



# UP THE HOLLER

## Newsletter of Division 9 THE COAL DIVISION

### Mid Central Region NMRA

August 2013



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#### HEAD OF THE HOLLER

**Bob Weinheimer MMR**

I think it is fair to say all who attended our July meeting had a good time. The weather was perfect for the event and we all ate our share of hot dogs, hamburgers, salads, and other delicacies. I particularly want to thank Dan Mulhearn and Charlie Venable for the hot job of grilling the meats. Thanks are also due to all the other members who brought the remaining items to make the cook out a complete meal. In the process of preparing for this event Jerry Doyle purchased a new propane fueled grill; the members voted to reimburse him and the grill now resides at the depot for future events. Gary Burdette describes some of the other events of the day in his column so I won't repeat them here. I am certainly in favor of doing this again next year.

That Saturday was a long one for me. As many of you know, as soon as the meeting ended I hit the road for Atlanta and the Peach Tree Express, the 2013 NMRA National Convention. We were one of the better represented MCR Divisions with Dan Mulhearn, Ed Keith, and Kelley and Debbie Massie also in attendance. I had not attended a national convention since 1990 when it was in Pittsburgh. I now wish I had not been so frugal! What happens at a national convention? The best answer I can offer is that it is like a regional convention on steroids. There were about 1400 attendees, six clinics going at any one time, the contest, silent auction, door prizes, layout tours, I think you get the idea. The crowning event is the National Train Show. I sure did my part for the economy by making a number of nice purchases. NMRA's national officers and board members were all present throughout the week and available to all members for questions and comments. I even found myself seated next to Charlie Getz at one of the clinics.

Dan and I both entered items in the contest, see Dan's My Word column for the results. I must say that the model contest made a mixed impression on me. We typically see more models in an MCR contest but every model I saw in Atlanta was of very high quality so that more than made up for the small number.

My space in this columns is filling far too quickly so I'll cut things off here and tell more at the August membership meeting. In the meantime, since we will not have a regional convention in 2014, I do hope you strongly consider going the Cleveland July 13 through 20 for next year's national convention. It won't be that close for a while, future conventions are in Portland, OR, Indianapolis, and Orlando so make the most of this opportunity to enjoy the NMRA on a national scale.

#### MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The August meeting of Division 9 will be on Saturday, August 10 at 2PM, social hour and judging at 1PM. Location will be the C&O Depot at St. Albans, WV. This month's contest subject is dioramas or modules. Please bring something you no longer need for the raffle.

## FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary J. Burdette MMR

“Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their neighbor.” “Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their neighbor.” Many may remember these words by Deputy Sheriff Barney Fife when he solicited help from the locals in rescuing Helen and Andy from the old mine in an episode of *The Andy Griffith Show*. While just lines in a situation comedy, similar requests have been made in real-life times of need. Such is the case, now, with the St. Albans depot.

Those in attendance at the July meeting saw the destruction and resulting mess caused by the automobile plowing into the corner of the station. The good news is that very good insurance coverage will provide monies for a restoration of that damage. The bad news is that other areas require work which must be funded. We hope to get the contractors who will be fixing the auto damage to give us some estimates on what needs to be done, the priority of needs, and a general cost. Perhaps, some of the work may be done by volunteers, such as replacing the drip edge and baseboard trim along the bottom of the structure. Some areas are sound and just need painted. Other items will require a more experienced crew. We will have a report for the St. Albans C&O Modelers and Museum and Division 9 members in the fall.

The guys at SACOMM have already received a price of \$3,100, from St. Albans Windows to replace the three windows in the west end with historically correct wooden ones to keep with the National Historic Register requirements. I think the City has pledged \$500. Perhaps, we can help by kicking in our “two cents worth”. Please consider this, as we have informally discussed it but have not yet made a commitment. Two of the windows are in a small office area off the freight room. We are looking at cleaning it out, then arranging a work area along one wall with tool board, work bench, saw horses, etc. The small room could double as an office space and hobby desk. New windows here would help bring that part of the building “up to snuff,” and give us a nice room to boot. We will be scheduling a clean-up work session soon.

I really feel that there is excitement within Division 9 and a rejuvenated enthusiasm within SACOMM as a result of our joint discussions and picnic last month. Thanks to all who contributed food, drinks, and time to make the cook out a success. Much conversation was directed at working together and being Partners in Education and Friends of the Depot. Old acquaintances were renewed and new ones formed. Tony Puccini prepared a custodial schedule and Dennis McGeeney and John Stephens signed up immediately. Paul Lapointe is researching the cost of light-weight fold-down tables. Dennis’ wife, Donna, is working on a raised letter Division 9 wooden sign to display. Bob Osburn has looked at some of the

wood-working projects we can tackle. Jim Butler sent the SACOMM Constitution for me to review some of the goals of that group to help us integrate those of Division 9. Paul Tabit and I discussed some options we have with the city (and others) who would be willing to help us with different tasks. Tony has prepared a list of some things to get started on, and Jerry Doyle is looking at a presentation with mission statement, goals, etc. as a foundation for all our efforts. Several of us have looked at adding to the displays and offering activities at the station for public consumption, as it were.

Jim has said the goal has been that the St. Albans Depot be a destination with the model railroad over at the SACOMM building as a supplement to the study of the history of the town, county, and railroad which is presented at the station - a total historic package. Division 9 members (many of whom are in both groups) may certainly be able to help here. One main area will be to establish some regular hours. I mentioned having a play (“Chessie Finds a Home,” or “John Henry: The Black Sampson”) at the depot, along with an “Art Show at the Depot” highlighting various pieces of railroad art which are currently at the station or which I and others may place on display. It was noted that the Albans Players would probably love to present the plays. So, we might get the local actors and artists to get “on board” as Partners in Education.

As things come together, I hope to integrate some of the West Virginia Learning Standards into our program. In that manner, we will have a sound foundation from which to request grants based upon educational goals and needs. When we get a few easy projects completed such as painting the safety fence (I have a gallon of silver paint), painting the roll-up freight door, and “skinning out” the freight platform, we will be showing some progress which might inspire others to help either physically or monetarily. More has been discussed and more will come later. Put on your “thinking caps” and come up with ideas, or think of items you may have to display, of money-making plans, activities, and so on.

I have volunteered to help take some of the weight off of Matt Crouch’s shoulders as one who has typically kept the doors open, with periodic help from others. As soon as I agreed to pick up a little of this role, several of the guys said, “You are not alone.”

So, “Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their neighbor!” From what I have seen, these “good men” are stepping up and lifting up those who have gotten her where she is today, and the “Old Girl” is in good hands!

## MY WORD

### Dan Mulhearn, Editor

One of these days I will get to talk about the MCR Convention in Dayton; but meanwhile, Bob Weinheimer and I are just back from a wonderful National Convention. Division members Ed Keith, Kelley Massie and his wife Debbie also attended. The tours and clinics were superb, and the train show was outstanding, as well as expensive. But I have now upgraded my Digitrax system to radio/duplex. Bob won third prize in scratch built

freight cars for his C&O 60' hicube boxcar which re-earned it's already won merit award. I got the photo contest Chairman's Award for best special effects; although the storm clouds and the shaft of sunlight were supplied by God, not me. The photo is scanned by me from a 35MM slide and the only alteration is a slight adjustment to the contrast. Taken at Provo UT 5/24/80. Plan on Cleveland in 2014!!



## MOVING SALE

Coal Division member Dwight Sherman and his wife Marilyn will be moving south shortly to be closer to their daughters. Alas, his railroad will very soon be history. The good news is that Dwight will be having a professionally managed moving sale that includes the model railroad equipment.

The sale will be Monday August 12 from 5:30PM to 7:30PM. The sales agent says this time was chosen as it should be convenient to stop in on the way home from work.

The sale will be at 319 Oak Tree Lane in South Charleston. Directions: from the intersection of Chestnut

Street and MacCorkle in South Charleston (near the Dunbar Bridge) proceed 2.1 miles south on Chestnut over hill and dale, past Mallory Airport, to Oak Tree Lane which bears off to the left. Dwight's home is on the right near the far end of the road.

The items available are all HO scale and mostly RTR cars from Athearn and Atlas with a few KD and Red Caboose. Era covers the past 100 years or so. Most will be priced around \$10 with the KD and RC cars about \$15. There are a few locomotives, P2K and Atlas, some NCE DCC equipment, and numerous structures. An inventory of the cars and locomotives will be available at the August 10 meeting.

## NMRA InfoNet News

### Tom Draper

A Message from Mike Brestel, current Publications Department Manager and soon to be NMRA Worldwide at Large Director:

On July 12 I leave my position as NMRA Publications Department Manager, and *NMRA InfoBlast* editor Tom Draper has asked me to fill in our Region and Division leaders about our current activities.

The Publications Department is responsible for overseeing these major areas: The *NMRA Magazine*, NMRA Data Sheets, the NMRA Calendar Project, NMRA Books, and the *NMRA eBulletin*.

**NMRA Magazine** – White River Productions (Kevin EuDaly) continues to manage the production of the *NMRA Magazine*. Stephen and Cinthia Priest of Paired Rail Railroad Productions (PRRP) are our editors, and in addition, Cinthia has become our ad sales manager. White River and PRRP have successfully maintained the quality of all aspects of the *NMRA Magazine*, with an emphasis on NMRA organizational and member activities and accomplishments. We continue to watch the growth of electronic magazine distribution in the model railroad world, but at this time we do not plan to convert to electronic publishing.

**NMRA Data Sheets** – Over the past year we have moved Data Sheets back into the Publications Department. David Johnson, Data Sheet Manager, and Van S. Fehr, Assistant Manager, are working to establish new standards for Data Sheet content and presentation, and several new sheets are in preparation. I think you'll be pleased with what you see!

**NMRA Calendar Project** – We are in the process of selecting images for the 2014 NMRA Calendar, which as you know is an NMRA U.S. fundraising project. After the death of John Roberts, Tom Morrison and I remain to manage this project. We are on track to release the 2014 calendar in late 2013. As always, the calendar will be available to non-U.S. members for a nominal fee plus postage. Non-U.S. members are encouraged to contact HQ at [nmrahq@aol.com](mailto:nmrahq@aol.com) if they are interested in a calendar.

**NMRA Books** – We continue to offer current NMRA books to members and the public, but develop-

ment of new titles has been slowed by difficulties in obtaining copyright clearance for proposed projects. This is another area where we feel the loss of John Roberts. We will be looking for additional worthy titles to develop in the coming months.

**NMRA eBulletin** – You have all no doubt received the *NMRA eBulletin*, which is prepared bi-monthly by Gerry Leone, Chuck Dijak, and Tracy McKibben, and distributed through the efforts of Page Martin, Ben Sevier, and the NMRA HQ staff. The *eBulletin* has already proven to be an invaluable tool for the dissemination of fast-breaking news. Our biggest problem – and frustration – has been that we do not have the current email address for many of our members. You can help us get the *eBulletin* to your members by making sure they notify HQ when their email addresses change. A quick note to [nmrahq@aol.com](mailto:nmrahq@aol.com) will do the trick, or contact this url:

<<http://www.nmra.org/member/content/member-info-update>>

I've really enjoyed this past year as Publications Department Manager. It may actually be the best job in the whole NMRA! Fortunately, Mr. Don Phillips, who has extensive experience in the business world, with United Press International, and as an NMRA volunteer, has agreed to take over as the new Manager. All of the current Pubs Committee – Larry DeYoung, Tony Koester, Gerry Leone, and I – will happily continue (as long as Don will have us).

*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.*

*If the person bolding a region or division office changes, or their email address changes, please contact me at [tedraider@aol.com](mailto:tedraider@aol.com) with the corrected information*

Regards,

Tom Draper – HLM, DSA, FA  
Director – Support Services

## RAFFLE REPORT

### Paul Lapointe

Last months raffle brought in a respectable \$49. Thanks go out to everyone who donated raffle items or purchased a ticket. It was good to be back at the St. Albans depot after two months absence.

That being said, however, the raffle will again be off for two more months! August 10, I'll be in Kent Ohio

attending a Steel Mill Modelers Seminar and giving a clinic. Should be very interesting...more on that later.

September's meeting is at Mark Maynard's house in Portsmouth so the next raffle will be at October 12<sup>th</sup>'s meeting. Meanwhile, keep bring in your items!

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

Meeting Called to order at 2:00

Raffle and contest were held before the business meeting.  
 Raffle proceeds were \$49.

**Superintendent Report**

Bob mentioned on Monday August 12 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Dwight Sherman's railroad collection will be sold by a third-party. The NMRA National Convention will begin tomorrow in Atlanta, GA.

**Division Clerk Report**

Minutes from the May meeting approved as printed in the newsletter.

Treasury balance is currently \$8,713 No checks were written since the last meeting.

Purchase of the grill for \$211 was approved.

**Assistant Superintendent Report** Gary brought \$1.46 from shirts. He also mentioned the possibility of estate planning and the Division. Some groups have pursued this as a fund raising source.

Gary is now the SACOM VP in charge of the depot. He mentioned some immediate projects and displays.

**Membership Chair**

No new members to report, some members are nearing the expiration of their membership.

**Achievement Program**

No report.

**Newsletter Chair**

No report.

**Clinic Chair**

No report.

**Travels with Dennis**

Dennis reported on the Hocking Valley trip.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

Tony Puccini showed a depot duty list for cleanup after our meetings.

Jerry Doyle reported on the June Division 6 meeting at Marion, Ohio.

**Announcements**

Nathan Robinette reported on his father's health.

Dan Mulhern asked we keep Clint Foster and his wife in our thoughts due to some health concerns.

**Next Meetings**

August 10 St Albans Depot

September 14 Portsmouth OH Mark Maynard's

October 12 St. Albans Depot

Adjourned 2:31.

Respectfully Submitted

Jerry Doyle, MCR Division 9 Clerk

**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.

September	September 2
October	September 30
November	October 28
December	December 2
January	December 30
February	January 27
March	February 24
April	March 31
May	April 28

## The Reminiscences of David Robinette

It's six AM, time to get up. Mother and Dad were already up fixing breakfast. They built a fire in the old cook stove to bake fresh biscuits and apple butter; plus bacon from the smokehouse. On occasion they would fix ham or shoulder. This brings me to my job. When I was old enough, I would feed the hogs two times a day. The pig pen and the outhouse sat down on the riverbank across the main highway, US 19 which is now US 460. Both the pig pen and the outhouse buildings were four feet in the air. This was so when the river rose we did not have to move the pigs and we could use the outhouse. Everything the pigs ate, weeds, grass, chop and their drinking water had to be carried across the road to the pen. The pen needed cleaning daily to keep the hogs healthy. Dad would pick two six week old pigs in May then in November or December a year later, Dad would take a day off and we would kill the hogs. We would render lard, make good sausage and cut tenders some of which we canned. I had the job of filling the holes in the hams with salt. Those salt covered hams, shoulders, bacon sides, ribs and pig feet were all good eating. They were worth the six months of work and would provide fresh salted meat for up to eight months.

During the day I enjoyed loafing around the railroad station, which was in hollering distance of our front gate. They had two passenger trains, westbound at 10:30AM and eastbound at 6:30PM. Freight number 86 usually went by in the afternoon around four to four-thirty. In the fall it would pick up sheep, hogs and cattle which had been grass fed all summer and were headed to the slaughter house. The station was the place to be to find out all about what was going on, who was shipping what and where it was going. The animals to be shipped were walked from the farms to the cattle pen, sometimes taking up to two days to herd them in. Some stayed in pens overnight so they could be watered before loading. I helped load hogs, sheep and cattle in the cars. I saw yearling and young horses unloaded from the railroad and trucked to farms to rest and feed before being sent to the slaughter houses. Railroads had a time schedule to keep and they had to keep moving in order to avoid having to unload the animals for rest and feed before going on. They could save expenses and delays by delivering the animals before they had to be rested off the cars.

While I loafed around the station, I tried to get the morse code but couldn't, so being a station agent was out for me. But, I did learn a lot about railroading, how they ran on schedule and all watches were set to the same minute so mistakes were unheard of. This was probably the beginning of UPS, Federal Express and the others to whom timely delivery is so important. Railway Express started it all. The station agent had to be able to take messages in morse code and write out orders for the engineers and conductors on all trains, along with a copy as proof of

what was written in case of something happening. The agent would hand up the orders to the engineer or fireman, whichever was on the correct side to receive it. The N&W used P type hooks with the messages and orders under a clip. The order had to be read aloud to all involved in running the train. The agent was in charge of getting bedding placed in all cattle cars to be loaded. He also had to handle all Rail Express (LCL) loaded or unloaded from passenger or freight trains along with all the records involved with this. In the 40s and 50s station agent Graham Massie, at Pounding Mill, VA would teach telegraphy. He taught about twenty five or thirty people and when they finished they could get hired by N&W somewhere. I was out of that job so I found a job as a handy man at an auto dealership; the kind of thing I've done all my life.

Well, back to the station, all the boys and girls had ball games to play when there were no vehicles in the way. A big deal was going in and weighing yourself on the freight scales. When an extra train, a special or a delayed trip was coming the station was the place to get all the information. You could stand out front and look across five railroad bridges, a short tunnel and a little more than a mile of track. At night the oncoming headlight was just a speck until it got within about one quarter mile.

Detouring passenger trains were allowed two hours to go to Bluefield WV but most times they were only an hour and one half late and those engineers knew where to pull the throttle and where to let off to make up time. Now, loafing around the station there were plenty of mail bags to load. When I was ten years old the mail bags would weigh almost as much as I did; but of bunch of us boys would throw the bags onto the passing trains. Once I got the bag on my shoulder but since the car was tilted away I missed the door and the bag fell to the ground. I later learned to stand at a spot where the car was not so tilted and threw many a mail bag aboard the train. You had to have some way to pass the time before radio and TV. So you made your games. As late as the 50s the section worker lived in the section house and I played with his boy and girl. When it rained the water would pour off the big roof on the back of the station and all the boys would put on their shorts and run from end to end enjoying the shower.

We had a lot of happy times there. Sometimes there would be an unusual whistle and the agent would say so and so is running today as he had his own whistle which sounded different from the others. Sure enough he would be in the engineers seat when it went by. Freight 86 would have a pusher engine out of Richlands to push to Bluefield. So many, many times I have stood by the tracks and counted the cars. The muck would come up between the tires until the rail got so loose the section men had to come and deal with it. Look for another story next time!

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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**THOMAS SUBDIVISION**  
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**NEW RIVER GORGE SUBDIVISION**  
Clint Foster Superintendent  
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Bringing a little bit of West Virginia to the rest of America  
a few tons at a time



**John Harris, Chief Engineer**  
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## Upcoming Coal Division Events

**August 10**

**St. Albans Depot**

**Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue**

**St. Albans, WV**

**September 14**

**Mark Maynard's Home**

**Portsmouth, OH**

**October 12**

**St. Albans Depot**

**Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue**

**St. Albans, WV**