



UP THE HOLLER



DIVISION 9, MID CENTRAL REGION, NMRA

April 2021

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FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Bob Osburn, Superintendent

Thanks to everyone who attended the March meeting. This was the best attendance for a virtual meeting so far, matching our usual turnout for an in-person gathering at the depot. It was great to see some faces we hadn't seen in a while and catch up on what you have been doing. It is understandable that it takes time for change to happen, getting familiar with the technology and understanding the virtual process is something a lot of our members just aren't familiar with but we are slowly getting there—thanks again.

The standard format for the March meeting was altered a little to give the guest clinician an opportunity so he wouldn't have to be there during the entire meeting. This seemed to work out quite well and we will try and follow this same procedure with future guest speakers. Speaking about the clinic; Bob Frankrone joined us virtually from Louisville, KY to present his clinic "How to Make a Scene in 15 Steps." You may also recognize his name; Bob writes the monthly article in the NMRA magazine titled "Love Those Loads" and many of you have attended his clinics at NMRA events. He presented a very informative and interesting step-by-step detailed process for creating a completed model railroad scene. I think everyone took something away from this wonderful clinic that they will use in the future. Thanks Bob, we really appreciated you being with us.

Much of the business session of the meeting was devoted to when and how we can safely meet once again in-person. A lot of ideas were presented and it was decided if CDC guidelines could be followed, June seemed to be the target month for an in-person meeting. We are also working on how to have a hybrid meeting, both in-person and virtually. Many Divisions within the MCR are looking to implement this type of meeting. It has been really rewarding to see all the cooperation between the divisions; sharing ideas, giving advice, and working together toward this issue. If we can have hybrid meetings it would create more opportunities to bring our members together. Vacations, illness, or foul weather wouldn't stop you from attending a meeting. Another great feature would be the ability to have guest clinicians available. Yes, the pandemic has changed our world but we must embrace the good we can salvage out of the bad it has created.

The last thing I would like to talk about this month is membership. Membership in the Coal Division has taken a down turn during the pandemic. If you have let your membership lapse, please renew your membership if possible. We are a very small division and we need your help. Every member is important and an asset to the division. The last year has been really difficult for all of us. The one thing I believe we all have learned is comradery, a hand shake, and a pat on the back is very important. Meeting virtually has helped keep us together to a certain degree but we all hope the future can see us back together and enjoying each other's company again. Your fellowship and contributions are needed more than ever—hope to see you soon.

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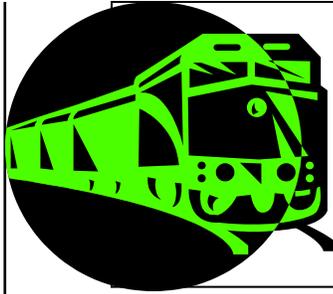
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Upcoming Coal Division Monthly Railfun Events

Saturday April 10

1 PM

Virtual Division Membership Meeting

- **Welcome and Call to Order (Acknowledge members present)**
- **Approval of Minutes from the last meeting**
- **Treasurers Report**
- **Superintendents Report**
- **Assistant Superintendent Report**
- **Clinic: James Knabb will tell us how the modelers of the future will not only design a layout but will incorporate technology into their modeling efforts.**
- **Committee Chairs Reports**
- **Bring and Brag: Kitbashing/Scratch Built (Anything Railroad Related)**
- **Open Discussion/Questions (One at a time please)**
- **Adjourn Business Meeting**
- **5 Minute Break**
-

Next Event

Saturday May 8, 2021

Zoom

APRIL 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 April 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 April 10 at our regular time of 1 p.m.

Topic: NMRA MCR Division 9 Meeting 04-10-2021
Time: Apr 10, 2021 12:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/96795622053>

Meeting ID: 967 9562 2053

Dial by your location
+1 301 715 8592 US

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

I hope everyone is doing well and able to have time to get some modeling done. I haven't done a ton of modeling this month. Since our last meeting, I hurt my hand at work. I was moving a pump and it shifted and fell on my hand. Although my hand was sore, the big hold up to modeling was the cut on my finger. It took a while to heal so I didn't get my 15 minutes of modeling in most days since our last meeting. Since it has healed I have been back hard at work to try and finish up projects that I have been working on. I have a couple more kits almost ready for the paint booth and I have a couple ready to be weathered. Once painted and weathered they'll be ready for final assembly and then I can add them to the roster.

I have not been to the Kanawha Valley Modelers Association to run trains since the pandemic hit. Actually I don't think I had been there for a month before the pandemic. As I write this article, I just got back from the club. I went today with the intention of testing some of the locos and rolling stock that I had been working on over the last year. All of my rolling stock with the exception of one of my cabooses ran well. As for the locos, that was a mixed bag. Some ran really well although I had trouble with a couple. A couple of the problematic pieces were my Overland Brass Erie Lackawanna bay window caboose and my Proto PRR C-Liners. The EL cab was shorting out interminably no matter which orientation the trucks were. The insulators were properly aligned so I suspect that it is a matter of a faulty insulator. As for the C-Liners, it appears that the gears in one of the trucks have split. I guess it was a good thing that I test run them on the layout because they ran well at home when I in-

stalled the decoder. Luckily both of these will be easy fixes. I also test ran my Nickel Plate Road 587 as I hadn't had a chance to run it on the layout since I had completed it. It will need some minor tweaking. Although not as easy as the first two, it should not be that bad. This goes to show that those little gremlins can pop up at any time.

I don't often talk about current happenings on the current railroads but there were a couple that I read about recently that I found interesting. The first being Amtrak's announcements of the 50th anniversary heritage units. Amtrak has announced six paint schemes for their 50th anniversary including the first unit of the phase 7 paint scheme. Although I am not a huge fan of many of the schemes, it does give us a glimpse into the future. Although we all knew it was coming and maybe I just missed it, they did say that the P42 is starting to be replaced by the Seimens Chargers. One of the heritage schemes will be applied to one of the chargers in production and the other five will go on p42s.

The other big news is that Canadian Pacific has come to an agreement to buy Kansas City Southern. Although it is in the very early stages, if the purchase goes through, they will be the only railroad able to go from Canada to Mexico on its own trackage. The new company will be called the Canadian Pacific Kansas City. It's hard to say if this will actually happen as it has to pass the Surface Transit Board but there is the possibility that this merger of class ones could happen. (Editor's note: how long before it changes its name to CPKC like BNSF did?)

As always, be kind to yourself and even better to others.

CLINICS

Sam Delauter, Clinic Chair

The March clinic was presented by Bob Frankrone. It was about "How to Make a Scene in 15 Easy Steps". However it was not on "How to Make a Scene in 15 Minutes" as I had previously stated. The error was on my part and not on Bob. As always the Coal Division showed our ability to adapt and welcome Bob's clinic of a different title. Many thanks to Bob for a great clinic.

The April clinic will be presented by James Knabb of Dallas, Texas. James will be giving a presentation on how the modelers of the future will not only design a layout

but will incorporate technology into their modeling efforts.

Looking ahead, the May clinic will be given by Robert Osburn. Robert has been working on the structures on his layout and will be explaining how he is adding interiors to his DPM buildings.

As always, we are looking for clinicians or ideas for clinics. If you have an ideas or would like to give a clinic, please let me know.

**NMRA MCR DIVISION 9
THE COAL DIVISION**

**Virtual Meeting
Using Zoom
March 13, 2021
Minutes**

Members caught up on their status for getting a COVID vaccine. Robert Osburn share that he was able to visit his mother for the first time in a year. There was discussion about layout progress for various members. David Oliverio was warming by his fire pit for today's meeting. Members introduced themselves. We had a guest, Bob Frankrone, from MCR Division 8.

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

Division Clerk Report

February minutes approved
Treasury Balance is \$8,435.35.
Company Store \$0.
Raffle \$0.
Pike Ads \$0.

The only upcoming expenses should be the annual fee for incorporation and new checks once we change banks.

Superintendent Report

Robert Osburn thanked everyone for attending today. He kept his report short to expedite Bob Frankrone's clinic.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Sam Delauter also noted the good attendance today. He mentioned his idea of modeling for at least 15 minutes a day. He noted that he is now working on some older kits and the vagaries of dealing with warped resin parts.

Clinic – Bob Frankrone

Adding a Scene to a Layout in 15 Easy Steps

(There was a short break before continuing the meeting.)

Newsletter - Up the Holler

Bob Weinheimer was conducting a NMRA region president's meeting today.

Achievement Program

Bob Weinheimer was conducting a NMRA region president's meeting today.

Library

Bill Wadsworth nothing new to report. He noted that it is fairly easy to access the NMRA website www.nmra.org.

Contest

Dale Osburn noted next month's contest is a new topic - anything kitbashed that is railroad related.

Clinic

Next month's clinic is James Knabb from Dallas, Texas. The topic will be how technology is being used in the hobby. The May clinic is still open. Usually, it is the Steel is King meeting in Parkersburg.

Membership

John Harris discussed the downward trend in membership and possible causes. The downward trend is nationwide, but our division has seen a steeper decline. Economics may be a cause. There was some discussion about the high cost of dues as a possible cause. Robert Osburn mentioned the notification procedure for the Academy of Model Aeronautics as a model for the national NMRA to look at. He suggested that members brainstorm ways to address the decline and the renewal process.

Robert Osburn is hopeful that we may be able to resume in-person meetings in or about June. He mentioned the St Albans Historical Society's facility as a possible venue. Tom Harris raised the issue of appropriate social distancing. Jerry Doyle raised the issue of continuing Zoom once we begin meeting in person and the logistical issues this involves. He suggested that we consider a public library as an option since they usually have internet connectivity. Since some members are only able to participate via Zoom this is an important consideration. Robert and Jerry will work on this issue.

Raffle

No raffle today.

T-Track

Sam is always available to help anyone who is interested.

Education

No report.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Potential future in-person meetings.

Announcements

None

Future Meetings:

April 10 – Zoom

We had one entry in today's contest *Locomotives Other Than Steam*

Meeting adjourned at 2:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk

CONTEST

Dale Osburn, Contest Chair

The March contest was locomotives (other than steam). Larry Richards was the winner of the contest with an outstanding model.

The past year has made many of us step out of our comfort zone and into Zoom meetings with very little interaction with members of our club. During time away from our in person monthly meetings, I have really missed looking at models firsthand and being able to show projects that I have completed. With this said, I can see what the true value of being a member in the NMRA. Sure, it is nice to receive a discount when making purchases, but the true value comes from meetings and learning ideas from other modelers. I believe that what I have learned since 2013 when I became a member in the NMRA could have never been taught using videos or books on the market today. From day one being involved in this group has given me unlimited knowledge in so many ways not to mention building some great friendships. With that said, I am looking forward to hopefully returning in June to regular meetings.

The April contest is brand new this year and will be Kit bashing/Scratch Built (anything railroad related). The contest for May will be anything steel related.

I am looking forwarding to the entries for April because I know firsthand what some of our members have in the back of their closets and under their layouts. All contest pictures and descriptions must be submitted 24 hours prior to the April meeting to Robert Osburn.

2021	Monthly Model Contest
January	Modeler's Choice
February	Steam Locomotives
March	Locomotive Other Than Steam
April	Kitbashing/Scratch Built (Anything Railroad Related)
May	Anything Steel Related
June	Non Revenue
July	Structures
August	Electronics of a Railroad
September	Photo, Model or Prototype
October	Open Loads
November	Passenger Cars
December	Fifth Annual Gary Burdette Memorial Modeling Challenge





Larry Richards March Contest Entry

- HOn30 Boxcab Diesel
- Scratch built body on Bachman VO1000 chassis
- 5 chime air horn
- Bell from GE-U25
- Scratch built exhaust
- Air tank from Atlas GP25
- MV lenses
- Doors scratch built



PASSENGER MANIFEST

John Harris, Membership Chair

In her April "Observation Car", NMRA Magazine editor Cinthia Priest asked "Why? Why? Why?" Why did you join the NMRA? Why do you stay? And, why do you see membership in NMRA as being personally beneficial? All good questions. These are certainly in keeping with our latest discussions on membership retention. We all have discussed the fellowship with other modelers, the educational benefits and exchange of ideas, as well as the participation in regional and national conventions. So, I will be interested in the responses she gets in her in box.

Perhaps we should also ask "Why not?" Why are you not now a member? Why you are no longer a member is perhaps just as important to understand as we move forward. We discussed in the last Coal Division membership meeting a few of the possibilities. These ranged from the disconnect due to Covid 19, loss of interest due to cancellation of conventions, to pressure on personal budgets due to loss of income. All are understandable reasons. Certainly Covid has contributed to a portion of the fall-off and yes, membership dues have recently increased. But, perhaps there are other reasons that need to be explored.

I reported at the division meeting that we were now down almost 18% to 42 members. A further look into the

past member roster or inactive list suggests some other possibilities. It turns out that several of those listed as having not renewed, had taken advantage of the "Rail Pass" membership. This heavily discounted membership opportunity is intended to attract new members without a large outlay of capital. It is a great way to test the waters or rails so to speak. So, why are we not retaining these new members? Perhaps they were casual modelers. Perhaps they were just taking advantage of a good deal. Perhaps they were just curious. What is the attraction for grown men and women to play with trains?

While I have resisted the urge to call or write to those who have not renewed and directly ask the question, perhaps a less invasive form of communication would be an emailed survey. In the survey, we could ask the "Why" questions. Why did you first join? Why did you not re-join? Why would you consider rejoining in the future? You may have other suggestions and I certainly would be interested in feedback. I offer this as topic for our April meeting. Be thinking of potential whys and why nots. We will discuss further.

Keep modeling and be safe. Hope to see you soon!

SPAM BUTTON MISUSE

It has come to the attention of the NMRA's IT department that many NMRA members do not receive NMRA email publications (*Turntable*, *eBulletin*, *Dispatch*) because **other** members use the Spam button.

If the publication is not of interest, simply delete it. If you no longer want to receive **any** NMRA email publication, please use the Unsubscribe link which is safe and secure. Never use the Spam or Junk button. If too many people do this, service providers such as Yahoo will block all people from ever seeing the emails. Most NMRA members want to keep in touch. Don't ruin it for them.

Please note that Unsubscribe will apply to all NMRA email publications, including the *Turntable*, *eBulletin*, special *eBulletins*, and *Dispatch*. Note that it does *not* apply to *Up The Holler*.

MY WORD

Bob Weinheimer, Editor

Some months I have little to say or little space into which to put my thoughts. This month, as things happen, I can cut out an entire page of NMRA promotional ads and have no space or leave them in and have a whole page to fill.

On the National level, there is an item on the previous page about spam and NMRA publications. One of the benefits of membership is the opportunity to read these items. If you are receiving this newsletter and are not a member or are a lapsed member, consider joining or rejoining in order to receive them. The spam issue arises because some internet providers look at how their subscribers handle spam and if a large enough number report the NMRA mailings as spam, instead of just deleting them, the provider will label all as spam to all its customers and in an extreme case just toss it all before you ever see it. If you are not receiving these items, that may be the reason. In some cases you might be able to overcome these spam designations but that may not be universally so. Of course, your email address must be on file with the NMRA in order to subscribe in the first place.

Also on the National level are conventions. While the 2021 convention in Santa Clara has been canceled, the organizers are now working on a virtual version. There will be a modest charge but it appears that it will be quite an event. You can read more about it [here](#):

Planning is also coming along for the 2022 convention in St. Louis in August. Clinicians who were to appear in 2020 are being asked if they will appear next year. I hear the new venue has better clinic space, it all appears to be coming along nicely. I'll post a link when there is something to see.

On the Region level, planning is coming along for the three Region convention planned for next May in Indianapolis. Mid Central is working with Mid West and North Central to bring a larger than normal convention. This was originally planned before COVID and other complications caused the 2022 convention in the Birmingham to be canceled. Now, there is a National convention a few months and a few hundred miles away. On the surface this might look like a problem with them possibly being viewed as competitors for your convention budgets. On the other hand, those of us who go to a National convention almost always go to our home Region convention in the same year. For example, in 2016 we had our MCR convention in Columbus, Ohio and the National convention was in Indianapolis and I never heard a word of complaint about the proximity in time or location. Next year is really no different, both Indianapolis and St. Louis are within a day's drive of just about anywhere in the Mid Central Region. We'll all be starved for a convention so 2022 will give us the opportunity to enjoy two of them.

Also on the Region level is the upcoming Board of

Directors meeting and the Annual Meeting. An email blast will go out shortly with the scoop on these. I can tell you they will be the evening of May 21. That's the night we would have met at the now canceled convention in Erie so board member should have had that on their calendar already. The Annual Meeting will immediately follow the board meeting. Normally the Annual Meeting is the following evening at the banquet. The plan is to adjourn the board meeting, take a short break, then start the Annual Meeting. Unfortunately, that means we won't know just when it will start so the invitation will offer the chance to sit through the board meeting as well. I don't see it lasting very long and there should be no big issues to resolve so it should not be too bad to sit through if you want to attend the Annual Meeting.

The highlight of the Annual Meeting will be the announcement of the Directors Award winner and the Wenderfer Award winner as well as the change of officers.

As the number of us who have received our COVID vaccinations increases, it may be time to begin operating the Pennsylvania Southern once again. I've used the pandemic to make some improvements. The north end of Bridgeville has been rebuilt and the steel mill interchange yard has been made larger and much more user friendly. Some of the building owners in Pittsburgh have paid their power bills and they now have lights. A train order office has appeared in Waynesburg. A major visual change overall has been the conversion of the track lighting in the big room to daylight (5,000 Kelvin) LEDs. They are brighter and use 20% less electricity than the LEDs they replaced.

I have also reworked the train schedule. As I bought more cars I just put on more merchandise trains that ran end to end with no switching. It was hard to rationalize them economically while much of the coal traffic never really ran. One of my operators is always on my case about the coal traffic rusting to the rails. It turned out that the number of those overhead trains was about equal to the number of coal trains so I just pulled the merchandise trains and replaced them with coal trains. I've run through the entire schedule twice and I feel this is a big improvement. Nearly all of the coal trains actually work on the railroad. Some get loaded at the mine in Waynesburg, others switch the Montour interchange, one supplies coal to the steel mill, and yet another delivers coal to the power plant in Pittsburgh. All in all, these trains offer better play value than the old run throughs. Now I am working on revisions to the routing program to make sure I cycle all the cars through a reduced demand for them. That's an intellectual exercise that is a challenge.

Well, it looks like I have just filled all that space. See you next time.



PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

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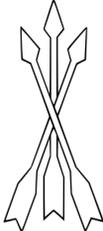
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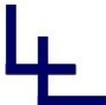


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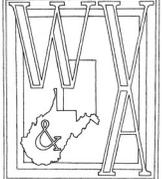


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Upcoming Coal Division Events

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April 10
Virtual

May 8
Virtual

June 12
Virtual or In Person?