



UP THE HOLLER



DIVISION 9, MID CENTRAL REGION, NMRA

October 2020

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FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Bob Osburn, Superintendent

We are now having close to the same number of members attending our virtual meetings as we would have at a Depot meeting. It's been a slow process for Division 9, but little by little more members are learning how to join our Zoom sessions. We wouldn't be seeing this increase of participation without members assisting other members, thanks for all of your help. Future activities are still a big question. We all want to be back at the Depot again for our meetings and ideas have been discussed to maybe make this possible in the future. Please do your part and practice the CDC guidelines to help get this virus under control. We all miss that in-person contact.

It's hard to believe it has been almost 4 years since we lost Gary Burdette. He left us with a very special parting gift: the idea of the Square Foot Challenge. We should be proud of all the Division 9 members who have decided to honor this gift and continue to participate in the annual challenge. This year a craftsman kit of a small structure is available for members. Fourteen kits were produced for the challenge and only a few kits remain.

Last year we had a Christmas luncheon for our regular meeting in December. At this gathering members displayed and explained their inspiration for their Square Foot project. At this time, it is uncertain how we will view this year's creations but we will come up with a plan that ensures everyone's safety. If you have any ideas for the meeting or if you still need one of the kits, please contact Dale Osburn.

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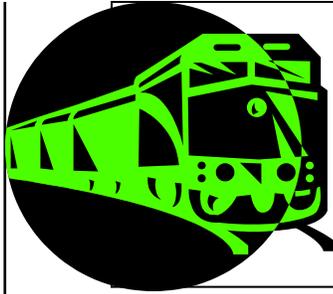
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Upcoming Coal Division Monthly Railfun Events

Saturday October 10

1 PM

Virtual Division Membership Meeting

- **Welcome and Call to Order (Acknowledge members present)**
- **Approval of Minutes from September meeting**
- **Treasurers Report**
- **Superintendents Report**
- **Assistant Superintendent Report**
- **Committee Chairs Reports**
- **Open Discussion/Questions (One at a time please)**
- **Adjourn Business Meeting**
- **5 Minute Break**
- **Clinic by Tom Harris on making mountains**

Next Event

Saturday November 14

At the Depot, or Zoom, or Both?

SEPTEMBER 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 October 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 October 10 at our regular time of 1 p.m.

Topic: Division 9 October Meeting

Time: Oct 10, 2020 12:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97651146658>

Meeting ID: 976 5114 6658

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,97651146658# US (New York)

+13017158592,,97651146658# 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)

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

Sam Delauter, Assistant Superintendent

As the seasons are changing I hope they find you well and doing some modeling. My favorite time of the year is fall and it's finally upon us. With the cooler weather, the warehouse I work in has started to cool down. At long last I am not hot and sweaty by 8AM. With the hot weather, I was not getting much modeling done. By the time I got home, I was worn out and the dogs had been waiting on me to get home. With the cooler weather, I am much more motivated to work on some trains when I get home.

I am really good at starting projects and then stalling on them. I'm sure that there are others like me that get excited about starting a new project and once started, begin to stall on the project. In an effort to finish more projects that I have stalled on, I was looking for a way to organize and streamline my process. While in the train room one day looking at the projects strewn across the room, it hit me. I have an old Fender amp sitting in a corner that got put there because I had no where else to put it. While it does work, I haven't played it in a number of years. At this time it does a wonderful job of holding projects I'm working on, but more importantly, it only holds a limited number of projects. I started thinking and realized that only having a limited space allotted to store active projects will hopefully keep me on track better. I

hope that over the next few months I can lighten the number of projects I have in the works. Whether it's using my amp as a place to store the most current projects that I am working on or a different location, I think only allowing a small space to keep my current projects will help me stay on track.

With my new found streamlining of my building process, I have directed my attention at a couple of HO caboose kits and an HO boxcar kit that I had started. The boxcar is a Sylvan Models Canadian Pacific newsprint boxcar. This car is at the very tail end of my era or a little out of it but I got the kit at a good price. It's a resin kit and very nicely done. I'm not sure what I'm going to do with it yet but it has been an enjoyable build. The two caboose kits in my ever expanding caboose collection are a Sparrows Point Lackawanna wood caboose and an American Model Builders Norfolk and Western wood caboose kit. The Lackawanna caboose will be painted as in an Erie Lackawanna scheme to run with my EL trains. While I don't model the N&W, I did have the need for a proper N&W caboose. One of the locos that I received from Greg's estate was a N&W Y6b that I will run at the train club. The accounts online say that these have great pulling power so I'm looking forward to running this loco with a long coal drag.

CLINICS and T-TRAK

Sam Delauter, Clinic Chair

I hope that everyone enjoyed my clinic on building one piece body resin kits. The October clinic will be given by Tom Harris. The clinic will be on making mountains.

While there has not been any events to display the T-TRAK layout at, I hope everyone has been making pro-

gress on their modules. I would like to extend the offer to anyone in the division to write an article on T-TRAK in the upcoming issues.

CALL FOR CLINICS

Doug Sandmeyer, Northern Express Clinic Chair

The planning committee for the 2021 Mid Central Region Convention, The *Northern Express*, is looking for clinicians. We are looking for a variety of topics from prototype modeling, modeling methods, empire building, electronics, and well, you name it. Submitted clinics will be selected based on subject needs, timeliness, and the number of clinic slots.

The convention is being held at the Ambassador Center in Erie, Pennsylvania from May 20 through 23, 2021. The

center will feature three well-lit clinic rooms with tables for clinicians and participants alike. The Ambassador was the site of our successful Mini-Meet last September, giving participants a chance to get a peek at our future convention center.

Contact Doug Sandmeyer at dsandme@stny.rr.com for more information and the submission form. Visit the *Northern Express* website at <https://www.div12mcr.org/northern-express/>.

**NMRA MCR DIVISION 9
THE COAL DIVISION**

**Virtual Meeting
Using Zoom
September 12, 2020
Minutes**

Members caught up each other and their railroad projects and current railroad events. Several members were signing in for the first time since the migration to virtual meetings.

Meeting called to order by Superintendent Bob Osburn at 1:10 p.m.

Division Clerk Report

August minutes approved
Treasury Balance is \$8,466.35.
Company Store \$0.
Raffle \$0.
Pike Ads \$0.

Superintendent Report

Robert Osburn welcomed everyone to our online meeting. He noted we have some first-time attendees and the challenges that come with technology. The Appalachian Model Railroad Society has cancelled this year's November railroad show. This show has been held annually for the past 62 years. He noted John Harris' recent article on recruiting new members. Robert also mentioned some things that other divisions are doing to cope with the current need to isolate and yet still hold meetings in some form. The possibility of having some type of in-person meeting was discussed, possibly in October or later and in a manner that keeps members safe.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Sam Delauter mentioned that the Kanawha Valley show was still being considered for February. He shared some of his experiences in the disposition of Greg Barker's railroad collection.

Newsletter - Up the Holler

Bob Weinheimer is always looking for materials. He noted the articles on a paint shaker and scratch built Sperry rail car in the current issue.

Achievement Program

Nothing new to report.

Library

Bill Wadsworth was present but was having audio issues.

Contest

Dale has been distributing Square Foot Challenge kits. This year has the potential for very high participation. For October we will be doing shop tours where members show us around their work shops. There was discussion of how some divisions were doing voting contests. Members also discussed ways to blend various contest categories.

For today's bring & brag Robert Osburn showed how he

converted a N Scale Tomix DC rail cleaning car to DCC. Jerry Doyle showed a "Frankenstein" switcher, a bargain HO blue-box Athearn SW1500 purchased second hand for parts that ended up, instead, being completely rebuilt and was almost ready for service. Tom Harris showed his home made ACI labels using the in the 1970's. He showed how he placed them on locomotive handrail stanchions.

Clinic

Mark Maynard showed some videos of scenery work on his layout. Sam Delauter gave a clinic on building a resin PRR container flat car. He mentioned possibly syncing the contest topic with clinic topics. Tom Harris will give the October clinic. Dale volunteered to do a clinic on home-made ground foam in 2021.

Membership

John Harris was not available. Robert Osburn recommended members read John's article in the current newsletter.

Raffle

No raffle today.

Education

No report.

Old Business

No report.

New Business

Dale Osburn suggested we explore meeting in person at the depot sometime in October. The logistics and issues involved were discussed. Robert recommended we explore scheduling a separate in-person meeting. Sam Delauter mentioned Hurricane city park as another location.

Announcements

Out of the Holler online meeting September 17.

Future Meetings:

October 10 – Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 2:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk

CONTEST

Dale Osburn, Contest Chair

The September Zoom meeting went very well and we had several members showing their recent modeling efforts (see pictures below).

One item discussed during the meeting is changing the monthly contest schedule. We have a few new topics that should bring some interest to the monthly contest such as scratch building structures, kitbashing and anything electronic.

I have been reviewing Divisions 7 and 8 contest information and have been working on a plan for the upcoming year if we still cannot meet in person. I will share information on voting and contest entries in the next few months.

The October contest will be Shop tours. Robert Osburn is on the list to provide a tour of his shop. Anyone interested in showcasing their shop, please let me know.



Jerry Doyle showed a Blue-Box Athearn SW1500 switcher purchased used for parts. Instead it ended up getting new trucks, details, and a fresh coat of paint!

Sam Delauter presented a clinic on how he built this resin car flat car kit and its container load.



Robert Osburn showed us this track cleaning car, it is designed to be pulled by a locomotive. On page 7 he tells us how he installed a decoder to control its vacuum cleaner motor speed.

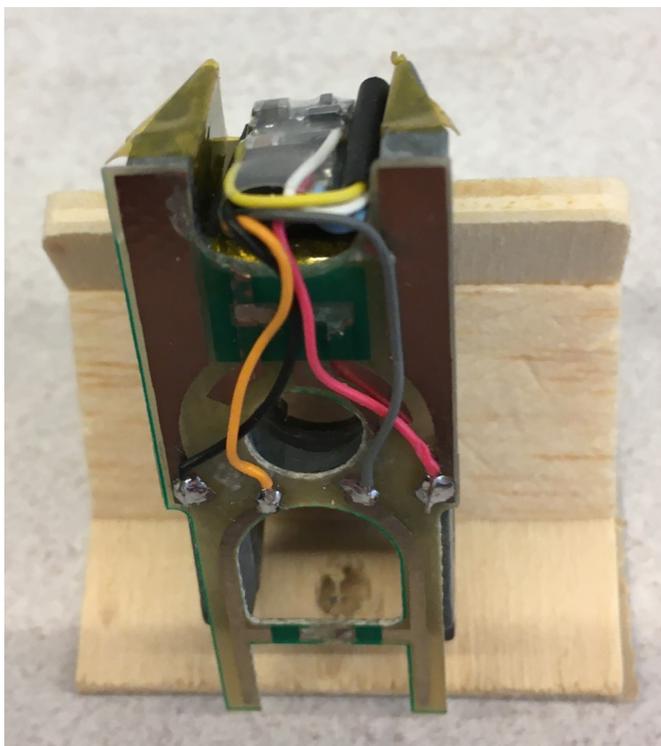
Tomix N-Scale Cleaning Car DCC Conversion

By Bob Osburn

I had been looking for a simple way to maintain the track on my attic railroad; something I could put on the track and pull around while I did other work on the layout. I had searched for some time but I thought the cost and reviews of other cleaning cars didn't meet my needs. I had looked at the Tomix car before, the reviews were good, but the only version available was a DC version. While at the Bluefield Train Show last year, I spotted a Tomix unit at a vendors table. The cleaning car looked new, had all the accessories with it, and already had knuckle couples installed. With a little dickering, I purchased the Tomix car at a very reasonable price. The track cleaning car is not recommended for use with DCC but after some research I found that others had changed the car over to DCC and it didn't seem like a difficult task. Note that this is not a self-powered car; it requires an engine to pull it around the track. The motor in the car drives a vacuum device or a set of cleaning pads on the bottom of the car. The advantage to converting it to DCC is you can program an address (say 003) into the decoder to vary the higher DCC voltage and have complete speed control without harming the motor.

I chose a TCS Z2 decoder for my conversion because of the size and being only a 2 function decoder (I only needed 1 function for speed). Some

mill work was needed on the end of the car weight and circuit board for decoder installation and all electronic components had to be removed from the circuit board. The board also needed some copper traces removed to isolate the track pick-ups from the motor. The installation went smoothly and the car seems to perform well while I work on other layout projects.



PASSENGER MANIFEST

John Harris, Membership Chair

In my article last month, I discussed some of the challenges facing NMRA during this year of COVID-19. One of these challenges continues to be membership retention. Certainly fears and limitation to mass gatherings has made it difficult to maintain connections with fellow hobbyists. To say many of us have been distracted would be an understatement. It is perhaps for this reason we have seen a slight drop off in membership.

While I have not seen numbers for either the region or national, Coal Division is down 2 members in the last report I received from the headquarters. Surely this is not a large number, but it does represent a drop of 4% of our division roster. And if applied to active members, this would have been significant. I do not, however, feel this is reason for panic, I feel it just simply reflects the mood

of the country, perhaps a "tightening the belt" in uncertain times.

It does however; point to the need to continue efforts to reach out to members whose membership has lapsed to encourage them to consider rejoining the ranks. This will include direct emails to suggest participation in our Zoom meetings and the forum discussions. I am glad that our newsletter continues to be sent to even those whose membership has recently lapsed as it keeps the lines of communication open and offers opportunity to reconnect when the time is right for them.

As we continue to move forward thru the pandemic perhaps we will see other opportunities to expand our outreach and retention efforts. Keep modeling and be safe. I hope to see you soon!

NOTICE OF 2020 NMRA MID CENTRAL REGION ANNUAL MEETING

The Mid Central Region of the NMRA will hold its 2020 membership meeting on Friday October 23, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. Due to the cancellation of the annual region convention due to COVID-19, our meeting will be held virtually using Zoom.

It is required that general attendees register before the meeting to aid in administration of the meeting. To register please notify the MCR Secretary at abledog@aol.com

or leave a message at 304-638-2826 no later than October 18, 2020.

Questions to the Board should be submitted in advance to the MCR Secretary at abledog@aol.com no later than October 18, 2020.

The MCR Board of Directors meeting will immediately follow the annual meeting.

MY WORD

Bob Weinheimer, Editor

This issue of Up The Holler is a little shorter than the last one due to a smaller number of items. That gives me a little more room to fill.

Right above this article is one describing the Mid Central Region annual meeting. We are a non-profit incorporated in Ohio meaning we are required to have such a meeting annually. Normally it is part of the banquet and goes by very quickly. As all real business is conducted by the Board of Directors, we don't really miss much. This time, however, with no banquet due to the loss of the convention, we will meet virtually. If you are a member of the NMRA you are invited to attend, please send a note to the MCR Secretary to get the link to the meeting. If you are not a member, this is one of the things you miss out on. To give us something to do at the meeting, please send any questions you would like answered by the officers or board members to the Secretary, we will do our best to have answers for you at the meeting.

Again due to the virus, I have not held any operating sessions for a while. One thing I did do was to run through the entire schedule by myself looking for problems and other things to improve. I found a number of maintenance items heretofore unknown to me, the crew seems to keep such issues to themselves. I hope the railroad runs a bit more smoothly once we can do so safely.

I have also started to install lighting in some of my structures. There is a new train order office at Waynesburg that has a light in it. The other targets of my atten-

tion are the two structures comprising West Penn Stamping in Pittsburgh. In both I am using strips of surface mounted LEDs of the sort shown to us by Paul Lapointe in a clinic some time back. To me, the key is to get some light in the structures but not so much that it becomes overwhelming. One structure is complete and ready for the layout, the other, the one to the right in the photo, needs a little bit of rehab before returning to its spot. The photo is of the first structure, it is seen on the layout in full room light. It is no longer the dark blob of the past, compare it to the unlit building to the right. The lighting is subtle but it is on and looks better in person.



Pittsburgh Plastics, the empty spot to the left, is off the layout under study for its lighting. It, too, will need a significant restructuring in order to install the lighting. While this is a bit of work, the results should be very noticeable.

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

November	November 2
December	November 30
January	December 28



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CRESCENT VALLEY

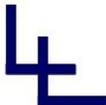


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 Clint Foster Superintendent
 Ronceverte WV

Allegheny & New River Road
 An Appalachian Coal Hauling Railroad set in the 50's

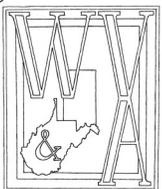


Bringing a little bit of West Virginia to the rest of America a few tons at a time



John Harris, Chief Engineer
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West Virginia & Atlantic Railroad



www.dewv.edu/center-railway-tourism
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Upcoming Coal Division Events

If you received this newsletter 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 to get onto the email distribution list for Up The Holler.

October 10
Virtual

November 14
Virtual

December 12
Virtual?