

# UP THE HOLLER



DIVISION 9, MID CENTRAL REGION, NMRA

May 2020

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## FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER

### Dan Mulhearn, Superintendent

It's kind of a bittersweet experience preparing my last column serving you as Division Superintendent. It is understood that I have kind of fizzled due to health concerns for several months. Many thanks to Bob Osburn for hitting the ground running in my stead. The plan always was a short and succinct business meeting with the emphasis on the contest, MADD displays, and clinics. Thank you to our members for your support, enthusiasm, and participation. This applies especially to the committee chairs. It has been a pleasure to serve you. I would encourage everyone, including me, to work at the Achievement Program. It is hoped we will soon be over this pandemic period and get back to operating sessions, meeting events, and conventions. So, welcome to the helm Bob. I know you will do a great job!

Model railroading is fun and Steel is King.

## INCOMING SUPERINTENDENT

### Bob Osburn, Outgoing Assistant Superintendent

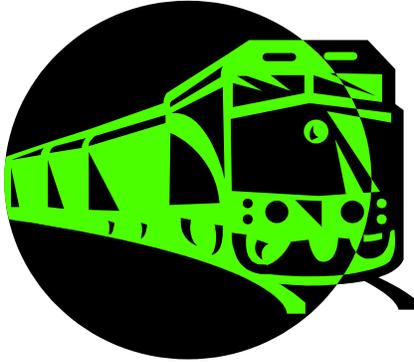
I would like to thank Dan Mulhearn for all the excellent work he has accomplished as the Division Superintendent. He has always stepped-up at the Division, Regional, and National levels to offer his leadership and assistance when needed. We know Dan has been going thru some rough times lately with health issues and hope he can get back to enjoying his hobby and model railroad family soon. Thanks, from all of us!

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus has had a dramatic effect on our nation, society, and social activities. Terms such as “flatten the curve”, “social distancing”, and “vulnerable population” are now a daily part of our lives. Face masks and vinyl gloves are now a common scene as we venture out. Disinfectant wipes and hand soap now appear on our shopping list. Yes, things have certainly changed and a back to normal routine seems in the far future. Our model railroad hobby has also seen changes. Conventions and shows have been cancelled, curbside pick-up is now a norm at the hobby shop, and most of all, we can't enjoy the monthly meeting at the Depot. But wait, we may have a solution for our meetings and it is called Zoom.

Zoom is a web-based video conferencing tool with a local (Coal Division member) as the host and a mobile app that allows users to meet online. Division 8 recently conducted their last meeting using this method with great success, so we are going to give it a try. Jerry Doyle uses this web-based method for remote teaching and is very familiar with the process. He has taken the lead on this project and is scheduling a Zoom session for the May meeting. Jerry is including information on how you can join in on the meeting in an article on page 4 in this newsletter.

Don't expect this first meeting to be perfect. There will be a learning curve for most of us, yet we can work through the problems and get everyone on-board. A virtual meeting may have several benefits for us. It is a way we can get back together and have contact with other members. Since the Coal Division covers a large area, this method gives those members another way to attend the meeting if unable to travel or if sickness limits their participation. Weather cancellations of the meeting would no longer be a problem, just email the members the information and we can go on with our normal business. We may even be able to live stream the meetings when we are back to a semi-normal condition at the depot or record the meeting and add them to our web site or other video sites.

Cover photo by David Oliverio. See his article elsewhere in this issue.



## Upcoming Coal Division Monthly Railfun Events

*Saturday May 2, 2020*  
*“Steel is King”*  
*Cancelled due to COVID –19*

### **Saturday May 2 1 PM Virtual Division Membership Meeting**

- Welcome and Call to Order (Acknowledge members present)
- Brief overview of what Zoom is (Jerry Doyle)
- Approval of Minutes from March meeting
- Treasurers Report
- Outgoing Superintendents Report
- Incoming Superintendents Report
- Assistant Superintendent Report
- Committee Chairs Reports
- Open Discussion/Questions (One at a time please)
- Adjourn Business Meeting
- 5 Minute Break
- Clinic presented by Jerry Doyle

**Next Event**  
**Saturday June 13**  
**At the Depot, or Zoom, or Both?**

## MAY VIRTUAL DIVISION MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Jerry Doyle

We've all been doing our part for Covid-19 isolation measures. This means we won't be meeting in person for several months but there is another way to stay connected.

Our May meeting will be held remotely using Zoom which is very easy to use. You can use a laptop (provided it has a webcam), tablet, or smart phone. Just use the link provided below. You'll be prompted on how to connect with your particular device. You can also join with a voice

-only connection by calling one of the numbers listed.

We are planning to conduct a short business meeting followed by show-and-tell where you can show everyone what you've been working on. There will also be a railroad related clinic and possibly more.

Our meeting will be Saturday May 2 at our regular time of 1 p.m.

### Gerald Doyle is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: NMRA Coal Division May Meeting  
Time: May 2, 2020 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/93709764124>

Meeting ID: 937 0976 4124  
One tap mobile  
+16465588656,,93709764124# US (New York)  
+13017158592,,93709764124# US (Germantown)

Dial by your location  
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)  
+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)  
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)  
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)  
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)  
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)  
Meeting ID: 937 0976 4124  
Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/acOx9QDQIt>

#### First Time Users

- On a computer: The **FIRST TIME** you open a Zoom meeting link you will be asked to download a small Zoom application file. Follow all the typical steps and allow anything requested by the app as it installs.
- On a smart phone or tablet: **BEFORE** you open the Zoom link, go to the app store and download the Zoom Cloud Meetings app from Meet Happy (the app publisher).

#### To join a Zoom meeting:

- See the meeting invitation above
- Open that link 10 minutes prior to the meeting
- Accept any requests for video and/or microphone
- MUTE your microphone

#### Other pointers

- Make sure your connection is strong
- If you have a weak connection, disconnect other devices from your home network
- For your first time, don't wait until the last minute to join
- Use the **Chat** button to view and make comments or post questions
- Click the **Invite** button to send meeting information to others
- If everything freezes, click **Leave Meeting** and rejoin using the original invitation
- You do not need to create a Zoom account to participate in a Zoom meeting

Thanks to Paul Downs of MCR Division 8 for these tips.

## FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL (THE NEW OCCUPANT)

Sam Delauter, incoming Assistant Superintendent

As I write this article, it seems that the world has all but shut down. In this time of uncertainty I hope you are well and I look forward to seeing you all, hopefully sooner than later.

I am currently working but on a reduced schedule. Although the wallet is taking a bit of a hit, I am finding extra time to finish projects and to reflect on my modeling. Since I am not going out much at this time I have been trying to complete as many projects as possible during my spare time. This means I have been using the airbrush quite a bit lately. I have only gotten comfortable with the airbrush in the last year or so. I finally am getting a good even coat of paint on the resin kits and brass rolling stock that I have been waiting to finish. I have been painting some brass cabooses that I have had for a while.

I have an Erie Lackawanna, a Chesapeake and Ohio, and several Pennsylvania cabooses. The Pennsylvanian are in both HO and N. I have had the Pennsylvanian for a few years now awaiting paint. Finally they are all painted and one is decaled and weathered. Not only do I feel more confident using my airbrush, I am really growing to like using Tru-Color Paint. Once thinned with acetone, it sprays nicely and dries quickly. The availability of railroad colors makes the job much easier and cheaper than buying online. WV Hobby and Craft stocks many of the TCP line of paints and can order the ones they don't keep in stock.

I don't do much C&O but could make a pretty good C&O modeler for an Erie guy. A project that I have wanted to do for awhile is a C&O SD40 #7534. I decided on the in service version of 7534 and not the restored version. Not only did this take a custom paint (even though it was just two colors) but it also took finding a DCC ready donor chassis for it. The later was more frustrating than the former. Currently I am in the final detailing and weathering stages of the project. I plan to have it ready to run for train shows this fall.

Probably my largest project as of late has been working on my T-TRAK modules. Not too long after the St. Albans show, I received an email from model railroader advertising their new layout planning book. The photo in the email showed a Western Maryland GP and a few box-cars. They were in front of a scene that was a split industrial and a city scene. That picture got the creative juices flowing and shortly after the COVID 19 outbreak I started stripping one of my incomplete modules. I now have a home for my scratch built coaling trestle and a few buildings that I have had for a while but no home for. Construction continues on this module. I am currently still building structures for it. Once all of the structures are together, I plan to add LED lighting in some of the buildings and also on the street. This will be a learning experience for me but I welcome the challenge.

Although I am T-TRAK Chair, I don't want to ignore my other responsibilities. Currently the clinic schedule is on hold. Hopefully, once we get through the Corona Virus, there will still be some open spots for more clinicians. At this time I have both Robert Osburn and Tom Harris scheduled for clinics. At the next meeting that is held Robert will be giving a clinic on scratch building led street lights. The following meeting with feature Tom Harris on making mountains. Hopefully we will have time for more clinics but if not these will be top notch clinics as always from these clinicians.

Although the world is much different than it ever has been, I hope that you will get a chance to get some modeling done, plan a new project, or take some time think about what you model and why you model it. I have done much of all these things in the past weeks. Although there are many things going on in the world right now that we can't control, one thing that we can control is our hobby. I hope everyone is enjoying the worlds greatest hobby as much as I am right now.

## 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

June	May 27
July	July 1
August	July 29
September	August 31
October	September 28
November	November 2
December	November 30

### CLINICS Sam Delauter, Clinic Chair

See Sam's column on page 5 for clinic updates.

June	To Be Determined
July	To Be Determined
August	
September	
October	Visit the Crusty Mountain in Portsmouth
November	Bluefield Train Show
December	4th Annual Gary Burdette Memorial Square Foot Challenge

### MONTHLY MODEL CONTEST 2020 SCHEDULE

January	Modeler's Choice
February	Steam Locomotives
March	Locomotives Other Than Steam
April	Cabooses
May	Anything Steel Related
June	Non Revenue Except Cabooses
July	Structures
August	Freight Cars
September	Photo, Model or Prototype
October	Open Loads (flats, gondolas, hoppers)
November	Passenger Cars
December	Fourth Annual Gary Burdette Memorial Modeling Challenge. Details and kick off in October

## Improve your modeling with a few sheets of paper.

That's exactly what happens when you participate in the National Model Railroad Association's Achievement Program. One Merit Award here, another there, and pretty soon you're on your way to becoming a Master Model Railroader. All the while learning and having a ton of fun.

The Achievement Program is modelers helping modelers become better modelers and get the most out of their hobby. And it's yet another benefit of NMRA membership.

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**We make it even more fun.**

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## HOW WE ARE KEEPING BUSY Compiled by the Editor

Bob Osburn has sent a couple of photos of a warehouse he has been working on. He goes on to say “this is for my grandson’s N-scale layout I am building for him. It is a craftsman paper download and was quite challenging. All constructed from paper, cardstock, and mat board. The only additions I made were the styrene step railings and 2 small vents on roof.” I’ve included one photo to keep it large, look inside at the details Bob has added.



Below are the locomotive and caboose Sam Delauter mentions in his column.



## MY WORD

### Bob Weinheimer, Editor

It looks like COVID-19 has thrown all of us for a bit of a loop. That said, many of us are keeping busy. Bob Osburn, David Oliverio, and Sam Delauter have sent photos of their recent work. The north end of Bridgeville on the Pennsylvania Southern is a major construction zone given a large maintenance window without operating sessions. I trust the operators will see a big improvement in the size and efficiency of the steel mill interchange yard once sessions resume. Check out the photo of the barren space.

I “attended” a virtual meeting by Division 8 in Louisville and look forward to Saturday’s Coal Division event. As we learn our way around this way of meeting, as Bob Osburn notes, perhaps it can be added to regular in person meetings as a bonus to those who find it difficult to attend otherwise. From what I read, this is catching on in Divisions around the world with the Australians among the leaders.

This sort of technology can be very useful. Did you attend the NMRA-X virtual convention April 24 and 25 on Facebook? It was 24 straight hours of clinics from around the world. When it was night here, the members in Australia were presenting. It was very well done. A shorter, 12 hour version, is planned for May 16 from 4am to 4pm EDT. Those early slots are likely for European or Australians with later slots for North Americans.

Gordy Robinson, a resident of Scotland and active member in the British Region, was the organizer of the event and should be congratulated for a job well done.

I thank Tom Harris and David Oliverio for preparing articles for this issue. David called me the other day to let me hear the driving of the Golden Screw in his steel benchwork. I heard the whirring of the electric screwdriver and it was done.

Like Tom, I, too, had a derailment that was quite spectacular although the iron ore cars were empty. I’ll not bother explaining the situation in order to avoid embarrassing the operator but it involved a string of light cars pushing a string of heavy cars around a curve. David Oliverio was NOT the operator but merely a rail-fan who happened to photograph the event as seen here.

I hope all of you are as productive as Robert, Sam, David, and I have been during this trying time. Take care, be safe, and model productively.



## A DERAILMENT AND A GOOD STAY AT HOME PROJECT

### Tom Harris with Tom Harris and Larry Zeigler Photos

During our January operating session of the Lakeside Lines a rather spectacular derailment occurred. Much of Train 104, a heavy coal extra made up of three head end locomotives, 75 loaded hoppers, two pusher locomotives, and a caboose, left the rails. The front of the train stringlined on the 13 degree curve around the far end of Hines Hill. This resulted in the middle of the train running in on the stopped cars on High Bridge with many cars tumbling off the bridge and into the North Fork of the Potomac River below. It was a very realistic derailment to see. Because of the pushers, the cars to the rear of the train just kept coming and coming, right into the pileup prior to my getting the power on the railroad shut down. It all looked very like the derailment videos one sees on You Tube.

I must say, I don't like to see derailments during op sessions, and this was a beaut. However, Larry Zeigler absolutely delighted in it, and he is responsible for the photos of the disaster seen here. I was very glad Train 104 was Blake Frame's coal train, loaded with fake coal loads. If this had occurred to one of my loaded coal trains, which are filled with very real coal dust, I would likely still be cleaning up the mess today.

Upon investigation, it turned out that the derailment occurred as a result of the wire coupler hook of one of the hoppers somehow getting caught in the point where High Bridge's guard rails come together. This stopped the car cold. The front of the train, being hauled by three of Blake's strong GE's, was pulled right off the rails and across the tight curve. At the same time, the two pushers kept on shoving the hoppers behind the stopped car into the accident, and off the bridge onto the pileup. This was not the first accident on the Lakeside Lines traced back to one of these coupler hooks, but it was certainly the most spectacular.

Kadee style couplers all come with iron hooks to facilitate delayed coupler action by means of uncoupling magnets. In order to prevent problems, I have long bent these iron hooks up pretty well with a bending tool made for the job. Unfortunately if a coupler box cover becomes loose, or an Athearn metal cover becomes detached from one side of the coupler box, a sagging coupler results. The hook of such a coupler often snags the first switch, crossover, road crossing, or guard rail it

encounters. The result is usually a derailment, often a bad one. In fact, this has been a leading cause of derailments on the Lakeside Lines for years. Clearly, it was time to do something about this problem beyond just bending the hooks up.

I used to make use of uncoupling magnets in the past, but last time the railroad was rebuilt the magnets were all discarded. In other words, the coupler hooks were now doing nothing but causing derailments. So, with plenty of time in the basement due to the COVID 19 stay at home order, it was obviously time to cut off all those hooks. I have been steadily doing so. What a job! It turns out there are an awful lot of cars and locos on the Lakeside Lines. Currently, the all the cars in at Riverside Yard and on the various spurs around the railroad have met the wire cutter. So have all of the cars and locos deployed in the east-bound trains. Still left to do is all the westbound trains, but I will get there. I am happy to report there has been another happy result of this project; the equipment looks markedly more realistic with the hooks removed. Contrary to what we have been told, these hooks do not resemble air hoses. So if you're looking for a stay at home project on a mature railroad, you might consider this one.



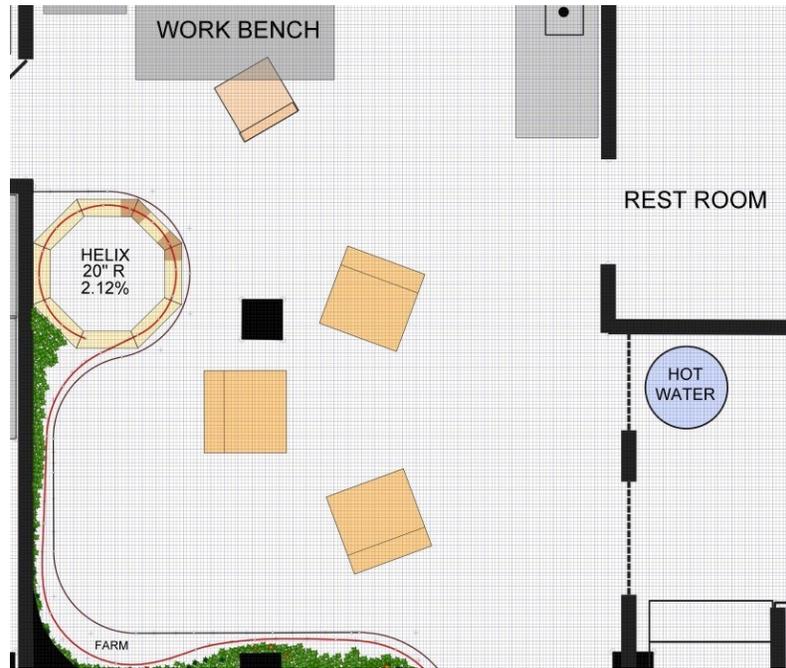
### New Layout Construction David Oliverio

Construction is underway for my latest version of the early 1950's N scale B&O Monongah Division. The primary layout space consumes a 13ft x 26 ft space in my basement plus 15 ft of additional main line to the helix that will connect the lower and upper levels. I also plan to build a small crew lounge with a kitchenette and rest room.

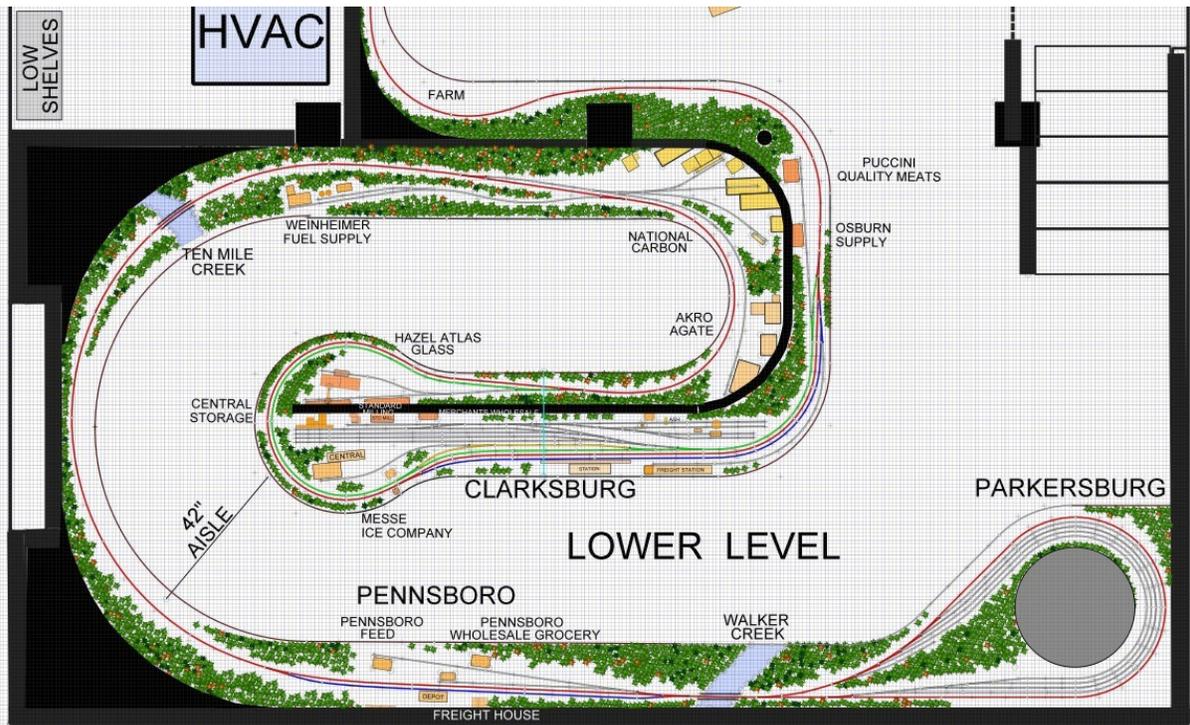
The west end of the layout will be located on the lower level and will represent Parkersburg staging. Pennsboro, Clarksburg and various industries will also be located on the lower level.

The upper level will consist of Grafton, some industries, coal mines, and Cumberland staging which is the east end of the layout. Upper level Cumberland staging will be located directly above lower level Parkersburg staging.

The lower level bench work was recently com-



pleted. All bench work is constructed of 1 5/8" steel studs which form a framework for cabinets that will provide below layout storage. The steel framework



will be faced with thin plywood. The steel framed cabinets will support the model railroad which will consist of 2" rigid foam insulation board over 3/8" plywood.

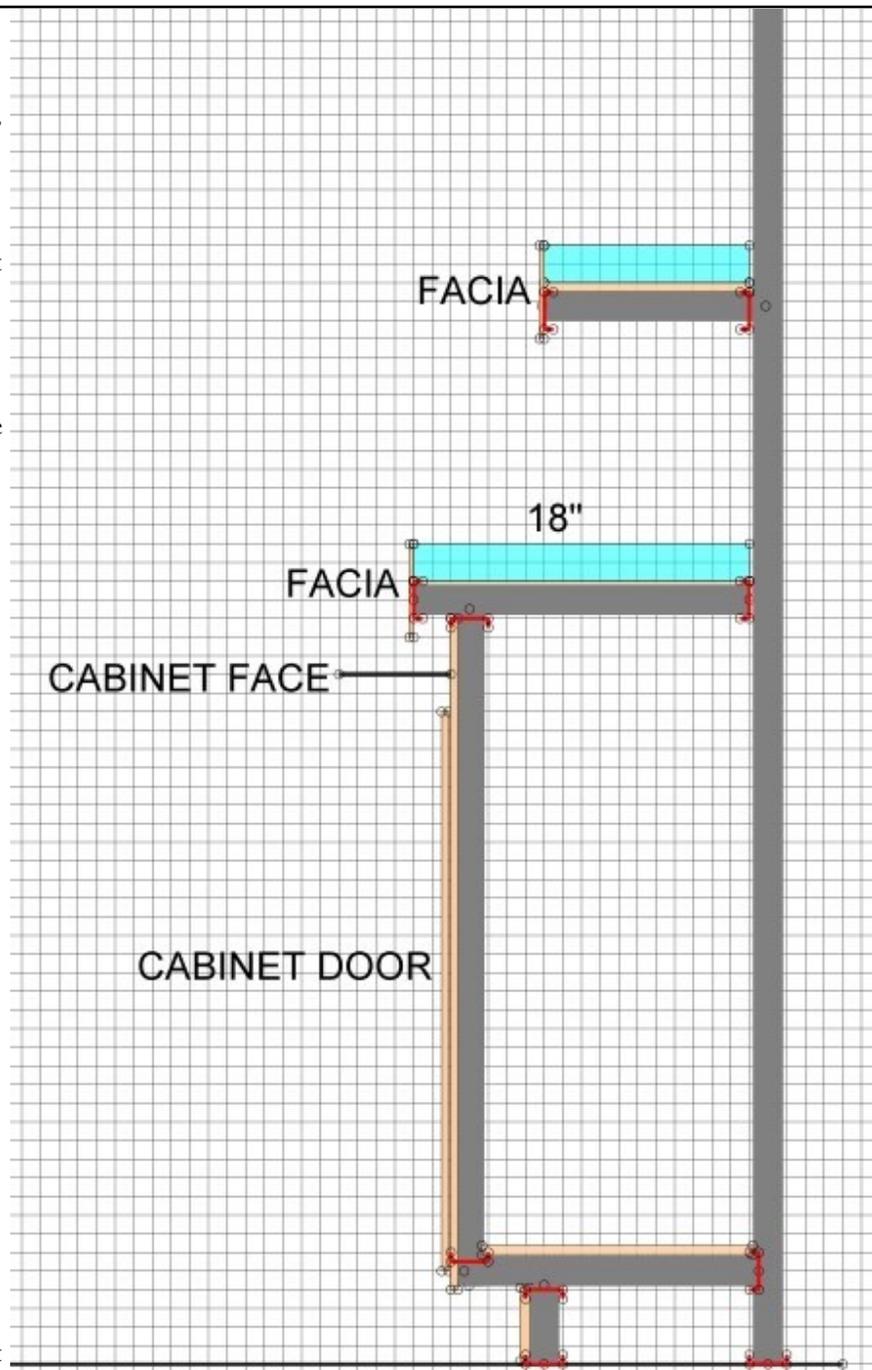
I have not yet determined how to build the curved cabinet doors that will be needed in some areas. If anyone can offer guidance regarding the curved cabinet doors, please let me know. (Randy Allio or Dale Osburn are you listening?) I highly recommend the use of steel studs in layout construction. The cost of 1 5/8" x 8' 20GA steel studs is \$2.43 each. The 1 5/8" x 10' 20 GA steel track is \$3.05 each.

Steel studs are uniform, straight, lightweight and easy to work with. Construction was quieter and cleaner since I didn't have to use my electric miter saw or table saw.

The tools and materials I used are as follows:

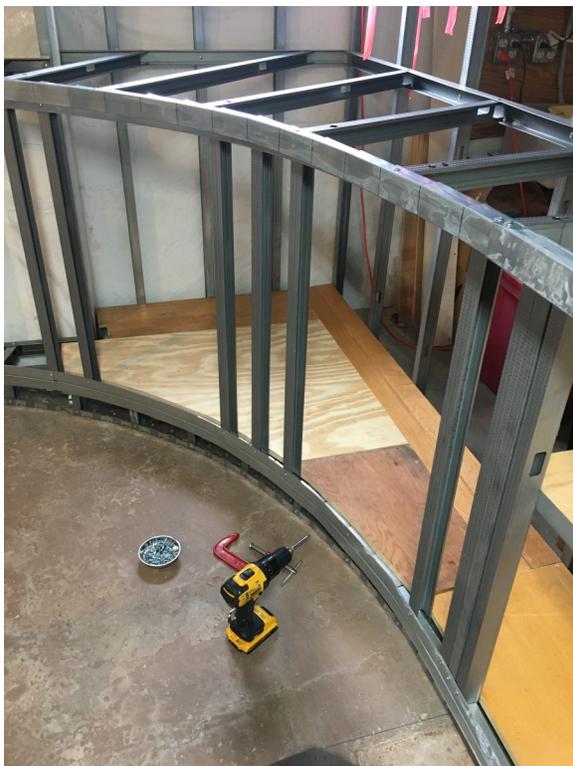
- Good quality tin snips.
- Cordless drill driver.
- Various clamps including 2" vice-grip locking C-clamps for holding studs to track when driving screws.
- Electric hammer drill (\$40) and 1/4" masonry bits for drilling the concrete floor.
- Levels, including two small magnetic levels that easily attach to the steel studs.
- Laser level (nice, but not necessary. \$60)
- Small framing square.
- 1 5/8" steel studs and track.
- 1/2" wafer head self-drilling screws.
- 1" mushroom head hammer screws for anchoring the steel track to the concrete floor. (Tapcon fasteners could also be used).

If you are building a new layout or modify-



ing an existing layout, I encourage you to consider steel studs.

When the Corona virus threat is over I will be glad to show the bench work to anyone who might be interested. Until then, be careful, stay safe, and I hope to see everyone at the next Coal Division meeting.





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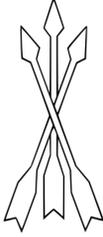
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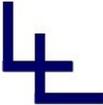


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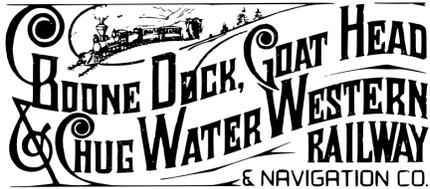
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 An Appalachian Coal Hauling Railroad set in the 50's

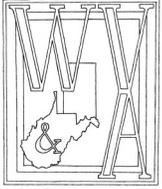


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## Upcoming Coal Division Events

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letter 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](mailto:editor@coaldivision.org)  
to get onto the email dis-  
tribution list for Up The  
Holler.

**May 2**

**Steel is King is Canceled**

**VIRTUAL MEETING INSTEAD, see page 4**

**June 13**

**St. Albans Depot and/or Virtual**

**July 11**

**St. Albans Depot and/or Virtual**

**August 8**

**St. Albans Depot and/or Virtual**