



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9
THE COAL DIVISION
Mid Central Region NMRA
September, 2011



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HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Bob Weinheimer MMR

I want to start this month's column by thanking the members for their outpouring of appreciation of my efforts as the Superintendent. At the last meeting I was presented with a card and a gift certificate in recognition of this role. As it came midterm and not after leaving office, I was truly surprised. I suspect Dennis McGeeney was the driving force behind this action. Once again, thanks to one and all.

This month we will be having what has become our annual picnic at the home of Mark Maynard over in Portsmouth, Ohio. In years past we have invited members from nearby divisions to join us but this year we are trying something different: a joint meeting with the members of Division 6. The boundaries of Division 6 focus on Columbus but extend some distance, particularly to the north. Division 6 Superintendent Bob Lee and I have been working on an agenda for the membership meeting. As this is their September meeting as well as ours, we need to cover the business of both divisions. I can almost hear a groan coming from you but please look at this as an opportunity. Pay close attention to what is going on in Division 6; perhaps you will see something they are doing that we should do. Look also at how they seem to conduct the same activities we do, maybe they have a different approach that we might wish to try (or not).

I have a little more space to fill so let me discuss regional conventions. Going back a few years, it was uncommon for more than two or three of our members to attend the MCR convention. Of course, that changed in Columbus when many of you went to learn your roles for the Coalfield Express. I was heartened to see the big Coal Division turnout this year up in Geneva on the Lake. It looks like the regional convention experience has really caught on. Three of us (Ed Keith, John Harris, and myself) are planning to attend the MER convention (and present clinics) in Cary, NC in late October. I understand there are at least two more Coal Division members that might also head south for this meeting. That's more attendees from our Division going to another region's convention than to our own in years past. It looks like convention fever has spread!

The Mid Central Region Board of Directors will be meeting in Columbus October 2. This is the regular fall meeting and I want to make sure you know it is open to all members. It starts with a buffet lunch at Schmitt's German Restaurant, that will set you back about \$20. If you want to attend, let me know so we can get you in on the count for lunch.

Of interest to our members who love to operate is the notice on page 3 of SWOOPS 2011, a weekend of operations in southwest Ohio September 30 to October 2. I'm already signed up to run Friday evening then help Jim Rollwage host two sessions on Saturday. Sunday I'm off to Columbus for the BOD meeting. If you like to operate, this is a great opportunity to run on some outstanding layouts.

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary J. Burdette MMR

For a while now we have been discussing the possibilities available, through the participation in various activities, to make our hobby experience more enjoyable. Members of our group have gone to the Cincinnati area for a picnic and layout tours, visited Alan McClellan during the final running of the V&O, ridden the Cass Scenic Railroad, and travelled on the Amtrak Cardinal from Prince, West Virginia to Clifton Forge, Virginia to visit the Chesapeake and Ohio Historical Society Archives and Heritage Museum (Other trips are in the works.). All of these adventures and more turned out to be quite special. The lesson we have been preaching is to look for these opportunities and take part.

You never know how things will work out when you set on an adventure. I've been wanting to tell you this story for a while, but other things came up that I had to address. Now, due to the postponement, there is much more to tell. Last fall Bob Weinheimer and I went up to the Pittsburgh area to hear Andy Blenko's clinic on building the Irwin, Pennsylvania depot. (You may remember Andy from his talk on "Infrastructure" at our 2010 MCR Convention.) Bob has had ties with the group for quite a while and introduced me to Andy via internet e-mail when he volunteered to present the clinic at our convention. "Yes, that family," was Bob's comment. I was thrilled to have Andy speak because I was worried I would not have enough clinicians for the show, and Andy represented what I feel is one of West Virginia's treasures: Blenko Glass. His presence could not have been more appropriate for our Coalfield Express. Of course, his clinic went well. I was looking forward to hearing about the depot on this outing.

