



# UP THE HOLLER

## Newsletter of Division 9 THE COAL DIVISION

### Mid Central Region NMRA

May 2013



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#### HEAD OF THE HOLLER Bob Weinheimer MMR

If you missed the April meeting you missed a good one. Dennis McGeeney made a wonderful presentation about his experiences as a locomotive engineer in the 1970s. Things were clearly a bit different in those days, a 16 hour work day was still permitted. It would be a very interesting clinic to get Dennis together with a current locomotive engineer to compare those differences. Let's see if we can talk Russ into doing just that!

That brings us to the May meeting. Full details are on page 4. Paul tells me that all the pink on his layout is no longer visible. That pink is, of course, the foam insulation he has used extensively in layout construction. It's all painted or covered by scenery materials so I am expecting to see big changes in the last year. Dave has also been at work, he posted a few photos of improvements to his city scene on Facebook. He has also made big improvements at other places on the layout. There is nothing like an open house to inspire layout progress. We have heard of considerable interest by members of Divisions 2 and 6 and expect a good turnout from the Pittsburgh and Columbus areas. Let's make sure we have a good turnout as well.

I have just returned from the Division 2 Jamboree in Pittsburgh. The best way to describe this event is to call it a one day regional convention with clinics, contests, raffles, and white elephant sales. The big difference is that the \$20 registration fee included donuts and coffee in the morning as well as a very nice lunch buffet. Nobody should have gone away hungry. An added bonus this year was the presence of new NMRA President Charlie Getz. Charlie presented a clinic that reminded me a bit of Dave Stout's clinics although he gave nothing away afterward. Charlie also spoke at the optional dinner. He had some exciting news about the NMRA charitable status and how it *might* be extended to regions and divisions. Nothing is final but this could be very helpful. I also told him of our matching of donations to the Gallery Project, he extends his thanks to the donors and to the division for its match. If a regional convention is beyond your budget for time and money, consider this event next year.

Just as we were about to send you this issue of Up the Holler the May/June issue of the NMRA eBulletin appeared in my email box. If you are an NMRA member and did not receive it, this means the NMRA does not have the email address that we use to send you this newsletter. You can update your email address at [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org).

#### MEETING NOTICE

The May meeting will be hosted by Dave Stout and Paul Lapointe in the Parkersburg, WV area. Full directions and hours as well as a map are on page 4. Dave adds: Paul and I look forward to seeing you at Steel is King day. We would also welcome any members we have not met, we hope this meeting may be closer to home and that you will be able to join us, it would be so nice to meet you. We really are a friendly bunch so come on over to Parkersburg and we will have a rail good time.

## FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary J. Burdette MMR

Well, spring is here and the smell of coke, coal, and steel is in the air. Ok, for me and those who attend "Steel is King Day" this month in Parkersburg it shall be. The fun of our annual visit to the more northern part of our division (and picnic) celebrates modeling the steel industry and often attracts some visitors from nearby neighboring divisions (as Bob noted). This is one of the highlights of the year.

Last month, I noted that the replica C&O Railway bulletin boards were in production. Some of you may have seen my posting on the Coal Division Facebook page where one was featured. There were several "Likes," and Matt informs me that they are in use. Related to this initial education project are clamps which were procured and given to Matt with which he may attach a metal CHARLESTON, WV sign to the canopy beam, perpendicular to the tracks, at the Amtrak station. Another will be located on the wall above the door. Hopefully, Division 9 can help with that and a schedule-type board that is being planned.

Some of the "Partners in Education" and "Education Station" ideas can be implemented at the St. Albans depot while others may reach out into the community such as the work at the Charleston station. A tri-fold pamphlet was prepared as a hand-out for Dennis McGeeney's enjoyable and informative talk at the April meeting about his experiences as a locomotive engineer. The education committee is looking at having several informational, historical items printed to distribute to the public at various locations and/or events. Those who have seen the "Beginner's Guide to Model Railroading"

on our web site have noted another example. More will be developed and presented to the members from the education committee.

It might be possible to prepare exhibits or displays on a smaller scale much like a student's tri-fold, cardboard science fair or social studies fair project to be set up at libraries and other venues around the entire Coal Division. Photos, plans, handouts, registration forms could be provided. They might be made more specific to relate to the particular area in which they are set up (ie.: B&O at Parkersburg, N&W at Portsmouth, the chemical industry, coal mining, etc.).

I, personally, want to have more "live" presentations, like Dennis' talk, demonstrations, hand-on sessions with kids, and maybe even the two plays I have mentioned in the past. (More on that, soon.)

All of this may be adapted for use on our web site. I hope you have gotten to see the education outline and the section on scenery which are currently posted. A prototype and model photo gallery, how-to sections, construction, and anything else we can think of might fit. I'm working on an article (for lack of a better term) with photos of a Sperry Rail Car and truck, the small wheels and sensors, interior controls, a record sheet, and a model photo as a historical and educational item for inclusion on the web site ( and maybe a hand-out).

The sky is the limit, and we have a pretty good start getting there.

## 2013 MID CENTRAL REGION CONVENTION

The 2013 Mid Central Region convention will be in Dayton, hosted by Division 3, May 15 to 18. This convention starts Wednesday instead of the usual Thursday and will have an emphasis on operations but not at the expense of other interests. Tony Koester will be part of an operations boot camp series of clinics and operating events and will be the banquet speaker.

There will be several operating sessions and in a change from the usual MCR format they will be scattered throughout the duration of the convention. This means that the diehard operators might get to run on more than the usual one layout.

Taking a page from national conventions, there will

be a Building with the Masters session. Several Master Model Railroaders (Gary Burdette among them) will work with the attendees to build a small laser cut wood model of a chapel. This is an extra fare event to cover the cost of the kit.

There will be numerous clinics of all sorts including several from Coal Division members.

There is quite a list of places to visit in the Dayton area including the Museum of the United States Air Force. It's still a bit early to have all tour information available, look for that in the MCR Kingpin which should be out in January. In the meantime, advance registration is available, see the details at [www.mcr2013convention.com](http://www.mcr2013convention.com).

**NMRA MCR DIVISION 9**  
**The Coal Division**  
**St Albans, WV C&O Depot**  
**April 13, 2012**

**Division Clerk Report**

Corrected minutes from February and minutes from March approved.

Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk/Treasurer, presented a new procedure for those involved in fund raising. Members involved in fundraising activities should submit the funds received at the monthly meeting. The amounts will be recorded in the meeting minutes. A separate written summary of the date, activity, and amount should be submitted to the Superintendent. Ongoing activities should be reported at year end.

Coal division matching program for NMRA Magic of Scale Model Railroading Gallery donations ends on April 30, nine members have participated in the division match as of today.

Treasury balance is currently \$9,113.98.

**Superintendent Report**

Bob reminded everyone about the upcoming MCR Convention.

For 2014 there will not be an MCR convention but some sort of annual meeting is necessary, more to come as the officers figure out how to handle it.

Unofficial MCR election results were discussed.

**Assistant Superintendent Report**

Gary submitted funds of \$6.50 from shirts and a list of items bought for the N Scale layout. He also updated the group on education activities on the web. He has prepared a historic C&O sign for display in the Charleston Depot. He showed brochures for Dennis McGeeney's presentation about working on the Reading and Conrail.

**Education Committee**

Tony asked about the reimbursement for Matt Crouch.

**Membership Chair**

John thanked those who volunteered at the Dunbar Show. The display we currently use for shows isn't well-suited for using at the St Albans Depot. John is exploring a vertical display through the NMRA. Paul Lapointe suggested an electronic picture display as well.

**Achievement Program**

Dan Mulhearn is working on his electrical certificate.

**Newsletter Chair**

Dan is always looking for materials and input. New product reviews and stories are welcome.

**Clinic Chair**

We have no clinics planned at present. The next clinic will be in August.

**Travels with Dennis**

Dennis discussed the costs for members for the Hocking Valley - Adults \$17 seniors \$15 children \$12. Dennis has arranged for us to ride in cabooses. We will pay extra \$4 for the caboose portion. In addition we are charging an additional \$1 to pay for lunch for our tour guide. The total cost will be \$22 and \$20. Three members have signed up so far.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

Matt mentioned a depot work session April 18 at noon. He also mentioned the recent Hawks Nest Modeler's Weekend for SACOM. Next year will be the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Modeler's Weekend. There is also an upcoming Chessie mini-convention at the St Albans Depot.

**Announcements**

Whistles by the Depot April 20

Division 2 Jamboree April 27

**Next Meetings**

May 11	Parkersburg, WV
June 8	Nelsonville, OH
July 13	St. Albans Depot

**Adjourn Business Meeting**

Meeting adjourned at 3:07

**Fundraising:**

Raffle: \$69.00

Shirts: \$6.50

Other: \$0.00

**Post Meeting Activities:**

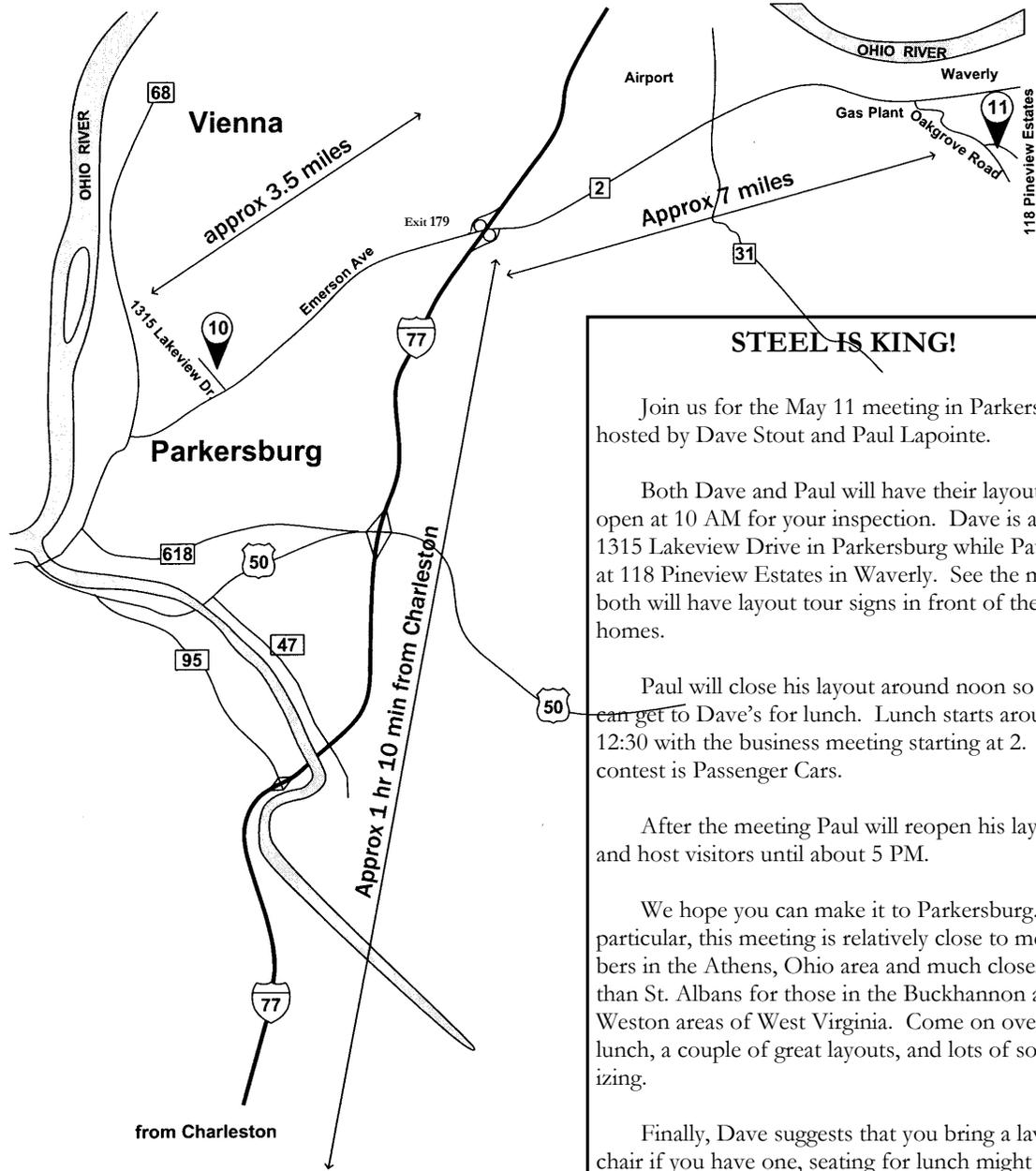
**Contest** – Freight Cars

**Clinic** – Dennis McGeeney - *The Locomotive Engineer and the Job He Does* a presentation about being a locomotive engineer on the Reading and Conrail in the 1970s.

Respectfully Submitted

Jerry Doyle, MCR Division 9 Clerk

# Parkersburg Area



## STEEL IS KING!

Join us for the May 11 meeting in Parkersburg hosted by Dave Stout and Paul Lapointe.

Both Dave and Paul will have their layouts open at 10 AM for your inspection. Dave is at 1315 Lakeview Drive in Parkersburg while Paul is at 118 Pineview Estates in Waverly. See the map, both will have layout tour signs in front of their homes.

Paul will close his layout around noon so he can get to Dave's for lunch. Lunch starts around 12:30 with the business meeting starting at 2. The contest is Passenger Cars.

After the meeting Paul will reopen his layout and host visitors until about 5 PM.

We hope you can make it to Parkersburg. In particular, this meeting is relatively close to members in the Athens, Ohio area and much closer than St. Albans for those in the Buckhannon and Weston areas of West Virginia. Come on over for lunch, a couple of great layouts, and lots of socializing.

Finally, Dave suggests that you bring a lawn chair if you have one, seating for lunch might be tight

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

