



The Local

Newsletter of the Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
The Local, 76, Number 4, July-August, 2021

Official publication of the Mid-Eastern region, NMRA – A tax-exempt organization

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Happy Independence Day!

MER Elections 2021

Before heading out to the beach, and before you look at anything else in this issue, please check out the candidates for election of Directors for the Mid-Eastern Region (MER) of the NMRA for 2021, and also consider the bylaws changes listed in the same area. Informed voting is one of the most important things you can do as a member of the MER – especially now, as we begin rehabilitation and revitalization efforts to move us forward out of this pandemic.

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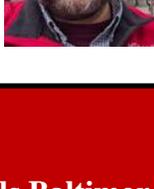
I know we don't need to mention the importance of your vote in this election as in all of our prior elections. Your vote is like paying respect to all those who have volunteered their services over the past 75 years since the MER Charter was first adopted, many of whom have worked hard to keep the organization alive and vibrant. In addition, our voice and direction in establishing what kind of leadership we want is paramount to maintaining our integrity and purpose. An organization like ours is only as good as the interest and the participation of our members.

Please look at the candidates' profiles and pictures, so you can learn about their experiences, their energy and their enthusiasm for enhancing the MER – their goals for the future and their leadership abilities. Do it

now, ahead of time, so you can make an informed decision, and so you will be ready when the ballot comes around.

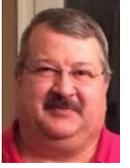
Okay! Now you can start reading the rest of this issue packed full of model railroading stuff!

Mid-Eastern Region Board of Directors & Administrative Staff

	President: Kurt Thompson, MMR 350 Ternwing Drive Arnold, MD 21012 410-507-3671 president@mer-nmra.com		Director-at-Large Randy Foulke 919-649-8253 randy.railfan@gmail.com		Achievement Program Manager: Dave Chance 704-933-4200 loconut@carolina.rr.com
	Vice President: Scott Unger 610-462-0756 sunger@mer-nmra.com		Director-at-Large and MER Photographer: Jerry Lauchle, MMR 814-404-6955 jlauchle@mer-nmra.com photographer@mer-nmra.com		Nominating Committee Chair: Bob Charles, MMR 717-763-1848 rcharles@aol.com
	Secretary: Martin Brechbiel, MMR (703) 309-3082 secretary@mer-nmra.com		Director-at-Large: Bob Morningstar 701-471-0132 bobmorningstar@protonmail.com		Editor: Greg Warth 757-816-8399 Local-editor@mer-nmra.com
	Treasurer: Brian Kampschroer 717-991-7560 treasurer16@mer-nmra.com		Business Manager: Howard Oakes 717-632-5990 301 Moulstown Rd Abbottstown PA 17301 business@mer-nmra.com		Assistant Business Manager: John Hoyt 410-340-1776 jhojt@mer-nmra.com
	Assistant Treasurer: Scott Unger 610-462-0756 sunger@mer-nmra.com		Executive Convention Chair: Sam Rogers 443-610-8452 ecc@mer-nmra.com		Contest Chair: Alan Mende 717-469-1047 alanmende@yahoo.com
	Ballot Committee Chair: Bob Minnis, MMR (434) 589-3011 kahlualab@aol.com		Publisher: Martin Brechbiel, MMR		Archivist: Kevin O'Connor 919-593-2537 kjoconnor2@yahoo.com
	Registrar: Kirk Bateman 410-442-0446 MER-Registrar@mer-nmra.com		Assist Registrar: Jim Fisher 443-504-3919 jfisher@mer-nmra.com		Web Master: Jeff Burch 443-574-6859 webmaster@mer-nmra.com

MER Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

1. MER Board of Directors Meeting – October 21, 2021 (Delta Hotels Baltimore, 245 Shawan Rd, Hunt Valley, MD 21031) (Contact the MER President for access to the meeting)

Mid-Eastern Region Division Superintendents					
	New Jersey Division 1 Bill Grosse (609) 585-4616 wgrossejr@gmail.com Division web page: njdivnmra.org		Potomac Division 2 Martin Brechbiel, MMR superintendent@potomac-nmra.org Division web page: potomac-nmra.org/		Philadelphia Division 3 Rob Hinkel (610) 279-2394 robhinkel@gmail.com Division web page: www.phillynmra.org
	Tidewater Division 4 Fred Humphrey 757-482-9498 tidewater.mer.nmra@gmail.com Division web page: nmra-mer-tidewater.org		James River Division 5 Phillip R. Taylor (434) 589-6006 drphilster@gmail.com Division web page: jrdnmra.blogspot.com/		South Mountain Division 10 Division web page: http://www.smdnmra.org/
	Susquehanna Division 11 Tim Himmelberger (717) 695-7958 timh@susquehannanmra.org Division web page: www.susquehannanmra.org		Carolina Southern Division 12 Alan Hardee (704) 868-6976 superintendent@carolinasouthhern.org Division web page: www.carolinasouthern.org		Carolina Piedmont Division 13 John Sokash N/A jasokash@bellsouth.net Division web page: www.cpd13.org/
	Chesapeake Division 14 Tom Casey (410)-426-8947 super@chesdiv-nmra.org Division web page: www.chesdiv-nmra.org				

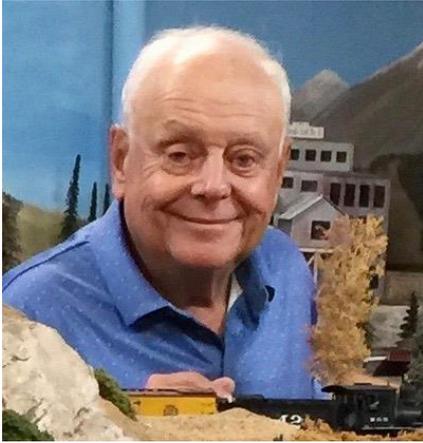
Candidate Statements for Officers to be Elected to the Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA Board of Directors

Candidate for Director -- Jerry Lauchle, MMR No. 618



I rejoined the NMRA in 2015 after a 25 year hiatus filled with marriage, family, professional development, woodworking, fishing, and bicycle racing. I retired from Penn State as a Professor Emeritus of Engineering Acoustics in 2006. I am currently serving my first term on the MER Board of Directors having responsibility in the areas of model contests and the website. I am also the Official Photographer of the MER. Before retirement I served over two decades as president, vice president, and member of the board of directors of a national professional engineering organization: The Institute of Noise Control Engineering of the USA. I also served the Acoustical Society of America and was named Fellow of both organizations. I served on my church council for several years as president and as the stewardship leader.

Candidate for Director -- Charles Rausch, MMR No. 659



I am volunteering to serve on the MER Board of Directors. I have been actively involved in model railroading for many years, first joining the NMRA in 1972. Presently I am an active member of the Carolina Piedmont Division and have attended recent MER conventions. Activities and accomplishments include:

- Division Assistant Superintendent
 - Editor of *The Herald* (monthly CPD division newsletter)
 - Presented clinics on various topics such as DCC installations, using JMRI, geared locomotives, estate planning, operations, etc.
 - Volunteered in the building of various raffle layouts to raise funds for the holiday season “Trains for Kids” program.
 - Volunteered for the 2016 MER Durham convention.
- Created an Internet Popular Vote program due to Covid 19.
 - Created a new Covid 19 project section in The Herald for members share their model building progress during the lockdowns.
 - Successfully worked on getting CPD13 meetings converted to virtual using Zoom.
 - Offer mentorship and encouraging participation in the Achievement program.
 - MMR 659 with the following AP certificates: Master Builder – Cars, Structures, Scenery; Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical; Chief dispatcher; Model Railroad Author; Association Volunteer

I now feel I am ready to move on to the region to bring my energy for this great hobby. Thank you for your consideration.

Candidate for Director -- Bob Morningstar



This is my nomination statement to serve another term as a director for the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA. I have been an HO scale modeler since 1978 and member of the NMRA since 2006. I am a retired Air Force Lt Col and currently the Division Chief for Security Engineering for the US Court system. I have served as Treasurer and past President of the Hagerstown MD Model Railroad Museum.

My desire to serve as a director is driven my desire to give back to the hobby and the organizations that promote it. My peers consider me a consensus builder and problem solver. I have presented clinics at the South Mountain Division (SMD) mini-conventions and conducted a virtual JMRI clinic in 2020 for the SMD. I attended all MER directors meeting during my first term, have reviewed and edited many articles submitted to the MER Local magazine, and have faithfully served the MER during my first term. I have delivered on time all actions assigned to me by the MER President and the board. My health is excellent and can travel to conventions and meetings. My work schedule is flexible and I can be available in the evenings and weekends. Evidence of my passion for the hobby includes:

publishing to the Model Railroad Hobbyist website blog (Username: bobmorning) and at my website, wmrwy.com. I have attended the past two MER conventions and firmly believe the hobby can grow with the proper promotion and leadership. I do believe we need to rethink our position on virtual events and also on long term gift giving from the membership to the MER and NMRA. Thank you for consideration of my re-nomination.

Candidate for Director -- Randy Foulke



I am seeking reelection as Director-at-Large to continue contributing to a hobby that has brought joy and sustained me in tough times. The list of accomplishments during the past two years includes:

- 1) Assisted with developing best practices for communicating information to members, including an Annual Report to membership.
- 2) Lead effort for a commemorative MER 75th Anniversary shirt.
- 3) Developed a Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy.
- 4) Assisted with navigating the At-Risk Persons Policy, including development of Outreach Coordinator job description.
- 5) Developing Document Retention Policy.
- 6) With colleagues, developing a Planned Giving Initiative.

In a new term, I would like to develop new initiatives to encourage young people to become involved in the hobby and NMRA. My passion is passenger train modeling and operation. I have been involved in 3 module groups, building multiple modules. I served as

Treasurer/Board Member of the Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club, and have been a NMRA member for 45 years. I have been collecting locomotives/ rolling stock for over 60 years. I come from a railroading family with one grandfather a yard clerk for PRR, and my other grandfather an interurban conductor; and my Father-in-Law was an engineer/fireman on the PRR/PC/CR.

Changes to Bylaws

Current:

Article IV, Section 5C: The Treasurer shall ensure that all money is deposited promptly in accounts maintained for that purpose in convenient banks; all accounts shall be joint requiring a single signature of the Treasurer, President or **Secretary**;

to change to:

Article IV, Section 5C: The Treasurer shall ensure that all money is deposited promptly in accounts maintained for that purpose in convenient banks; all accounts shall be joint requiring a single signature of the Treasurer, President or **Assistant Treasurer**;



President's Column

Plants and Volunteers



President Kurt Thompson, MMR

Okay, before the questions about my sanity become audible, I'll answer the question. What is a picture of a plant doing in the Local? I present to you the official plant of the Mid-Eastern Region (MER): the "volunteer." A "volunteer" plant is any plant that takes root and grows outside of its normal area. This particular volunteer has taken root and grown out from a worn-out tie surrounding one of my wife's flower beds. As you can see, the plant has grown sturdy and strong and is a symbol of the health of the entire bed.

Located in this issue are the candidate statements for four of your fellow members of the MER who have stood up and volunteered to run for one of the three Director positions on the MER Board. They have all done excellent work at the Division level and some have been serving already at the Region level. I also had three members who served as the Financial Review team this year. I want to thank them for each being a volunteer and stepping forward to willingly serve and provide leadership for the MER.

The MER only functions when it has volunteers who grow, sometimes in unexpected places and ways. With that, I ask each of you to consider

modeling the behavior of the official MER plant by contacting your division Superintendent or anyone on the MER Board about serving. I'm always looking for someone either to take on a small project or to serve for a longer term, such as running for and serving on the MER Board of Directors.

This year we will vote in three Directors to the Board. Next year's election will be for the four Officer positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. As President in my second term, I am term-limited from being re-elected into that position. So, it's clear that we need some candidates for the 2022 ballot – the more the better! Please help the MER grow as you volunteer and grow in a new area.



From the Editor's Desk...

Greg Warth, Editor

The Mid-Eastern Region (MER) of the NMRA is proud to present our candidates for election for 2021. Please spend some time reviewing these dedicated volunteers, including their goals and recommendations for our Region with the prospect of moving forward into a better, safer and more productive future.

In addition, we have a new update from the Mt. Clare Junction Convention Committee heralding our 75th Anniversary as an independent Region of the National Model Railroad Association. This is truly shaping up to be an awesome event! Since we've never had a 75th Anniversary before, and will never have another, you really won't want to miss this one.

In this issue of The Local, you will find another great demonstration of "How to Get Rid of Leftovers – Part 4", by one of MER's best scratch-builders, Martin Brechbiel, MMR. Martin goes back to the "Basic Cabin or Company House" concept in this instructional piece and

shows how easy it is to build one of these with a minimum of tools and materials. Earl Hackett continues on with his very educational series on how to construct and wire an interlocking signal bridge. Our next issue will contain information on how the prototype interlocking signals work and what they mean. "The Basics of DCC - Part 2" contains a lot more information about how to wire your DCC layout, how you can have both DC and DCC on the same layout, and how to install decoders in your old analog DC locomotives. "Modeler's Haven" is chock full of information, tips and techniques to build your skills as a model railroader. The topics in this issue are all about scratch building, wiring and scenery tips. Don't forget to send in *your* tips and pics before September 1st to get them in the next issue.

Reminders:

1. Sign up for the Convention using the [Registration Form here.](#)
2. Order your MER T-shirt on the Registration Form.
3. Send us your modeling tips, articles, and layout pictures to local-editor@mer-nmra.com
4. Don't forget to work on your Baltimore railroad car, structure or locomotive for the President's Award.
5. Send us any information you may have on the history of the MER for our next issue.
6. Carefully review the candidates that have been nominated for the election, so you will be well-informed when it comes time to vote.

Above all, thank you for your membership in the MER and NMRA. We truly appreciate your support and your faith in our organization as an informational resource and as a method of collaborating with other modelers. Happy railroading!

Advertising:

If you have a business and find yourself wishing to place an ad on this page, please contact the Editor at local-editor@mer-nmra.com. The current advertising rates (one year) as follows:

Callboard ads (Division and Clubs Only)...Free

Business Card size	\$60
Quarter Page ad.....	\$125
Half Page ad	\$225
Half Page ad per issue (Div. only)	\$25

Your ad may appear as text, photo, art or any combination thereof. Art must be of high quality and camera-ready. Formats must be in txt, doc/docx, pdf, jpeg, bmp or tiff only. The content must be related to model trains or railroads or provide a benefit specifically to model railroaders. If you need help with your ad, please don't hesitate to ask the Editor.

The Local welcomes articles, photographs, and model railroad related material as contributions to members' education and enjoyment of the hobby. Materials should have a wide appeal. The Editor will exercise all due care of submissions, but contributors should not send paper/photo originals without retaining back-up copies. Editors, by definition, reserve the right and have the responsibility to make corrections, deletions, and changes to accommodate space. If your item is time-sensitive in any way, please advise the Editor. Otherwise, stories and photos that are accepted for publication are used in approximately the order they are received.

Publication Schedule Submission Deadline

Jan/Feb	Dec 1st of previous year
Mar/Apr	Feb 1st
May/June	Apr 1st
Jul/Aug	Jun 1 st
Sept/Oct	Aug 1 st
Nov/Dec	Oct 1 st

Please observe the following steps to submit your contribution. **1.** Compose and submit your text in one of the following formats: TXT, DOC, or DOCX. **2.** Consider what photos, illustrations, or other graphics can go with the text. These are essential. But, **DO NOT** include/insert them into your text. **Do** put notations in the text such as

“Insert Photo #1 here.” Send the illustrations separately and numbered as you would want them in the text. JPG, GIF, TIFF, or PNG formats are best for photos. **3.** If you have captions for your photos, etc., create a separate text file for the captions, each of which will be numbered to match a numbered photo or figure. A special note on photos or other exhibits; please only send us your creative work or that for which you have written permission to use so we can give that source proper credit. We need to avoid any copyright infringement situations.

Proofreaders:

Alex Belida , Martin Brechbiel, Bob Morningstar



Achievement Program Update

By Dave Chance, MER AP
Manager

June 1, 2021

Since the last report in *The Local*, the following Achievement Program certificates were earned and awarded:

Division 1 – New Jersey

John B. Swift – Golden Spike Award

Division 2 – Potomac

Richard Steinmann – Golden Spike Award
 Richard Steinmann – Master Builder Scenery
 Alex Belida – Model Railroad Engineer
 Civil
 Richard Steinmann – Model Railroad Engineer
 Civil
 Richard Steinmann – Model Railroad Engineer
 Electrical
 Richard Steinmann – Chief Dispatcher

Division 3 – Philadelphia

Charles Stevens – Model Railroad Author

Division 4 – Tidewater

Fredrick Humphrey – Golden Spike Award
 Fredrick Humphrey - Association Volunteer

MER’s Newest MMR is George Gaige, MMR #668, of the James River Division. Offer your Congratulations the next time you see George!

In a perfect world, this information will appear soon in the **NMRA** magazine. This should not deter you from giving recognition locally. Normally you will be able to recognize AP accomplishments long before the names appear in the **NMRA** magazine.

PROBLEM - The R&V form is for your personal use.
 Only use it with the Author Submission.

Please, NO R&V FORMS with other submissions.

Elections 2021

The Nominations Are In!

Please review all the statements from the candidates provided in this issue of *The Local* starting on page 3, along with the proposed bylaws change following those statements. Think about how you will be voting when the ballot comes around. And remember, when next year's nominations are requested in May of 2022, please consider joining in the fray. We need your leadership and expertise!

Deadlines and Schedules for 2021 Nominations and Balloting

Our Bylaws require the publication of deadlines and schedules for nominations and balloting in the first issue of *The Local* of each year. The dates and schedule for nominations, ballot and election results are in Executive Handbook, Section 5, Policies, Article VI.

The remaining dates for 2021 are:

July 5, 2021 -- You must be a member in good standing (paid up NMRA dues) based on the membership report supplied to the MER Business Manager from NMRA National as of 07/05 (the 5th of July) of every election year to be eligible to vote. If an

individual is not a member or if membership has expired as indicated by the record supplied to the MER, and MER officials have not been informed by NMRA National of a valid renewal of membership by 07/05 (the 5th of July), that individual will not receive a ballot, nor be permitted to vote in that year's election.

August 1, 2021 -- Deadline for mailing paper ballots to members and for commencing electronic voting; could be mailed earlier depending on other deadline requirements.

September 7, 2021 -- Deadline for electronic voting, also last day as shown by postmark for mailing paper ballots.

September 11, 2021 -- Deadline for receipt by Balloting Committee of paper ballots sent by mail.

September 18, 2021 -- Deadline for Ballot Committee to transmit results to President, the Director overseeing this committee, and the Business Manager.

September 25, 2021 -- Deadline for The President to communicate the election results to candidates. The Business Manager also notifies the MER Web Master and the NMRA of the election results.

October 9, 2021 -- Deadline for publishing election results on MER's website.

HELP WANTED: Publisher

Newsletter Publisher: *The Local* and *eLocal*

Appointed by: President
Approved by: Board of Directors
Reports to: Editor of *The Local* and *eLocal*

Position Summary

Responsible for assembling the official publication of the Mid-Eastern Region, *The Local*, working directly with the Editor. The newsletter Publisher is responsible for providing "typesetting", article layout and arrangement, and pasting-up services for each issue, to produce a web-and-email-ready version of the full issue of *eLocal*, as well as a ready-to-print version of *The Local*. The Publisher shall also produce camera-ready-copy and ship the camera-ready-copy

and related artwork to the printer in a timely fashion. Those efforts all rely upon the materials delivered from the Editor to the Publisher with direction as to which issue and where in that issue (sequence location) that content might be placed. The Publisher is to communicate objectives met on creation and insertion of content, sending frequent draft versions of the *eLocal* to keep the Editor fully informed of the status of issues as they are being assembled.

The content of the first twelve pages of the print version of *The Local* shall be equivalent to the first twelve pages of the *eLocal*. The in-house official articles and business-related information must be contained within those first twelve pages. This ensures that all members will have access to this information regardless of which version they receive.

The Local serves as our official in-house publication and will contain all relevant articles of the organization and information of general interest to the membership. *The Local* must be presented as an image-building device for gaining membership and maintaining membership interest. The Publisher, working with the Editor, must exercise sound judgment and expertise for producing a uniform and pleasing tone to the publication.

Specific Responsibilities of the Publisher:

1. Keeps the Editor informed at all times.
2. Provides quality production.
3. Assembles the articles, photos and content obtained from the Editor into a pleasing and interesting presentation.
4. Collaborates with the Editor, when necessary, on layout design, presentation of content and space considerations.
5. Produces uniform quality and tone of the publication.
6. Acknowledges in writing (by e-mail) to the Editor confirming receipt of article(s) for insertion into draft versions of *eLocal* and communicates with the Editor routinely by providing draft versions of *eLocal*.
7. Prepares the ballot for all elections held within the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA.
8. Provides electronic copies of *The Local* and the *eLocal* of each issue to the Editor for final review and distribution

UPCOMING MER CONVENTIONS

2021 Convention – Chesapeake Division – Oct. 21 - 24, 2021 - Delta by Marriott Hunt Valley Inn, 245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, MD

2022 Convention – Carolina Southern Division -- “Carolina Special Look South”, Charlotte, NC

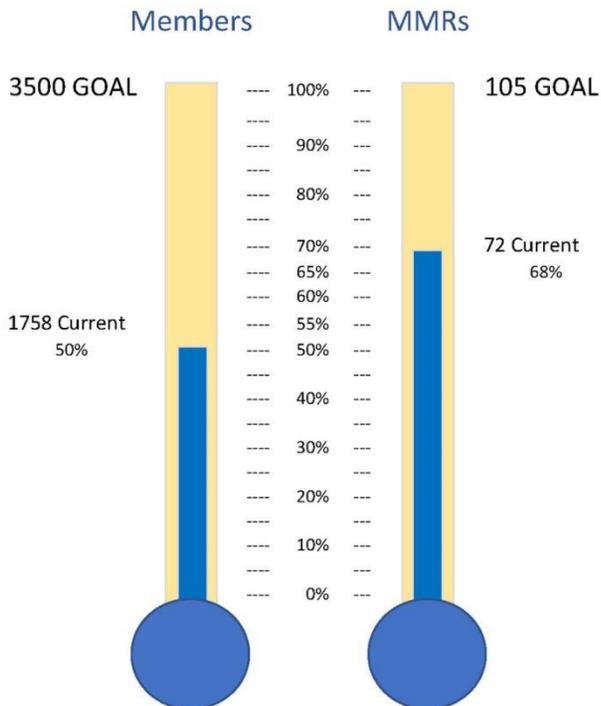
2023 Convention –Susquehanna Division – Dates and location tbd

2024 Convention –Division, Dates and location tbd

2025 Convention –New Jersey Division, Dates and location tbd

MER 75th Anniversary Goals

By Kurt Thompson, MMR



You may remember that our established goals for membership and MMR (Master Model Railroader) achievements in the Mid-Eastern Region (MER) was to reach 3500 members and 105 Master Model Railroaders on or before the time of our 75th Anniversary Convention in October of 2021. Of course, this goal was created before we knew the pandemic would have such an adverse effect on our membership and the rest of the world for that matter. So, not surprisingly, our membership has decreased over the past year. As of June 1, 2021, since the last issue of *The Local*, we have lost 29 members and gained 21. There was one Master Model Railroader (MMR) achievement - Congratulations to George Gaige, our newest MMR! Our current membership stands at 1758, and MMRs increased to 72. I’m sure these numbers will improve after the pandemic is over and once the train shows and conventions become active again. For now, we will ask for renewed recruitment efforts from our current members to try to get as

many friends and neighbors as possible to join in on the fun.

We truly appreciate your ongoing support to keep the MER thriving, just as it has been for almost 75 years now!



Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA 2021 Convention MOUNT CLARE JUNCTION

October 21st to 24th, 2021

www.mtclarejct.com



Use Online Registration for Secure Payment and Best Up To Date Activity Availability. See Info Below.

Please enter (print legibly) all names **as you wish them to appear on your registration badge(s)**. They will not be changed at the convention.

Primary Registrant: _____ **MMR? Y / N, Any Title for Badge?** _____

Significant Other Attending (living at same address): _____

Children Attending (18 & under - list all + age): _____

Registrar's Use Only!	Address: _____
	City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
	Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____
	NMRA #: _____ Region: _____ Division: _____
	Favorite Scale: _____ Is this your first MER Convention? _____ Putting Items In Sale? _____

Description	ID	Cost	Qty	Paying
Early-Fare Registration (through Aug 31)		\$60		
Regular-Fare Registration (Sep 1 thru Oct 3)		\$75		
On-Site Registration (Oct 21 – 24)		\$85		
Spouse/Significant Other (through Aug 31)		\$30		
Spouse/Significant Other (Sep 1 thru Oct 3)		\$40		
Spouse/Significant Other (Oct 21 – 24)		\$45		
Children 18 and Under (Name & Age)		\$0		No Fee
Banquet – Saturday Night	401	\$60		
____ Maryland Crab Cakes ____ Grilled NY Steak ____ Roasted Turkey w Sage Dressing				
Thu Lunch ____ Buffalo Chicken Wrap ____ Dix Roast Beef Sndwch ____ Veggie Sndwch	402	\$20		
Fri Brkfst ____ Ssge w Scrmbl'd Eggs ____ Minced Ham w Scrmbl'd Eggs ____ Griddle Cakes	403	\$18		
Fri Lunch ____ Chicken Salad Sndwch ____ Sourdough Turkey Club ____ Veggie Wrap	404	\$20		
Sat Brkfst ____ Grilled Ham w Scrmbl'd Eggs ____ Bacon w Scrmbl'd Eggs ____ Griddle Cakes	405	\$18		
Sat Lunch ____ Tuna Salad Sndwch ____ Italian Sub ____ Veggie Sndwch	406	\$20		
Sun Brkfst ____ Ssge w Scrmbl'd Eggs ____ Omlt w Green Peas & Potatoes ____ Griddle Cakes	407	\$18		
Sun Lunch ____ Sourdough Turkey Club ____ Dix Roast Beef Sndwch ____ Veggie Sndwch	408	\$20		
Call Boards / Ops – Expanded Call Board Info Available on Website	-----	-----	----	-----
Don Marvel's Wilson Creek Division	801	\$5		
Fritz Dahlin's B&O/Chessie System Broken Timber Subdivision	802	\$5		
Jeff Mutter's Erie Lackawanna Scranton Div in 1975	803	\$5		
Ken Larsen's CL&W Subdivision	804	\$5		
Kurt Thompsons Cincinnati and Lake Erie Moraine Div	805	\$5		
Pete & Jane Clarke's East Broad Top Railroad	806	\$5		
Scott Wooddell's Deer Creek and Susquehanna Railroad	807	\$5		
Fred Eisen's Western Maryland Dutch Line	808	\$5		
Extra Fare Clinics – Registration Required, Further Info On Website	-----	-----	----	-----
Arduino Basics: Don't Be Scared	601	\$20		
Introduction to DCC	602	\$0		No Fee
Introduction to JMRI Operations Pro	603	\$0		No Fee
Making Pine Trees: Easier Than You Think	604	\$5		
Resin Casting Parts 1 & 2	605	\$15		
Tune Up Freight Cars for Reliable Operation	606	\$10		
Screen Painting	607	\$40		
Building a Craftsman Kit –Crossing Shanty ____ N ____ HO ____ O	608	\$10		
Landscape Painting	609	\$55		
Painting and Weathering Rolling Stock	610	\$0		No Fee
Would You Like To Be A Contest Judge At The Convention – Circle - YES or NO	-----	----	---	-----
Have You Been A Contest Judge In The Past – Circle - Yes or NO	-----	----	---	-----
TOTAL			➡	

Online Registration – <http://test.mer-nmra.com/index.html>. Please refer to COVID-19 and cancellation policies online.
 Print Registrations must be accompanied by check payable to MER Conventions. Send to: MER Conventions, PO Box 426, Sykesville, MD 21784-0426
 Any questions and/or additional information, e-mail to mer-registrar@mer-nmra.com, or 410-442-0446.
 Hotel – Delta Hunt Valley, 245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, MD 21031, 410-785-7000. Reference-MER Model Railroad Convention 2021.
 Online Reservations <https://www.tinyurl.com/MER2021> Room Rate - \$109.00 night + tax. Room Rate applies 10/21/2021 to 10/24/2021.

Ordering MER 75th Anniversary Shirts With 2021 Convention Registration



At left is a photo of the commemorative MER 75th Anniversary shirt currently for sale. Even though this is a fundraiser project, with a portion of the sale price going to support your MER, the shirts are reasonably priced. [Details about the shirt and how to order, along with the order form, are on page 13 and 14 in the March/April Edition of *The Local*.](#) Costs and sizing are at the end of convention registration webpage. Remember shirts with your name must be ordered by September 10, 2021. Shirts without name can still be ordered until September 24, 2021, but must be picked up at the registration table at the convention. Should you have any questions about the shirt, call Randy Foulke, Director-at-Large, at 919-649-8253.



Roundhouse at the B&O Museum (photo by Greg Warth, 2011)
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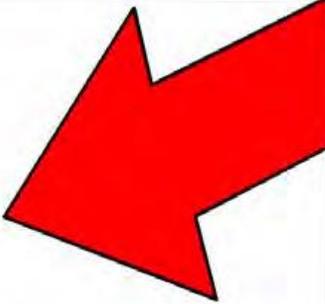
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Mount Clare Junction - Registration is OPEN!



It's a go! Registration for the 2021 Mid-Eastern Region Mount Clare Junction Model Railroad Convention is now Live! [Click here](#) to be taken directly to the convention website to register.

When we laid down the plans for the convention in 2019, there was no consideration made for a global pandemic, and the uncertainty of the last year and a half has made planning the event every bit different. As we open the figurative registration doors, I would like to take a moment to thank every member of the Local Convention Committee for sticking with this and to every clinician, layout owner and prototype facility which have been signing up to allow everyone opportunities to learn and share.

MER 75th Anniversary



If you haven't heard, the Mid-Eastern Region is celebrating its Diamond Anniversary. During the convention, several events will be hosted to bring the attending regional members together, plus provide the opportunity to win awards and prizes.

As part of the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the MER (Mid-Eastern Region) in 2021, a special edition shirt is being issued for purchase by MER members and any other interested persons. The shirt supplier will be Mohawk-Design, a leading supplier of apparel for the rail industry and rail enthusiasts, and is a white, short-sleeved golf (or polo) type shirt with a pocket, made from 60% cotton/40% polyester. A special MER 75th Anniversary logo will be embroidered on the left side of shirt (above).

See the convention registration page to order one today. Orders placed prior to September 10th may be embroidered with your name.

Dining / Banquet



In celebration of the MER's Diamond Anniversary, the Local Convention Committee, with the Delta Hunt Valley, have created daily and banquet menus around those issued by the railroads of the Mid-Eastern Region.

The daily breakfasts were created using menus from a number of railroads serving the MER over the decades. Each plated meal will be offered in the convention dining area at an inclusive price point lower than the buffet options of the hotel restaurant.

This year's convention banquet, to be held Saturday evening, 23 April, will be set to a 1946 theme. The menu has been selected by referencing the dining options available to patrons of the Baltimore & Ohio, Pennsylvania and Western Maryland railroads in 1946. The B&O "The Royal Blue" and PRR "Broadway Dinner" menus are near matches.

Convention Tours

Tours at the Mount Clare Junction Convention will be subject to certain conditions. Group sizes may be limited because of capacity limitations of our hosts. Participation in such tours will be determined by the order of receipt of your registration. Some tours will require the payment of an additional registration fee. You will be expected to provide your own transportation to all venues, and some tours have limitations on available parking. Certain tours may insist on specified safety protocols or other requirements for participation. Finally, all tours will be subject to any local health department regulations which are in place at the time of the convention.

Custom Model Railroads Tour



If you've ever been curious about the production side of our hobby, we will be offering a tour of Custom Model Railroads. Founded in 1991, CMR is a designer and manufacturer of model railroad layouts, custom built structures and both HO and N scale kits. A number of their kit offerings over the years have featured Baltimore prototypes.

An unusual feature of Custom Model Railroads kits is their use of laser-cut and engraved acrylic, rather than injected molded plastic, wood or plaster for their basic structure. Acrylic is both rigid and dimensionally stable, making it an excellent medium for scale models. We will also learn about some of their custom projects which the firm has undertaken for a variety of clients. The model of the Baltimore and Ohio's Camden Station in Baltimore, on display at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum, is an example of their work.

Why Traction?

A clinic presented by Don Yingling

An Introduction to HO Trolley and Interurban Model Railroading -- but applicable to any scale.

Don's clinic will cover the advantages of modeling a traction layout and tell how he got started in traction modeling. Traction layouts can use much sharper curves than conventional model railroads and require relatively little space.

The clinic will cover what products are available to model street cars, the special street tracks, the wiring, and the construction of the overhead wires, including information on simple detection circuits used for running traction layouts. Don's traction modules will be on display in the operations area during the convention providing an opportunity to observe and discuss them.

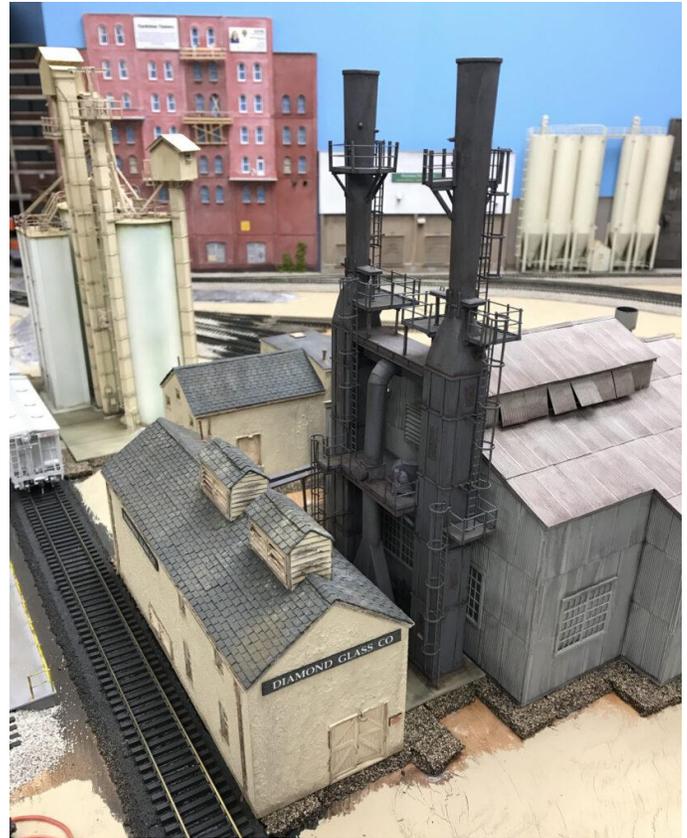


Modeling the Diamond Glass Company, Royersford, PA

Presented by Richard Newmiller, MMR

Diamond Glass Company, the prototype, was located along the banks of the Schuylkill River in Royersford, PA from 1894 to 1989. It was originally rail-served by the Philadelphia & Reading, then the Reading, and finally Conrail. The clinic presentation explores the research and construction of this HO-scale scratch-built model including some background on glass making. Richard's model won Best-in-Show at the Fall 2018 MER convention.

The project construction photographs detail the building with styrene, stucco application, corrugated roofing & siding panels, multiple silo elevators, hand cut shingles, distinctive furnace stacks, and industrial details such as safety cage ladders and open grate walkways with handrails. The modeled complex includes the raw material silos, batch house, powerhouse, glass furnace, bottle making and annealing structures. Painting, weathering and signage complete the presentation.



Brian Sheron's Long Island RR Layout Tour

Brian Sheron, MMR, models the Long Island Railroad, Port Jefferson Branch, Atlantic Branch, and the City Terminal Zone, circa 1964 (or, if he wants to run his G5's, K4's, and H10's, he changes out his fleet of cabooses, and dials the era back 10 years to 1954). The layout occupies three rooms in his basement, a 13' x 19' room, a 12' x 12' room, and 10' x 20' room. It is primarily a double track, folded dog bone arrangement. One branch (City Terminal Zone) runs into the 12' x 12' room where he models New York City, complete with an operating overhead EI, and Penn Station, which includes a cutaway of the LIRR underground platforms in Penn Station where the P-54 MU's would arrive to



deliver and pick up the famous “Dashing Dan” LIRR commuter.

Because Brian’s layout is about 90 min. from the convention site (and perhaps 2 hrs. in rush-hour traffic) we anticipate it will only be open on Sunday afternoon for viewing.

Ken Larsen’s CL&W Subdivision Operating Session

Just a few miles from Ellicott City is Ken Larsen’s CL&W Subdivision. The CL&W is named after a segment of a Baltimore and Ohio branch running from Sterling, OH to Cleveland, OH based in the period of 1969-1972. It includes a freelanced belt line connecting to the B&O.

The layout, designed for industrial switching operations, is 24 x 24 feet with 3-foot aisles. It features several “signature” steel mill structures and transfer tracks serving an auto assembly plant. Ken has solved the problem of populating open auto racks by filling them with every HO Ford Maverick on this side of the Mississippi!



For operations Ken uses JMRI-printed switch lists and manifests. His DCC system is NCE. Six operators will make for a great operating session.

We hope this gives you a taste of the fun and excitement that awaits us in Baltimore this October. If you haven’t already registered and booked your hotel room, better do it right away – I mean, like, right now!

Modeler's Haven

By Greg Warth

Scratch-building:

Foamboard: Here is an inspirational video on how to scratch build a house using nothing but foamboard, a hobby knife, a square metal straight-edge and some plans. This is a one-day build for Adam Savage, the modeler who did this video, but it would probably be a week or more for me to do this. The model shown is a large scale house, but it could easily work for a much smaller scale as well. I presented this here just to demonstrate what you can do with a minimum of materials. Of course, the video leaves out the painting and all the little details that could be added, but it shows how to build the basic structure (<https://youtu.be/ssxCQuv3KzE>).

Popsicle Sticks: Speaking of great scratch-building projects, check out this video from Luis Nerety on building a cabin with popsicle sticks (<https://youtu.be/Qt4HdzJQf9k>). You might also think about using wood coffee stirrer sticks for building projects like this.

Skyscrapers: While we're on scratch-building, Ron Marsh shows you how to make a high-rise modern N scale skyscraper out of plexiglass (<https://youtu.be/wbgeUMonoNo>).

Hotels: And here, Ron shows how to kit-bash a seven-story hotel using multiple DPM (Design Preservation Model) kits (https://youtu.be/7tLDFHN_8q8).

Wiring:

How do you get those thin 26–30 gauge feeder wires through the 4-10" layout surface to connect to the main track power wires, or bus? First, you drill through the surface with a long drill bit. Then use an uncoiled, straightened wire coat hanger as a guidewire, push it down through the drilled hole, then loop the top end back on itself. Pull the feeder wire through the coat-hanger loop, tie the wire to the loop if you have to, then pull the coat-hanger down from the bottom of the layout surface. This works well if you are going through plywood and foam sheets or Homasote. But what if you're going through mountains made with wadded newspaper and plaster cloth? This makes it much harder to find the bottom hole of the layout surface with the coat hanger. To solve this, you have to leave the long drill bit in place after you drill the hole, disconnect it from the drill, tape the wire to the top of the drill bit and pull the drill bit (with the wire attached) down from the bottom of the layout.

How do you do layout wiring if you don't want to crawl around under your layout? If you have used foam sheets on your layout surface, you can make channels in the surface to embed the wires and bring them out to the front of the layout (**Photo 1**).

Photo 1 - Wires were embedded in channels that were easily made on the foam sheet surface with a hot knife. The feeder wires were too short to make it all the way to the front of the layout, so connections were made to longer wires at the holes you see on the surface.



If you have tracks already laid on the surface, or if you have already installed a lot of scenery on the surface, it's easy to use the long drill bit to drill through the foam sheets horizontally under the tracks or other surface structures to where the wire will be located, then drill down an inch or two into the foam sheet vertically where the feeder wire is located. Thread your long wire coat-hanger through the horizontally drilled hole. Attach the feeder wire to the coat-hanger loop and pull it through to the front of the layout. Attach the feeder wires to your main power lines that run along the front of the layout surface (**Photo 2**). Then attach your fascia-board to cover it all up.

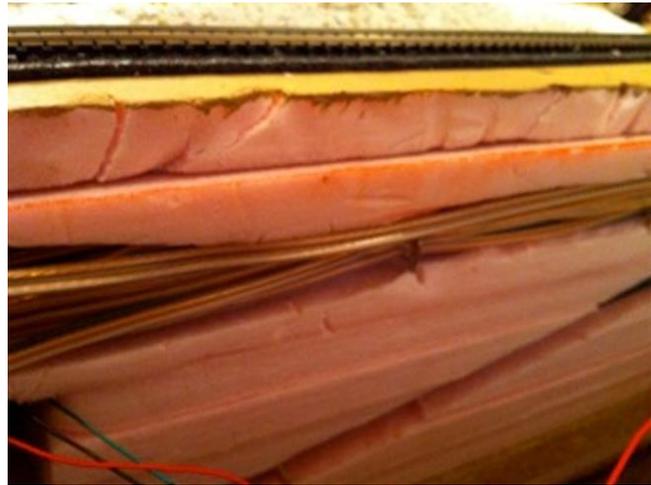


Photo 2 - The front of the layout surface with the fascia-board removed to show wire channels.

Scenery:

Using a variety of vegetation in a scene enhances the realism (**Photo 3**). Start by painting the surface or applying textured “ground goop” (a mixture of Sculptamold, water, white glue and tan, brown or green acrylic paint for color).

Photo 3

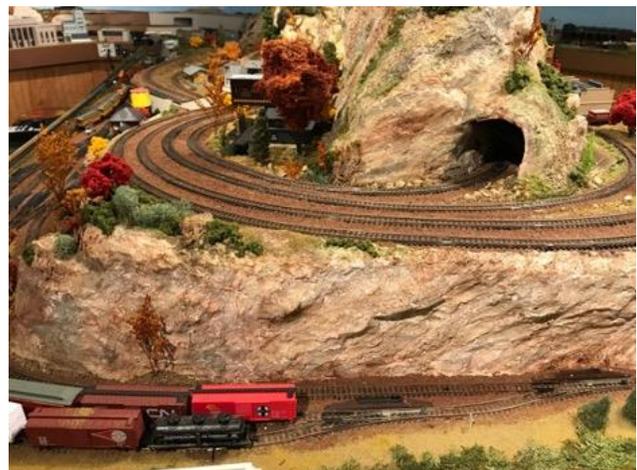
Spray with diluted white glue. Then add ground cover (blended turf), then small bushes (lichen or colored clumps of foam), then trees (make your own or use natural items from the local craft store). Use a variety of colors and textures for the most realistic effect.



Sculptamold Cliffs:

This cliff (bottom of **Photo 4**) was made almost entirely of Sculptamold shaped to look like rock and painted with a variety of various-colored washes, including yellow, brown, umber, gray and burnt umber.

Photo 4



Trees from pine cones:



If you have a lot of pine cones in your yard, you have a ready-made pine tree factory. Take one of the tree-shaped pine cones, put on a pair of thick fireplace gloves and shuck off the surface layer of scales. Drill a tiny hole in the base of the cone and glue in a toothpick or a headless nail or pin. Then dip the cone in diluted white glue, sprinkle green static grass all over it and you're done. You don't even need the static grass applicator (**Photo 5**).

Photo 5 - The tree in the middle and the smaller one in the foreground on the left were made with pinecones.

Use pine bark mulch for underwater rocks (from Earl Hackett):

You know those big bags of stuff you use to cover and protect your flower beds? There are dozens of uses for this very inexpensive natural material. I've used them for "rocks" painted gray or brown and embedded on a hillside. They are great to use in a stacked form as a natural retaining wall. Here is yet another application sent in by Earl Hackett as an underwater "rock" at the bottom of a creek bed (**Photo 6**) (Reprinted with permission from *Tracks*, April 2021 at BYMRR.com)



Photo 6 - The "rock" in the stream on this model railroad are pine bark! (with permission and by courtesy of Earl Hackett)

Other Modeling Articles of Interest from Nick Kalis:

[Resources for Three D Printed Figures](#) from Nick Kalis' Blog: "Modeling Hints and Reviews for Large Scale Modelers and Others".

[Thinking about modeling an urban school?](#) Here are some photos of one from Woodside, New York from Nick Kalis' Blog: "Modeling Hints and Reviews for Large Scale Modelers and Others".

Send in YOUR Tips:

I'm certain that many MER members have great modeling tips up their sleeves that they have been "hiding" from the rest of us. Let us see what you're up to. We'd be happy to post it here. Send your tips to local-editor@mer-nmra.com.

The Basics of DCC – Part Two

By Greg Warth

Part Two of this series includes further wiring tips, a discussion about the many capabilities of DCC, how to install DCC decoders in your analog locomotives and how to combine DC and DCC on the same layout.

Wiring Tips

There are many DCC users who say you should divide your layout into two or more power grids (separated by rail gaps) depending on the size of your layout. If you have a layout that goes all the way around a large room, for example, you may wish to divide it into four separate power sections, each of which gets its own pair of bus wires. These bus wires from each of these power grids goes to a [power distributor](#) that is then connected to your command controller. The main purpose for this is that if there is a short circuit in one section of the layout, the other sections will continue to work well, and it will be easier to find where the problem is. I have a small to medium-sized N scale layout for which I just have just one power grid with one set of bus wires and haven't had any trouble with it. However, if you are hosting a large operating session and there is one short circuit on a one-grid layout, the whole session would have to be shut down if you couldn't find the problem right away.

Some people like to use two or more pairs of bus wires under the layout for different purposes. One pair is used to control the trains. One pair may be used to control turnouts and another pair may be used to control all other devices. If you have a small layout, that's not really necessary. However, if you run a lot of trains and you only have one pair of bus wires to control everything, you may see a slower response to controlling trains when another device is using power on the same bus line.

DCC Capabilities

Probably the main advantage of DCC is that your operations will be much more prototypical. You can start and stop trains and run them forwards or backwards, all independently of each other. While you have two trains running on the mainline, you can be pulling another one out of the yard. If you have two or more operators, each one can be an engineer for his train that he can control without interference from the other operators and without having to power up and power down various blocks. You can also have one operator controlling the yard and two others operating as engineers and another as a dispatcher, all able to operate trains independently of each other.

One nice thing about the newer DCC command stations is that most of them contain auto-reverse capability. That means that if you have a reversing loop on your layout, the DCC controller automatically takes care of reversing the polarity as your loco traverses the rail gaps that you have made for that loop. So, you don't have to do a lot of extra wiring, nor do you need an A-R circuit-board. Once you have all that set up, that are many additional things you can do. For example, you can add more [walk-around throttles](#) (**Photo 1**), that all work wirelessly, either by infrared direct line transmission or by radio control which doesn't require line-of-sight between the handheld throttle and the receiver. The infrared controllers are a little less expensive, but they work well as long as you point the one that you're using in the direction of any of the Loco-Net connectors around the layout. For Digitrax, their proprietary Loco-Net system allows you to easily run RJ-12 cables to various outlets positioned on the fascia around the layout allowing operators to plug in their throttles whenever they need to in order to operate a particular section of the layout without using infrared.



Photo 1: Smaller walk-around throttle along with a plug-in connector and infrared receiver for Digitrax Loco-Net System

More advanced operators can also add standalone decoders to activate almost any other device on the layout including turnouts, signals, lights and sounds. If you connect a wireless interface, you can control your entire layout with your smartphone or tablet using an app called “[Withrottle](#)”. There is also a computer interface which, along with [JMRI](#) software, allows you to control your layout using a map schematic (**Photo 2**) of your railroad on a computer screen from which you can operate

trains, turnouts and other devices.

Photo 2: This shows a DCC computer integrated setup on another HO scale layout using JMRI software along with [CTI Train Brain](#) hardware that serves as the interface between the DCC system and the computer. There are two Digitrax amps on the right. One of them serves as the command station and the other serves as a booster amp. Computer control will be a topic for future discussion.



DC AND DCC: On the Same Layout?

Many DC railroaders have asked if they can just add DCC to their existing DC systems instead of converting the whole layout to DCC. The answer is definitely yes. You can set up one mainline to be DC and a second mainline to be DCC. Use the same DC transformers and wiring you always did with your DC system on your DC mainline. Then, wire your DCC mainline as outlined above using a separate DCC controller to operate it. You can even connect the two systems as long as you use rail gaps in both rails of the connecting track. As mentioned in Part One of this series, you may run into problems if you try to run analog locos along with your DCC locos on the same DCC track using standard DCC command controllers. Constant AC current from a DCC power pack, could potentially burn out the engine of an analog (DC) locomotive.

Model Rectifier Corporation has come out with a special transformer, called “[Tech 6 Sound Controller 2.0](#)”, that can control DC and DCC locomotives on the same layout although NOT at the same time. ([See information in the package insert here.](#)) If you want to run your analog trains, push the “Standard” mode button. Use the “Dual” mode button for DCC operation. You can operate your DCC-equipped trains, including sounds and lights, and even program the decoders just like you can if you were using a regular DCC controller. The main disadvantage here is that you won’t be able to operate analog locos while in Dual mode. A walkaround handheld throttle is also available for this transformer as an accessory.

Adding Decoders to Your Analog Locos

This is sometimes a challenge and is probably the main reason that many model railroaders are reluctant to make the switch from DC to DCC. It may be more difficult to add a decoder to the smaller scales like

N and Z, because of the space limitations under the shell. However, O scalers will tell you there's not much room in some of those larger locos either. Steam locomotives may be easier because you can put the decoder in the tender and run wires into the loco from there. Also, you may have to electrically isolate the engine from the body of the locomotive for these older models.

Despite the challenge, it is definitely possible to add decoders to almost any locomotive. It may take some time, but it's like everything else we do in this hobby. Take one step at a time and eventually you get where you want to be.

First, you have to have a compatible decoder. The locomotive manufacturer can tell you which decoders are compatible with their brands. Likewise, decoder manufacturers will usually tell you in which locos they can be installed. [JMRI](#) is a great free software program that is mostly used for computer layout control as mentioned above, but it also provides information on which decoders are compatible with various locomotives and it can help in programming decoders. The size of the decoder is also a consideration. Some decoders will just not fit in certain locomotives without major modifications to the body, especially in the smaller scales.

Many of the newer locomotives on the market today are noted to be either "DCC friendly" (you can put the decoder in yourself if you don't mind soldering some wires), "DCC-ready" (the loco contains a pin connector into which you plug a compatible decoder), or "DCC equipped" (which means it already has a decoder). Some "DCC-ready" locomotives will accept the so-called "drop-in" decoders. Kato is one manufacturer that is known for this.

Here is a video that will show you how to install decoders in almost any locomotive.

<https://youtu.be/dhnZ2rUiTA>

I am hoping this discussion will stimulate our analog friends to at least consider the many advantages that DCC provides over DC. It may seem intimidating at first, but it's not difficult to set up. I would encourage you to just get a starter kit. You can always expand later. You can even use your old DC transformer as an extra throttle using the "jump" feature on the Zephyr controller. Additional handheld throttles can be used wirelessly anywhere around the layout. As you start adding DCC locomotives that you can run independently of the others, along with DCC turnouts and other devices, you will soon discover the beauty and the prototypical freedom that the system affords. Thank you, Lenz!

References:

Converting an Old DC Loco to DCC by Larry Puckett: <https://youtu.be/iDL7stl1WeY>

How to Use DC and DCC on Your Layout by Mike Fifer:
<https://youtu.be/bjowI73aky4>

[How to Install a decoder in almost any locomotive](#)

The Basic Cabin or Company House, or How to Get Rid of Leftovers – Part 4

By Martin Brechbiel, MMR

The tub of leftover siding bits and other parts is not empty, yet. In the bag of leftover 1/16” thick scribed siding, I spied with my little eye a length of siding that spoke to me. Back to the box of leftover bits of doors and windows, and out popped a 5-panel door and frame from a partial pack (Tichy; No. 2040), and a 4/4 window (Grandt Line probably). Someone had painted the window, so that counts as primer here. I found another stove pipe (Banta No. 5030) in a pack of two. That’s enough to get started here with this project ([Photo 1](#)).



I married the scribed siding to some 1/16” basswood from the leftover flat stock box to make the floor. I added a bit of reinforcement to the back and some basswood around the perimeter underneath.



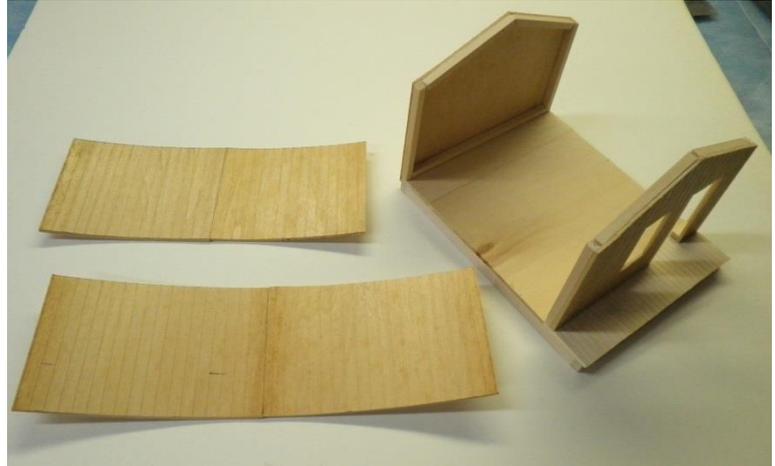
The scribed siding of the floor is going to be exposed as the front porch, so the

rest of the floor defines the dimensions of this cabin or house. I cut a front and back wall from more of that same board & batten used in earlier articles in this series. I cut openings for the door and window castings. This is pretty easy to do just taking millimeter measurements off the backs of the castings ([Photo 2](#)). Being board & batten, you do have to relieve the batten bits around the castings top and bottom to get them set down tight onto the boards ([Photo 3](#)). I added reinforcement all around to the front and back. This is mainly leftover scale 12” x 22” that I

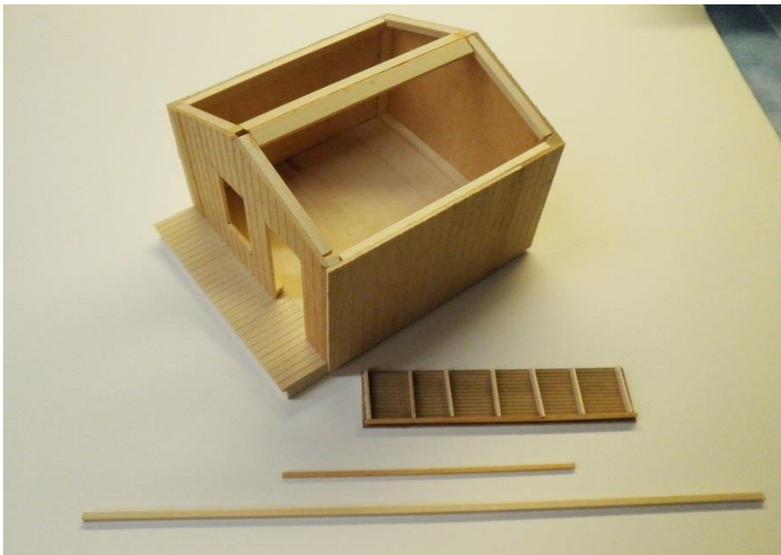


use when building MoW car underbody frames, so there's almost always a good bit of it in the scrap stripwood box (**Photo 4**). And, as always, you can never have too many little spring clamps!

Cutting out some sides was next up on the agenda. The board & batten was not wide enough, so the sides were made up from sections of that siding edge glued together just like the front and back were made. Every little bit gets used! You just have to pay attention to the board & batten spacing, trim accordingly, and then glue neatly. Having glass top work stations makes that easy. Once glued, those siding sections also curl up a good bit so it takes some glue and weights to get it to sit down cleanly. The front and back were glued into place to the floor in anticipation of attaching the sides (**Photo 5**).



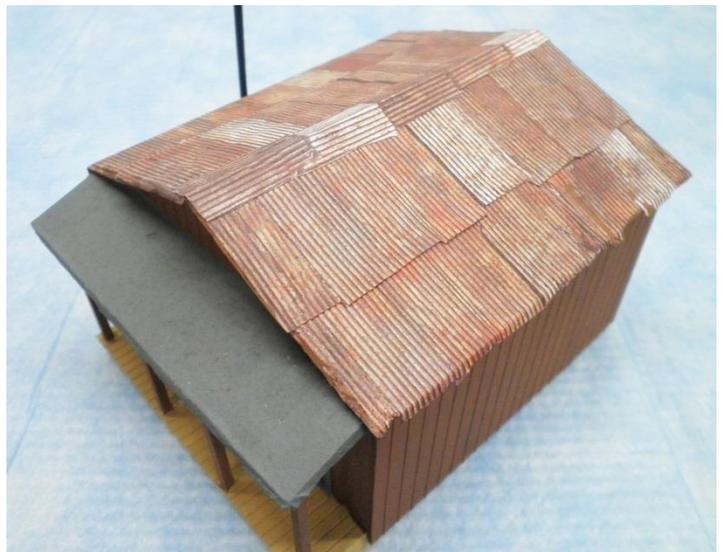
After that bit of foreshadowing, the sides were glued into place and also then to the base. This of course requires a bit of foresight in the measuring department while gluing up those sides! Once in place, more reinforcement was added to the top of the sides to also act as a surface to glue the roof sheathing in place. Similarly, two bits of the same scale 12" x 22" were used to form a reinforcing ridge pole and to also act as a gluing surface for the roofing material (**Photo 6**). This cabin



called for a porch roof, so out of the scrap scribed siding tub came a bit of 1/32" thick finer siding and just enough to do this job. Seven bracing rafter bits (1/6" square stock) were glued to the scribed side and then across the front. Another length of this square stock was set aside to be a brace that would anchor the porch roof to the front siding. That was applied and then the porch roof set into place. Four posts (3/32" square stock) were cut to hold up the front of the porch roof (**Photo 6**). Now it is time to jump forward into the finishing steps; painting and roofing, and installation of the door, window, and stove pipe.

A roof of simple 1/32" basswood flat stock was used to make the roof. The front, back, sides, and porch posts were painted Earth Red (Polly Scale). The door and window castings were painted Maintenance of Way Grey (Polly Scale), and then the window was glazed with some scrap acetate. The porch and foundation were painted Depot Buff (Polly Scale). A washer from the 6/32 box of screws and related sundries was added to the stove pipe prior to painting (Steam Black; Polly Scale) and a hole was drilled in the side where it was mounted. The pipe was secured with some Goo and CA. The door and window castings were installed used a bit of Goo. The roofing used for the cabin is some of the leftover

printed corrugated roofing from Paper Creek Model Works. I put it down with carpenter's glue. The cap sections were included on the printed sheet. The edges were folded down to finish the appearance. The porch roof was done using single ply sections of paper napkin (Panera) glued down with 50% carpenter's glue overlapping to make it all two-ply. This was also pushed up onto the siding above the roof a bit and into the board and batten profile to seal the roof from weather. After drying, it was painted Lark Light Gray (Polly Scale) ([Photos 7-10](#)). We'll call this done for now, but lots of little details could be added on that front porch to dress this up such as a wood box, chair, a dog and its person, and other bits that your imagination can supply. But, the first objective here was to demonstrate the ease with which a simple cabin can be put together.





Electronics Corner...

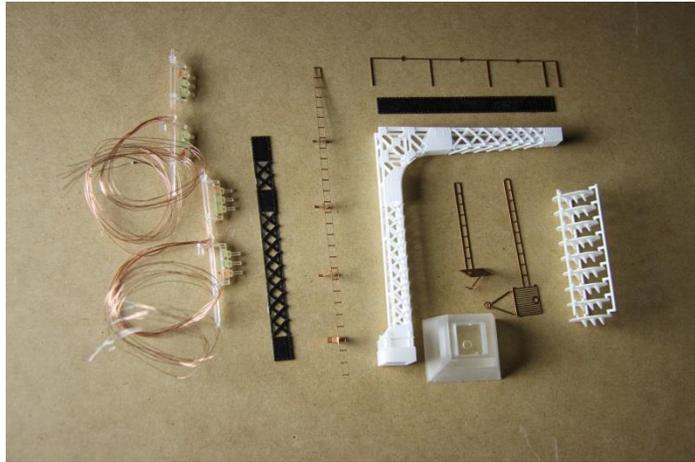


Interlocking Signal Construction Part 2

By Earl T. Hackett, Jr.

In Part 1 of this 2-part series, I showed how to use 3D printing technology to make a matched plate pattern for casting resin. Although this article is about a signal bridge, I hope readers can use the concepts in other modeling projects. Being a C&O [Chesapeake & Ohio] modeler in HO scale, I'm fortunate to have access to a huge amount of prototype information through the C&O Historical Society so accurate models can be constructed. In this installation I'll describe construction of the other components and finish the assembly. **Photo 1** shows the signal kit that I used for this project.

Photo 1 - A complete "kit" of parts to construct a two-mast small cantilever signal bridge.



The signal masts with the LEDs were covered in the previous article. The black walkway and lattice are cast in a standard matched plate pattern. The signal faces shown here (**Photo 2**) are 3D printed, but since I have a vacuum chamber, I can cast them in a conventional single sided mold and fill the hood detail.

Photo 2 – This is the mold I use to make the signal faces. I add a black pigment to the resin so there is no need to paint the parts. Masters for this mold were created using "traditional" modeling techniques.

The concrete base, that squarish thing near the bottom of the bridge, is a casting made from a traditional RTV mold [Room Temperature Vulcanization – often referred to as resin casting or silicon molding-Ed.]. Just dump some leftover resin in the mold cavity, put on the top and you have a part. Over time you will have more bases than you know what to do with. The original 3D print of the base was made from C&O engineering drawings. In the field the bases were built with straight sides, so I sanded them off. It worked out well as it was easier to pack the wires.

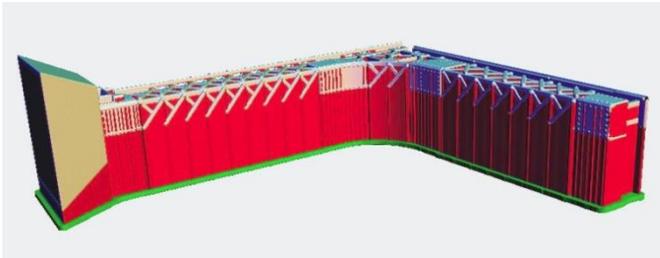
All the 3D prints are from Shapeways using their Fine Detail Plastic process. Many portions of the bridge are pushing the design limits, so to insure it has reasonable strength, material is added where it is not visible. For example, many of the prototype components are angle irons, which I print as extruded triangles. Flat bars have a triangular shape added to the unseen surface. The bulk of any sheet metal

component is significantly thicker than the minimum thickness but is tapered toward the edge. The added thickness is completely invisible (**Photo 3**).

Photo 3 - Detail of base with cross sections showing increased part thickness.

3D printing can be very cost effective if you design the part appropriately. Price is based on the volume of the part, the volume of support material, and the space it takes on the build plate.

All the red stuff you see in the bad design (**Photo 4**) is support material, and you pay almost a much

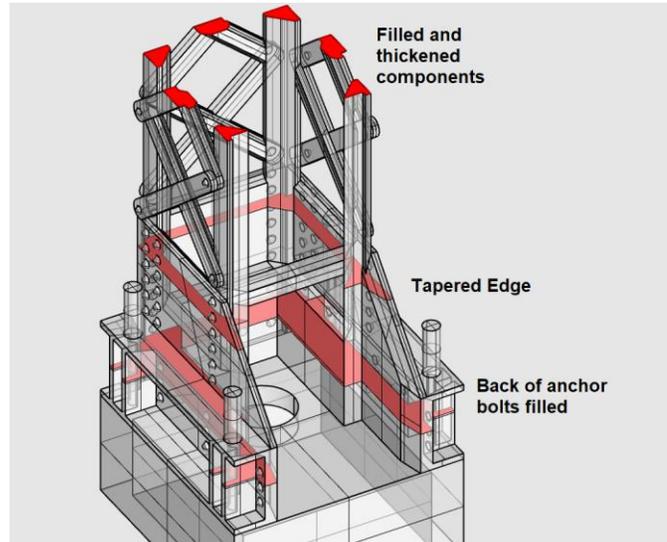


for that as for the model. I also had the walkway and rear lattice attached to the part. Pricing on this design was about \$70. By removing the concrete base, the walkway, and the rear lattice, the bridge dropped all the way to the green build plate and the cost dropped to about \$10. The matched plate mold for the walkway and rear lattice cost \$30, but I can make all the parts I want for pennies.



edges. This is where any leftover resin goes.

The brass etchings were made by PPD Ltd., Lochgilphead, Argyll, UK (ppdltd.com) and need a bit of elaboration. PPD comes highly recommended by my friends in the UK. Their quality and service are



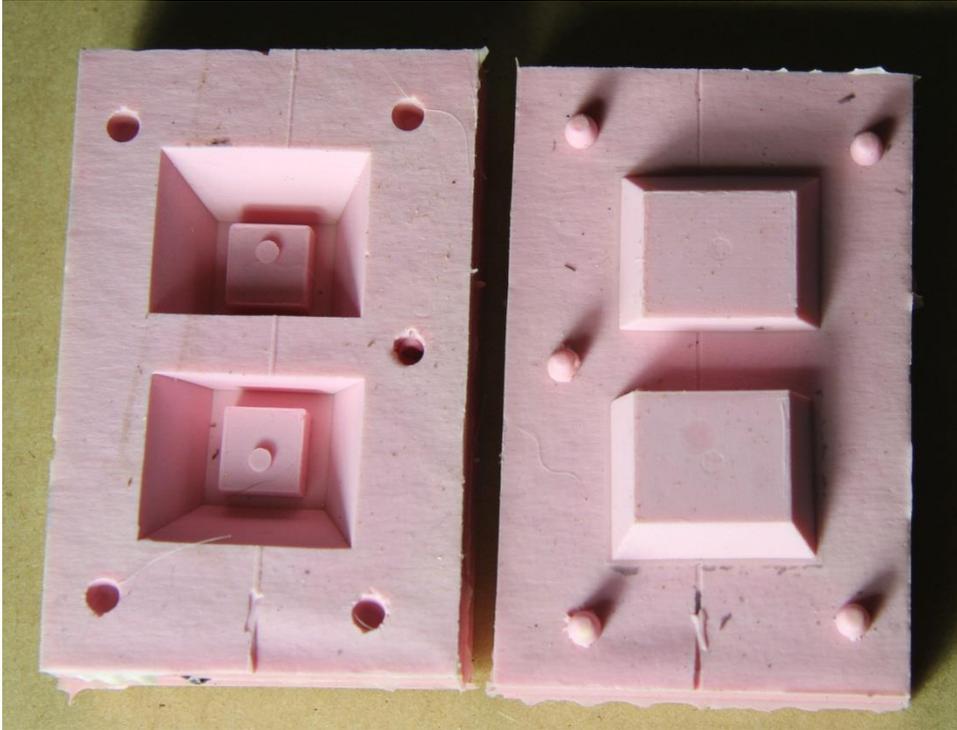
for that as for the model. I also had the walkway and rear lattice attached to the part. Pricing on this design was about \$70. By removing the concrete

Photo 4 - A screen print of a very bad design from the Shapeways web site. All your models should have minimal support (red) material.

Photo 5 - The mold used to cast the walkway and rear lattice.

A normal matched plate pattern was used to cast the walkway and rear lattice. The alignment pins are symmetrical, and that's a problem. You can assemble the mold backwards as I have demonstrated several times. I pour resin to completely cover both halves of the patterns, flip one over onto the other, and add a flat piece of wood and a weight. The resin relief vents are critical to minimizing flash.

The mold for the concrete base (**Photo 6**) is a conventional rubber mold and can trap air bubbles. As long as these don't show on the surface they are of no concern. Flash is easily removed from the



first rate, and the cost is reasonable. The first thing you must do is develop the artwork. The PPD website has a very good description of what they need to produce a first quality part.

Photo 6 - *The mold for the concrete base.*

A good CAD system allows you to design the artwork right on the model. The ladder design (red) is a 2D surface (Photo 7). Once dimensions are finalized, it will be flattened to become part of the artwork. Rhino allows me to save drawings in the Adobe Illustrator

format, one of the formats used by PPD. Once you have the artwork for all the parts you need, you push them around the work area to maximize the yield. I try to anticipate the relative number of parts I will eventually need and position them as efficiently as possible (Photo 8).

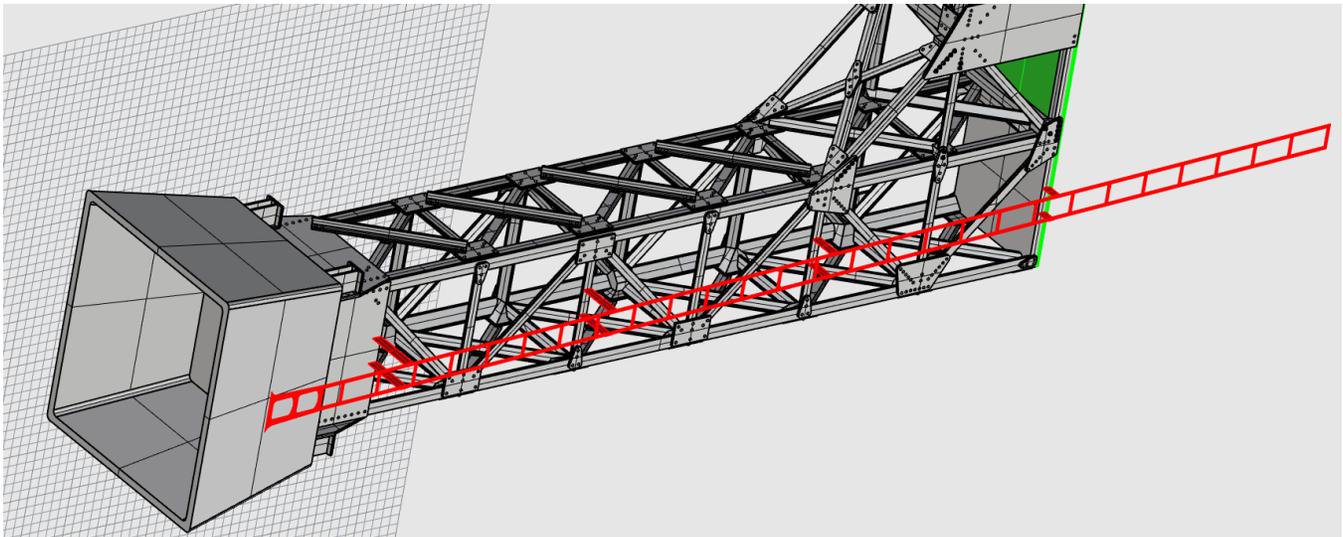


Photo 7 - *A screen shot of artwork being designed for ladders on the large, 3-track, C&O cantilever signal bridge.*

The prototype platforms are made from $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{8}$ " steel bar stock on $2\frac{1}{2}$ " centers, making them almost invisible from above. I wanted to make them appear as open as possible, so I pushed the design limits suggested by PPD (Photos 9,10,11).

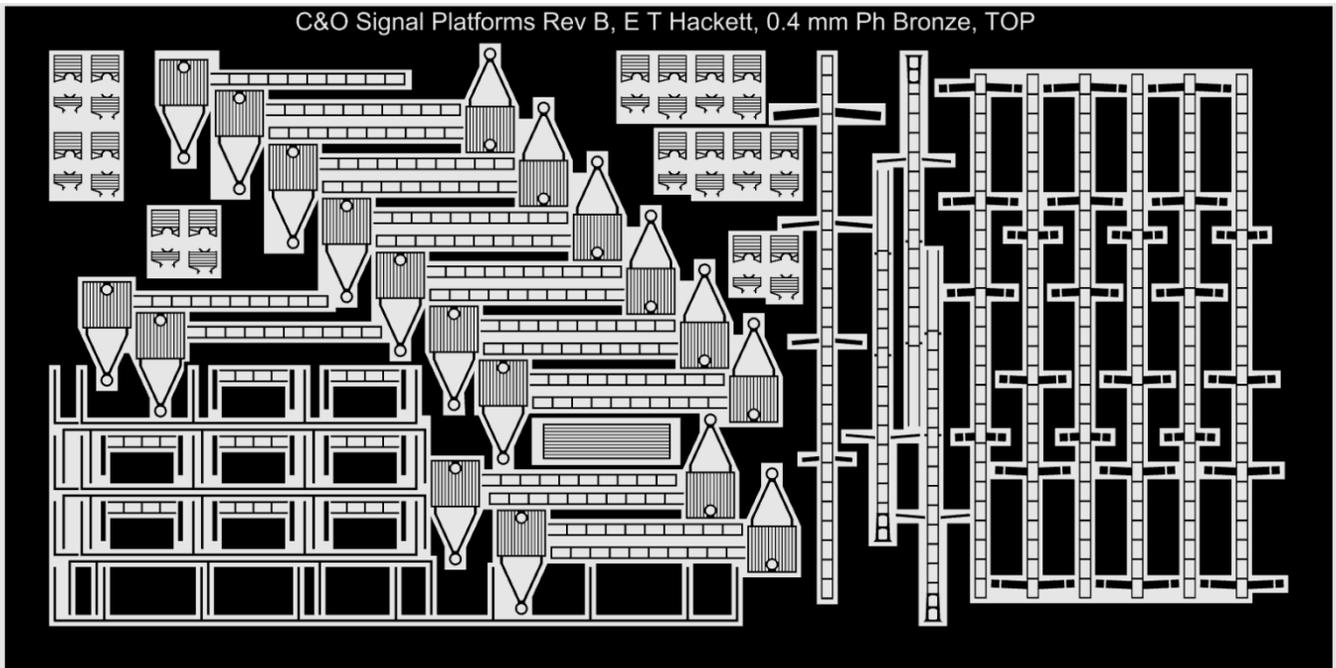


Photo 8 - This is the front side of my artwork. It contains parts for two types of bridges, ground-mount maintenance platforms, and three types of ladders.

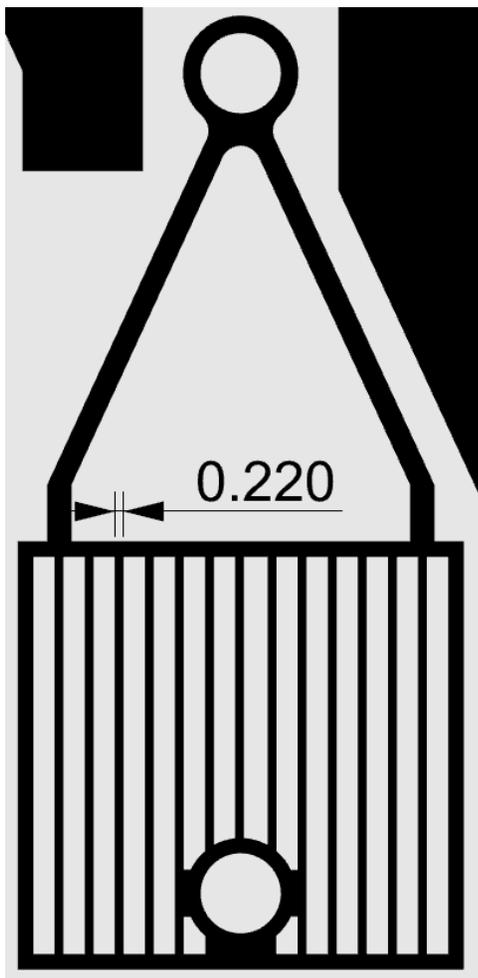


Photo 9 - A portion of the artwork with dimensions in mm, the resulting part, and the prototype.

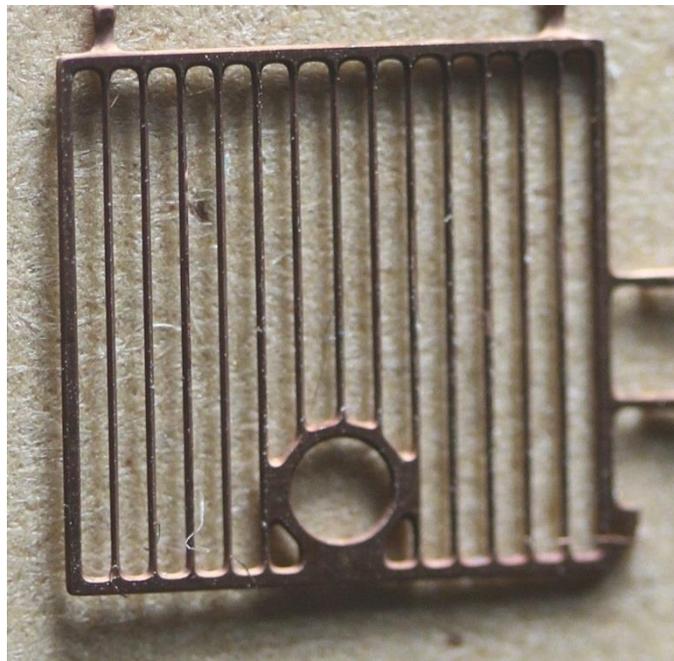


Photo 10 - A portion of the artwork with dimensions in mm, the resulting part, and the prototype.



Photo 11 - A portion of the artwork with dimensions in mm, the resulting part, and the prototype.

For phosphor bronze the recommended minimum line thickness is 1.2 x the sheet thickness to account for undercut. I wanted to use 0.4 mm thickness material as that is pretty close to the HO dimension of the prototype. The recommended minimum line width is 0.48 mm. I wanted a final shape that was much thinner than the metal thickness, so I went with a 0.22 mm line width. The resulting bars measured 0.19 to 0.21 mm wide and give the light open appearance of the prototype. Even though the railings are etched in spring temper phosphor bronze, they are not as strong as I would like and bend easily. In the future I will probably build a fixture and fabricate them from music wire.

Now we'll assemble the kit parts. It is useful to mount the bridge in the base at this point because the base is strong enough to allow it to be clamped in a vise. The first step is to open the mast mounting box (**Photo 12**). This is located behind the mounting plate just below the walkway. It is closed because signals can be mounted on either side of the bridge. I prefer a small inverse cone burr (**Photo 13**) in my belt driven dental hand piece because it gets into the corners and affords much better control than a Dremel. A bit of trimming with a small file produces a nice firm fit. Make sure any trimming you do results in the mast sitting at a 90° angle to the bridge and perpendicular to the ground. If you have to leave them a bit loose that's fine. Later I will add a drop of CA adhesive and hit it with some quick-set glue.

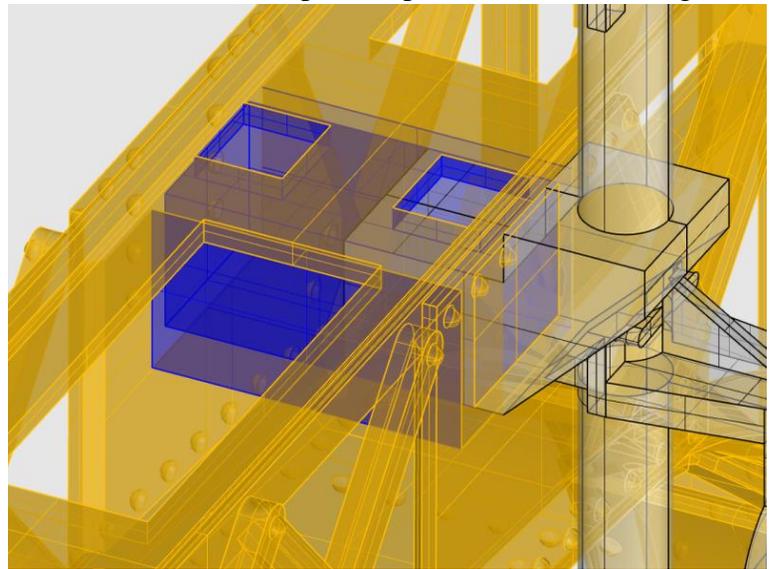


Photo 12 - The mounting box (blue) is printed inside the bridge (gold). Wires are snaked through the top openings to run under the walkway. This design is a problem. I cut away that section between the two openings to make threading the wires easier.

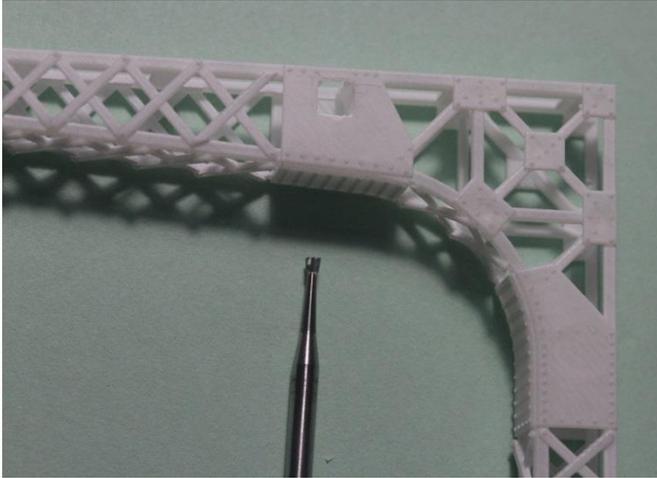


Photo 13 - *The mounting box opening has been roughed out with an inverted cone burr.*

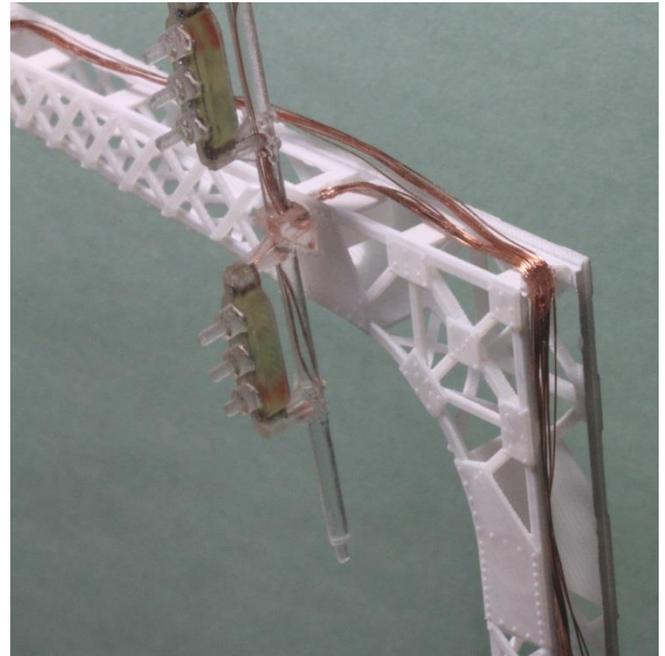


Photo 14 - *Wires have been routed into bridge mast and a drop of glue at the corner of the bridge holds them in place.*

Once the signal mast has been tested to ensure that all the LEDs operate correctly, the wires are fed through the access holes and routed to the end of the bridge where a semicircular opening has been provided for them to head down the bridge mast. A small drop of an adhesive (I like Welder for this



application) is placed in the opening and, after the wires are positioned, another drop is placed on top to make sure they stay in place (**Photo 14**).

Separate the two bundles and select a long wire from each. Wrap them around the remaining wires to make a nice tight bundle. Place a drop of nail polish just beyond the point where they enter the base to keep them from unraveling. Once it is dry, feed the wires through the base, tuck the bundles against the inside of the vertical members of the bridge mast and apply a few drops of glue to hold them in place (**Photos 15, 16**).

Photo 15 - *Wire bundles have been neatly tucked alongside the main support members. When painted they will be almost invisible*

To keep wiring as simple as possible I use ribbon cable and insulation displacement connectors whenever possible. Ribbon cable can easily handle the current needed to light an LED, but you have to get the bridge wiring right and there are sixteen wires to sort out.



Photo 16 - *On the prototype these wires were in a 2" conduit that popped out near the bottom of the mast. The actual location was probably dictated by the length of pipe they had available at the site.*

My signals are built on a plug made from a pair of circuit boards. The signal is attached to one and can be plugged into the other half in only one orientation (Photo 17). The problem is getting the right wire soldered to the proper pad. For this I built a simple test apparatus. Using DIP switches, some resistors, and connectors I can plug in a ribbon cable that will simulate the output from my

output boards. When I first cut the wires, I tinned both ends in my solder pot (Photo 18). Using a 5 VDC supply I identify the four common cathodes. These are soldered together and inserted into a hole connected to a 5 VDC power source (Photo 19). The connection for the desired LED is grounded and a grounded probe with a 1K resistor is used to find the desired lead wire. This wire is dragged across the available pads to find the one associated with that LED position. Some wires need to be shortened so a section is tinned and pulled further into the hole. The wire is soldered into the hole while the circuit is hot so electrical conductivity is assured. Once all the wires are soldered in place, the base of the bridge is glued to the connector.

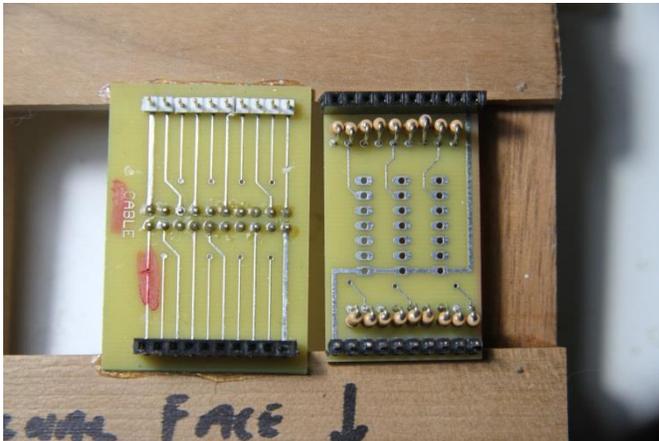
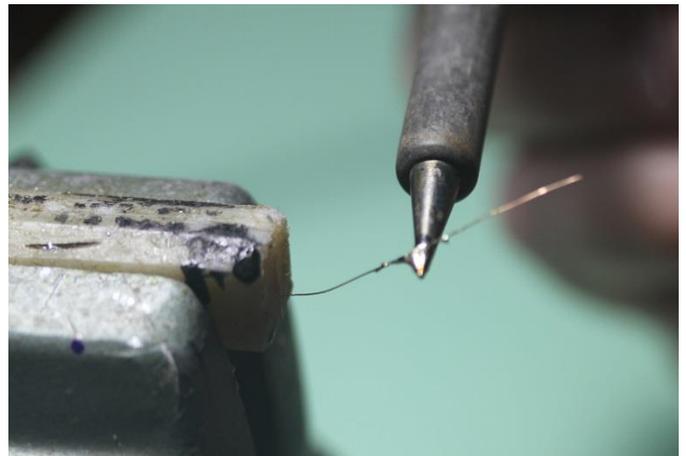


Photo 17 - *The plug and socket for mounting the signal bridge. The socket (left) is mounted under the layout, a 2 x 10 header below connects to the ribbon cable. The plug (bottom shown) has connection points for 16 wires. The heavy trace is 5 VDC. Resistors limit current to less than 18 mV to prevent accidental damage to the LEDs. Additional resistors are located on the output boards.*

Photo 18 - *Magnet wire being tinned prior to soldering to mounting plug. The soldering iron tip is running at 700°F. An 800°F tip would be better.*



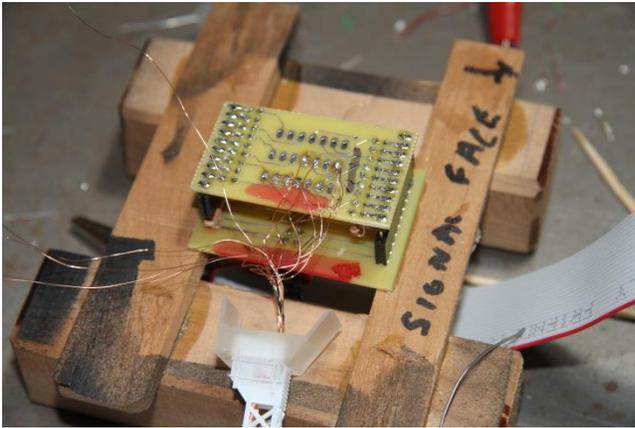


Photo 19 - *Tinned wires being soldered to the base plug. Leave as little uninsulated wire as possible above the circuit board.*

The excess wire is packed under the base and another electrical test performed to make sure there are no shorts caused by bare sections of wire contacting each other (**Photo 20**). Once everything checks out, thickened epoxy is packed into the opening to permanently bond the signal to the circuit

board and fix the wires in place. Another electrical check before the epoxy sets up is a good idea.

Photo 20 - *An almost finished signal undergoing final electrical testing. The leftmost green switch is turned on.*

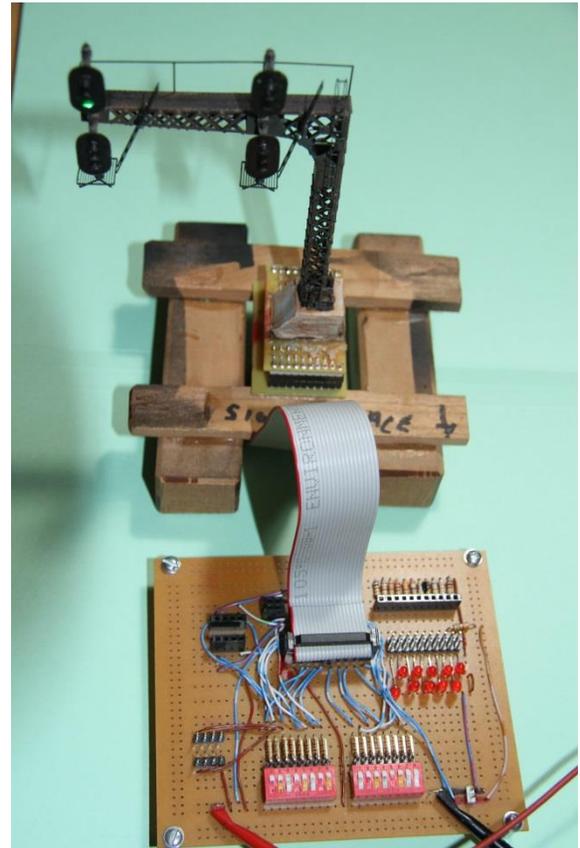


Photo 21 - *This is a finished signal sitting on my electronics bench, ready for installation on the layout.*

That ends the hard part of the construction. Now you just apply the etched metal parts and spray the whole thing black. Take a sanding disk to the front surface of the lamp lenses to remove the paint and add the signal faces. A dilute wash of burnt umber oil color gives the signal a slightly weathered, rusted appearance (**Photo 21**).

[Now that we've learned how to construct interlocking model railroad signals from scratch, perhaps we should have a primer on how to interpret them. We will continue our discussion of railroad signals and what they mean in the next issue. -Ed.]

2020 Division Reports

Yearly Division Report

Division: New Jersey Division

Reporting Period: January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020

Meeting Times and Places:

We schedule 5 NJ Division Meets per year, with all meets starting at 9:00 am and ending at 12:00pm. We usually try to move the meets around the division for member's convenience, of course 2020 changed everything.

Our live meets usually consist of Division Business, 2 Clinics, NJD Bookstore, Model Contest, Sales Tables, and Door Prizes. Following the meets we have 6 - 7 very generous members, near the meet locations, open their layouts for tours from 1pm to 5pm.

The NJ Division Board of Directors hold meetings 5 times a year, in the month before a Division Meet, to conduct administrative business.

For our 2020 meets, NJ Division members sign in count ranged from 35 to 75, the average. This count is NJ Division Members only and does not include guests of members, first time visitors, or members from other divisions.

We gladly welcome visitors from other divisions, seeing regular visitors from Philadelphia and Susquehanna Divisions in MER, and Garden State Division of the NER.

- January 2020 was held at Grace Church in Merchantville, NJ. Also home to Cherry Valley Model Railroad Club. We host a joint meet at this location with the Philadelphia Division as guests. Clinics were Scratchbuilding Structures Working With Photographs, and Model Railroad Operations Dispatching, From a Prototypically Functional Approach.
- March 2020 was to be held in Hamilton Twp., NJ, but was cancelled due to the virus and the room being closed the day before the meet.
- May 2020 we were to host the Garden State Division of the NER in Wall Twp., NJ. In place of that, we held our first Virtual Meet using FreeConferenceCall.com. Clinics presented were Something Creative, and Making Toilet Paper Water.
- September 2020 was to be held at Brick Elks Lodge in Brick, NJ. Due to the Virus, we had our second Virtual Meet on Free Conference Call. Division Business included our Annual Business Meeting, followed by our Annual Board of Director's Meeting which is mainly the election of Board Members to Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Paymaster, and Clerk. Clinics presented were Special Track Work, followed by Tooling for Model Railroaders, and finally Presenting Clinics In The Virtual World. This meet also included announcing the First Winner of Our Online Model Contest, in the Category of Overpass/Underpass.
- November 2020 was a joint meet hosted by Philadelphia Division in Internetville, in the virtual world using the Zoom Service. Clinics presented were Structure Drawing and Model Railroad Lighting Using Dwarvin Products Fiber Optics.

This meet we announced the winner of our second Online Model Contest in the Category of Something That Does Not Belong.

Our modified schedule during virtual meets consist of Division Business, 2 to 3 Clinics, Model Contest Winner Announced, and time for members to show their work or to present other input such as videos, photos, prototype information, or start discussions of interest to model railroaders.

Change in Officer from last year (including AP Coordinator):

Director Chuck Higdon retired at the end of his term because of a pending move to Tennessee.

Geert Marien was elected to fill the vacant Director position.

Fritz Plenefisch was elected by the Board to the 8th Director's position as Editor/Director.

Achievement Program highlights: The following submitted paperwork and received certificates;

Master Builder Cars - **Chris Conaway**

Master Builder Structures - **Fred Willis**

MR Engineer - Electrical - **Paul More**

Chief Dispatcher - **Mike Prokop**

Model Railroad Author - **Chris Conaway**

- **Thom Radice**

Association Volunteer - **John V. Gallagher**

More AP Judging has been completed for work that was done during 2020 and Certificates will be posted in the report for 2021.

Activities from the past year:

- We continued to sell our New Jersey Division Gondola Car in 2 numbers, NJDX 1968 for our start year, and NJDX 2018 for our 50th Anniversary year. The model is a Bethlehem Steel Company, 52'6" 70-ton Drop-end Gondola. These gondolas are available for **anyone** in any region or division, to purchase, \$35 for first one, and \$30 for the second, choose number(s) you want. Contact a NJ Div. Board Member if interested. See njdivnmra.org for more info.
- We designed and had embroidered NJ Division Caboose Logo Polo Shirts made to order for members wishing to have them. This was at cost per member, not for fund raising. Shirts arrived in March.

Special Projects or working with other organizations:

We plan at least 2 joint meets per year to expand the availability of activities, clinics, and layout tours for our neighboring Division/Region members. Each division provides 1 Clinician for the joint meets.

We will host or be hosted by the Philadelphia Division, MER, and the Garden State Division, NER annually during January, May, and alternate Novembers.

The New Jersey Division has decided to volunteer to host the 2025 MER Convention. There are no further details to present at the time of this report.

Any successful or new ideas your division has tried that might be helpful to other divisions:

Due to the lockdown restrictions, we decided that we should do whatever we can to keep our members somehow active with the Division, and to offer a view other than what they were stuck seeing within their home property boundaries. So we started the following activities;

- Online Virtual Board of Directors meetings began in April 2020, to handle administrative business, and to make plans for modified activities to keep members active.
- Online Virtual Meets, started for 2020 in May, then in September, November, and continuing into 2021. First used FreeConferenceCall.com and have now switched to and have a paid account for up to 100 people on Zoom. If we expect more than 100 we have FreeConferenceCall.com as a back up.
- We are making plans to have Hybrid Meets once we are able to start Live meets again. This would be having the live meet with attendees, while simultaneously using Zoom to allow those unable to attend to be a part of the meet. This will allow members having extended travel times of 2 hours or more to the far corners of the Division, or others with health concerns, to have the option of joining at home.
- Began using CoffeeCup.com online forms hosting to allow us to have an Online Model Contest. Members submit 1 to 3 photos of a model made by themselves, with a short description, meeting the contest category, to be placed online for voting during the week before a meet. Winner is announced at the virtual meet. We plan to continue this into the future to allow Large Model Categories, and hybrid contests where members can vote online and in person when live meets are back. This will allow members not able to travel 2 plus hours to a meet, to be a part of the contest voting.
- Began new Train Orders Newsletter Columns to showcase members work, in the What I Did During Covid-19, compare photos of Model vs Prototype items, a Do You Remember Column showcasing old modeling kits, items, tools, and supplies. Also Less than Carload (LCL) by our Editor, to have a column containing small items of interest added to the newsletter.
- Extra Email Updates were sent out with member recommended online links, member project stories and photos, and links to other Region/Division activities or information. These are done once or twice a month by how much information has been submitted.
- Continued the use of Election Buddy for our Board of Directors Election.
- We are continuing the Member ID Card and Lanyard program we started in 2018. This includes credit card sized custom ID's (similar to the MER Conventions ID Cards) and a custom printed New Jersey Division Lanyard. These items have been a big hit with our members, and generate many comments and questions from other divisions, while costing the division about \$2 per member.

In your opinion, where could the MER provide support to your division?

Find a way to begin funding the RailPass Program again. Our Division has been paying the cost of the trial memberships through 2018, 2019, and 2020 directly to the NMRA, or by reimbursing the Garden State Division of the NER for a number of memberships they initially paid, for members within our Division

Superintendent's Name and Signature (Electronic or typewritten signature OK):
William Grosse Jr.

Yearly Division Report
Reporting Period: 01-01-2020 --- 12-31-2020

Division: Potomac Division

Meeting Times and Places.

Our Annual Meeting was not held this year as the event in April was cancelled.

Annual Elections were handled by physically mailing ballots to every member of Our Division. Passage of the revised//re-issuance of Bylaws was postponed until 2021.

Board Meetings were held via e-mail and then resumed by means of Zoom in Dec. with a plan to hold regularly scheduled monthly meetings rather than *ad hoc* or on demand. Our Dec. meeting was to set the basis for holding meetings via Zoom and also to establish a policy for the same once these become regular and open to Division members, and then also such that we can hold an Annual or an Elections meeting.

Our Division transitioned to an io.groups with a controlled invitation of Division members and those known to be NMRA members (<https://groups.io/g/PD2MERNMRA>).

Change in Officers from last year (including AP Coordinator).

Contact information:

Name	Address	Contact Info	Position	NMRA Number
Martin Brechbiel, MMR	3404 Monarch Lane Annandale VA 22003-11	703-309-3082 Superintendent @potomac-nmra.org	Superintendent	114353
Andrew Dodge, MMR	16260 Batchellors Forest Olney MD 20832-0000	301-774-7753 sr-asst-super @potomac-nmra.org	Senior Asst. Superintendent	107528
Ernest Little, MMR	10162 Woodbury Dr Manassas VA 20109-372	571-383-7316 asst-super @potomac-nmra.org	Asst. Superintendent	129108
Nick Kalis	1420 Spring Hill Rd Ste McLean VA 22102-3030	703-585-0100 Clerk @potomac-nmra.org	Clerk	092783
Jerry Stanley	11552 Hereford Ct Hume, VA 22639	Paymaster @potomac-nmra.org	Paymaster	142333
Mathew A. Thompson, M	13000 Triple Crown Loop Gainesville, VA 20155-3	703-743-1895 achievement-program @potomac-nmra.org	AP Coordinator	081125

Division web site address

<http://potomac-nmra.org/PDnewsite/Main/Home.php>

Membership (Number of members including the change from the previous year. Membership recruitment activities conducted during the year.)

According to the roster extract provided to the Division from the MER:

December 2019 --- ~288

November 2020 --- ~275

However, it is also clear that our membership Roster data that filters down to the Division through the MER is not at all accurate and varies significantly from month to month. Members listed one month, disappear, and return later. New members appear and then disappear. Members known to be correct are missing and Life members are missing. This information when detected has been provided back to the MER Business Manager without our knowledge of any further action taken by anyone anywhere.

We make every attempt to recruit new members at every open house and other events; membership forms, NMRA benefits, and a Divisional brochure are available at every event.

Your Division will hold elections again in April as they were executed in 2020. As our current bylaws do not permit electronic voting by our members, a ballot will be mailed to all members.

We hope to hold a Zoom meeting in 2021 to ratify the proposed re-issuance of the Division bylaws that will not only address electronic voting, but also eliminate considerable redundancies, contradictions, and a host of other oddities to put this Division into alignment with the Region.

Financial.

Dollar amount in bank at end of the last accounting period was ~\$5,727.25

We do not charge for any event or service other than for attendance at the yearly miniCon that takes place usually in the 1st quarter of every year – the attendance fee is nominal and set to cover the cost of the venue as opposed to profit. However, to cover costs of venues in the future we will be accepting donations as opposed to a set fee. Clinicians do charge to cover material costs, e.g., Making Bushes clinic at Jerry Stanley's hobby barn this year.

Our Division members along with members of the one operating round robin group stepped forward to generously provide direct financial support the acquisition of a Zoom license for the Division.

Achievement Program highlights:

Master Model Railroader – Bernard Kempinski, MMR

Achievement Program Certificates:

Volunteer	-	Bill Mosteller
Civil	-	Bill Lyders
Cars	-	Bernard Kempinski, Alex Belida
Author	-	Bob Rodriguez, Bryan Kidd
Prototype Model	-	Bernard Kempinski, Alex Belida
Association Official	-	Brian Sheron
Chief Dispatcher	-	Bryan Kidd
Golden Spike	-	Cam Green

Activities from the past year.

After our meet in March of 2020, all in person activities ceased within the Division. Virtual Clinics were activated starting in July. In person clinics resumed in September in a very controlled limited attendance setting (6) at our Paymaster's Hobby Barn

Division Events**Events 2020**

			Scale	Location
February 16, (Saturday)	Frank Benenati, Layout	Maryland Junction Railroad	HO	Damascus Maryland
March 7, 2 Clinics and 2 Layouts Meet @ Surratt House				Clinton, Maryland
Virtual Clinic 1, July 19, 2020	Andrew Dodge, MMR	Railroad Infrastructure		Zoom
Virtual Clinic 2, August 16, 2020	Ernie Little, MMR	Master Builder - Cars AP Certificate		Zoom
Virtual Clinic 3, September 20, 2020	Alex Belida	Potomac Flyer/ NMRA Author AP		Zoom
Build and Take Clinic 1, September 26, 2020*	Cam Green	Scratchbuilding a styrene track side structure		Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn
Virtual Clinic 4, October 18, 2020	Marty McGuirk	Tips For Researching and Building Prototype Structures		Zoom Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn
October 20, 2020		An Afternoon at the Movies		(Cancelled)
Virtual Clinic 5, November 15, 2020	Brian Sheron, MMR	Constructing an Elevated Railway		Zoom
Build and Take Clinic 2, November 14, 2020	Nick Kalis	Building trees with manila rope.		Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn
Virtual Clinic 6, December 6, 2020	Tim Barr	Using Styrofoam as a Scenery Base		Zoom
Virtual Layout Tour December 12, 2020	Todd Hermann	Lehigh & New England Railroad's Catasauqua Branch	HO	Zoom
Virtual Clinic 7, December 13, 2020	Zach Pabis	3D Printing , how to use it and other related services		Zoom

***This event also functioned as a fund raiser for the Division's Zoom account**

Attendance of virtual clinics has routinely exceeded 20; Todd Hermann's virtual layout tour exceeded 40 attendees. All of our virtual events were recorded, uploaded to the Division web site, and to the Division YouTube channel.

Virtual clinics and **Build and Take Clinics at Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn are currently scheduled through August of 2021.**

Special Projects or working with other organizations

We continue to seek to hold a Fall joint meet with the James River Division in Nov. of 2021 although this clearly remains a major unknown at this time. We would seek to make this a regular yearly event. We would like to have a parallel meet jointly with the Chesapeake or South Mountain Divisions if suitable venues were to be found available within budget constraints.

Any successful or new ideas that your Division has tried that might be helpful to other divisions.

The ongoing program of monthly clinics via Zoom has demonstrated significant attendance success and will be continued. Use of Zoom for other purposes will be instituted to address travel time of members to attend event in person. This will no doubt require the investment of a camera system suitable for remote capture of clinics and layouts to be recorded for placement on the Division web site and YouTube channel.

Charitable and Educational Activities.

This year has severely compromised such activities effectively eliminating them until further notice.

NMRA and MER Convention Activity.

No interest whatsoever in either due to ridiculous costs associated with venues, hotels, other associated financial unknowns that apparently cannot be defined by the MER.

Ongoing & Future Directions.

The Board members remain committed to working to fulfill the requests and desires of our Division's membership, which was expressed in the December 2017 special addition of *The Potomac Flyer*. The current response exemplified in the attendance of virtual events which were an outgrowth of the outreach program of clinics, coordinated open house events clearly reflect a significant level of success in this effort. This is also very clearly satisfying some of the socialization aspect of the hobby as we can gather as a group, see one another, and talk to one another.

Given current conditions and unknowns projected into 2021, we will continue on as we have since July of 2020, until we are confident that we can do otherwise. Given the success of the virtual attendance, we are investigating the acquisition of a camera system that would permit direct broadcast via Zoom of in person events to address the challenges of travel and traffic within our Division.

Where in your opinion could the MER provide support to your division?

The \$1 per member rebate remains completely inadequate support given the constant assessment of the Divisions to be the most important level of the NMRA. The MER should take this issue very loudly to Nat'l NMRA and demand this so-called rebate be significantly increased from what is currently a cruel joke. The matching grant program currently on hold by the Region is really needed to support the acquisition of A/V equipment for the Division to use to interface with the web in the near future given that the Division has no real fund raising abilities and is confronted with very serious costs associated with meeting place venues.

Superintendent's Name and Signature.

Martin Brechbiel, MMR

Yearly Division Report
Reporting Period: 2020

Division: Philadelphia Division

January 11th: (Joint Meet with NJ Division)

Location: Merchantville Episcopal Church, NJ

Attendance: 29 Philadelphia Division Members, 70 NJ Division Members

April Meeting:

Canceled due to building availability caused by Covid-19

June 6th

Location: Held via Zoom

Attendance: 29 Members

September 19th

Location: Held via Zoom

Attendance: 28 Members

November 7th

Location: Held via Zoom

Attendance: 29 Philadelphia Division Members, appx 20 NJ Division Members

Change in Officers:

Bill Fagan declined to run for another term on the board

Charles Butsch resigned as superintendent as of June 18th assistant superintendent Rob Hinkle assumed Superintendent duties as of that date. Kevin Feeney was appointed to fill Charles last year of his Directors term.

List of Officers:

Board of Directors:

Supt.	Rob Hinkle	robhink@gmail.com
Asst. Supt.:	Joe Walters, MMR	josephfwalters@yahoo.com
Clerk:	Mark Wallace	mwallace665@verizon.net
Treasurer:	Howard Kaplan	hakaplan@rcn.com

Directors at Large:

Mike Dettinger	detting@comcast.net
Chip Stevens	readingchip@yahoo.com
Kevin Feeney	ic4277@yahoo.com

Auxiliary Officials/ Committees:

Achievement Program Coordinator: Earl Paine earlpaine@verizon.net
 Achievement Program Committee Chair: Joe Walters, MMR
 Clinics: Mike Dettinger
 Layouts / Layout Videos: Bill Fagan
 Publicity: Chip Stevens
 Item Donations: Kevin Feeney
 Door Prizes: Mike Dettinger
 Newsletter Editor: Howard Kaplan
 Ops: Rob Hinkle
 Webmaster: Howard Kaplan
 Social Media: Rob Hinkle
 Member Outreach:
 Membership: Mark Wallace
 Layout Video: Bill Fagan
 Certificates/Awards: Howard Kaplan
 Division Apparel: Howard Kaplan

Activities During the Year

With the Covid Pandemic we had to move to all Zoom meetings for the second half of the year, meets were conducted via Zoom with two clinics plus a show and tell time for the members to show or discuss that they have been working on. We look forward to 2021 when we can get back into our regular meets.

Prepared by Rob Hinkle

Rob Hinkle

Tidewater Division 2020 Annual Report

Division 4 – Tidewater Division

Subject: Yearly Division Report

Reporting Period: January 2020 – December 2020

Division: Tidewater (#4)

Meeting Times and Places:

18 January 2020: - Annual Business Meeting at Lee Hall Station and Museum in Lee Hall, VA

February 2020 – December 2020 meetings were cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions imposed by Virginia Governor.

Officers and Directors:

Superintendent: Fred Humphrey



He's in his Third term as the "Superintendent" for the Tidewater Division. He retired in 2010 as a Master Chief Petty Officer after 50 years of reserve and active service plus civil service responsibilities for the Navy. Fred has been interested in trains since childhood because his father worked for Southern Pacific. He began collecting railroad items and got into model railroading after getting his first O-scale train. He grew up around Decatur Illinois where he loved watching trains near the interlock. All train traffic passing through

the interlock included B&O, Illinois Central, Illinois Terminal, Pennsylvania and Wabash railroads. Fred still visits the interlock every time he's in town. Now, he watches trains from NS, CSX (up for sale), CN, UP unit coal, BNSF unit grain plus observing several short lines like the Decatur Central, Decatur Junction, R. C. Corman and the large ADM locomotive fleet. He joined the NMRA and TMRC to learn more about the hobby and how to use it in building his layout.

929 Priscilla Lane

Chesapeake, VA 23322

Phone: 757.482.9498 (H)

757.406.2078 (M)

Email: frederickhumphrey@outlook.com

Assistant Superintendent: John Fallon



This is his Fourth term as the “Assistant Superintendent”. He is native to Hampton Roads, having returned here after military service. He spent ten years (active and reserve) in the Navy as a submarine electronics technician-nuclear and spent all of his career in submarines. John is a journeyman electrician and enjoys modeling the Norfolk & Western

Railroad. John's fondest childhood memory was an Amtrak trip with his family from Richmond to Orlando's Disneyland.

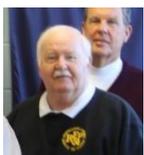
200 Mt. Vernon Ave. #4

Portsmouth, VA 23707

Phone: 757.636.3023

Email: zzoxdoc@yahoo.com

Pay Master: John Robey



He is in his Fourth term as the Division “Paymaster.” John is a retired member of the US Secret Service, having served president's Carter, Reagan, Bush (G.H.W.) and retired when Bill Clinton's term ended in 2001. John is a lifelong fan of (and models) the Richmond, Potomac & Fredericksburg Railroad and is a member of their historical society. John's favorite railroad memory is riding in a convertible across the highways of central Missouri

with his father. His Dad drove with one hand on the steering wheel and in the other...held an 8mm movie camera shooting pictures of local trains traveling down the tracks.

1313 Smith Cove Circle

Virginia Beach, VA23455

Phone: 571.217.0599

Email: Jrobey2019@gmail.com

Time Keeper: Roger Bir



He is in his Third term as a “Director at Large” for the Tidewater Division. Roger produces the division newsletter, “The Callboard” and is the webmaster for the Division.

He retired in 2011 after 38 years of active and reserve service in the Navy and Air Force.

Roger moved into model railroading in 2007 after retiring as an NCAA football and

wrestling referee. His early interests centers around passenger consists starting from Union Pacific and continuing with the C&O's “George Washington.” Roger's fondest railroad memory came in 1956. He and his father ventured to a country railroad crossing just east of Columbia City, Indiana. Off in the distance approached a Nickel Plate Berkshire. As the train grew near, his Dad said, “Wave at the engineer and make a pulling motion with your hand.” He did as his father asked and was surprised as the engineer waved and sounded the locomotive's whistle.

1728 Springs Edge Court

Virginia Beach, VA23456
 Phone: 757.876.5568
 Email: sorcerer54@cox.net

Director At Large: John Cryderman



He's in his Fourth term as a "Member at Large" for the Tidewater Division. John was born in Rochester Michigan and models both the Piere Marquette and Chesapeake & Ohio railroads. He is a Navy veteran having retired from active duty with 20 years of service as a nuclear machinist mate. Since retiring from the Navy, he is currently employed with Huntington-Ingalls Newport News shipyard as a production planner. John's fondest childhood railroad memory was walking in the Michigan Central Station (Detroit) with his Dad.

4706 Barger Street
 Chesapeake, VA 23320
 Phone: 757.494.0976
 Email: jcryderman@cox.net

Director At Large: Dale Ridgeway, MMR #657



This is his First year as "Director at Large". Model railroading has been a part of my life since early childhood. As an adult, I still enjoy the hobby. I spend time reading current publications, rail fanning, and participating in operating sessions on various model layouts. Joining the Tidewater Division of the NMRA has enhanced my hobby interest and definitely has made me a better modeler. Even though I live a long distance from most of the Tidewater's monthly or quarterly meetings, I have always tried my best to attend no matter where the location. Becoming a master model railroader is an accomplishment that I could have never imagined if it were not for the inspiration and leadership of the Tidewater Division and their membership. Now that I have the achievement I have been elected as a board member who will give me yet another experience pertaining to model railroading. I hope to be able to help this organization and other member's progress further in this great hobby of model railroading.

10663 Piney Island Dr
 Bishopville, MD 21813
 Phone: 410.352.3229
 Email: ridgerail@aol.com

Director At Large: Jim Keiper



He is in his Second term as "Director at Large". His love for model railroading started as a young child with 027 scale trains around the Christmas tree and later layouts in the cellar. I got serious in modelling later in life and joined the Tidewater Division in 1999. I served in various capacities to include BOD member, assistant Superintendent and later Superintendent for two terms. I am also a founding Member of the Tidewater Model Railroad Club (TMRC). I have participated in the transportable modular layouts as they evolved and attended their shows at various venues to include our Division and major Shows, Assisted Living Centers, and Nursing Homes. I have represented the Division on local radio and television shows to promote our hobby and related events. I have also participated in the organizing and conducting of a MER Convention (MP 40) in Suffolk, VA. I have also attended numerous MER and NMRA National Conventions. I model the DL&W and the Erie Lackawanna System in HO and N Scale. I grew up in Tobyhanna, PA where the DL&W and later, the EL traversed. My Father worked for those Railroads for 20 years. I learned some behind scene operations of the Railroad as a result of his employment. My home layout was

disassembled and is presently being designed and built in my FROG. My desire for participating in our NMRA MER Division is many faceted. I am thrilled participating with my Family Members, I enjoy the fellowship, public operations, appreciating others' modelling talent, sharing of the hobby with younger folks, and learning from some of the best modelers in our hobby; right here in our Division!

1024 Chesterfield Ter
Chesapeake, VA 23320

Phone: 757.739.9082

Email: eljek8952@gmail.com

Achievement Program Coordinator: Norm Garner, MMR #625



Has served in various official positions within the Tidewater Division over the decades and has become the Achievement Program Coordinator.

3408 Wilshire Road
Portsmouth, VA 23703

Phone: 757.484.0772

Email: nwgrail2@aol.com

Achievement Program highlights:

Dale Ridgeway; MMR #657

Roger Bir; Association Volunteer

Bob Cook; Chief Dispatcher, Model Railroad Engineer-Electric & Golden Spike Award

Mark Neiting; Chief Dispatcher

Charles Brown; Official

Gary Brown; Official

James Curth; Official

Jim Keiper; Official

Activities from the past year: Divisional activities were reduced due to the Covid-19 restrictions from the Virginia Governor. Additionally, we were asked to leave the facilities which housed our layout for public display and open to all ages to run a train. This site was also used to recruit model railroaders.

Division Events:

Held Annual Business Meeting and voted for the Tidewater Division Officers and Directors on 18 January 2020, plus held annual white elephant sale.

Provided several volunteers to support the NMRA booth at The Greenberg's Great Train and Toy Show and The World's Greatest Hobby during Feb 2020. When Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted will continue to support membership recruitment display at The Greenberg's Train Show, World's Greatest Hobby Show and Tidewater Divisional Train Show. Distribute back issues of Scale Rails, Model Railroader, Railroad Model Craftsman, newsletters to waiting rooms, hobby stores, etc., with Division contact information sticker applied. Also, use weekly local newspaper supplement to list Tidewater Division in hobbies section.

Divisional Awards:

Modeler of the Year: Dale Ridgeway

Superintendent Awards: Roger Bir

Special Projects or Working with Other Organizations: The following effort was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions placed by Virginia Governor on having meetings with less than 10 individuals. Some back ground on this imitative in 2019 we began Project Endeavor to bring the various model railroad clubs together and share ideas and locate a facility to house various scales for public view. This project was initiated because several local model railroad clubs are in danger of losing their public display facilities. The Division took the lead to discuss possibilities with the various organizations and locate a facility to house multi-scale layouts. This effort will try to bring local modelers into one organization on how best to have public displays, hobby education, hands on clinics, public tour of local layouts and build a railroad library for public access. We believe an organization titled “Hampton Roads Council of Model Railroaders” will provide the best solution in having a governing body for all local model railroad scales.

We were also looking for ways to improve the Tidewater Division inter-action with other train modelers. First, to continue the follow-on from the previous superintendent’s goal to change the Tidewater Division imagine from just an HO organization to one which supports all modelers (regardless of scale). Our top priority will be to move some meetings near a train club or layout for inclusion into our meeting schedule, so the membership can visit that club’s or individual’s layout. The object is to share information, exchange ideas and reach agreements on ways to spread the word regarding railroad club events. Those events support our second priority by having them placed in “The Callboard” the division newsletter, providing links to other local web sites to promote these events.

These local clubs have shown interest by attending several meetings to determine whether or not they will participate:

ATLANTIC COAST S GAUGERS – S Gauge
 CHILDREN’S MUSEUM – O Gauge
 CHUCKATUCK LIVE STEAM - 7½ inch Gauge
 KIDS RUN TRAINS – O Gauge
 LEGO GROUPS – O Gauge
 SOUTH HAMPTON ROADS N-TRAK – N Gauge
 SUFFOLK SEABOARD STATION & MUSEUM – HO Gauge
 TIDEWATER O-GAUGE ASSOCIATION – O Gauge
 TIDEWATER MODULAR RAILROAD CLUB – HO Gauge

These organizations haven’t attended any meetings, but are on the distribution list for meeting reports:

PENINSUAL MODEL RAILROADERS – N Gauge
 TIDEWATER BIG TRAIN OPERATORS – G Gauge

These clubs provided documentation to help us in developing our strategy in forming the Hampton Roads Council of Model Railroaders:

Citrus Model Railroad Club (Florida) – Non-Profit 617
 Florida Citrus Model Train Society (Florida) – Non-Profit 501(c)(3)
 Model Railroad Club Inc. (New Jersey) – Non-Profit 501(c)(3)
 North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (Texas) – Non-Profit 501(c)(3)
 San Diego Model Railroad Museum (California) – Non-Profit 501(c)(3)

Any successful or new ideas that your division has tried that might be helpful to other division:

We established a partnership with Dayton Hobbies, Inc. (HOBBYTOWN STORES) to a meeting or two during the year in the Virginia Beach Store. Meeting is open to the public with Q & A sessions about

the hobby, demonstrations, (clinics), etc. A large floor to ceiling glass show case has been made available to the Division to exhibit structure, motive power, rolling stock, kit bashing, and other hobby related topics regardless of scale. Also, generous discount on model railroad related supplies is given to Division members. After two years working with Hobbytown has not been as successful as we hoped it would be and therefore we have terminated our association with them this year.

We continue to support and assist in developing more media exposure to promote the art and science of model railroad hobby. For example: PBS "Track Ahead" series shown on television. It was popular in Charlotte, NC and Richmond, VA area. Our local PBS told me there is not enough interest in model railroading, but it received a half page in the Wall Street Journal in 2016 and according to last survey by Hobby Industry Associations, it was the number one hobby in the USA. Also, connect with "Teen for Trains" which has replaced the defunct "Teen Association of Model Railroaders."

Where in your opinion could the MER provide support to your Division? Like all organizations it's become a matter of availability of funds to accomplish things on our agenda. If funds are available, it would be helpful to throw some our way. I know you don't have it, but thought I'd ask.

Division Web Site Address: <https://nmra-mer-tidewater.org/>

Membership: 137, down from 147.

Superintendent Name and Signature:

Fredrick Humphrey



Yearly Division Report Reporting Period: 2020

Division: Carolina Southern Division 12, MER

Meeting Times and Places:

Regular member meeting third Saturday each month
January 17th Annual Business Meeting;
January 17th Board Organizational and Planning Meeting

Change in Officers from last year (including AP Coordinator):

Contact information:

Superintendent:

Curtis Alan Hardee 908 S. 9th St. 704-868-6976
 Bessemer City, NC 28016
 superintendent
 @carolinasouthern.org

Asst Superintendent:

Andrew Stitt 160 Woodland Drive 910-572-2321
 New London, NC 28127 assistsuper
 @carolinasouthern.org

Paymaster:

Dave Thrams 209 Rainbow Drive 704-747-6823
 Stanley, NC 28164 paymaster
 @carolinasouthern.org

Clerk:

Edward Gumphrey 911 Pleasant Drive 757-353-8355
 Shelby, NC 28152 Clerk
 @carolinasouthern.org

Director 2022:

Ed Smith 142 Williams Cove Lane 828-495-7441
 Taylorsville, NC 28681 director2
 @carolinasouthern.org

Director 2023:

Scott Perry 1926 Sapphire Meadow 980-205-0526
 Drive director1
 Fort Mill, SC 29715 @carolinasouthern.org

Director 2021

Larry Paffrath 17815 Prescott Border 704-778-2745
 Drive assistsuper
 Cornelius, NC 28031 @carolinasouthern.org

AP Chairman

Neal Anderson 172 Woodfield Dr 704-775-2830
 Statesville, NC 28677 apchair
 @carolinasouthern.org

Activities from the past year:

2020 MER Convention “Carolina Special” slated for Charlotte, NC Canceled due to COVID.

Carolina Southern Division 12 has agreed to host the 2022 Convention in Charlotte, NC.

“Brass Pounder” Division Newsletter; (12 editions)

14th annual Railroad Modeling University (RMU), January

Members Swap Meet, November

Wades Train Town Open House, November 21st. coinciding with a local train show in Hickory, NC

Monthly activities

January, Annual Meeting. BOD Meeting 1/18/20
RMU, Railroad Modeling University. 1/25/20

February, Layout visit and Op session at Joe Skorch

March, Monthly meeting canceled

April, Monthly meeting canceled

May, Monthly meeting canceled

June, Monthly meeting canceled

July, Monthly meeting canceled

August, Monthly meeting canceled

September, Monthly meeting canceled

October, Monthly Meeting and Tour. Southeastern Narrow Gauge Museum
Newton, NC

November, Monthly meeting. Train Show. Hickory, NC

Special Projects or working with other organizations

Sponsor Boy Scout Model Railroad Merit Badge with multiple Councils
Maintain & repair model train display at Levine Museum of the New South.

Any successful or new ideas that your division has tried that might be helpful to other divisions.

The Division has held a Railroad Modeling University for 14 years. This event has been a half or full day collection of classes, clinics, demonstrations, and hands on work sessions on many aspects of the hobby. It is scheduled for January and always includes some classes targeting beginners. Some of the beginner classes have been run every year and consistently get 8 to 12 attendees. We often have several people who had their first exposure to model trains at Christmas and are curious about what more they can do with them. We typically have 4 to 6 concurrent one-hour classes at all levels of expertise, so anyone can learn something from the day. Attendance has been in the range of 60 to 80.

Superintendent's Name and Signature.

Curtis Alan Hardee, 12/9/2020

Yearly Division Report

Division: CPD-13 Carolina Piedmont

Reporting Period: January 2020 to January 2021

Meeting Times and Places: At start of 2020, it was the 4th Tuesday of Every Month for January and February at Cambridge Village Retirement Community, Apex NC. March through July General Membership meetings cancelled due to CoVid. First exclusive BoD and Officers meeting was held in May following CoVid personal distancing recommendations. First Virtual BoD and Officers meeting was held in August, with first full virtual General Membership meeting held in September. The September meeting also included a virtual presentation--Charlie Rausch's train layout Go-Pro tour. Thereafter all meetings were held in the 2nd week of the month, with BoD/Officers on Monday and General Membership on Tuesday. The October meeting virtual clinic was by Danial Fisher (3D printing) and November by Marty Steele (sheet aluminum backdrops). December was the annual Yankee Swap moderated by Charlie Rausch and Tom Shafer. Have noted a gradual increase in the

numbers of members attending the meetings virtually as more members feel increased comfort in using the technology. Given current circumstances, Virtual Meetings will prevail for the foreseeable future.

Change in Officer from last year (including AP Coordinator):

Re-elected in January 2020---John Sokash as Superintendent (3rd and last 2-year term), Charlie Rausch as Assistant Superintendent (3rd and last 2-year term), Gene Sing as Paymaster, Bill Hanley as Clerk. Tom Shafer replaces Will Seehorn as BoD member till 2023. Kevin O’Conner continues as BoD membership till January 2022 and Danial Fisher continues as BoD membership till January 2021. Elections (virtually) will be held in January 2021 to name Danial’s replacement. Vic Bitleris continued as AP Coordinator. Rob Rousseau continues as Webmaster and Virtual Meeting coordinator.

Achievement Program highlights from Vic Bitleris:

January 9 - Chief Dispatcher - Charles Rausch
 January 9 - Model Railroad Engineer Electrical - Charles Rausch
 June 1 - Master Builder Scenery - James Murphy
 June 2- Golden Spike Award - Robert Gamble
 July 16 - Master Builder Structures - Charles Rausch
 July 18 - Golden Spike Award - William Aulicino
 July 21 - Master Model Railroader - Charles Rausch
 Oct. – Golden Spike Award – Tom Shafer
 Oct. – Model Railroad Engineer Electrical—James Murphy
 Oct. -- Model Railroad Engineer Electrical Bob Gamble

Activities from the past year: Model contest every month. Members are encouraged to send photos of their entries to the editor of the *Herald*, and voting by membership (i.e., email) held thereafter. There was limited attendance at the Neuse River Train Show at NC State Fairgrounds held in November (the April show was cancelled). Due to CoVid there was no Raffle Layout this year. Annual Yankee Swap was held with the Virtual December meeting.

Special Projects or working with other organizations: Holiday Trainsets for Kids which is normally funded via the Raffle Layout; however, this year was funded out of general funds.

Any successful or new ideas your division has tried that might be helpful to other divisions:

Regarding Monthly modeling contests—have expanded numbers of winners from just one to multiple depending upon total numbers of entries. This has encouraged many more participants to the contest. Have been successful in getting more members to contribute articles to the *Herald*. Special emphasis placed on member’s CoVid projects. A typical monthly issue runs anywhere from 20 to 30 pages. Virtual meetings have become normal given the continuing situation with CoVid isolations.

In your opinion, where could the MER provide support to your division? Continue as previous.

Superintendent’s Name and Signature (Electronic or typewritten signature OK):

John A. Sokash, CPD-13 Superintendent

Chesapeake Division Yearly Report

Meeting times and places: not fixed

Change in Officers from Last Year:

Asst. Superintendent – Kirk Bateman

Achievement Program Highlights:

None

Activities from Last Year

January, Division Modular RR Work Sessions
February, Exhibited at Timonium Train Show
July, Online evening of short clinics
February, AGM with Meet and Greet conversation

Special Projects:

Preparation for MER Convention

Any Successful or new ideas:

The short clinics provided a forum for members to present programs without the extensive preparation that goes into a full hour clinic. This enticed a number of us to speak about a focused topic for 10-15 minutes.

Where could the MER provide support:

Accurate and up-to-date membership lists would be helpful. We see the same errors every month even though they have been reported.

Tom Casey, Superintendent

The Last Stop...

