



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9 THE COAL DIVISION

Mid Central Region NMRA

April 2012



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HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Bob Weinheimer MMR

I want to start by thanking Jim Butler and Matt Crouch of SACOM and Coal Division member Bob Mershimer for making the arrangements for our March meeting at the St. Albans C&O depot. Unfortunately, rail traffic was low and only one train went by while I was there. On the other hand, that let Paul LaPointe present his great scenery clinic without interruption. If you weren't there you missed a great clinic. At least one member has already started using Paul's techniques on his layout. This meeting was Paul's opportunity to try the clinic on us; he will be presenting it in Pittsburgh at the Mid Central Region Convention later in April.

We just finished a good weekend at the Collis P. Huntington Model Railroad Club's Dunbar train show. John Harris and Gary Burdette combined to add to the features of our display. We talked to a number of potential members, we will just have to wait to see if they join. We also discussed improvements to the display. John will be developing a proposal that we should be able to discuss over the summer. If approved, I expect to see a nice professional looking backdrop much like you would see at a trade show. This will greatly improve our appearance at train shows and should attract more visitors to our booth.

Dennis McGeeney is working diligently on the June 23 Potomac Eagle trip. While he will be unable to attend our April meeting, I stand ready to take your checks and pass them on to him. As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, the last day to sign up and pay is May 12.

June 16 will see us in Marion, Ohio as guests of MCR's Buckeye Division. The day will feature several clinics including one each by Coal Division members Jerry Doyle and Paul LaPointe. With three rail lines passing the meeting venue, there should be plenty of action. I also understand that our hosts will be providing lunch at no cost to us. Given the distance (Marion is an hour north of Columbus) and the Potomac Eagle trip the following weekend, I don't expect a huge Coal Division turnout, I do hope you prove me wrong. I have told Buckeye Division Superintendent Bob Lee that I don't think a joint business meeting is necessary. If there is something that needs to be brought up we can do that.

I want to close by thanking the membership for their continued faith in Gary and me as evidenced by our reelection to our current offices. I was really surprised to hear that about half of you mailed in your ballots even there were no real choices! We will strive to do our best to serve you during the next two years.

NEXT MEETING

The April meeting of The Coal Division will be held on Saturday, April 14 at West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts at Teays Valley. Social hour and model judging are at 1PM and the meeting commences at 2PM. The April contest will be passenger cars. Please bring your models. The clinic will be a look back at the "Action Road" the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad.

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary J. Burdette MMR

"If it had been a snake it would have bitten me." How many times have we heard that old saying as we have looked and looked for something, "right under our nose" requiring numerous searches before we actually located the item. Sometimes, we have stumbled upon the presence of something interesting that we didn't realize existed, but was there all along. Such was the case with me this past weekend at the annual St. Albans C&O Modelers and Museum Modelers Weekend at Hawk's Nest, WV.

As a C&O modeler and historian, I am aware of the existence of many of the old towns along the line in the New River Gorge area. Most notable, of course, is Thurmond, the Dodge City of the East. I have visited there many times taking pictures, measuring structures and watching trains. Prince is another favorite town with it's beautiful art deco depot with it's atrium windows, Chessie Cat floor emblem and the huge coal mine mural on the wall. I once boasted I had the only model of the Prince depot in the world as I had never seen another one. I know there are several such models as of this writing. However, I know I am, still, the only one who has former Prince Station Agent Marvin Plumley's autograph and Amtrak stamp on the inner roof section of their model. So, there! Marvin has been a friend to the C&O Historical Society for years and many of the guys have accompanied him on numerous railfan trips. One such trip was the scheduled outing for this year's modeler's weekend; Nuttall, WV with Marvin as one of our guides.

I knew Nuttallburg had once existed as I had seen pho-

tos of the depot, tipple and a couple of houses. Little did I realize that it still exists, in a manner of speaking. As soon as I heard that a field trip to the restored tipple was in the offing, I was raring to go. I quickly discovered that the National Park Service has restored the old tipple and uncovered the foundations and footers of numerous old structures as well as a bank of a couple of dozen coke ovens. After a circuitous trip down in to the gorge, we reached the valley floor and came upon what remained of the old mining community. The relics just mentioned were fascinating with plaques showing old photos depicting the active days of the town. The keynote feature, however, was the rebuilt coal tipple complete with trackage. Taking in all that was there, we all realized what a thriving community it once was. A school, church, company store, depot and many houses surrounded the old tipple making up a self-contained entity within the deep confines of this remote area. At one time there were several villages up and down the old C&O with similar stories. For one modeling coal country, this place helps capture the look and feel of the history being recreated.

