



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9 THE COAL DIVISION

Mid Central Region NMRA

NOVEMBER 2010



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FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Bob Weinheimer MMR; Superintendent

It has come to my attention that a couple of our members have asked if they are permitted to attend our meetings. The answer is an unqualified YES. Your membership dues buy your membership at the National, Region, and Division levels. You may have read in the *NMRA Magazine* that much of the value of your membership is delivered at the Division level. I firmly believe that is true. While we hit the road for some meetings, our meetings at the West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts usually see folks wandering in to shop around 1, sitting down to a short business meeting around 2, having our contest entrants describe their models, sometimes a raffle, then a clinic on something of modeling or prototype interest. We usually conclude between 4 and 4:30. We try to make this a full event as our members come from near and far and we want to make the outlay for fuel, tolls, and the like worth the cost. If you are not one of the 30 or so regular meeting attendees, give us a try!

In the previous paragraph I mentioned those that come from near and far. Dan Mulhearn and Charlie Venable are very regular attendees who come from the most southern part of West Virginia around Bluefield. Our November meeting will save them the trip, we will go there instead. Dan and Charlie are also active in the National Railway Historical Society chapter in Bluefield; that group sponsors a very nice train show each November. Once again, we have been invited to hold our meeting at the train show. Since Dan and Charlie come north so often, I think we can all head south once each year. I hope to see you in Bluefield November 13. Look elsewhere in this issue for details including directions.

The Mid Central Region held its Board of Directors meeting in Columbus October 24. Reports were made by the officers, committee managers, and division superintendents. We discussed some ways to improve the contest at the convention; the regional committee will take a more active role in this event. We also clarified a part of the regulations that discusses term limits. Now, a partial term, such as that served by an officer who takes over after a resignation, death, or removal of an officer, will not count against that member's ability to serve two full terms in that office. In the near term, that means that Dick Briggs, who became President following Jerry Ashley's resignation, and Merlyn Jarman, who succeeded Dick as Vice President, can now run for a second full term next spring. We also heard updates on the next two conventions. Please note that these meetings are open to all members so please feel free to attend if you ever wonder what goes on!

NEWSLETTER NOTES

The October issue of UTH was the first with printed copies produced in color. We quickly learned, however, that the process consumed an unexpectedly large amount of black ink. A little research has led the way to a font, Garamond, that is supposed to be much less ink intensive. This issue uses that font and much less bold type. We still have to see if those pike ads may be the real culprits as they have lots of black in them. If we fail to realize the expected cost savings, we may be forced to revert to black and white. We have learned that there are better ways to handle photos in the publication process so in the worst case those should improve. Please bear with your editorial staff as we work on this issue.

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary Burdette; Assistant Superintendent

Former Division 9 Superintendent Lin Young and others have said, "Everyone has two favorite railroads: the B&O and one other." In our part of the country, that could very well be true. In other areas, it might be the NYC or Santa Fe which is that first favorite line. Even if we free-lance, we probably have one prototype road we prefer over all the others. We may study the full-size brother in order to determine how we will build and operate our miniature route. Lin's Grafton and Greenbrier has its roots in the B&O, C&O, WM and Chessie country of the mountains of West Virginia. Allen McClelland's Virginian and Ohio used these old lines as well as the Clinchfield as a basis for developing his famous pike. So, prototype modeling (one area of the Achievement Program) is addressed by most of us whether we realize it or not. We study the real thing and apply what we have learned to our modeling. Free-lancers may have several pet railroads from which they draw inspiration and practices to adapt to their own layouts.

