



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9
THE COAL DIVISION
Mid Central Region NMRA
AUGUST 2010



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FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER Bob Weinheimer MMR; Superintendent

Well, as some of you who subscribe to the magazine formerly known as *SCALE RAILS* have seen; there have been some big changes at the NMRA since our last newsletter! The *NMRA MAGAZINE* and the new logo are the tip of the iceberg. Elsewhere in this issue of *UP THE HOLLER* you can read of the new vice president's (yes, that's plural) as well as other changes in top management ranks. One of those changes, Dave Thornton's appointment as Vice President of Administration, has an effect on our members living in Ohio and Kentucky. Dave had previously been a member of the Board of Directors representing the Central District, a group of States in the middle of the Country (excluding West Virginia, part of the Eastern District) as well as the Nation of Canada. For the moment that director position is vacant. Dave's term was about to expire and he was term-limited; there will be a new Director elected early next year. The Nominating Committee is expected to appoint an interim Director in the near future.

Perhaps the most visible change is the new NMRA logo. The coupler and steam loco driver logo will be retired as supplies of stationery and other goods are exhausted. I must say, my first look at the logo left me mystified. A couple of days after I first saw it I saw the light very clearly. Think, not of some sort of odd symbol, but of the stylized outline of a wheel rolling on a rail. The idea was to get an era neutral logo. Rather than an era specific logo with a steam locomotive driver; this new logo is timeless as the wheel and rail have been around for a long time and will likely continue for some time to come.

Finally, let me say a couple of words about the new *NMRA MAGAZINE*. I first saw it at the National Train Show and it took Mike Brestel telling me what it was before I realized it was something more than a train show directory. I sure hope none of you discarded it as junk mail! Once I got a chance to read it, it was quite interesting. Dave Thornton's article on the history of the NMRA was interesting and I look forward to the second part in the next issue. The unsigned article starting on page 14 was written by Tony Koester, it explains in detail the logic behind the changes and does so better than I can.

These changes may be difficult for some; but I urge you to give them a chance. I firmly believe they will lead to improvement and reinvigoration of the NMRA.

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary Burdette; Assistant Superintendent

In the July UTH our Superintendent, Bob Weinheimer, has continued his discussions of the Achievement Program he had initiated through a series of clinics by listing the requirements needed for one to receive the Golden Spike Award. I followed up last month by looking at some reasons why one may wish to begin to earn various certificates beginning with this first and basic one. Fundamentally, pursuing such a goal is going to promote more enjoyment of our hobby through greater participation. This is the theme we have been promoting all along. We saw thirty guys at the June meeting and thirty at the July meeting. They weren't the same ones. Our latest list has sixty four active members. I've counted forty two names of those who have been attending at one time or another. That is participation in my book. We welcome and encourage you all to attend a monthly meeting.

As many of you know, I enjoy building structures from cardstock. Tony Parrish brought a box of old index type cards he thought I might like to add to my supply "stash". I was thrilled with this gift. Upon closer inspection, I noted these were old computer punch cards from the 1970s era. The interesting thing about these cards was the Chessie System logo on the front. Not only were these cards usable for construction, they were railroad memorabilia. I like to collect such things, and with Tony's permission, offered a couple to anyone who might wish to add them to their own collection. It was ironic that Tony brought a piece of railroad history to the meeting; for we were discussing that very thing this day. Promoting our modeling hobby and railroad interest to the general public through some type of educational program has recently been assigned to us as part of NMRA suggested guidelines. The old punch cards offered an example for us to use as we began some initial discussions. While it may take a while to build an education plan; the first step is brainstorming. Bob, Jerry Doyle and I began the process while traveling to Parkersburg WV to judge portions of a couple of layouts. Bob mentioned adding links to our website. Jerry thought the old slide shows offered by the NMRA were pretty good and could be promoted. Jerry added that the St. Albans C&O Modelers had prepared lesson plans for public presentations. I thought a little tri fold or handbill hand out with railroad information (for instance the meaning of commonly used "jargon" such as gandy dancer or boomer) to be distributed at train shows, displays and hobby shops. The ideas began to fly. I wrote everything down and tried to think of even

more upon returning home since Bob had appointed me Chairman of the Education Committee. Thus, the crux of my presentation at the July meeting: "how might we prepare an educational program".

I'll state a few of the ideas mentioned for those who did not attend, and as a reminder for each of you to share any ideas you may have. For example; Jim Trivett has suggested we offer a direct link to audio of operations on the Pennsylvania Southern to demonstrate a typical operating session. The theme of HISTORY VS HOBBY, or EDUCATION STATION came to mind. I passed around a few photos of a display I once used at train shows and conventions when I was working with the C&O Historical Society. There were prototype photos, drawings, advertisements, models and railroad artifacts displayed on a large tri fold metal background. You may have noticed the easel in Lin's dining area with several photos of railroad maintenance of way equipment and brief descriptions of each. These items could be adapted for shows, libraries and other public locations as a point-of-purchase format similar to that used for advertising by businesses and merchants. John Harris had the "scenery in progress" display he uses for his clinics at the Dunbar Train Show along with my tri fold MCR 2010 Convention backdrop and Division 9 poster. Several contacts were made due to these visual elements. We were thinking that anything three dimensional, informational or instructional could be considered as a way to generate interest and distribute information about our hobby; both model and prototype. One of the most interesting discoveries I made was of the wvculture.org website. There is much to see here but the key feature I noticed was the "On Line Museum".

I could visualize several areas of our own "virtual museum". The MofW photos previously mentioned could form the basis for an entire section. Jim Trivett recently sent several of us some great shots of AK Steel recently. Those shots of the prototype combined with photos of Paul LaPointe's, Dave Stout's and Dan Kennedy's model mills would make great real comparisons showing how to simulate the prototype. There can be so much more. Any ideas? My mind is racing.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Bob Weinheimer MMR

This month I thought I would discuss "Conformity", one of the judging categories in the AP and model contests which seems to cause both modelers and judges some trouble. In its simplest form, it all comes down to how close the modeler comes to reproducing in miniature the prototype. Are the dimensions correct? Is the lettering correct? Did it have the correct number of windows and doors? I think you get the idea.

The problem arises with free lanced items. Let's consider a car I might build for my Pennsylvania Southern. Let's assume I am trying to reproduce a prototype car but paint and letter it for my road. Clearly the car itself would have to be evaluated. The paint scheme needs a good look as well. Does the scheme make sense? Are the various items required by regulation (reporting marks, numbers, dimensional data, etc) present and in the correct place? Are the markings appropriate for the era? We can take this a bit further and consider a kit bash of a couple of ready to run models such as gondolas into a longer gondola. Does the new longer car make structural sense? Is its underframe suitable for such a long car? Will this car collapse under its own weight of the load it carries? Did you modify the brake parts or did you just leave the parts from both cars? The whole idea is to create something that makes good, practical sense; something which might have actually worked in the real world. Similar comments apply to structures.

The score for conformity is, in most cases, zero to twenty five points. When you prepare your documentation, it is essential to present

photos, drawings, or other material that supports the realism of your model. When freelancing this can be a problem. Make sure to address how your model conforms to proper practice for the building, car, or whatever. This is particularly important for structures. Present photos showing the architectural style. Discuss how you may have selectively compressed the building. What might a building inspector think if he or she looked at your model? Just keep in mind that a lack of documentation limits your Conformity score to a maximum of fifteen points.

I will close with an amusing comment on conformity by Frank Koch, Assistant Manager of the AP program and the gentleman who makes all final judgments on "Statements of Qualifications" (SOQ). Frank has also stated elsewhere that his favorite certificate to review is Prototype Models. The following note was posted July 22nd on the NMRAAP Yahoo list and is quoted with Frank's permission.

"For a bit of levity, I got a Prototype Models SOQ in the mail yesterday. The prototype scene had two cows in it, Jersey and Brown Swiss (best guess of breeds) documented with prototype reference cow photos and then photos of the two modeled cows. They matched! Talk about conformity and documentation. The modeled site was Sewell WV on the narrow gauge Mann's Creek Railway and the standard gauge C&O. The modeling and photography were exceptional. His reference photos were historical black & white; so he showed his model photos in both color and black & white for comparison. I was wowed!"

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The August 2010 Coal Division meeting will be held on Saturday, August 14, 2010 at WEST VIRGINIA HOBBIES & CRAFTS at Teays Valley, WV. At 1PM there will be a social hour and judging of items you may need judged (not to mention shopping). The business meeting will commence at 2 PM and will include the usual model contest. The August contest category will be TRACTION EQUIPMENT; so bring along your trolleys, MU cars, mine locos, etc. Following the business meeting will be a clinic given by Paul La Pointe on his model railroad.

The September meeting will be our annual trip to Mark Maynard's home in Portsmouth, OH. We will be treated to Mark's barbecue for lunch. Activities also include the annual flea market (bring those unwanted items), Mark's great layout, a clinic by MCR President Dick Briggs MMR on scenery making, and the usual business meeting. We have also invited members of nearby divisions to join us. Things get started around Noon. We will have directions to Mark's in the next newsletter. You will certainly want to attend, don't miss this event!

A TALE OF THREE GEEPS

Dan Mulhearn

It seemed like a good idea at the time. The plan was to program three LifeLike Proto 2000 Geeps to run together by giving them all the same address. This would provide a set of power without the operator having to "MU" the units. This would help out operators not familiar with Digitrax protocols when, in the hopefully not too distant future, I can host an op session.

Three units were involved; GP18 954, GP9 622 and GP9 710. It was intended to have the horn and bell features operable on 622, which would be in the middle of the consist. The headlight function (F0) would operate the headlight on 710 while F6 would operate the headlight on 954. Now 954 and 622 came in paint schemes which would be seen in my 1968 era scenario. But that old 710 was in the original as delivered "steam era" scheme.

I removed the original lettering and used a "Shell Scale" decal set to put 710 into the so called "half moon" or "hamburger" logo. All three units received Custom Finishing short hood end bell sets, Details West Leslie 5 chime horns and spark arrestors as well as "home made" cab awnings and round plates on the hood ends for the N&W logos. The end plates were made by punching out thin plastic on a hole puncher. All three units were to have the old Soundtraxx "LC" series decoders. These decoders are "plug and play" but there is more to that than meets the eye.

When installing these decoders the speaker wires must be soldered to the decoder and a capacitor must be soldered in line between the

positive speaker lead and the speaker. Also, I soldered the connections for the lights, truck leads and lights rather than using the black plastic crimpers that come with the units. Well, everything went fine with 954 and 622, but old 710 was not going to cooperate. I installed the decoder and for some reason something touched where it should not have and the unit smoked two decoders. I had them repaired and reinstalled them to find that one of the gear sets in 710 was a thumper.

Using a truck/gear tower from another Geep, I put the unit back together and there was a dead short somewhere; smoked another decoder. I then tore the unit down completely and reinstalled the decoder and all components. The unit worked fine but the headlight would not work so I tore down the unit and discovered one of the headlight leads had come loose. I tore down the unit again and resoldered the headlight lead. AHHHH! It all works, but, it sounded funny and I came to realize the decoder in 710 was a second generation unit with a turbocharger. I tore old 710 down again and installed a first generation sound decoder.

I should point out that all this took place over the space of about one years time. When it got to be too much I would lay it all aside and work on something else. But, after all the aggravation and tearing down 710 at least five times; I have a good set of GPs for coal service on the Pocahontas Sub. It is all fun; or were the gods of model railroading telling me I really should have modeled the C&O?

MORE CONVENTION CONTEST PHOTOS

Photos by Donald Wilke

Larry Richards took first place in Off Line Displays with his Putter's Store.

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NEWS FROM NATIONAL Excerpts from NMRA INFONET

There were six candidates for the office of Vice President, vacated by Allen Pollock. Two of the candidates appeared at the Board meeting in person, and five of the six submitted written statements. All statements were read aloud at the meeting. The Board opted to divide the VP workload into two positions, and thus selected two of the candidates to fill those spots: Dave Thornton (former Central District Director) becomes Vice President of Administration, and Bill Kaufman becomes Vice President of Special Projects. The Board's decision for two VPs was based on the fact that a "multiple vice president" model is more in keeping with modern business practices, versus a "single vice president" model, which is based more on our political system. A new Central Director will be selected within the coming weeks to fill out Thornton's term, which expires in July 2011.

The Board listened to final bids for the 2014 National Convention from representatives of Memphis, Cleveland, and Calgary. After intense deliberations and much discussion, Cleveland was selected as the convention city.

Next year's 2011 NMRA Convention in Sacramento has a very special registration pricing deal available. Until September 1, registration is only \$99. For details, visit www.x2011west.org.

Although the "official" numbers aren't in yet, the final count on paid registrations will be over 1600.

Milwaukee's National Train show was larger than the last three Train Shows, and all 345 booths had been sold by the time the doors opened on Friday, July 16.

It was announced at the Board meeting that an anonymous donor has pledged \$250,000 to be used as a matching grant for the model railroad display at the California State Railroad Museum.

Remember that no NMRA dues or funds will be used to build the display, which will be seen by over 600,000 museum visitors a year, so this is a great start to an important project.

The Board also adopted the proposed Recommended Practice for large scale couplers. For those interested, the RP is posted on our website.

Next February's ballot will include candidates for Central District Director, Canadian Director, and Regional Advisory Council Director. For information about Regional Advisory Council Director, contact Bob Ferguson, RAC Director, at racdir@hq.nmra.org.

After serving as head of Meetings and Trade Shows for 24 years, Henry Jordan announced his retirement. His successor is current NMRA Legal Counsel Bob Amsler, who served as Convention Chair for the 2000 "21st Century Limited" Convention in San Jose. The transition is expected to be completed by next February.

Tom Draper, long time National Train Show Floor Manager, also announced his retirement. His replacement will be Jim Lupfer, who has been an NTS assistant for a number of years.

Long time Education Department and Membership Services Department Chair Jan Wescott also announced her retirement due to health problems. Howard Goodwin (Superintendent of the Piedmont Division, SER), has been appointed to replace her as Membership Services Chair. I personally worked with and for Jan for the past 5 years, and I'll truly miss her wit, insights, and guidance.

Treasurer Kevin Feeney retired as of the end of the Milwaukee Convention. He'll be replaced by Frank Koch, the Assistant Manager of the NMRA's Achievement Program.

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Gary Burdette took first place in Passenger Cars with his C&O Railway Express Car.

Photo by Donald Wilke



MEETING MINUTES JULY 10, 2010

Jerry Doyle, Clerk

The business meeting of Division 9 was held at Lin Young's home in Gallipolis, Ohio.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 by Superintendent Bob Weinheimer.

Introductions were dispensed with in the interest of time. Bob recognized the Strogens visiting from Division 2.

Thanks to Lin and Bev for hosting us today.

Division Clerk Report

Minutes – motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes was made and seconded.

Treasury – we have about \$8,600 on hand. We were assessed a \$7 service charge for activity. Bob reported we have found an additional \$100 owed for the convention.

Superintendent Report

National: Diamond Club Donations close to goal, will digitize library holdings.

Appointment of new VP by Board, we are still awaiting word on this.

Bob reported on the educational resources for the Division. Gary Burdette is taking responsibility for this.

Membership directory: delayed until due to the recent takeover of Verizon in WV by Frontier. Many member's emails will change due to this so Bob decided to wait. Bob asked that members note new email addresses on the attendance sheet or by via email to Dan, John, or Bob. Once those changes are all in noted, we will issue another list.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Bob, Jerry, and Gary traveled to Parkersburg to judge Dave Stout and Paul LaPointe's layouts. Gary made Chessie System IBM cards available to members as memorabilia or construction material. Gary discussed the Cairo and Kanawha and some interesting items he found using the NMRA index. Regarding our educational resources Gary shared several ideas. He showed the WV Museum of Culture and History as a potential template that we could use as an educational resource for the Division. Gary showed some booklets he created as another potential educational resource.

Webmaster

After the convention traffic is down substantially.

Achievement Program

Following people have submitted their paper-

work:

Ron Blessing Scenery

Dave Stout Scenery

Paul Lapointe Electrical Engineer

Nominations Chair

No report

Membership Chair

We are up to 64 members. We have three new members this month from the convention. We are going to begin a "bring a friend" campaign to encourage new membership.

"Up The Holler" Editor Report

The newsletter is "coming along." Dan mentioned a few recent contributions and asked members to please contribute more. We received very positive feedback from Randy Kerka, Division 7 Superintendent.

Old Business

John Harris mentioned we still have coal loads available. We also have a few shirts remaining from the convention.

New Business

Announcements

Next Meetings

Date: August 14

Location: West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts, Teays Valley, WV

Date: September 11

Location: Mark Maynard's home, Portsmouth, OH

Date: October Coal Division Meeting

Location: West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts, Teays Valley, WV

Date: November 13

Location: Bluefield, WV

Date: December 11

Location: West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts, Teays Valley, WV


Contest

Off Line Structures

Clinic

Operations on the Grafton and Greenbrier.

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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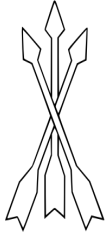
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Upcoming Coal Division Meetings

If you received this newsletter via the US Postal Service and have an email address, please let us know so we can save printing and postage costs. Send a note to editor@coaldivision.org to get onto the email distribution list for Up The Holler.

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