Andy's interest in the station was piqued when a co-worker presented him with a colorized photo of the structure. The underpass and line are still there, but the only remnant of the building is a piece of concrete foundation. Andy got out old maps, topos, reference books, and newspapers to find out more about what was there. A creek was realigned along with the track at one point. On the lower level was a short-line railroad with shelter. All of the photos, info, charts, and maps were included into a very interesting presentation. A question on when and who (Penn Central or Conrail) demolished the structure was presented. Bob suggested that county records might include an application for and granting of a permit to the company that tore down the structure. All-in-all, the experience was enlightening and enjoyable. The adventure didn't end here, however.

When you make a new friend, you try to keep in touch. We have done that through e-mails. Andy's son, Charlie, has his own email address and sends out interesting information from time to time. Thus, we are able to keep the fun going, even though there is quite a bit of distance between us. Another opportunity to share some time with one another arose at the MCR 2011 Convention at Geneva-on-the-Lake. My wife and I enjoyed lunch with Andy and Charlie along with some other friends. No, the story does not end here, either.

Early in July, we saw a flyer announcing the Glass Festival at Blenko Glass in Milton, West Virginia. There were to be classes, demonstrations, tours, and other activities. One of the guests was Andy Blenko, fourth generation family member signing autographs. Janie and I knew this would be a great mini-trip as we were only about an hour away. It would be fun to surprise Andy and tour the facility. His face lit up when he saw us. The family was there, too. They gave one a souvenir glass disc at the door which Andy would autograph if you wished. All the beautiful glass pieces begged one to pick up some Christmas gifts (we did), and the tour (this was up close and personal beside the glass-blower and his helpers.) was fascinating. If you were lucky (my wife was), you might win a door prize. Wow, what a treat which began as an introduction to a gentleman as part of our NMRA convention!

My original theme was to be to examine Andy's research into the depot and Bob's suggestion as to further possibilities on gaining information. This is, indeed, a part of the extended focus of our hobby. Delving into obscure bits of history is great fun. We can learn so much, improve our layouts, and increase our level of entertainment through our efforts. However, the acquaintances and friendships we make are even more dear and priceless results of our participation in our hobby. I would never imagined that all of these great experiences would transpire when I was first contacted by Andy back in 2009.

With the above in mind, let me encourage, invite, request, beg, and convince you to attend the Division 9 and Division 6 joint meeting at Mark Maynard's house in Portsmouth, Ohio on Saturday, September 10, 2011. There will be food, a flea market, train operations, a photo contest, and plenty of socialization. Here is the chance to renew old friendships and make new acquaintances. Our buddies from the Columbus area are a great bunch of guys. The opportunity to begin a journey like the one I have shared with you is here. If you have not been to a meeting in a while, this is the one! Come on down and participate. You won't be sorry.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

As noted in both Bob's and Gary's columns, our September meeting is a joint meeting with Division 6. As he has for the past several Septembers, Mark Maynard has graciously agreed to host us and to provide lunch and beverages. Mark's layout will be on display, he tells us that he and his crew have made great progress on scenery in the past year. A big part of the day is the flea market sale. Bring any of those things you thought you couldn't live without but now realize you don't need. Make sure your name is on it or the packaging, set a price, perhaps do some haggling, and be rid of it. We hope to have somebody to handle the money and bookkeeping but if you make a sale privately, please don't forget to pay the 10% fee due from the seller.

Since the meeting is a joint meeting, the business of both divisions will be discussed. The plan is to go through our typical agenda alternating between divisions. This should give Coal Division members an idea of how Division 6 does things and it might even give us some ideas that we may wish to consider implementing. As this is a joint meeting, there will actually be two contests. Our normal photo contest will be held while Division 6's normal contest will also be held. Their contest is Stock Cars,

both models and photos. As I have entered models in the contests of other divisions, I can't imagine any Coal Division member bringing a stock car would be turned away. Finally, we have a big surprise in store for the meeting, you have to come to find out what that is.

The fun all starts around 11am, lunch will be available around noon or shortly thereafter. The business meeting will start at either 1:30 (so says Division 6's newsletter) or 2 (our usual start time). I'm sure we will work something out. While Portsmouth is a long distance for most of us to travel, car pooling can reduce costs and provide lots of good discussions en route. Now, all we need is a nice day....

Now, for some directions: If you are coming from anywhere but the west, find your way to Portsmouth, OH and leave town headed west on US 52. Look for Brouses Run Road about one half mile after the road narrows from four lanes to two lanes. Turn right onto Brouses Run Road, pass the first house on the right (Mark's) then turn right into the barn lot in about another 150 feet. The model railroad is upstairs in the barn, the meeting will be out behind the barn under the canopies.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

October 8 we will meet at West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts in Teays Valley. Bob can present a clinic on AP judging but you sure don't want to hear him drone on two meetings in a row, do you? If not, offer a clinic. The contest will be Open Loads.

November 12 we will make the annual trip to Bluefield. The NRHS Pocahontas Chapter's train show makes the trip worthwhile and we plan to have our meeting at

the train show. The contest will be Non Revenue Equipment.

December 10 we will meet at West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts in Teays Valley. The clinic is not yet determined but the contest is Modeler's Choice so bring something that you have that may not fit the usual contest categories. Also, plan on doing your Christmas hobby shopping.

SWOOPS 2011

We are writing to ask you to help with the promotion of the SouthWest Ohio OperationS (SWOOPS) weekend. We are asking that you let your members know about this opportunity through newsletters, web sites and local email lists.

The SWOOPS weekend (September 30-October 2) will be an opportunity to operate some of the finest model railroads in the Cincinnati, Dayton, and Springfield Ohio area. The event is in conjunction with the Cincinnati Division 7 of the NMRA's Mid-Central Region and OpSIG. Organizers are Division 7 members, while layout owners are both Division 7 members and Division 3 members.

SWOOPS 2011 has a wonderful collection of layouts. There are large and small layouts in a variety of scales, gauges and operating schemes. The scales include O, HO and N, and there are standard and narrow gauge, main line and short line and industrial pikes. Many of these layouts have achieved a high level of completion, and excellent craftsmanship is on display. Operating schemes include CTC, Timetable and Train Order, Track Warrants, with car movement schemes including car cards, JMRI switch lists and others. If you haven't previously been to an operations weekend, this is an excellent way to start -- anyone should be able to find a layout worth operating!

Please encourage your members to check out our web site at <http://swoops2011.wordpress.com/> .. We are looking forward to seeing you at SWOOPS 2011.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Bob Weinheimer MMR

Our rate of Achievement Program activity has diminished in recent months. While it may be that we have gotten all the easy to earn certificates out of the way, I do know of at least three members whose work has been judged or otherwise certified. All they have to do is write it up and get it to me for transmission to the MCR AP Manager. I think you know who you are so I won't embarrass you publicly. I have also heard through the grapevine that there might be a couple of Scenery certificates to be earned as well as a possible Prototype Model certificate out there. That last one is one of the least often earned certificates and if earned by this member might just be his first certificate. He needs to do a bit more work but the basis is in place. Again, you know who you are so get working!

At the August meeting I reviewed the Achievement Program requirements. This program is part of the

NMRA's Education Department and should be viewed not only as a recognition program but as a way to improve one's modeling skills. Even if you have no desire to become a Master Model Railroader, you are probably quite capable of putting in the effort to learn more about an area that already interests you and earn a certificate or two or three. In my case, after scratch building some cars for that certificate, I have become more willing to take on car projects that involve more effort. As an example, just last week I scratch built a boxcar underframe. It might not be a merit award effort but it sure is good enough for my layout.

I will gladly answer any questions you have about the Achievement Program, my email address and phone number are on the front page of this newsletter.

TAKE A RIDE ON THE READING

As you are probably aware, "Take a ride on the Reading" was one of the chance cards in the venerable old board game of MONOPOLY. Of course if you landed on it you had to pay rent to the owner, or you could buy it. Well, we are not offering a ride on the Reading but Dennis McGeeny, at one time a locomotive engineer on the Reading in the anthracite region, is trying to organize a couple of Division trips. Dennis has "spark plugged" a couple of prior trips and he feels that the Division has a lot of potential for continued fellowship and enjoyment of our hobby through these trips.

Dennis is organizing two trips for September. We realize this is short notice; however if you would like to make either trip, Dennis will set up the necessary car pools, etc.

HOCKING VALLEY: The first suggested trip is a ride on the Hocking Valley Scenic Railway. The HV is located at Nelsonville, OH. Dennis is proposing a weekend trip on Saturday, Sept. 17th on the HVSRR. The plan is to catch the 12 noon trip out of Nelsonville. If you

would be interested please contact Dennis and he will arrange travel according to the response.

VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM:

The VMT in Roanoke is a wonderful venue to observe, particularly, the N&W heritage on the Commonwealth of Virginia. The stars of the museum are N&W 611 and 1235; however there are many other exhibits of interest. In addition there is a pedestrian walkway and overpass over the Norfolk Southern main line which leads to the O Winston Link Museum located in the former N&W Roanoke passenger station. This would be a weekday trip, and again, Dennis is willing to arrange car pool or other arrangements based on members who would like to attend.

CONTACT: Should you be interested in either or both of these activities; please contact Dennis so he can formulate a travel plan. Dennis can be contacted at 304-872-7262 and he says his answering machine is on 24/7. Let's support Dennis in his effort to expand the Division's activities.

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 example, this issue was prepared August 31. 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.

Upcoming Newsletter Deadlines:

October:	September 26
November:	October 31
December:	November 28

NMRA DIVISION 9, MCR Meeting minutes, August 13, 2011

Welcome & Introduction; The meeting was called to order at 1:57PM by Superintendent Bob Weinheimer in the meeting room at West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts, Teays Valley. Members and one guest introduced themselves.

Division Clerk Report; In the absence of Jerry Doyle, Bob W. requested a motion to approve the July minutes as printed in the newsletter. So moved by Charlie Venable, seconded and approved. Checks have been issued to Mark Maynard for picnic expenses re: our September meeting and to Bob W. for newsletter expenses.

Superintendent's Report; Bob advised that he has discontinued the practice of preparing a copy of the agenda for each attendee. He is open to resuming the practice if the members demand it. Bob has copies of the on line magazine *Model Railroad Hobbyist* on DVDs containing all issues to date. These are available to those on dial up internet for \$1.00. The new Division Boy Scout Merit Badge program was introduced by Bob, with details from Tony Puccini to follow. Bob reported that Dennis McGeeney is working on future outings. The next meeting at Mark Maynard's home in Portsmouth was discussed. Members were reminded to bring items to sell, marked with name clearly. Two members are needed to handle the money. Jim Heilman volunteered to be the "company photographer" at the meeting. The September meeting will be a joint meeting with Division 6. Bob requested clinicians for upcoming meetings. Dave Stout will do October and Lin Young, Greg McCartney and Dennis McGeeney also volunteered to provide clinics.

Assistant Superintendent's Report; Gary spoke on our mission of using our expertise and interest to educate people about railroading, both full size and model. He mentioned the new Boy Scout program as something which is a big step in this process. There was discussion of the *NMRA Magazine* request that Divisions and Regions submit lesson plans for their educational outreach programs. Gary spoke about prototype research and noted, for instance, how much is available on the internet regarding passenger operation. There are plans to place much of this educational material on our web site. Gary presented a card and gift certificate to Bob W in recognition of Bob's efforts on behalf of the Division at last year's convention and since that time.

Boy Scout Program; Tony Puccini introduced the Division's plans to work with the Boy Scouts to put scouts through the Railroading merit badge program. Tony and Gary will be coordinating this effort and other members were invited to volunteer their time and expertise. It was noted that working with the scouts requires a background check which can take some time. Therefore those interested in participating should get started with the necessary paperwork. This is a good way to introduce youngsters to the NMRA and there was a lively discussion on the hows

and wheres of the program.

Webmaster; Bob W mentioned that it is difficult to decipher the web reports we are getting from our present server. However, hits remain heavy with 4730 in July. Most visitors look at our picture pages first and most. Perhaps one third of hits come off the link from the NMRA National web site.

Achievement Program; The AP will be the subject of today's clinic.

Nominations Chair; Bill Wadsworth was not present but sends word that current officers expire (their terms that is) in April, 2012. Anyone interested in running for office should get in touch with Bill. Bill also is looking for a couple of volunteers to fill out his committee.

Membership Chair; John Harris was not present and no report submitted

Raffle; Paul thanked Dennis for his assistance with the raffle. Paul mentions his new method where you can place your ticket on the item or items you wish to win. There was a request from the floor to have raffle info in the newsletter.

UP THE HOLLER Editor; Dan asked for both input and feedback as to what is published.

Old Business; None

New Business; None

Announcements; Dennis McGeeney spoke on two outings he is attempting to arrange for September. One would be a Wednesday trip to the Roanoke Transportation Museum. The other would be Saturday, Sept. 17th and would be a ride on the Hocking Valley tourist line. Dennis mentioned several past trips and the camaraderie and fun that was enjoyed. He feels this is a good way to expand the Division's activities and develop interest. Bob W reminded that it would be much better to have a longer lead time on these outings so members would be able to plan ahead. Dennis will develop his plans as early as possible and submit information to the newsletter.

Contest; This month's contest subject is "traction". No models were submitted. There was a suggestion from the floor that we may want to consider some different categories in the future.

Clinic; Bob W presented his power point presentation on the Achievement Program.

Respectfully submitted;
Dan Mulhearn, substitute clerk

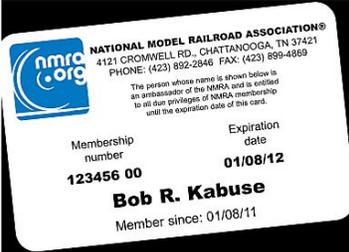
NEWS FROM NATIONAL NMRA INFONET

The dust has barely settled from the Sacramento convention, when the folks in Grand Rapids are revving up for next year's get-together. In fact, registration for Grand Rails 2012 is well underway. Members can visit the website at www.gr2012.org and either register online or download a mail-in form. Non-members can also sign up at that time. Note that currently registration only covers the costs of attending the convention. Furniture City Flyers Club members will receive the complete list of tours, activities, and merchandise in December, followed by advance registrants, then all other members.

The Howell Day Museum is planning a new release of its extremely popular Commemorative Car #3 -- the Gorre and Daphetid bobber cabooses -- except this run will feature two new road numbers, #3 and #5. As you may know, John Allen was very fond of these cabooses and ran a fleet of them on his G&D railroad. Pricing will be \$19.95 for one car, or \$34.95 for the set of two. Watch for the announcement of their availability at www.nmra.org, or keep your eyes open for the ad which will appear in *NMRA Magazine*.

Again, many of the clinicians at the Sacramento convention have uploaded their handouts or full presentations as PDF files to the x2011 website at www.x2011west.org. Anyone can download them. Just look for the Clinics tab, then Clinic Handouts.

In case you missed it last month, the Board of Directors selected Portland, Ore. as the site of the 2015 National Convention. Details and exact timing of the convention will be announced in the coming months. For a complete summary of the Board of Directors meeting, visit the homepage of our website at www.nmra.org in the next few weeks. The report will also be published in *NMRA Magazine* in the near future. *Editor's note: as of August 31 the summary has not yet been posted.*



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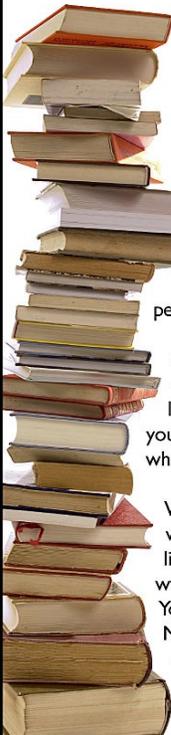
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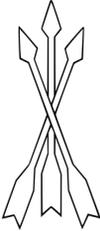


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Upcoming Coal Division Meetings

September 10, 2011
Joint Meeting with MCR Division 6
Mark Maynard's Home
Portsmouth, OH

October 8, 2011
West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV