



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9
THE COAL DIVISION

Mid Central Region NMRA

April 2015



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From the Head the Holler By Gary J. Burdette, MMR

One of the best parts of our hobby is making new friends and acquaintances. Frequenting train shows, visiting layouts, attending meetings, and going to conventions offer the opportunities for us to make these introductions providing us with much enjoyment. As we build a cadre of friends, we also open our lives up to the possibility of sadness. This was the case when I learned of the passing of Howard Smith, MMR.

Howard was a long-time member of Division 6, the Buckeye Division (which I call our sister division). Many of you may remember him from MCR conventions and our visits to Marion and Portsmouth, Ohio. I first learned of him through the pages of *Railroad Model Journal* in the mid-nineties. An article on his beautiful Cumberland Division of the B&O really intrigued me as I have always been a B&O fan. I remember that Lin always said we all had two favorite railroads, the B&O and one other. Such is the case with me.

It was a thrill for me when I was able to visit Howard's railroad as part of the 2009 MCR Convention in Columbus. He offered us a friendly greeting and gave us an enjoyable tour of the line. Wow, I considered switching to the B&O. I told Lin, and he agreed. The modeling was excellent and he really captured the feel of the road.

More than the modeling was the man. As I got to know Howard this became more and more apparent. There was the smile, warm hand-shake, and the conveyance that he was glad to see you. I know Bob has some similar stories to share. I also know that we will miss you, Howard, and are glad we had the opportunity to know you and enjoy our hobby together.

Friends were abundant this past weekend as many of us who are interested in the C&O attended the "Modelers Weekend" sponsored by the Saint Albans C&O Modelers and Museum organization. Folks attended from Vermont, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, Florida, and places in between along with the West Virginia guys, many of whom are Coal Division members.

Again, as noted above, the joy came from the camaraderie as much as the activities of the event (though they were fun, too). Most of you in the Coal Division have expressed those same sentiments on more than one occasion. As we look to the near future we will note that our yearly trek to Parkersburg for "Steel is King" Day is coming up in May. The last couple of years we have been the guests of the Buckeye Division at their June meeting in Marion, Ohio. A day of clinics, flea market, and fun is in the offing. July may bring a visit to several layouts, tour of BTS, a stop at the museum, and maybe a train trip on the Tygart Flyer out of Elkins, West Virginia.

With each one of these adventures, we will enjoy our hobby and time together. All aboard for fun!

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Dan Mulhearn, Assistant Superintendent

Boy, didn't Spring fly by. We had some lovely days which may have turned our heads toward yard work and tuning up lawn mowers. My other thoughts at this time of year also include a combination of cameras and a railroad track; any railroad track. So this morning we wake up to 15 degree temperatures and that warm basement is looking mighty enticing.

I have been working on a couple of civil war era steam locos. They have had TCS steam sound decoders with "keep alive" add-ons but they are still sputterers. I recently got some Richmond Control axle wipers which I am installing in the trailing box car which holds the decoder, keep alive, and speaker. Got my fingers crossed that that will turn the trick. I am afraid that the little inexpensive Bachmann locos are just not of high enough quality to justify the expensive decoders.

Tomorrow, Dennis and I are going to set up Walt Mycoff's railroad with a 5 amp smart booster. Walt will be back from Florida in mid April and we are hoping to have everything up and running for him.

Please feel free to bring your comments, concerns and modeling exploits to Gary Burdette and myself. Looking forward to our meeting and the upcoming MCR convention in Lexington.

Editor's note: This was written Sunday March 29, let's hope all went well.

MEETING NOTICE

The April meeting will be at the St. Albans Depot at Fourth Avenue and Fourth Street in St. Albans, West Virginia. The doors should be open by 1 PM with the business meeting starting at 2 PM. As noted by Paul Lapointe in his column, the contest will be **Modeler's Choice**. We will have the usual raffle so keep that in mind if there are any items you no longer need but might be wanted by other members.

For the clinic we will try something new and different, one of the Edu TRAIN® clinics now available. Gary Burdette has downloaded a clinic on scenery that should complement nicely the one he and Nathan Robinetto presented in March. This will be a bit of an experiment so bear with us to see how it works.

There are only three such clinics currently available but Bob Weinheimer's "Getting Started in Operations" is currently under review for inclusion in the program.

CONTEST REPORT

Paul Lapointe

March's Contest:

The category was Steam locomotives. There was only one entry: Gary Burdette brought in an early MDC locomotive (see picture).

Next Month:

April's meeting is at the Depot. The contest category will be Modeler's Choice. Bring in whatever model you want: structure, engine, rolling stock, track work, vehicle, open load etc.



Photo by Dan Mulhearn

RAFFLE REPORT

Paul Lapointe

There was no raffle at the March meeting. We're still at the Depot for the next meeting, so take a look around for anything you can donate and bring it with

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The goal of the newsletter team is to have this document reach you by email or snail mail at least one week prior to our meetings. We typically do the layout work the Wednesday 10 days before the meeting with distribution Thursday or Friday. For this to happen reliably, we need all items for publication by the Monday 12 days prior to the meeting. If we don't get it on time we can't print it. Please help us give you the most up to date information possible. Here are the deadlines for the next few issues.

May	April 20
June	June 1
July	June 29
August	July 27
September	August 31
October	September 28
November	November 2

NMRA MCR DIVISION 9 *THE COAL DIVISION*

March 14, 2014

Minutes

Called to Order; The meeting was called to order at 2:06PM by Superintendent Gary Burdette; the location being the C&O St. Albans depot building.

Approval of Minutes: On a motion by Nathan Robinette, seconded and approved the minutes of the Feb. 14, 2015 business meeting, as published in *Up The Holler* were approved.

Superintendent's Report: Gary mentioned that a set of surveillance cameras have been donated to the depot and will be installed. The SACOMM group will install and our members may assist. Gary noted that the National NMRA recommends that visitors should be limited to around three meetings after which they should join the organization or cease attending.

Assistant Superintendent's Report: Dan Mulhearn noted that being the assistant is kind of like being the vice president. Sometimes you feel like you should be doing something when your only job is to be available to back up the superintendent when needed. The members were encouraged to submit feedback on what we can do to make the Division better.

AP Report: Bob Weinheimer reports that Dan M's papers for the electrical certificate have been submitted. Bob urged members to bring in their items for judging. For items not transportable the judges will arrange to visit the modeler.

Newsletter: Bob says most everyone receiving the e mail copy of the *UTH* is opening it. Members are encouraged to submit copy and articles for publication. It is a way to get your Author certificate.

Clinic: There is a continuing need for clinics for the upcoming meetings.

Membership Chairman: John Harris is recruiting at the Dunbar Show and has no report.

Raffle: No report

Old Business: none

New Business: none

Announcements: The members were told that upkeep and utilities for the depot is about \$1200.00 per annum. Nathan Robinette had Hocking Valley brochures to distribute and noted that his dad, David's picture appears in the 2015 Ohio State Highway Map. Members were reminded that the annual C&O Modeler's weekend at Hawks Nest is approaching.

MADD: Bob W displayed his Fast Tracks track molds and notes he is able to build a turnout in about one hour. He plans on a clinic on this handy tool. On display was a 1902 stamped metal Ives train set as well as an antique wind up airplane and bicycle horn.

Next Meetings:

April 11, 2015 St. Albans Depot

May 2, 2015 "Steel is King" Parkersburg, WV

June 13, 2015 joint meeting at Marion, OH

July 11, 2015 possibly Elkins, WV, in the works

Adjournment: On a motion by Nathan Robinette, seconded and passed; the business meeting was adjourned at 2:58 PM

Contest: The category was steam locos and the only entry was Gary Burdette's heavily kitbashed logging loco.

Clinic; Gary Burdette and Nathan Robinette presented a clinic on the scenery techniques on David and Nathan's home layout. Included were tips for earning your own scenery certificate.

Respectfully submitted

Dan Mulhearn; acting clerk

**THOROUGHBRED LIMITED
2015 MCR CONVENTION
MAY 14-17, 2015
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY
HOSTED BY MCR DIVISION 10
DETAILS AT thoroughbredlimited2015.yolasite.com**

**B. L. E. V. E.
Dennis McGeeney**

What is a BLEVE? It is a Boiling Liquid Expanding Vapor Explosion. As an engineer on the Reading Lines and Conrail extensive training was provided regarding procedures to be followed in the event of a derailment or other rail accident or situation. This is especially important in the case of rail cars carrying hazardous materials. Rail cars may contain flammable, toxic, explosive, radio active or other dangerous cargo.

I am sure we are all aware of the recent incident on CSX where a train of 109 tank cars of North Dakota crude oil en route to Williamsburg, VA derailed and burned. Nineteen of the upgraded type tank cars derailed near Montgomery, WV and some were punctured and all that was needed was a spark. We are so thankful there were no injuries and only one home destroyed. This wreck was on the former C&O mainline connecting Richmond, Washington DC and the east coast with the mid-west. The clean up from this wreck disrupted CSX freight service and the Amtrak Cardinal passenger train until February 20th. The cost of a derailment like this is tremendous. There were rail cars destroyed, track torn up, heavy equipment to be brought in, rebuilding of a home and the cost of taking care of evacuees. Crude oil can be very volatile and there have been several incidents involving crude oil being moved by rail. CSX had an earlier incident in Lynchburg VA where derailed oil tank cars burned and also dumped a lot of product into the James River. Perhaps the best know incident was at Lac Megantic, Quebec where a runaway oil tank train derailed and burned in the middle of town. This was a true

BLEVE as the burning oil heated some other cars until the metal failed and what resulted was a massive explosion of flammable vapor. Forty seven residents died and half the town was burned down.

What causes a wreck like this to happen? There can be many culprits such as rails out of gauge or broken, a broken axle or wheel, dragging equipment, a hot or locked journal box, and even vandalism. Weather can be a big factor as extreme hot or cold can cause rails to expand or contract. Other factors could be crew error such as speeding, missing a signal or other factors.

Train crew training was extensive. We were taught to attempt to get the train out of a populated area, put rail cars that may be dangerous on a siding in a rural area. We were to stay off bridges and out of tunnels and to notify the dispatcher immediately. The dispatcher would then put in place pre-planned emergency procedures including the notification of Federal, State, and local authorities, hospitals, etc. and planning for rerouting of other trains as needed. It is very important to stay clear of wrecked cars carrying hazardous materials because of exposure to toxic fumes, fire or other hazards.

How can we incorporate those situations in your layout? Put some small red, orange, or yellow dots on a tank car and declare it on fire. How do you deal with it? Try and move the train away from populated areas and if possible push car onto rural siding. Stay off bridges and tunnels and do immediately notify the dispatcher who will put emergency procedures in motion.

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2015 MCR CONVENTION
MAY 14-17, 2015
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY
HOSTED BY MCR DIVISION 10
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**Thoroughbred Limited 2015
2015 Mid-Central Region Convention
May 14-17, 2015
Lexington, Kentucky**

**\$99 Room Rate, Renovated and Updated Hotel
Great Tours. Company Store, Clinics
Contests, OPS, Layouts
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With NMRA President Charlie Getz as our banquet speaker, great clinics and tours, a super hotel facility at a great price and laid-back Southern Hospitality, we can assure you that you'll have a good time and return home relaxed but full of enthusiasm and new ideas.

This is a wonderful opportunity to bring your spouse along to enjoy our beautiful city. Lexington is both classic and contemporary; Southern yet worldly; elegant but approachable. Come discover an extraordinary cuisine scene, a compact and vibrant downtown, thriving arts and a legendary landscape. We are planning some incredible events for your spouses to enjoy their stay here with you, Y'all come.

There's so much to enjoy and spring is so beautiful in Kentucky, you might want to consider taking advantage of the hotel's low rates 3 days before and after the convention, and make this a family vacation in addition to the convention.

Details at thoroughbredlimited2015.yolasite.com

MY WORD

Bob Weinheimer, Editor

As noted by Gary Burdette in his column, Howard Smith passed away recently. Howard was very active in Division 6 and the Mid-Central Region and was well known to a number of Coal Division members. I'm not sure what offices he held at the Division level but I first came to know him when he was Region President. My best memory of Howard was during the contest at the 2007 MCR contention in Louisville. I had just been named MCR Contest Manager and had to learn something about judging. Howard took me under his wing and we judged all the contest models for construction. He started out explaining the process and how he came up with the score. Gradually he let me start suggesting what I thought the score should be and by the time we finished I was taking the lead. Howard was tough but fair and I always try to follow his training in any judging I do for contests or the Achievement Program.

Progress continues on the Pennsylvania Southern. I took the Fast Tracks fixture and tools for show and tell at the March meeting and there was considerable interest. I plan to offer a clinic on the subject, perhaps at the August meeting, and give everybody a chance to at least do some soldering. I will also discuss the economics of the system. It does have a high startup cost but if you are in need of many turnouts it is very economical in the long run and

the quality is unsurpassed. No, I do not receive any compensation for my comments, I'm just a happy customer.

Last month I included a photo of five turnouts all assembled for installation at Waynesburg. The day after my March operating session I tore into the town and removed everything that was in the way of progress. The turnouts are now in place with wiring and switch stands. I replaced the other tracks with Fast Tracks based track. The photos shows the current state, ties are still needed but everything works and will be in use at the April session.

I am now prioritizing future efforts. I just received the tools to make number four turnouts, there are more than 20 on the layout and many have been troublesome. One group is in Washington on the passing siding. They all lead to various tracks in the engine terminal. Since the transition from code 83 rail in the new turnouts to any existing code 100 track is a bit of a nuisance, the engine terminal tracks may very well be hand laid. The only issue with that is that, unlike flex track, I have to get the tracks right where I want them as they won't be easy to move once built. The biggest decision will be the track spacing around the engine fueling facility. I think I know the answer so let the work begin!



This photo shows the group of turnouts shown last month in stalled and operational. The track for the propane dealer is visible near the propane tanks.



Here you see the track near the edge of the benchwork that serves as the lead to the propane dealer and the track serving Arrow Refurbishing. These tracks were also built using the Fast Tracks system.

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Ronceverte WV

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With Connections to the B&O, C&O, Western Maryland, West Virginia Northern

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Upcoming Coal Division Events

April 11

**St. Albans Depot
Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue
St. Albans, WV**

May 2

**Steel is King
Parkersburg, WV**

June 13

**Joint Meeting with Division 6
Marion, OH**