**April 13, 2013 Minutes**

**Reported by Tony Puccini**

The following were present at our April meeting:

Gary Burdette Our Committee Chairman  
 Matt Crouch  
 Dennis McGeeney  
 Walt Mycoff  
 Marttie Mycoff  
 Robert Osburn  
 Tony Puccini

available for young and old during 'Open House' at our depot.

Steady progress is being made by Matt Crouch on our portable N scale layout. To preclude a last minute rush to make this project's completion date of November prior to the Bluefield meeting; Matt will designate a future work date or two. This is where we can come to the depot for the express purpose of working on this layout. Matt may have some tools or parts that we can bring.

Two Bulletin Boards, provided by Dennis McGeeney and finished by Gary Burdette, were presented to the committee. One is to stay at the St. Albans Train Station and the second is to go to the Charleston Train Station. Both will be used to promote prototype and model railroading. These bulletin boards constitute our first completed project..

Bob Osburn will donate a magazine rack for handouts and to store some 'How To' books. Bob is going to donate some of those books also. I have a few to donate like Wescott's "How to build model railroad benchwork". These are the kinds of donated books that can be of use to all of us. It looks like we will need a Division 9 Librarian. If interested please see our Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent.

Darrell Thurmond called in sick. Consequently we are not able to take delivery of the 4 foot by 8 foot N scale model layout that he donated. We will accept delivery at a future date.

Bob Osburn also presented a complete and most professionally done proposal for our next major project. Bob has the lead on this and his written proposal complete with a track diagram, list of all materials, wiring diagram, and methods for constructing benchwork, trackwork, electrical, switches, scenery, etc. This proposal seems worthy of the output of a professional company. A truly outstanding job.

The committee looked at some areas of our website that will be filled in at a future date. We took a close look at "scenery" and "industries". This view gave us an indication of how each area could be filled in. All hands were encouraged to contribute. These packets (scenery, industries, et al) can be given out at model railroad shows as well as posted on our web site.

We looked at a completed "Switch Qualification Certificate" which is to be presented to those who complete the switching problems on the O scale layout at the St, Albans Train Station. These switching problems will be

We are sure getting a lot of things done and so we need a little more time in committee. The Education and Outreach Committee will now meet 15 minutes earlier. All future meetings will commence at 13:15 vice 13:30. Remember everyone is welcome.

## RAFFLE REPORT

**Paul Lapointe**

Another great month! The raffle in April brought in \$69. Thanks to all who donated items and to all of you who purchased tickets!

books, that's all we have to raffle!

The May raffle in Parkersburg will be half-sized: three items instead of six. This is partially due to all the activity and reduced space but most importantly, except for

So please dig deep into those boxes of gently used stuff under the layout or those dusty stacks of kits you know you'll never build. That stuff is golden to someone else!

## CONTEST CORNER

The April contest included a number of freight cars from several members. Larry Richards won with the cars shown in the photo below. Photo by Jerry Doyle.

Let's keep up the level of contest activity, the May contest is Passenger Cars. Bring your pride and joy. Even if it doesn't win it may give another member an idea for a new project or provide the spark of interest to work on a current project.



## TRAVELS WITH DENNIS

### Dennis McGeeney

Members, relatives and friends of Division 9, The Coal Division, our next meeting will be on May 11, 2013 at the home of Dave Stout in Parkersburg, WV. This meeting will be the deadline for turning in your money for the June 8th Division trip on the Hocking Valley RR in Nelsonville, OH. We must have an accurate count of the number of people planning to attend so that we can advise the Rocky Gear eatery how many tables we will need and extra servers. As I mentioned at our last meeting, we will have cabooses added to the train for us to ride. We will also get a tour of the Hocking Valley escorted by one of their volunteer staffers. To repeat, we must have your money by the May 11th meeting at the latest, if you plan to attend. Folks who are not members of the Division are also welcome, if you want to bring your family or friends.

The cost of the excursion will be \$22.00 for adults; seniors 60+ \$20.00; children between three and twelve \$17.00. Each of these totals includes an extra \$4.00 per person for the caboose ride and \$1.00 to provide a meal for the volunteer who will escort us on the shop tour.

We will gather at the Rocky Gear Outlet and Restaurant at 11:30AM on June 8th. The restaurant is located on US Route 33 at Hocking St. It is on the south side of Rte 33, about half way through Nelsonville and there is a traffic signal at this intersection. Parking is one block west at the corner of US 33 and Hocking Parkway.

The train will leave the depot at 2:30PM for a 22 mile round trip to Logan, OH. Trip time is about two hours and fifteen minutes. Some highlights are that we will cross the river several times, we will see a company town where the bricks were made for the Chrysler Building in New York City and we will pass a restored canal lock. A wheelchair lift for the train is available. You may bring food and non alcoholic beverages aboard the train. There is **NO SMOKING OR ALCOHOL** permitted on the train. Rest rooms are located in the depot. No animals except service dogs are permitted aboard.

This will be a great day for all, one of the longest periods of daylight for the year and please plan on bringing wives, girlfriends, kids, grandkids; all are welcome! We hope to see you there.

Payment for the trip can be made at the May Division meeting or by sending payment to me at

509 Water Street  
Summersville, WV 26651

I can be reached at 304-872-7262. Make checks payable to Dennis McGeeney. All money must be received by May 11, 2013.

## NMRA InfoNet News Tom Draper

### Welcome to the InfoNet-News For April, 2013

#### Peachtree Express 2013 News

Most of the prototype and general interest tours are limited to 50 people due to venue limitations. Keep in mind that we must confirm tours with the bus providers 30 days before the convention. So please register now to avoid disappointment and/or canceled tours due to lack of pre-registrations.

Update of the tour to the CSX Training Center (P355): CSX has recently informed us they will **NOT** be able to allow us inside the center. We are working on substituting tours of Tilford and Hulsey yards. The good news is that we have added a visit to the Georgia North-eastern RR, where you'll get an overview of their operations, see some of their locos, and visit their dispatch center and yards.

The Southeastern Region is hosting an NMRA Welcome Reception at the convention hotel on Sunday, July 14, from 4:00 - 5:30 PM, providing a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and make some new ones. Light snacks and a cash bar provided.

The clinic schedule has been posted to [www.NMRA2013.org](http://www.NMRA2013.org) as well as updates to some of the other events.

A very active and entertaining general interest/non-rail program is planned, so bring the family, sample some Southern hospitality, and see all that Atlanta has to offer.

Model Celebration & Contest: Chair Bob Hamm has issued a challenge to exceed the 2011 Sacramento Convention in the numbers of models brought for display and/or AP judging. Let's not disappoint! Bring what you're working on and show it off.

#### Message from Gerry Leone, MMR – Vice President, Special Projects

Greetings, Presidents and Superintendents!

For the past four years the InfoNet News eblast has contained interesting NMRA facts you could share with your newsletter editors and members. With the advent of our new eBulletin, we now find that that same information is going out every other month directly to all NMRA members.

So, rather than stopping this direct communication between National and you, we've decided to reformat it. Beginning next month, each InfoNet News edition will be authored by a different NMRA Board Director or Officer. Each will be written "manager-to-manager," and may contain tips, techniques, insights, facts – any and all kinds of things that can help you be an effective leader and a greater resource to your members.

We trust you'll like this new format, and hope that it'll open the door to some lively dialog between you and NMRA National.

Gerry Leone, MMR  
Vice President, Special Projects

*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) on in the NMRA Magazine.*

Regards,

Tom Draper  
Director – Support Services

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The goal of the newsletter team is to have this document reach you by email or snail mail at least one week prior to our meetings. We typically do the layout work the Wednesday 10 days before the meeting with distribution Thursday or Friday. For this to happen reliably, we need all items for publication by the Monday 12 days prior to the meeting. If we don't get it on time we can't print it. Please help us give you the most up to date information possible. Here are the deadlines for the next few issues.

June	May 27
July	July 1
August	July 29
September	September 2
October	September 30
November	October 28
December	December 2
January	December 30
February	January 27

## MY WORD

### Dan Mulhearn, Editor

Operations, that seems to be the goal for a lot of model railroad enthusiasts these days. We go to great lengths to try and replicate to workings of the prototype on our miniature empires. I am not arguing that this is for everybody; some just enjoy building the models, some are content to just enjoy watching them pass through the scale landscape. For myself, operation is the main objective of my hobby. I am less of a modeler than I am a railfan who enjoys recreating memories of prototype railroading in miniature. If I were a millionaire; I would pay someone to build, scenic and signal my railroad and build and weather the cars. Then I would invite all of you over for an op session!

There are many ways to research railroad operation. We have books, magazines, videos, historical societies, the NMRA and many other ways to find all we need on our favorite line. But, I think one of the most underused and underappreciated sources of information is the current or former railroad employee. This is particularly true of those who enjoy their profession and sharing information about it. This was brought home to me especially by last month's presentation by Dennis McGeeney at our meeting. It was like an inside baseball look at how professional railroaders go about getting their work done safely and expeditiously and Charlie and I were really sorry we were forced to leave before Dennis had finished. I refer you to Tony Koester's Trains Of Thought column in the June 2013 issue of Mod-el Railroader. The column is entitled "Our Friends, The Pros" and tells how much Tony learned to develop and improve his operations by input from professional railroaders. The June 2013 issue of Trains In My Own Words column tells the story of Amtrak engineer Doug Riddell's last run before retirement. Doug ran the Amtrak Silver Star from Washington to Richmond, VA carrying his grandfather's gold Hamilton Railway Special. Next to Doug in the cab was his son, Ryan, an Amtrak engineer. All along the route railfans were out with cameras and signs wishing Doug well and thanking him for all his years of sharing his love of railroading through his writings. And the traditions were

honored; Amtrak assigned red nosed 40th anniversary P42 #156 and had it scrubbed and polished for his final run. The computer generated CSX release form for his train had a personal note from the dispatcher thanking Doug for his years of service. I have a copy of the book Doug wrote called Tales From The Cab. It details his career starting as a Seaboard Coast Line switchman up to his SCL engine service and then hiring on with Amtrak. It is a treasure trove of information on railroads and railroaders, the good and the bad. The newsletter of the Operations Special Interest Group (OPSIG) usually has an article written by a professional railroaders detailing some interesting facet of prototype operation. One of my good friends when I lived on Long Island was Gene Collora, a Long Island RR employee. Gene started out as a switchman, rose to yardmaster and retired after 38 years as VP in charge of maintenance of way. Gene was and is an avid rail photographer and a virtual gold mine of information on rail operations. Even those railroaders who are not railfans are a good source of information. Two of the younger men in my volunteer fire department are railroaders. One works at the loco service building in Bluefield for NS; the other is a currently furloughed CSX conductor. They enjoy their jobs but are not especially railroad buffs, it just a good job to them. But, they know I am interested and will share things they think I may find interesting. My buddy John Taibi and I spent many a day along the former Pennsylvania RR Middle Division chasing trains. As the light failed in the evening we would get a pizza and a six pack of Coke and head for Port Tower in Newport, PA. The operator, Ed, was not a rail-fan but would be an invaluable source of inside information once we could get him to stop talking about his beloved Pittsburgh Pirates.

So, as Tony Koester advises; seek out the professionals. Talk to them and learn from them. Invite them to your op sessions. Most of all shake their hands and thank them for helping we amateurs to better understand this fascinating business of prototype railroading.



Here are two more cabooses from the privately owned fleet at the Hocking Valley. Will we ride on one of these? It's hard to tell because there are many more! Photos of others can be found at [http://www.hvsry.org/about\\_us/cabooses.htm](http://www.hvsry.org/about_us/cabooses.htm) Photos courtesy of Hocking Valley Scenic Railway.



## ALL ABOARD

### Dennis McGeeney

The duties of a locomotive engineer on the Reading Lines were many. Working on the extra board you could be called at any hour of any day for many different types of runs. One of the trains we could be called for was the wreck train. At the time the sixteen hour rule dictated that we could only actually operate the train for sixteen hours; however there was often non operating time before and after making for long days. When called for a wreck train you could be on duty for several days at a time. A wreck train was in the charge of the wreckmaster, not the conductor. A wreck on the railroad was not good news. Blocked or torn up tracks stopped trains, cutting off revenue and the main objective of the railroad was to get traffic rolling as fast as possible. There were several types of wreck trains. One type would have flat cars carrying sections of rail already attached to ties to hurriedly replace damaged track. Another type of wreck train consisted of hoppers filled with fresh ballast to be spread on the repaired track at the wreck site. The type we usually think of, however, is the actual "big hook" wreck train. On the Reading this typically consisted of two locomotives, two box cars for parts and supplies, a baggage car, a sleeping car, a dining car, several empty flat cars, a Browning self propelled 250 ton crane with it's own idler flat car and a caboose.

The men needed to work the wreck rode the sleeper or the caboose to the scene. Most of these men had long years of seniority with the railroad and plenty of experience working wrecks. This experience was important for several reasons. There might be a ruptured fuel tank on a locomotive pouring thousands of gallons of fuel on the ground or into a waterway. There might be placarded cars transporting hazardous materials such as chemicals, LPG, explosives or other dangerous cargo. Safety came first on a wreck; deal with spills and dangerous loads and then get

the wreck out of the way and the track replaced and operational.

At times a second big hook might be brought in to deal with a difficult wreck. This might be a locomotive over a steep embankment, or to speed up the removal of wrecked cars from the torn up track. There would be one crane working at each end of the wreck in such a case. It took some time to set the crane up to work the wreck. There heavy hooks and chains at each corner of the crane which were hooked to the track. At the center of the crane was a heavy stabilizer which was lowered on to the ties beneath the crane. Finally, there was a heavy steel beam which extended out and then stabilized against the ground. The crane had two hooks on the boom. The smaller hook was used to move track or empty rail cars. The big hook with all it's attached steel cables had a 250 ton capacity and could lift loaded rail cars and even locomotives. The dining car had a chef and the meals were top shelf.. The wreckmaster would order us to the sleeper for eight hours rest.

Other equipment on the wreck scene might include a Jordan spreader to spread the new ballast or clear the ditches alongside the track. There might also be a ballast tamper to tamp down the renewed roadbed. Most often the wrecked cars and locos would be moved in the clear to be picked up later and the repair of the track would proceed.

My purpose in these stories of the real railroad is to show how you could replicate these wreck trains and situations on your model railroad. There is a lot more to railroading then moving freight from A to B. These extra situations can add so much realism to running your layout.

To help illustrate Dennis McGeeney's All Aboard article about working on a work train in this issue; here are a couple of pieces of equipment which might have been in the work train. Both are Lehigh and Hudson River cars. The bright yellow flanger is an ex New York, Ontario & Western car. The other is a fairly lightweight crane. Warwick, NY Feb. 1969 photos by Dan Mulhearn



## CLOSE CALL

### The Reminiscences of David Robinette

After five years I graduated from high school and went job hunting. Between June 6, 1947 and September 23 I found work painting two houses. Then I went to work for Richland Motor Sales, a dealership located across the street from my old high school. Every day at noon I would wander over to the school and briefly wish I was back; but then I needed a salary so went back to work. In 1947 there were no used car lots as today; garages might have one used car for sale in the back. I was given work cleaning parts, helping the shop mechanics and running the wrecker. We had to tow a log truck which had wrecked and had the rear wheels and axles up on the back bed of the truck. After hooking it to the wrecker I needed to tow it to Bandy, VA. During that trip I crossed the railroad tracks 23 times. At Bandy I had to go over a high

crossing and through a gate to deliver the log truck. The wrecker hung up on the crossing and the running board was up against the rail. It was necessary to slowly raise the truck a little bit at a time to get it free. While I was doing this, hear comes the steam whistle blowing in the distance. A train was coming! I started to work as fast as I could and just did make it in time to clear the crossing and allow the train to pass. After the train went by I parked the truck and closed the gate to keep the cattle from getting loose. So, you can have close calls anywhere there is a railroad track.

Editor's note; This is one of a number of stories of David's memories of growing up along the N&W in south western Virginia. We have several more to publish.

Here are a couple of more pictures to help illustrate Dennis McGeeney's accompanying ALL ABOARD article about working on a wreck train. These slides were shot in February of 1969 at the New Haven's Maybrook, NY yard. This was the yard where traffic to and from New England via the Poughkeepsie Bridge was interchanged with the Erie, The New York, Ontario and Western, the Lehigh and New England and the Lehigh and Hudson River; which brought traffic off the Reading at Allentown as part of the famed alphabet route to the mid west. Imagine the elegance of traveling in that wood sided passenger train in it's heyday. Now it is the sleeping and eating car for crews out working on wrecks. The building to the rear is the locomotive and car shop at this busy yard. The entire area taken up by this large yard is now paved over as a very large truck terminal and the Poughkeepsie Bridge is a scenic walkway. Photos by Dan Mulhearn



Now that Up The Holler is a monthly publication, your Pike Ad support is much more important. If you don't already have an ad, please consider buying one. We can help with the art work if necessary.



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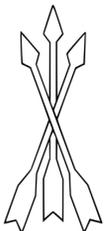
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## Upcoming Coal Division Events

**May 11**

**“Steel is King”**

**Parkersburg, WV**

**June 8**

**Special Outing at the Hocking Valley Scenic Railway**

**Nelsonville, OH**

**July 13**

**St. Albans Depot**

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**August 10**

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