I mention this for two reasons. First, one may study a particular route (or many) as a hobby within a hobby. Simply learning about how the line operated is interesting. Secondly, we may still participate in the AP by working on the Prototype Modeler Certificate, even if we have a private road rather than modeling lines such as those mentioned above. Greg McCartney mentioned he was going to build the small engine facility at Gauley Bridge, West Virginia on the C&O as is was compact, full of details and very straightforward. Structures could include the timber-by-timber cribbed retaining wall, the scale house, fuel facilities, and motor car shanty. The motive power would be the blue C&O Geep that was usually there. A caboose and hopper, box, or fuel tank car and a couple other items could round out the scene. Because Bob Weinheimer and Lin Young both have Chessie connections on their free-lanced model railroads, this scene could be incorporated into either line as their interchange with the C&O. Pennsylvania Southern or Grafton and Greenbrier power and rolling stock could be seen during operating sessions with the C&O/B&O/WM/Chessie equipment. During the photography sessions the free-lanced items would be removed from the layout and only the prototype stock would remain to document the model scene as a replica of the actual area. Since Greg is a Chessie modeler, this plan is a natural for him to complete. But, the door is open for everyone, if done as described above.

As many of you know, I am a C&O modeler with a special interest in Thurmond, West Virginia - "Hell with a river running through it!" Clint Foster and John Harris are fellow C&O Historical Society and Division 9 members who share my interest in Thurmond. Both have rep-

resentations of the town on their layouts. I know of at least six other modelers who have modeled this scene in N, HO, and O scale. I hope to complete my model soon as the requirement for the AP certificate. All those noted above have been my inspiration. I have been to Thurmond on many occasions, purchased drawings, obtained books, pamphlets, and photos. I have taken my own photos and notes as I record, build, and reproduce my version of "Dodge City of the East."

My studies have become a hobby within a hobby. Dan Mulhearn, Charlie Venable, and David and Nathan Robinette have all been studying the N&W. Dennis McGeeney is a Reading modeler as he worked for them for many years and has a number of fond memories. Different people have different "favorites" but the same theme in their endeavors. I'll discuss some more ideas and methods by which we may peruse data and information on a particular line or place. Maybe, all this will help you enhance your studies of a special railroad.

Bob Weinheimer examines the practices of prototype operations in 1980. He has a number of modern-day billboard cars (with the colorful logos and paint schemes) as I call them, representing many lines which leased their equipment on a per diem basis. Because of his efforts, he knew to pass on a recent flea market deal on several Rail-Box cars at bargain basement prices. Why? The cars had been heavily weathered, and Bob knew they would have been brand new in 1980. They would not have the heavy weathering, and would, thus, be out of place on his layout. This was a simple, yet important, bit of prototype knowledge. Bob is a prototype modeler even though he models a free-lanced line.

This past summer Jerry Doyle and I traveled to the C&OHS Conference in Richmond, Virginia where we met with modelers who were studying and building their layouts as C&O prototypes. This method requires a great deal of in-depth research in order for the modeler to learn what a specific line actually did at a particular location(s). We talked with Tom Dixon (Chief Historian), whom many may remember from our MCR 2010 Convention and Bill Simonton (whose drawings have appeared in *Model Railroader*); about their new book on Hinton, West Virginia. Bill has been studying the town for thirty years. I accompanied him on a photo/measurement trip a number of years ago and helped him collect data. He has a wealth of information on all the structures (dozens) which made up the yard and engine facilities as well as operational procedures. Because of his keen attraction to this place, Bill has even found data (from the manufacturer's records) on such things as the valves and steam

fittings on pieces of equipment like the wash rack. This may be a hobby within a hobby within a hobby. While gathering what he needed to build a model of this place, the researcher really came out as Bill discovered more than he had dreamed of. Thus, his enjoyment was further enhanced by his efforts to preserve some of the finer details of the operations at Hinton before they were lost

forever.

Both examples show us that studying the prototype and applying what we have learned to our own lines can be fun and rewarding. Depending on the depth to which you take your studies, you may uncover an important and little known fact to add to our knowledge. Keep on searching!

NOVEMBER MEETING

Out November Division 9 meeting will be held during the Pochahontas Chapter NRHS Annual Train Show on Saturday, Nov 13th. Meeting time is at 2PM. Please identify yourself as a Division 9 member or guest and you will be directed to the meeting room.

