook.com](mailto:Rpm-vf-clinic@outlook.com)

## Vendor Information and Ops Sessions

Steve Salotti

[Salotti.steve@gmail.com](mailto:Salotti.steve@gmail.com)

610-489-1940



[Click here](#) for the most recent issue



[Click here](#) for the most recent issue



[Click here](#) for the most recent issue



[Click here](#) for the most recent issue



Page: <https://www.facebook.com/NMRA.org/>

Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nmrargroup/>

YouTube channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/c/NMRAORGMModelRailroading>

If you missed out on any of our previous events, all of the videos are saved on the NMRA YouTube channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/c/NMRAORGMModelRailroading>

## Upcoming NMRA Conventions



[Gateway 2022, St. Louis, MO](#)

2022

[Gateway 2022](#)



[2023 Texas Express](#)

2023

[2023 Texas Express](#)

## Upcoming MER Conventions

**2022 Convention – “Carolina Special Look South in 2022”**



## Division Apparel



Polo



Polo with pocket



Cap



Short Sleeve Button-Down



Long Sleeve Button-Down

Our new apparel source is Daylight Sales. Website: <https://www.daylightsales.net/> You can do a search for “PhillyNMRA” to find our items, or [click here](#) for the direct link. Email: [daylightsales@gmail.com](mailto:daylightsales@gmail.com) Phone: (888) 557-9899.

We continue to offer the Port Authority polo, with or without pocket, and the short- and long-sleeve button down shirts. As before, you can have your name added. A new offering is a matching cap. Unfortunately patches are no longer available as our emblem is now being directly embroidered onto the items.

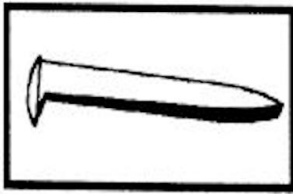
Manufacturer’s descriptions and specs:

POLO

POLO W/POCKET

LONG SLEEVE BUTTON DOWN

SHORT SLEEVE BUTTON DOWN



## 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: \_\_\_\_\_



# Improve your modeling with a few sheets of paper.

That's just what happens when you join the National Model Railroad Association and take part in the Achievement Program.

No, it's not a bunch of contests. It's modelers helping modelers become better modelers, to get the most out of their hobby. It's a way to hone your skills and become the modeler you've always wanted to be.

And it's just one of many benefits of NMRA membership.

It's never too late to start improving your modeling skills. And your hobby.



**We make it more fun.**  
[www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)