So, having traveled all around this little pocket many times over the years, I finally uncovered the "snake" that is Nuttall. It did indeed bite me, injecting a great deal of history, nostalgia and fascination for life in the Coal Division into my veins. The fun of the trip and time spent with my C&O buddies has certainly been a most pleasurable experience. Hopefully, you'll be snake bitten soon also.

A MODELER'S NUGGET FOR APRIL

Bring Life To Your N Gauge Mountains

Tony Puccini

It was a dark and stormy night. I had just finished putting the last tree in my newly created mountain range. While sitting back to give my work a critical look I realized that something was missing. My mountains looked like everyone else's mountains. I wanted something unusual.

The very next day, while I was outside trimming my bushes, the neighbor's beagle came by to visit. Now this is a very friendly dog and I enjoy his company. After a few moments the dog sat down and scratched at a flea that was located behind his right ear. This is when I was struck by inspiration!

I quickly gathered twelve fleas from my little furry friend. The fleas were placed in a bottle and later that day I spray painted them white. I then released the fleas on my mountain range. The fleas are exactly the size of an N scale mountain goat! Every once in awhile, a flea will jump from peak to peak and the illusion is just what I had hoped to achieve! Now my mountains really are alive! You also can achieve the same effect.

I hasten to mention that no fleas were harmed in the creation of this scenario. Happy April!

TRAVELS WITH DENNIS

THE POTOMAC EAGLE EXCURSION

Dennis McGeeney

Saturday, June 23, 2012, the date for the Coal Division Potomac Eagle excursion is approaching rapidly. A great deal of planning has been done for this trip and several members have already gotten their payments to me at the last meeting in St. Albans. The railroad has advised that if we sell twenty tickets we receive two free tickets which we may raffle off.

We will meet on the 23rd at 11:00 AM at Mario's Italian Restaurant at 33 South High St in Romney, WV (304-822-7776). There will be an opportunity to order from their five page menu and enjoy fellowship prior to our train ride.

The excursion itself departs Romney at 1:00 PM following the South Branch of the Potomac River and we arrive back in Romney at about 4:30 PM. The ticket office is an old B&O wagon top caboose and our motive power will be a C&O F7 diesel. We will also have an opportunity to observe the other equipment of the South Branch Valley RR. There is a possibility that we will be given a special photo runby at Romney after our return from the excursion. We will be assigned a car with tables for our comfort and to enable fellowship during the trip. As we travel the route we will see a Sears and Roebuck kit built home which was delivered by rail. There are several stone buildings crafted by German stonemasons in the early 1800s. The railroad reports that on ninety eight percent of trips bald eagles are seen from the train.

The day of our trip will be one of the longest days of the year for sun light. It is 232 miles from Charleston to Romney so some may want to consider making an overnight trip of it. There are several places to stay in the

Romney area. The Koolwink Motel on Rte 50 (304-822-3595) is clean and comfortable and features a fifties motif. The Hampshire House (304-822-7172) offers luxury rooms and fine dining. The South Branch Inn in Romney offers 61 rooms with many amenities (866-492-3122 www.southbranchinn.com). For campers there is the Wapocoma campground right on the South Branch with 200 sites (304-822-7003 www.wapocomacampground.com).

There are many close by attractions should you decide to make a multi day trip of it. At Cumberland, MD is the five mile long ex B&O yard and shops as well as the scenic railroad trip over the former Western Maryland to Frostburg. At Elkins and Durbin, WV there are several scenic railroad options available. You can work your way down to Cass and ride to Spruce Knob behind steam. Other attractions nearby are Seneca Rocks, Seneca Cavern, the National Radio Astronomy Center, Harpers Ferry, Antietam Battlefield and the beautiful Potomac Highlands.