The location of the meeting is the Bluefield Youth Center on Stadium Drive in Bluefield WV. The November contest is "Non Revenue Cars" so bring your caboose, maintenance of way cars, etc. In lieu of a clinic you are invited to browse the train show. We hope to see you there. Probably the easiest access for most would be The

WV Turnpike and I-77 to exit 1 just before the tunnel at Bluefield WV. Then follow John Nash Blvd to US 460 West. Take 460 west until you hit the WV/VA State line. At the first traffic signal after you enter the State of Virginia; make a right turn onto Leatherwood Lane. You will then come to another traffic signal at a "tee" intersection with College Ave. Make a left turn onto College Ave then immediately prepare to make a right turn onto Stadium Drive. You will see a used car dealership to your right and Bluefield (VA Baptist) College in front of you as you are turning onto Stadium Dr. Follow Stadium Drive to the show.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

December 11 will find us back at West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts. The contest will be Modeler's Choice so bring along anything that just does not fit any other month. In stead of a clinic, we hope to be able to visit Dan Kennedy's layout. Finally, this will give you the opportunity to do any last Christmas minute hobby shopping.

The new year will start with our January 8 meeting at West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts. The contest will be Cabooses. We still need a clinician so please feel free to volunteer. If you plan to give a clinic at the MCR convention in April this might be a good time to try it out on us first!

NEWS FROM NATIONAL NMRA INFONET

Headquarters just completed an [analysis of our RailPass Program](#) to see how many RailPass members went on to become full NMRA members. The statistics show that, since January 1, 2009, a whopping 65% have "re-upped!" That's just about 2 out of every 3 RailPass members who've stayed with us. From the time the RailPass program started in 2005, about 48% have renewed... again a great statistic. A lot of the credit for that retention goes to everyone in our Regions and Divisions. You're making new members feel welcome, and you're showing them the benefits of NMRA membership. [So... THANKS!](#)

Huge progress is being made with [Diamond Club scanning](#). Craig Sutherland, the man in charge of the project, reports that they have about 500 sets of diesel loco plans (average size: 24"x30"). In addition, he and Stephen Priest brought about 50 boxes of photographs (with about 700 photos each) back to Historical Archives Services (the company doing the scanning) from our Kalmbach Memorial Library. They mentioned that there are a lot of black and white steam loco shots, some early diesel shots, and a lot of photos that caused these seasoned pros to say "wow." Stephen called the collection "an unknown treasure." We're finding out that our ar-

chives are even more vast than we thought! So if you or your members haven't made a donation yet, [please do so](#) so we can get these railroad treasures on the web... and eventually into your hands.

The [winter Board Meeting](#) is being held concurrently with the Budget and Operations meetings this year in Las Vegas at the Palace Station Hotel (about 5 miles from the airport). The Budget and Operations meetings, which are by invitation only, begin on Tuesday, February 22 at 9 a.m. The Board Meeting runs from 9 to 5 (or later) on Wednesday, February 23, and 9 to 5 (or later) on Thursday, February 24. All NMRA members are welcome to attend.

As you probably read in the October of *NMRA Magazine*, the X2011 West NMRA Convention committee is making extensive use of [social media to promote their Sacramento convention](#). Over the next several months they'll be posting detailed information about layout and prototype tours, clinics, sights to see, and other pertinent facts. If you haven't visited them on Facebook or signed up to follow them on Twitter, this is the perfect time to get your feet wet and see what the "social media" buzz is all about! Both Facebook and Twitter are free.

THE PASSENGER MANIFEST

John Harris, Membership Chairman

Continuing the train of thought from my last column, I challenged each of us to get more involved with the hobby. Becoming active will mean different things to different people. For some, this might mean simply getting to a meeting on a more regular basis. For others it could mean starting on the layout that has been in the planning stage for twelve years. Regardless of the present level of involvement in the hobby, there is perhaps something more you would like to get out of the hobby.

One of the recent suggestions from one of our members, Dennis McGeeney, was to organize some informal group rail-fanning trips for Division 9 members. As such, Dennis and others recently made their way to Cass for a trip up the mountain behind, or in front of, as the case may be, those geared little steamers. The clickety clack of the rails, the soot, the smoke all combine to bring back the feel and smell of the golden age of railroading. Sure, playing with (OOPS, did I say that?) operating trains in the basement is fun and rewarding but who can argue that the "sound systems" in the real ones can't be matched.

Here in the Mountain State and surrounding area there are numerous opportunities for similar commercial railfan trips. The **Potomac Eagle** out of Romney WV offers open and enclosed passenger service behind "geeps" or F units through the trough of the South Branch of the Potomac.. All day and three and one half hour trips are available through the fall season.

The **Durbin & Greenbrier** offers several trips out of Durbin and Elkins. The **Cheat Mountain Salamander** offers nine hour trips along the Shavers Fork of Cheat River between Elkins and Spruce. Also offered are six hour trips from Elkins to Cheat Bridge and three hour trips from Cheat Bridge to Spruce. The **Tygart Flyer** has four hour trips out of Elkins. Lastly the **Durbin Rocket** features a two hour round trip behind a geared Climax between Durbin and Hevener Stations.

The **New River Train** run by the C P Huntington Chapter of the NRHS returns each October featuring a round trip between Huntington and Hinton along the

former C&O main line. Featuring the spectacular fall colors of the New River Gorge, this train makes stops at Thurmond and Hinton.

In Ohio, the **Hocking Valley** offers two hour rides through the rolling hills of southeastern Ohio behind vintage diesel power. The route runs from Nelsonville to Logan and special "theme" excursions are run depending on the season.

Besides train rides, the area also offers a couple of rail transportation museums that might appeal to members. The Virginia Museum of Transportation offers an amazing collection of railroad equipment and memorabilia. Featuring N&W's famous Class J #611 and the impressive Class A #1218, the collection includes diesels, steam, electric locos, passenger equipment and cabooses. A six hundred square foot O scale layout is featured for those who prefer the small stuff. (Editor's note; Not to be missed in Roanoke, right across the NS main line from the VMT is the O Winston Link Museum housed in the restored N&W depot. This fabulous photo display captures the last of steam and a way of life which has disappeared in rural America.)

In Clifton Forge, VA the C&O Historical Society Heritage Center is, as you would expect, dedicated to structures and equipment of the C&O. The rehabilitated freight station houses memorabilia and photos tracing the history of the railroad. Additionally an O Scale layout provides the animation for a fine collection of scale models of buildings along the C&O. On display in the yard are a C&O GP7, passenger cars, and a 1 foot gauge live steam 2-6-6-6 Allegheny.

This is just a sampling of some of the potential trips that could appeal to the division membership. Not only would these excursions provide inspiration for and technical information on possible modeling projects; but also provide great opportunities for furthering fellowship among the members. Keep this in mind and feel free to let us know what trips might interest you. Stay tuned for future announcements.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Bob Weinheimer MMR

As part of the MCR Board of Directors meeting, Achievement Program Manager Frank Koch submitted a report on AP activity since May. I was pleased to see that once again the Coal Division leads the region in nearly any way you wish to measure. Our members earned three AP Certificates in that time, there was one much larger division that also earned three. On a per member basis, we

were way out front. Keep up the good work!

At our last meeting it was suggested that the time has come for me to review the Achievement Program and its requirements. I am working with Dan to schedule a clinic on this subject.

MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 9, 2010
Dan Mulhearn; acting Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 1:57 PM by Division Superintendent Bob Weinheimer

Division Clerk: The minutes of the previous monthly meeting were read by acting Clerk Dan Mulhearn and on a motion by Nathan Robinette, seconded and passed the minutes were accepted. There was no treasury report in the absence of Jerry Doyle.

Superintendent's Report: Bob announced that Tony Puccini has arrived back in the USA from his foreign assignment. The Diamond Club scanning project at National is proceeding and donations are still welcome. All NMRA members are welcome to attend Division meetings. The MCR BOD meeting is scheduled for Oct 24 at noon at Schmidt's Restaurant, Columbus OH. Lunch is \$18.00 and all members are invited to attend and observe. Bob discussed upcoming meeting regarding Officer Term Limits at the Region and Division levels. Also discussed changing our by laws on when new officers take office to coincide with the Regions practice.

Special Announcement: Lin Young spoke on his candidacy for National NMRA office and advised that due to differences in geographic boundaries in the organization only members of the Division residing in Ohio or Kentucky can vote for him.

Asst Superintendent's Report: It was reported that Gary is off somewhere riding tourist trains.

Webmaster; The webpage has a new banner featuring the new NMRA logo. Jim Six of Michiana Div gave permission to adapt the banner he has developed and Greg

did the adapting

Achievement Program; Nothing new this month. Bob discussed repeating his clinic on the AP

Nominations Chairman; no report

Membership Chairman; John advised that National sometimes gets behind in current dues/membership records; advised to see him about any problems along these lines. John and Dennis McGeeney also discussed promoting membership and fellowship by organizing railfanning outings.

UTH Editor; Electronic UTH accidentally sent out in wrong format, then corrected with apologies. More on UTH to follow.

Old Business; discussion of donation to Diamond Club from Division; tabled until Jerry D can be present

New Business; none

Announcements; Mentioned were two upcoming train shows and a Hocking Valley "BOO TRAIN" in October

Contest: Open loads was theme, no entries. Greg McCartney did a show and tell on his heavily modified WM hopper

Clinic: In lieu of a formal clinic there was a presentation of the UTH newsletter, the finances involved and the "givens and druthers" of the membership on future content and style.

WEBMASTER REPORT
Bob Weinheimer MMR

I had some trouble with the software I use to create the web site and had to rebuild the whole thing. If you see anything that doesn't look right, please let me know.

As you can see below, web site page views continue to stay at a fairly high level. As you would expect, we leveled off after the Convention but the numbers for June through October are about fifty percent above those a year or so before the convention.

January 2010	8827
February	6551
March	7087
April	7780
May	9947
June	4586
July	4536
August	5087
September	4589
October	5025

Chuffing Up the Mountain: A Visit to Cass Dennis McGeeney

Division 9, The Coal Division, of the MCR-NMRA has a great group of members. Every member has knowledge of different avenues of model railroading; and is willing to share his knowledge. We have our meetings, a great convention and operating model trains together; however I think we need to do MORE. A few months ago a bunch of us met at Prince, WV and rode the AM-TRAK passenger train to Clifton Forge VA and return. At Clifton Forge we had about five hours to visit the C&O Historical Society's Heritage Center Museum as well as the C&OHS archives building. We also had time for a great meal during which we discussed the possibility of more such trips. So, I phoned every member and promoted a trip we planned on September 20, 2010 to the Cass Railroad. We had a good gang, most of us met at an eatery at Marlinton WV for a fabulous breakfast then went to Cass. The weather was perfect and the trees had started to change into their perfect autumn wardrobe. Three of the gentlemen drove to Summersville WV the day before and stayed in a motel. That evening I hosted

them to a meal and a visit to my Reading Lines HO layout. At Cass I was given an opportunity to ride the cab of Shay locomotive #6. We ran 185 lbs of steam, burned five and one half tons of coal and about eighteen thousand gallons of water. We made two water stops as the tender only holds six thousand gallons of water. The track has been replaced with 100 lb (per yard) rail to support the heavy Shay which was constructed in Lima OH. The steepest grade was eleven per cent and going down grade every car had a person on it operating the hand brake. The cars have cast iron brake shoes. We are planning more trips; all the information will be in *Up The Holler* in the near future. Come on guys; let's join in on these trips. The trips are reasonably priced and make for great fellowship. Those on the Cass trip were Leroy and Maria Parsons of Summersville WV, Gary Burdette of Point Pleasant WV, Clint Foster of Ronceverte WV, John Stephens of Hurricane WV, Bill Wadsworth of Dunbar WV, Larry Richards of St Albans WV and your author of Summersville WV.



Here's the gang in front of the Cass Company Store. From left to right we see Clint Foster, Dennis McGeeney, Gary Burdette, Larry Richards, John Stephens, Leroy Parsons, and Bill Wadsworth. Who was the photographer? Your editors assume it must be the traveler mentioned in Dennis's article but who is missing from the photo: Maria Parsons.



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Upcoming Coal Division Meetings

November 13

Pocahontas Chapter NRHS Train Show
Bluefield, WV

December 11

West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV

January 8, 2011

West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV

February 12, 2011

West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV