



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9 THE COAL DIVISION

MID CENTRAL REGION NMRA INC

March 2016



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

-March Madness and Lion and Lamb both describe events that occur in the month of March. Each stimulate specific thoughts in the reader. The NMRA continues to promote similar labeling as terms such as events instead of meetings to better promote interest.

-The February, 2016 issue of the *NMRA Magazine* introduced a hands-on clinic approach called "Train In' Day" to foster interest and participation in modeling. Recently, the members of the Coal Division were exposed to "TRAINING DAY" produced by the folks in the Dayton area.

-A Boy Scouts of America Railroading Merit Badge event was presented by the Pittsburgh area division and is on file at the depot.

-The Coal Division has developed programs like mini-clinics, demonstrations explaining ballasting, tweaking freight cars, using servos for turnout and animation control, and specialized tools for modeling.

-The Coal Division has been sponsoring Railfun Events over the last several months to describe the monthly get-together with the Superintendent's briefing used to denote a more abbreviated business meeting. Each event has been named with a theme like "Steel is King Day," "Picnic on the Platform," or "New Year, New Look."

-The Coal Division has expanded the contest portion of the monthly event from some of the traditional categories to include new areas like "Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, and Railroading Engineering," "Photos, Fine Arts, and Finest Finishes," and "Steel is King."

-Show-and-tell has morphed into M.A.D.D. ("Models, Artifacts, Discussions, and Displays") and participation in modeling has been encouraged with M, M & MMs ("Models, Models, and More Models") with the intent of accumulating historic displays for the depot museum.

-Mention of several articles and photos from Coal Division members in Up The Holler has appeared in the *NMRA Magazine*.

-An interesting component of the monthly event has been the raffle. In Portsmouth items are set up in the popular flea market-style format. Last month items donated by Greg Foster were sold in this same fashion. A silent auction is being considered for a future date.

-Bill Wadsworth has volunteered to be our librarian responsible for the NMRA CDs and other items.

-The Dunbar train show is the same weekend as our March event. The SACOMM Hawks Nest Convention is April 1, 2, and 3. Our MCR Convention is April 28, 29, 30, and May 1, 2016.

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-The July event has been cancelled due to the NMRA National Convention the week of the Fourth of July with National Train Day on the 9th.

-It has been suggested that the Coal Division consider hosting the MCR Convention in 2019 or 2020. Either Charleston or Huntington would be good venues. Are there any others? Think of possible prototype, historic, and layout tours as you make your recommendations.

-Hands-on clinics dealing with building scenery and paint-

ing freight cars are in the planning stages.

-The small N-Scale layout needs to be completed, and a set of modules for a large, movable layout are still available.

-The above list is a summary of items that have been presented over the last few months. The goal of this page is to remind us of some of the interesting possibilities before us and to encourage us to choose a pathway to the future.

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Dan Mulhearn, Assistant Superintendent

The old groundhog has come and gone, and despite his prognostications, I think we are due for alternating periods of a little spring then a little winter until May. For model railroaders this is a good thing. On those nice spring days get started on outdoor chores. Then, when winter blows back in for a few days, see it as an opportunity to work on the railroad.

In the model railroad hobby there is a critter who is making himself known. He is the mole. On many layouts there is an operator who handles the staging areas getting trains on and off the visible part of the layout. He is often found crouching under the bench work somewhere on a little mechanic's stool and so became known as the mole. There have been several articles in model railroading publications recently where we see the mole coming out of his hole to deal with advanced fiddle yards in much more comfortable surroundings. Often we now find the mole in a roomy space with shelves and drawers handy to accomplish his work. The mole's space is generally hidden and may be shared with the dispatcher or other behind the scenes operators. Now you say, what's a fiddle yard? It is a hidden staging yard where incoming trains may have their consist altered or replaced. It is a very handy thing to keep operations going without just recycling the same trains. Although he is still behind the scene, we no longer find him stuffed under the benchwork somewhere. Thus it is time to give the mole a more dignified title befitting his newfound freedom.

On Tom Harris' Lakeside Lines the title is Train Director. The Train Director is in charge of the immense staging yards on Tom's layout; working with the Train Dispatcher who controls the visible portion of the layout. He is able to stand or sit in comfort and walk to all parts of the staging yard to check lineups and guide train crews as they enter and leave staging. On Tom's layout the Train Director is also assisted by four cameras which train crews in the layout room can use to observe their train

movement while still in staging. From mole to Train Director: a raise would be in order!

Bob Weinheimer took note of this trend and while he never employed a mole per se; many of his trains come off the layout when they reach staging. The train crew acted as the mole by removing the train from the staging yard and placing it on shelves under the staging yards. This involved some strenuous bending and stretching. Bob, being Bob, took note of these articles on modern fiddle yards and immediately took action. When we showed up at the Pennsylvania Southern's February session; there under both staging yards were brand new stacks of pull out drawers to place the removed trains. It is now so much more comfortable to do this job. I know my back thanks Bob for this innovation.

A topic which arises from this increased use of the fiddle yard concept is the repeated handling of equipment. A lot of locomotives now come superdetailed or have been detailed by their owner. It is inevitable that horns, sunshades and other details are going to be knocked off in this repeated handling. Certainly something to consider. [Editor's note: The late Lin Young always fussed and fumed over the loss of those sun shades.] It is probable you are not going to put your scratch built merit award winning freight car into a train that is going to be fiddled. Some compromises in appearance may have to be made for cars which are frequently handled. Perhaps one could disguise those compromises with a good weathering job.

I must apologize to all for missing last month's meeting. The forecast was for blizzard conditions; which did not pan out, but Dennis and I were mindful of last year struggling home from a meeting in a virtual whiteout. I did look out the window about 10AM and noted the sun out and it seemed calm. I drove out of our little holler and got on WV 20 and though it was not snowing the wind was blowing snow all over with poor visibility. I look forward to seeing everyone in March.



Lion or Lamb? *March Railfun Event*

March 12, 2016 @ *your* **ST. ALBANS** depot

TIMETABLE

1:00 - Social & M.A.D.D. Viewing Time:

*Any challenging modeling projects

2:00 - Superintendent's Briefing: Info. On-

*The Depot

*The Division

*(Feb. *NMRA Magazine* - "Train N Day")

*(Jan. *NMRA Magazine* - Challenge Yourself)

2:45 - Raffle and Contest:

*Enter contest get raffle ticket

*Contest: Diesel Locomotives

*Clinic: Backdrops—Gary Burdette MMR

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 start the layout work the Monday 12 days before the meeting. This allows a day of review by the officers and a proofreader before the electronic version is issued, usually on Wednesday. The paper version is mailed Thursday or Friday. For this to happen reliably, we need all items for publication by that 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.

April	March 28
May	May 2
June	May 30
July	June 27
August	August 1

NMRA MCR DIVISION 9
THE COAL DIVISION
History & Hobby

St Albans Depot
 St Albans, WV
 February 13, 2016
 Minutes

Meeting called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Membership Chair
 No report.

Division Clerk Report

Treasury balance is currently \$9,021.17 pending additions for Pike Ads
 January minutes were approved.
 Pike Ads \$40.
 Raffle revenues \$0.

Raffle

None today. Gary Burdette showed items donated by Greg Foster that were available for a donation to the Division.

Superintendent Report

Gary Burdette recognized guests Dick Briggs and John Retterer. Members introduced themselves

Dick Briggs gave a short presentation about the Rails to the Capital convention which will be held in this April in Columbus, Ohio.

Gary mentioned the possibility of Division 9 hosting a future MCR convention in 2019 or 2020.

Old Business

None

New Business

Bill Wadsworth volunteered to be the division librarian.

The members voted to cancel the July meeting due to a conflict with the National Train Show so members could attend.

Assistant Superintendent Report

No report due to weather.

Announcements

Bob Weinheimer will be going to the NMRA National board meeting on February 20.

Achievement Program

Nothing new to report. Paul Lapointe pointed out the advantage of entering the MCR convention contest for merit judging for AP purposes.

COHS Clifton Forge, Virginia Show February 20

Coonskin Railroad Show February 20

Kanawha United Show, Dunbar, March 11-13

Newsletter Chair

Up the Holler is sent to NMRA National and we have been mentioned several times in the Business Car section. The content is also used for the NMRA website.

SACOMM Hawks Nest Show April 1

National Train Show Indianapolis, Indiana July 8-10.

Clinic Chair

We have several clinics lined up but can always use more for future meetings. Jerry Doyle brought up the idea of having a library and librarian for the clinic videos from NMRA National. The member who volunteers for this would likely receive one point per month towards their volunteer certificate.

Future Meetings

March – St Albans Depot: Model like a Lion or a Lamb?

April – St Albans Depot: The Chickamauga & Scioto RR, etc.

May – Parkersburg WV: Steel is King

Meeting adjourned 3:00 p.m.

Contest Chair

This month's contest – coal country.

Respectfully submitted,

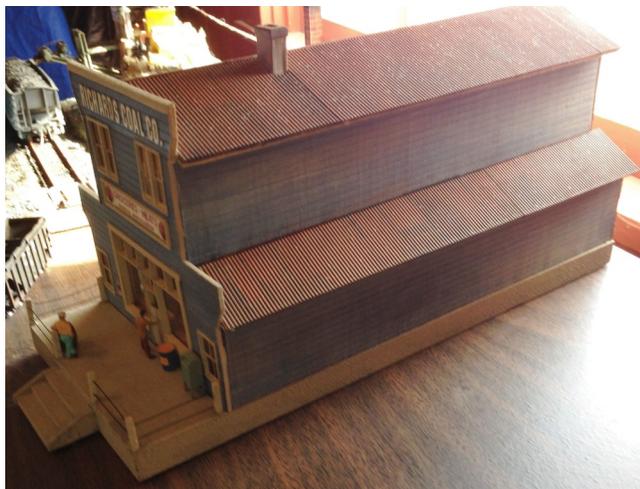
Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk

CONTEST

Photos by Paul Lapointe

February's contest was anything related to coal and we received several entries. Two models stood out so much that only they received votes. Sam Delauter took first place with his scratch built N scale coal trestle. Larry Richards took second place with his company store.

March's contest is Diesel Locomotives so bring those Growling Pests or Stupid Diesels or other non EMD engines.



Above: Larry's company store

Left: Sam's N scale coal trestle

KANAWHA UNITED MODEL RAILROADERS ASSOCIATION

MODEL TRAIN SHOW

MARCH 11, 12, 13 2016

DUNBAR PARKS AND RECREATION COMMUNITY CENTER

2501 FAIRLAWN AVENUE

My Word

Bob Weinheimer, Editor

Unlike last month, there is little space for me this month. Dan Mulhearn noted the sudden appearance of the staging drawers in his column. While I showed the finished product in last month's newsletter, there is a back story. The idea came from an article about fiddle staging in the 2016 *Model Railroad Planning* magazine. Among the photos are Lee Nicholas' staging drawers. I did some

quick evaluation and determined I could do something similar. I ordered the full extension drawer slides and they appeared very quickly. In mid January I started hearing ominous weather forecasts for January 22 and 23. I finished the design, bought the lumber, and spent the duration of the snow storm building the drawers as well as some garage storage shelves. By the

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Layout Expansion on the Pittsburgh & Western RR Part 3

By Paul Lapointe

Building the peninsula beams:

Up to now, the benchwork has been around-the-wall and because it is attached to and cantilevered from the wall studs, it required no table legs. However, the peninsula will be a free-standing table and so will require legs. The plan calls for a table 4 feet wide and 12 feet long with four legs. In addition, the furthestmost end of the table will bulge out to 5 feet wide to allow the track to loop back while maintaining the layout's 24 inch minimum main line radius.

The construction technique I'm using calls for a steel frame resting on two horizontal rails made from heavy-duty box beams. I first learned of this technique, and a lot about using steel studs, from the website augustastation-master.com a very innovative N scale club layout that pioneered using steel studs and foam and sadly closed in 2007. To see their construction techniques, scroll through their Photo Albums section.

The beams are approximately 8 inches high and 12 feet long and more than strong enough to span the distance without sagging.



To build each beam, one half inch thick plywood is ripped lengthwise into 8 inch wide strips. The flange of a steel track is fastened to one long edge using 3/4 inch pan head steel sheet metal screws every 6 inches or so. After 8 feet, a 4 foot plywood piece is butted to the first piece to make 12 feet. Similarly, a 2 foot piece of track needs to be added to the first piece to bring it from 10 feet up to 12 feet. The process is repeated along the other edge of the plywood. The tricky part of all this is to position the steel and plywood so you never have two seams fall at the same spot along the beam.

Now the beam is flipped over and using one and two foot long plywood, space the pieces along the length on the beam, ensuring that you support the seams where two tracks pieces meet. It's not necessary to completely cover this second side. For a 12 foot beam you'll use about 100 screws.

The pictures show the two beams supported by sawhorses prior to having legs attached. Also shown is how the four foot wide frames will rest on the beams.



Continued from page 5 time I had finished the drawers the snow had stopped and I got to shovel it all away.

The crews seemed to like the new shelves so it looks like an effort well expended. As Dan also notes, this will reduce model handling by eliminating the need to box up rolling stock between sessions.

As planned, I did attend the National Board of Directors meeting in Atlanta. I was able to update my then six week old report on the Member Discount Program. There was considerable discussion on the subject of member recruitment and retention, one of the biggest issues we face. The board approved a new composition of the nominating committee for elections in the United States, this committee will now be composed of Region presidents or their designees. The new display at the California Railroad

Museum is about to be built, the long delay had nothing to do with the NMRA, it was a political issue in California state government. All has been resolved with the hope that the display will be completed late this year.

As a side event John Stevens, NMRA Secretary and a Captain for Delta Airlines, arranged a tour of some of Delta's facilities near the Atlanta airport. We got to see the operations center. This is the heart of the airline's day to day activity with all the flight dispatchers, meteorologists, and everybody who makes sure the whole system works. It's absolutely amazing and not something often open to visitors. We also got to go into, but not ride, a Boeing 737-800 flight simulator. I'm glad I went to Atlanta!

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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NEW RIVER GORGE SUBDIVISION

Clint Foster Superintendent
Ronceverte WV

Allegheny & New River Road
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



John Harris, Chief Engineer
AandNRR@aol.com



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

Woody Higginbotham - Superintendent



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Upcoming Coal Division Events

March 12

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

St. Albans, WV

April 9

St. Albans Depot

May 14

**Steel is King
Parkersburg, WV**