I will be in Maine for our April meeting but you can get your checks to Bob or Gary. You may mail your check to me at 509 Water St Summersville WV 26651 and call me anytime at 304 872-7262. You can bring your own food and drinks and anyone and everyone are invited to join us. Cost is \$42.00 per person, six to sixteen years old is \$20.0 and less than six years old rides free. I am really looking forward to seeing you there! PS parking meters in Romney are free on weekends. **Please note that all payments must be received by May 12.**

Check out the photos below and on page 5



Passing a Farm south of Springfield, WV
Photo courtesy Potomac Eagle



Passengers enjoy the view of The Trough
Photo courtesy Potomac Eagle

MY WORD

Dan Mulhearn, Editor

I don't know if the mild winter and early spring is to blame; but my model railroading juices are really flowing. Several of us from the Pocahontas Chapter NRHS set up our HO modules for the first time in several years at the Dunbar train show this past weekend. After some wiring glitches and not a little head scratching (not as a result of Tony's fleas!) we got things running pretty well and had an enjoyable weekend. The Dunbar show is a rather small venue but the hospitality of the CPH modelers was wonderful. I also enjoyed looking over the dealers who reminded me of the old swap meet type shows where you could pick up a diamond in the rough at a great price. We also enjoyed visiting with Bob, John and Gary who were present to staff the Coal Division booth. Bob Weinheimer was kind enough to host an impromptu op session on the Pennsylvania Southern for the Pocahontas group on Saturday evening. We did have to send the jitney to rescue Ben and Charlie when they outlawed out on the line with a heavy Waynesburg Turn.

There is a lot to look forward to in the near future. My track and wiring is proceeding slowly but surely on the Clinch Valley Branch of my future N&W Pocahontas Division layout. The end of this month will see the MCR

Convention at Pittsburgh and I am looking forward eagerly to that. I will get to see my buddy, Bruce Knapp of Cincinnati, who Nina and I got to know at last years Sacramento National. April 20th I will be off to Appomattox VA to operate on Bob Burke's large, CTC controlled Sandy Creek and Southern. Next Thursday will be Bob's Pennsylvania Southern op session, always a pleasure; and Clint's C&O is coming up the end of the month! June will see the Marion meeting and the Potomac Eagle trip. On top of all that, sometime in the next couple of months my old buddy from New Jersey, John Locke and his son will be meeting me in the Altoona PA area for a few days of chasing trains on the old Pennsy main. It is not train related, but we are importing another paramedic from Texas at the ambulance where I work and I am hoping to cut way back on hours worked there. More modeling time!

This month's Coal Division meeting I am hoping to present a picture show from slides I took back in the late seventies and early eighties on the Denver & Rio Grande Western in Colorado and Utah. The Rio Grande was a feisty little operation which hustled to compete with it's much larger competitors.



Both photos,
Price River Can-
yon in the Wa-
satch Mts of
Utah May 1979
photos by DJ
Mulhearn



Both photos are of places you can visit easily from the Romney WV area. On the left is a Western Maryland freight climbing through Helmstetters Curve in April of 1975. In June of 1975 Chessie System abandoned this line in favor of the nearby B&O Sand Patch line. This track is now the route of the Western Maryland Scenic RR with excursions from Cumberland, MD to Frostburg. The second photo is a B&O freight at the historic town of Harpers Ferry, WV. Both photos by DJ Mulhearn, 4/75 and 12/76 dates.

NMRA MCR DIVISION 9
The Coal Division
Teays Valley, West Virginia
February 11, 2012

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Bob Weinheimer at 2:00 PM. Those in attendance introduced themselves. We were visited by Andy Blenko and his son Charlie from MCR Division 2

On a motion by Bill Wadsworth, seconded and passed; the minutes of the January 2012 meeting as published in the newsletter were approved.

Bob Weinheimer's superintendents report mentioned several important topics. Everyone was reminded to look over the candidates for National NMRA office and get their ballots in. The upcoming MCR Convention in Pittsburgh was mentioned and Bob advised making room reservations promptly. Bob noted that the thick schedule normally printed in the **NMRA Magazine** for the upcoming Grand Rapids National Convention would not be forthcoming. All schedules are found on the Convention web site. Those without computer access may obtain a printed schedule from the NMRA.

Assistant Superintendent Gary Burdette continued his discussion of the educational aspects of our outreach to the public. Gary has a lot of good ideas about utilizing our web site to present railroading, both prototype and model to the general public

In the absence of Tony Puccinni there was no report on our Boy Scout outreach

Webmaster Bob W discussed the difficulty of categorizing the hits on our web site with our new ISP.

The AP is warming up with Dennis McGeeney getting his scenery certificate approved. David Robinette will be getting his Structure Certificate. Clint Foster had his scenery judged. Dennis McGeeney is working on getting in his

hours for Chief Dispatcher. Dan Kennedy had his scratch built ATLAS transfer car judged and will soon have his scenery judged. Dan Mulhearn turned in his documentation for his Author Certificate.

Bill Wadsworth reported that ballots for the Division election have been mailed and are due no later than the March meeting.

Membership Chairman John Harris discussed the process by which we receive membership information from the National Office. John also discussed our participation in the upcoming Dunbar train show. Dennis McGeeney spoke on the upcoming Potomac Eagle excursion

Dan Mulhearn invited members to submit articles and input for the newsletter.

There was no old business discussed.

There was no new business discussed.

Announcements were made regarding several upcoming train shows.

Due to the snowy weather and the forecast of more to come the raffle and the clinic were postponed.

The contest was diesel locomotives and the winner was Dan Kennedy's ATLAS transfer car

Again, due to the inclement weather, the meeting was foreshortened and adjourned at 2:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted:
 Dan Mulhearn, acting Division Clerk



On select trips, regular ticket holders may opt for table seating as shown. We will be using a car such as this.

Photo courtesy Potomac Eagle



Boarding passengers at Romney
 Photo courtesy Potomac Eagle

NMRA MCR DIVISION 9
The Coal Division
St Albans C&O Depot, St Albans WV
March 10, 2012

Welcome and Introductions

Bob thanked SACOM for the use of the depot. Matt Crouch gave a short history of the depot and explained how the depot is currently used for functions both railroad and non-railroad.

Clinic: Paul Lapointe – *Appalachians in Eight Inches*.

Division Clerk Report

Minutes no minutes available for the February meeting

Treasurer balance is currently \$8,540

Superintendent Report

Bob reminded members the national election was ongoing.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Gary discussed some our educational efforts with the Education Station.

Achievement Program

David Robinette has submitted paperwork for AP Structure. Dan Mulhern has submitted for author and Clint Foster for Scenery. Dennis McGeeney was awarded his AP certificate for scenery. Mark Maynard has been approved for Electrical Engineer.

Nominations Chair

Election results - Both Bob and Gary were re-elected to Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent respectively.

Membership Chair

Staffing will be needed for the Dunbar train show which is same weekend as SACOM's Hawk's Nest meeting

Travels with Dennis

Dennis mentioned activities that members could do in addition to the train ride at Romney. The deadline will be the May meeting for the June 23 train ride.

Boy Scouts

Tony is now approved by the BSA to award the Railroad merit badge.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Announcements

The Greenbo Show will be next weekend.

WGH Show will be in Cincinnati at the Duke

Energy Center on March 9.

RPM show will be in Philadelphia and Tony will be attending.

Hawks Nest show will be March 30-April 1.

Dan presented certificates for the most annual achievement in Division 9 model contests.

The MCR Regional Convention will be in April.

Next Meetings

April 14 West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts

May 12 Dave Stout's home, Parkersburg, WV

June 16 Joint meeting in Marion, OH

Also Romney train ride June 23.

Contest – Freight Cars



Contest Manager Dan Mulhern presents Gary Burdette MMR with the 2011 Modeler of the Year award for his contest winning entries. Photo by Jerry Doyle

NEWS FROM NATIONAL NMRA INFONET

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

News from the Board meeting:

The NMRA has a new Development Department Manager, charged with seeking out new donation sources and methods, and coming up with ways to expand our fund-raising potential. Alan Anderson of Salt Lake City, UT, volunteered to fill the slot, which had been vacant for several years. In his full-time job, Alan works with a Salt Lake City area chamber of commerce.

The "Cruise Convention" idea was officially declared "not popular enough to pursue." Initial estimates, dictated that the idea receive approximately 800 firm commitments from NMRA members, and only about 300 were received via the survey, which was printed several times in *NMRA Magazine* and also sent to Sacramento convention attendees.

The NMRA is in the final stages of selecting a volunteer Marketing Department Manager. To date, several professional candidates have responded to a "help wanted" ad in *NMRA Magazine*. The Marketing Director will help the

NMRA identify ways to retain and re-rail members, as well as recruit new ones.

Jenny Hendricks, NMRA Administration Director, reports that the number of RailPass members who convert to Regular members has reached the 80% mark. Congratulations to all of you whose hard work has made this goal a reality! Maybe we should try for 90- 100%?

The Celebration of Models in Grand Rapids will introduce a new contest award in memory of Dean Freytag, the "Dean of Styrene" and former national Contest Chair. The award is funded by a donation given to the NMRA in memory of Freytag and is named "The Dean Freytag Industrial Structure Award." The winning structure will be selected by the Contest Chairman.

In other news:

White River Productions, the company that prints *NMRA Magazine*, announced that it has purchased the assets of the now-defunct magazine, *Model Railroad News*.

NMRA Secretary Bob Gangwish reports that the updated version of the Executive Handbook is now posted on www.nmra.org and can be downloaded.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM Bob Weinheimer MMR

Achievement Program activity among our members is really picking up. I noted last month that Clint Foster is now a Master Builder of Scenery and Dan Mulhearn is a Model Railroad Author, I hope their certificates will be arriving shortly. Just a few days ago we received word that David Robinette is a Master Builder of Structures and a Model Railroad Engineer—Electrical. Congratulations to David!

At the Dunbar train show Gary Burdette and I judged a number of modules built by Charlie Venable. A careful inspection showed these modules to contain some outstanding scenery, we judged it to a good solid merit level. The necessary paperwork will be submitted as soon as Charlie can get it together. Charlie's modules contain quite a bit of lighting and animation, we found almost enough for the Electrical Certificate as well. The only thing lacking was a turntable or wye that leads to the need to reverse electrical polarity. I trust Charlie can do something about that, perhaps by building a separate module containing one of these features.



Bob Weinheimer presents a beaming Dennis McGeeney with his scenery certificate.

Photo by Jerry Doyle

So this year the Coal Division has had four certificates approved at the National level; this does not include Charlie's scenery work. As I have said many times before, look over your layout or modules with an eye to the Achievement Program.



Take the HIGH-LINE to Pittsburgh for the 2012 Mid-Central Region Convention!

April 26-29, 2012

EVERYTHING YOU WANT IN A GREAT CONVENTION AND MORE!

**Clinics - Tours - Contests - Non-Rail Activities - Layout Tours
Banquet - Raffle Door Prizes Galore - Railfanning - Great Location**

Our convention hotel, the Pittsburgh Radisson, is just minutes from downtown Pittsburgh, so you'll have the opportunity to see the city, visit Station Square Shops, ride our two historic inclines, railfan and enjoy the sights. Not only that, but right across the road from the hotel is Rook Yard, the former home of the Pittsburgh & West Virginia Railroad, now a part of the W&LE Railroad. You can practically railfan from your hotel room!

Just some of the potential activities you'll find at the HIGH-LINE to Pittsburgh Convention!

A Variety of Rail Tours
Steel Industry History
Hussey Copper
The Bridges of Pittsburgh
Port Authority Light Rail Shops and Ride

Great Clinics
Hands-on clinics
Western Pennsylvania Railroads
Steel and Other Prototype Industries
Operations: Real and Simulated
Modern Railroad Equipment and Practices
Narrow Gauge Railroads, Model and Prototype
Modeling Structures, Rolling Stock & Scenery

Non-Rail Tours
Pittsburgh Glass Factory Make & Take
Just Ducky Tour of Pittsburgh
In-House Clinics for Non-Rails.

Local Attractions
Carnegie Science Center
Station Square Shops

Railfanning
NS & CSX Mainline Action
W&LE Across From the Hotel
Variety of Local Shortlines



For more information as it becomes available, see our convention home page:
www.highlinetopittsburgh.org

MCR CONVENTION

Above see the ad for the upcoming MCR convention. This promises to be a great one, to start with the hotel is across the street from an active rail yard, how long has it been since that has happened?

Pittsburgh is a city with a wonderful steel industry and railroad heritage. The Pittsburgh area also has one of the largest concentrations of highway and railroad bridges you will find, check them out at pghbridges.com.

Pittsburgh is home to more than its share of outstanding museums featuring everything from submarines to dinosaurs. You will also find a wide variety of restaurants featuring cuisines from all over the world. Bring the family, there will be lots of activities for those who are less interested in trains than us.

Mark your calendar for April 26 through 29. You can get registration forms on line or in the soon to arrive *King-pin*. Fill them out, send them in, and have a good time in a fun city.



SHAMOKIN DIVISION
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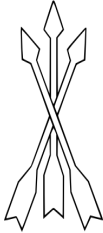


Ed Keith, MMR
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Chesapeake, OH



Jerry Doyle, President
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CRESCENT VALLEY



**THREE ARROWS
RAILROAD**

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An Appalachian Coal Hauling Railroad set in the 50's



Bringing a little bit of West Virginia to the rest of America
a few tons at a time



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NORFOLK AND WESTERN



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Upcoming Coal Division Events

April 14

**West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV**

May 12

Parkersburg, WV

June 16

Marion, OH

June 23

Potomac Eagle Trip

July 14

**West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV**