

# The Local

A PUBLICATION OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION OF THE NMRA



Volume 53

November - December 1998

Number 6

## Allentown Contest Results

By John Johnson, Contest Chairman

Photos by Norman Garner

Congratulations and thanks to all entrants in the contests at Allentown. There were only 23 models entered, with at least three of them earning merit awards.

Many thanks to the model contest judges: Charles Flichman, Chuck Hladik, William Nesbit, Ray Bilodeau, Brian Kampschrorer and Lawton Maner. Also thanks to Rita Lynam for her assistance in the contest room.

### MODEL CONTEST WINNERS

STEAM LOCOMOTIVE: 1st. Bob Malbenti: PRR K4s

DIESEL: 1st. Alan Mende: CNJ F3 A & B units

2nd. Alan Mende: CNJ Alco #1068

### FREIGHT CARS:

1st. John M. Johnson: PRR H21a hopper

2nd. James E. Dalberg: DL & W TOFC flat & trailer

3rd. Bob Bird: N & W hopper

### PASSENGER CARS:

1st. James E. Dalberg: Lehigh Valley car #1000 \*

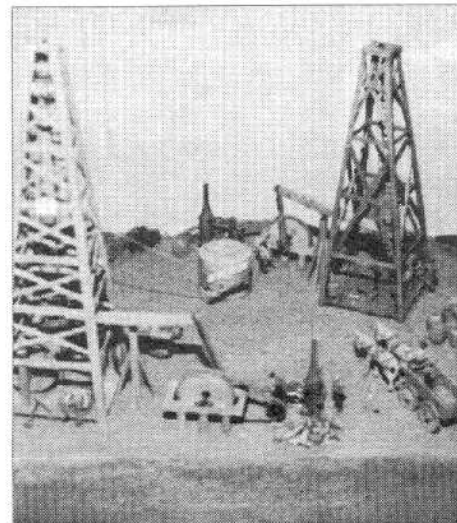
2nd. James E. Dalberg: DL & W express/baggage

3rd. James E. Dalberg: ACL 6BR lounge

CABOOSE: 1st. John M. Johnson: PRR N5

NON REVENUE: 1st. Bob Bird: Big Moose Duplex loader \*

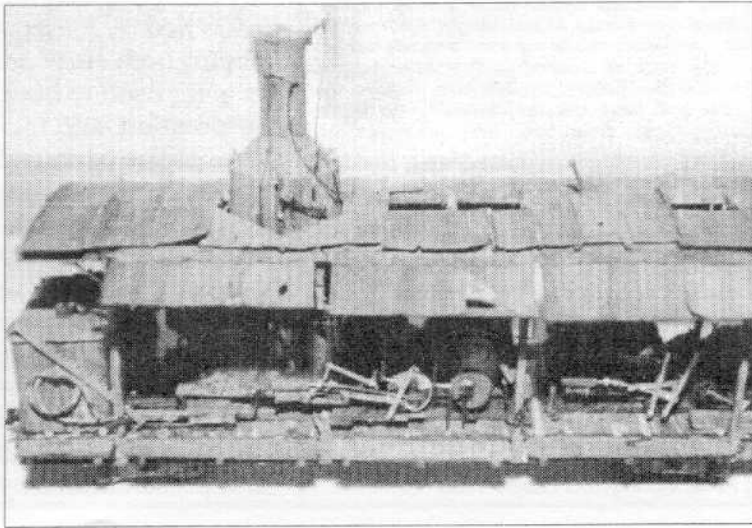
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**ABOVE: OIL WELLS ON OIL CREEK**  
Richard A. Sences, 2nd Place Diorama

**BELOW, LEFT:**  
**WEATHERLY ERECTION WORKS**  
*See Editor's Column, page 2*

**BELOW RIGHT:**  
**FIRST PLACE**  
**MAINTENANCE OF WAY**





# The LOCAL is now accepting ads

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AND POTENTIALLY TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PAGES WE PRINT PER YEAR.

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Eighth page	\$ 15	\$ 28	\$ 45	\$ 62.50
<b>Pike Registry</b> (for Clubs and Individuals)			2.5" x 1.5"	\$15 for the year
<b>Classifieds</b> (Text Only)		5 lines		\$5 per issue
<b>Retailers' Listings</b> (Business Card Size)			3.65" x 2"	\$60 for 6 issues
				<i>(Retailers' ads may change with each issue, but must be prepaid for the year.)</i>

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## Editor's Comments

### Allentown Convention good time all around

by Stan Knotts

The Allentown Convention at the Days Inn was a good one. It started off rainy but that didn't dampen our enthusiasms, and the sun came out on Saturday afternoon. Friday evening featured the first of a weekend worth of fine clinics and contest entries.

Saturday was a day for layout tours and a rail tour to Weatherly, PA and the Coal Museum in Lansford, PA. The non rail tour was to the Clover Hill Vineyard and the Crayola Museum in Easton, PA.

The rail tour which I took received good comments. After we got over the mountain, the sun came out and we left behind the rain that had been coming down lightly all morning. Our bus driver was very accommodating and a rail fan of sorts himself. Unfortunately, Jim Kerner who had arranged the tours was unable to accompany us due to illness, but we were fortunate to have Jim Dalberg who was familiar with the area and provided information over the bus intercom system as we drove along. The first stop was at Weatherly, PA which had once been a major rail center on the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Weatherly is located on a slope with the rail line drifting down through town past the old depot, not the town historical center. We were greeted by Jack Koehler who gave us a very thorough rail history of the town, accompanied by his marvelous collection of photographs and rail memorabilia, including one of the best railroad pass collections I have seen. After the presentation in the station, we walked around what had been the Lehigh Valley shop area. The only building remaining is the erection shop from the 1800's which is in reasonably good condition and being used for storage by a private owner (*See photo, front page*). Some of us walked down into the weed- and tree-grown area that used to be the yards and roundhouse. Some vestiges of those can still be seen.

Leaving Weatherly, we took a fairly brief bus ride to Lansford where we had an excellent lunch before touring the museum. The museum has only been open a few years but has amassed quite a collection of coal mining memorabilia. We first examined the entrance of the coal mine closed in the 1972. The mine will be open for tours in the future. There was a crew working with a mine loco and some cars nearby. The museum is housed in the mine wash house which has been renovated and is full of mining artifacts. Some of the things that caught my eye were several approximately 1" scale model breakers built many years ago by miners, miner's clothing and equipment, many mining photos both early and contemporary, a full size "model" of a mule such as were used to haul the coal buggies out of the mines before automation, and much more.

The banquet Saturday night was enjoyable and the food was good. The guest speaker was Lance Metz, noted canal and rail historian who talked about the early canal and coal history of the Lehigh Valley, and showed a newly created video of canal history by men who actually worked on the canals. Unfortunately, several of the men featured have died since the video was made earlier this year. That just goes to show we need to get this kind of oral history from retired railroad workers before they, too, pass away taking with them unique memories of the day to day railroad scene.

The banquet finished up with presentation of the contest awards and presentations by future convention committees of their plans.

# Contest Results

Continued from page 1

## STRUCTURES-ON LINE

- 1st. Richard C. Landt: Freight house
- 2nd. Richard A. Sances: Tunnel portal & lining
- 3rd. Robert D. Hubbard: Rail car ferry

## STRUCTURES-OFF-LINE

- 1st. Richard C. Landt: Overhead crane hoist \*

## TRACTION

- 1st. Fred Miller: T & C Trolley

## DIORAMA

- 1st. Alan Mende: N&W stationmaster's house
- 2nd. Richard A. Sances: Oil wells, Titusville, PA
- 3rd. Eugene Mones: Upside down covered bridge

## MODULE

- 1st. Fred Miller: Upper Gotham, circa 1925
- 2nd. Tom Cancelmo: Yard scene

\* Denotes merit award. All contest models were HO scale.

## FAVORITE TRAIN

- 1st. Alan Mende: CNJ Freight train
- 2nd. Paul Tice: Lehigh Valley Passenger train

## BLUE LANTERN AWARD

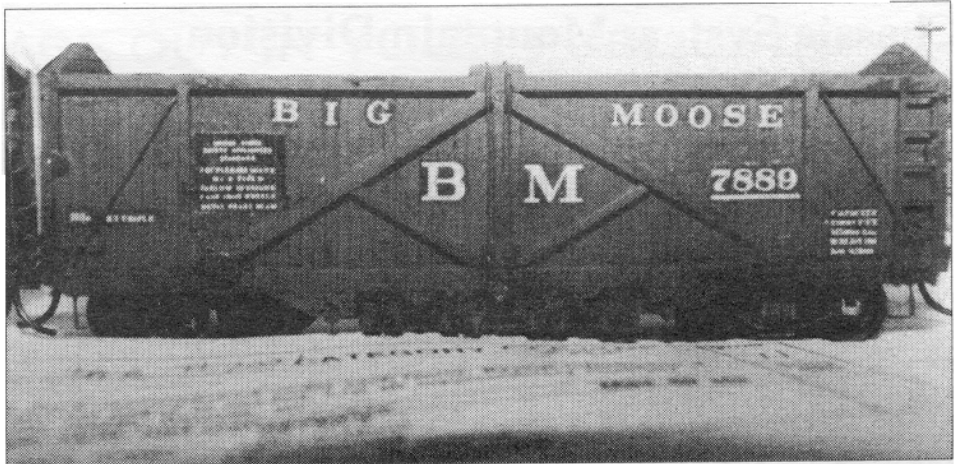
- Eugene Mones: Upside down covered bridge

## PRESIDENT'S AWARD

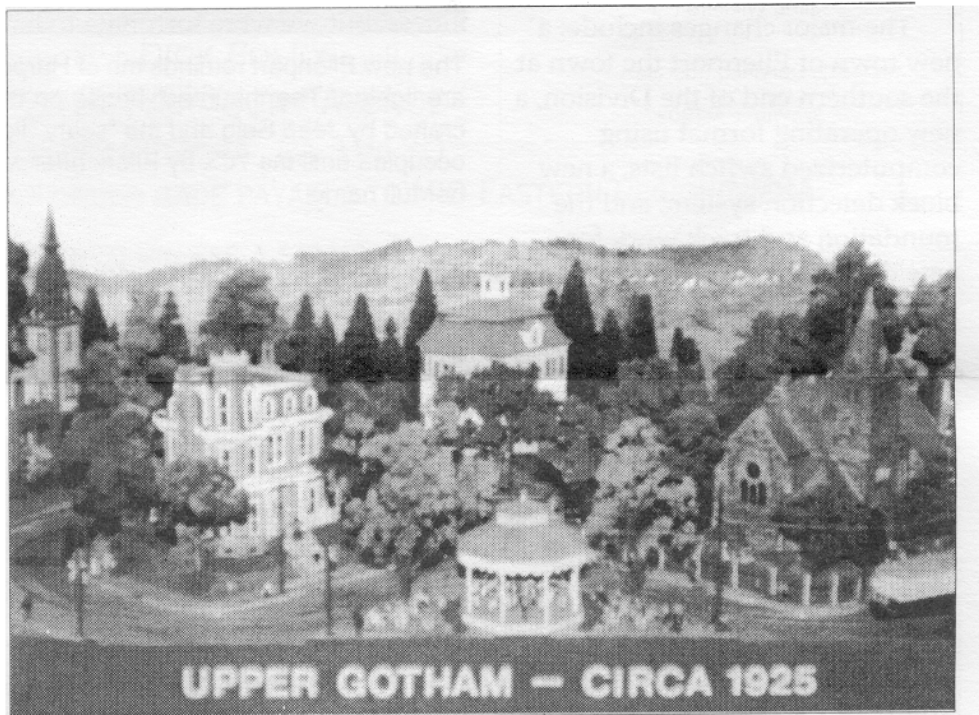
- John M. Johnson: PRR H21a hopper

## BEST-IN-SHOW

- Bob Bird: Big Moose duplex loader



Above: Bob Bird, Big Moose Duplex Loader, Non Revenue 1st Place Winner.  
Below: Fred Miller, UpperGotham, circa 1925, Module 1st Place Winner.



## PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

### PROTOTYPE PHOTO

- 1st. George Kahmer: Idaho troop train (B&W)
- 2nd. Norman Garner: "A Time Forgotten" Spencer, NC (color)
- 3rd. Norman Garner: "A Remembrance" Spencer, NC (color)

### MODEL (COLOR)

- 1st. Norman Garner: "Coming into Long Shot"
- 2nd. Norman Garner: "Busy day at Long Shot"
- 3rd. Norman Garner: "Scene at Long Shot"

## CRAFT CONTEST WINNERS

- 1st. Verna Kay: Handmade quilt "N&W Memories"
- 2nd. Vicki Brandt: RR station scene (made from prints)
- 3rd. Sandy Gruber: Counted cross-stitch, "Night train"



By Ed Martin

## SUMMARY UPDATE

Since many of you were last here to visit, the Chessie System Mountain Division has undergone a considerable number of changes. The RIF RAF crew has also. The crew now consists of myself, Bill Ataris, Paul Chiacchierini, Bruce Strickland, Lindsay Strickland, Ken Berthoud, and Colin Weiner. Bill McMillan moved to Richmond, and Dan Rousseau to Dallas recently.

The major changes include: a new town of Ellenport the town at the southern end of the Division, a new operating format using computerized switch lists, a new block detection system, and the foundation and track work for a new divisional passenger terminal at Maryetta. A trolley will serve the passenger terminal and downtown Maryetta.

## THE NEW ELLENPORT

The picture of the new town says it best. The Ellenport town layout was designed by Dan Rousseau. It reminds me of Harper's Ferry.

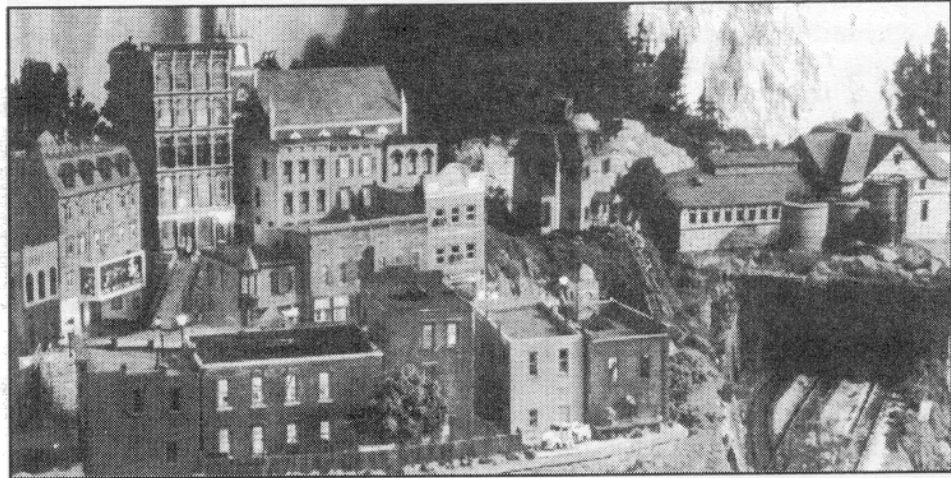
## OPERATION WITH COMPUTERIZED SWITCH LISTS

By Bruce Strickland

When I joined Ed's operating group in early 1993, the group used a variant of the simplified "Card Order" system. This type of freight car forwarding uses a 3"x5" file card for each car on the railroad. First, one prints the car information such as the road name, reporting marks, and road number on the main part of the card. Next, the possible destinations are listed down the side of the card.

When the car is placed on the layout, the card for that car is placed in the file box at the town where the car is spotted. The file box is divided for all the industries located in that town. The local operator or yardmaster where the car is located, chooses the next destination by moving a paper clip on the side of the card to the next destination. When a train is due into the town, the card is pulled and given to the engineer of the train that takes the car.

This system of operation has several drawbacks. The first one is that the car movements are at the whim of whoever selects the destinations. We had instances of towns and industries not being switched for many sessions. Some cars were also not moved at all or were moved much too frequently. The system could also be manipulated to handle less than honest operations. For example, if things got too hectic in a town, the local operator could just reshuffle the destinations and move the car(s)



The new Ellenport reminds me of Harper's Ferry. All the buildings and the streets are lighted. The "haunted" house on the hill with all the kids running away, was crafted by Jean Seig and the "scary" lighting by Phil Seig. The house used to be occupied until the 70's by Ellen, after whom the town was named. No one knows her full name.

out on the train. At times, devious operators would load up various industries or towns with extra movements to nick on another operator.

Although this system has flaws, it worked well for the railroad. After I joined the operating crew, we used this system for over 3 years. About a year ago, we tried a computer generated program called "Ship It."™ At first, there were many reservations about the behavior of the program. It only sent out trains with a small number of cars and did not generate many car movements. This program is like many of the programs on the market today. It is rich in features and means that some time needs to be spent with the documentation. Now that we have a better understanding of how "Ship It"™ works, it creates a far more diversified and realistic operating session.

All the industries ship and receive goods regularly. There is a more natural interaction between

*Continued on next page*

# Chessie System

*Continued from page 4*

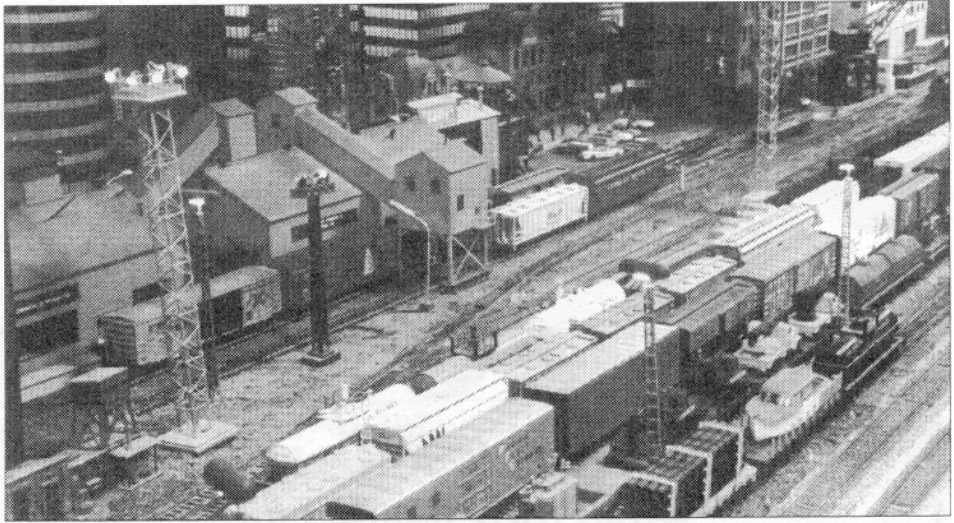
industries on the railroad. The card-order system put a lot of pressure on the yardmasters because they had to make up many trains during a session. The yardmaster can enjoy the operating sessions more now. There is more work for the train crews to do now because the program generates more moves that require planning by the crews. We are still exploring more diversity at our sessions as our knowledge of "Ship It"™ grows.

## OPERATION WITH BLOCK DETECTION

*By Bill Ataris*

The Chessie System is both blessed and cursed by a large amount of hidden track. While this gives us a lot of operational flexibility, using the track was always difficult because of limited visibility. About three years ago, we decided to install an extensive train detection and display system. We now have 78 detected blocks on the layout, using five BD16 "Block Occupancy Detector" boards manufactured by Ataris Engineering.

We built a 10 foot x 8" schematic display of the track plan. Each detected block has a large, bright LED which shows occupancy status. This display is hung from the ceiling so that it's visible from almost anywhere in the layout room. The original layout wiring used two rail switched DC cab control rather than common rail wiring. Since these detector boards require some form of common rail wiring, our first installation step was to convert to common rail wiring. This was both easy and not so easy. Connecting one output of each cab together gave us an "electrical



This is just about the view from the top of the new station building toward downtown Maryetta. A new viaduct with a roadway and a trolley is planned from the station in the direction shown toward the existing downtown parking lot, across the street from the Municipal building.

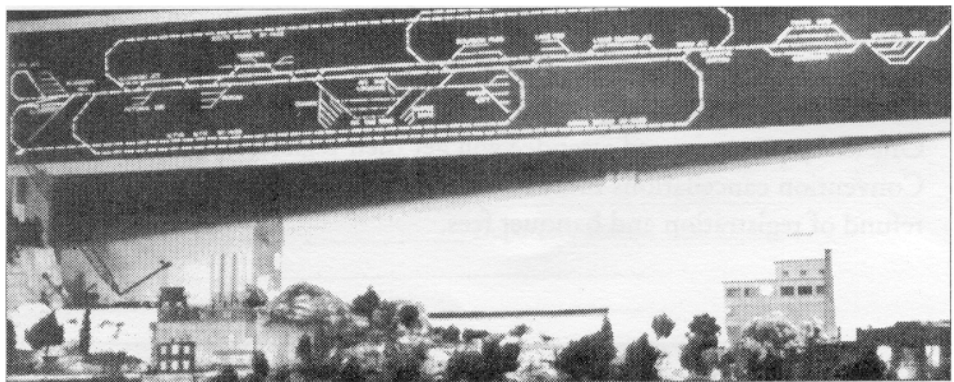
common point," but we still had the original connections to the various blocks. We had to remove all of these common rail connections and route a single connection per block through the BD16™ boards. Block by block, we installed the new common rail feeds while leaving the original wires in place. This kept the layout running while most of the installation was done.

Finally, we began cutting the original feeds to the common rails and switching over to the new connections through the BD16™ boards. Probably the biggest challenge was finding and cutting all of the original wires. The layout was operational the whole

time, but any remaining common rail feed wires would interfere with train detection. Working an average of probably less than 1 night per month, it took over 2 years to find and remove the last of the original common rail feed wires. We could have completed the task in far less time, but we wanted to continue a full operating schedule while the installation was underway.

The only other challenge we had was power routing through the turnouts. In most places, power routing was used to simplify train control. But power routing keeps you from detecting trains on the "off" track. So we

*Continued on page 11*



The layout diagram was built for the detection system. Each block is wired to the board which can be seen from most of the layout room.

# BLUE RIDGE RESCENT 99

*Come join your fellow modelers  
and their families for*

**THREE DAYS OF CLINICS, TOURS,  
CONTESTS, AND MORE**

**in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.**

The Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA Spring 1999 Convention  
will be April 23-25 in LYNCHBURG, VA.

**THE FUN BEGINS FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1999, AT THE HOLIDAY  
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Room rates per night are \$65/single, \$65/double, \$75/triple, or \$85/  
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guaranteed and will only be accepted on a space available basis.  
Cancellations must be 24 hours in advance or you will be charged one  
night's room fee and tax. Hotel phone: (804) 528-2500

Convention registration before February 1, 1999, is just \$30. Registration  
February 1, 1999, and after will be \$35. Registration for your spouse is  
\$10, and bring your kids for just \$5 each (18 and older \$10 each). Non-  
NMRA members will be charged an additional \$16 non-member fee.  
One lucky pre-registered attendee will get their registration returned.  
Convention cancellations must be received by April 9, 1999, for a full  
refund of registration and banquet fees.

**For information, contact Linda Sanders (804) 993-9210.**

**ATTEND CLINICS** FROM  
"BRIDGES AND VIADUCTS" TO  
"BACK DROPS" TO  
"ADVANCED DCC."

**VISIT HOME LAYOUTS** IN  
HO, O, AND N SCALES.

**GO ON A TOUR** OF BUNCHER  
RAILCAR. VISIT LYNCHBURG'S  
LOWER BASIN ON THE JAMES  
RIVER AND WATCH CSX  
SWITCHING IN ACTION.

**NEED A BREAK  
FROM RAILFANNING?**

VISIT NEARBY WALTON'S  
MOUNTAIN MUSEUM AND SEE  
WHY THE TELEVISION  
PROGRAM WAS SO SUCCESSFUL.  
VISIT POINT OF HONOR,  
GEORGE CABELL'S FEDERAL  
STYLE MANSION ON THE JAMES  
RIVER.

**OR, WATCH  
ARCHAEOLOGISTS**

UNCOVER THE PAST AT  
THOMAS JEFFERSON'S POPLAR  
FOREST. IF YOU'RE IN AN  
ADVENTUROUS MOOD, TAKE  
THE RIDE OVER THE  
MOUNTAINS TO NATURAL  
BRIDGE WHERE YOU'LL FIND  
ONE OF THE SEVEN NATURAL  
WONDERS OF THE WORLD  
ALONG WITH CAVERNS AND A  
WAX MUSEUM.

# Blue Ridge Crescent 99 Registration Form — April 23, 1999

(PRINT NAMES EXACTLY AS YOU WISH THEM ON YOUR NAMETAGS.)

Primary Registrant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

NMRA#: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Registrant (\$30 pre - Feb.1, 1999, \$35.00 after January 31, 1999) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse ..... \$10.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Children (under 18) ..... # \_\_\_\_\_ X \$ 5.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Children (18 and over) ..... # \_\_\_\_\_ X \$10.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Non-NMRA Fee (In addition to Primary Registrant Fee) ..... \$16.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Banquet — April 24, 1999

Meal #1: Roast Strip Sirloin of Beef with Madeira Sauce

Meal #2: Chicken Cordon Bleu (Breast of Chicken stuffed with Ham & Swiss cheese)

Both Meals also include:

Fresh Fruit Cup

Brandied Carrots

Assorted Bread and Rolls

Tossed Garden Salad

Home Baked Apple Pie

Coffee or Tea

Number of meal #1's ordered \_\_\_\_\_ X \$25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of meal #2's ordered \_\_\_\_\_ X \$25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Enclosed (Registration and Meals) ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Convention cancellations must be received by 4/9/99 for a full refund of registration/banquet fees.

*Mail the top portion of this form with check payable to Blue Ridge Crescent 99 to:*

Linda D. Sanders, NMRA-MER, P. O. Box 11313, Lynchburg, VA 24506-1313

**CUT HERE**

## Hotel Registration Form — Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association

Send this portion of form to:

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Phone (804) 528-2500 or Fax (804) 528-0062

### Special Group Rates:

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\$75.00 triple occupancy

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10% state and local tax not included.

### Standard Accommodations — Circle One:

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King Bed

or

Two Double Beds

Two Double Beds

Two Double Beds

**Please Note: If sharing rooms, only one (1) reservation form is required.**

Reservation Name:

(First) \_\_\_\_\_ (Last) \_\_\_\_\_

Sharing with (First) \_\_\_\_\_ (Last) \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of persons to occupy room \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: Day ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Guarantee: I have enclosed a check in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Special requests: (i.e., smoking, non-smoking) \_\_\_\_\_



# Annual Report on the Divisions

By J. Johnson

The **New Jersey Division** has been very busy this past year. Five meets were held from September through June, each featuring clinics and layout tours. In March, the division held its 30th anniversary banquet with about 150 people attending. Three first-time board members were elected in May and a new superintendent took over in June. The division's Web page on the Internet has provided information on the division, as well as helping to sign up new members. All financial obligations were met and the division is in good shape for the coming year.

The **Potomac Division** had a busy year, having a swap meet at NOVA in Annandale, Virginia. The home layout tours remain the division's most publicized and attended events, with meets at the homes of Evert Beekman, Matt Chibbaro, Jim Hellwege, Peter Jobusch, Pete Matthews, Jim Stapleton and Rick Wright. The division continues to excel in signing up new NMRA and MER members.

The **Philadelphia Division** had another successful year. Last November they hosted the MER fall convention — "Brandywine Junction '97," a very successful convention. Meets were held in Newtown Square and Sharon Hill. In September they held a joint meet with the New Jersey Division at the Black River & Western RR in Ringoes, NJ. The division sponsored the train show and sale at the MER Allentown fall convention, the "Lehigh Valley Limited." Many members also served on the convention staff. The division is also active in

signing up new NMRA and MER members.

The **Tidewater Division** continues to keep busy. In January the division had its annual business meeting and auction. They also had modules set up at the January Greenberg Show at the Virginia Beach Pavilion. In March, the modules were set up at the Chesapeake Public Library. During the summer, the 'N' module group set up at the newly refurbished Childrens Museum in Portsmouth. The museum is the recipient of the largest private collection of model trains and old toys in Virginia, a bequest from the late Junie Lancaster. In September the division held its annual train show at the Virginia beach Pavilion.

The **James River Division** usually meets three times per year. Meets were held in Farmville, Charlottesville and Richmond. The model contests continue to be popular and the meets also have an area for models that attendees can display and discuss in a show-and-tell format. Many division members are working on next year's MER spring convention that will be held in Lynchburg, Virginia on April 22-25, 1999.

The **Mount Clare Division** is in search of a new superintendent and has not had any meets this past year.

The **South Mountain Division** continues to hold meetings at members' homes from September through May. Slide shows and talks on the NMRA Achievement program have been presented at various meets. Many division members are working on next year's MER fall convention in Hagerstown, Maryland.

The **Susquehanna Division** has had a busy year. Last November the division had their HO

module set up at the Zembo Temple in Harrisburg. The meet in February was held at the South Penn Model Railroad Club in Lancaster, where a clinic on building benchwork was presented. In May, the meet was again at the Club in Lancaster, and a clinic on track laying was presented. The meet in August was at Williams Grove park, where a PRR steam engine was fired up.

The **Carolina Southern Division** is doing well. Last November a Division member had a model railroad display set up at the campus of the Rowen-Cabarrus Community College. In April the division hosted the MER convention "Carolina Junction 98." In June, as part of Rail Days at Spencer Shops, the division presented clinics at the Salisbury depot. In August the division's 2nd anniversary meet was held at the home of Jack Parker. After a short general membership meeting, three clinics were presented and everyone enjoyed a Bar-B-Q meal.

The **Carolina Piedmont Division** is one year old and doing well. The division had their module set up at the Neuse River Valley train show last November. NMRA literature was distributed and items sold to raise funds. The members were busy constructing a new yard and other new modules. The modular layout now measures 17' x 86' when set up. The division hosts a monthly meeting at the Apex Chamber of Commerce located in the restored depot in downtown Apex, North Carolina. Each meeting consists of a short business session, modeling contest, refreshments and a program that includes a variety of hobby related topics.

John M. Johnson  
Vice President, MER-NMRA

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**MER DEVELOPMENT FUND**

If you have been a member of the Mid Eastern Region for a while, you have had a chance to benefit from the technical information and good fellowship available by participating in Regional activities. If you would like to support the work of the MER you may do so by contributing to our Development Fund which is used to fund special projects for direct benefits to our members.

The Mid Eastern Region-NMRA is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization which is recognized by the IRS to receive donations for which a deduction can be made on your income tax. Your contribution can be monetary or a material gift which we could use in our operations or convert to cash. For example, if you have model railroad equipment that you are not using, contribute it to our next Regional auction and help the MER.

All you need to do is send a check made out to Mid Eastern Region-NMRA Inc. and addressed to Treasurer, MER-NMRA, Inc., 7110 Riverdale Road, Lanham, MD 20706-1130. I will provide you with an acknowledgement letter which you can attach to your tax return. If you have a gift in mind please write or call me so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

—Ron Schmidt, MER Treasurer, 301-577-7899

<p>The Mid-Eastern Region Inc., NMRA                  Business Manager                  13212 Bellevue Street                  Silver Spring MD 20904-1703</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>NMRA # _____ Expire Date _____</p> <p>MER # _____ Expire Date _____</p> <p>Scale _____ Birth date _____ Tel # _____</p> <p>Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION</p> <p><b>Remittance Enclosed for:</b></p> <p><b>National Dues:</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> New    <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal _____ \$ _____</p> <p>    <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year: \$32.00    <input type="checkbox"/> 2 years: \$64.00</p> <p>    Life membership cost is based on your age.                  Send your Birth Date to the NMRA for a quotation.</p> <p><b>Region Dues:</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> New    <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal _____ \$ _____</p> <p>    <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year: \$8.00    <input type="checkbox"/> 2 years: \$16.00</p> <p>    Life membership cost is based on your age.                  Send your Birth Date to the MER for a quotation.</p> <p>    Lapel Pin/Tie Tack @ \$6 each _____ \$ _____</p> <p>    Region Cloth Patch @ \$3 each _____ \$ _____</p> <p>    Donation _____ \$ _____</p> <p><b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b> _____ \$ _____</p>
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COMPILED BY ROGER L. CASON

## INTERNATIONAL HOBBY CORPORATION (IHC)

Bernard (Bernie) Paul, IHC's principal owner, is cheerful, engaging, positive, and optimistic—ie, characterized by love of life. A visitor to Bernie's book-lined office at IHC is greeted with gentle and good-humored zaps, zings, and one-liners ("Our neighborhood here isn't the best. But, no one has been shot this week. But, then, it's only Monday.")

A life-long resident of the Philadelphia area, he started in the hobby business in 1932 (yes. . . . you read it right. . . . 1932). As a teenager about to enter high school, he was an enthusiastic builder of model airplanes. By working odd jobs in connection with his parents' candy store, he scraped together enough money to buy balsa wood for his own use in wholesale quantities. Model-building friends starting "borrowing" wood from him. After a year with lots of borrowing and very few returns, he starting selling the wood. This quickly turned into a small wholesale business selling balsa wood, tissue paper, rubber, etc. Sales calls and deliveries to his customers (small hobby shops) were made by bicycle.

After high school graduation, to test the market, he applied for a job with Megow (a manufacturer of model airplane, boat and railroad kits). On the application form, under salary requested, he said "\$4 per week." "Too much," they said, turning down his application. So much for working for someone else!

By the late 1930's, his bicycle-operated wholesale business had grown into a full-size hobby shop in the Olney section of Philadelphia, plus a growing wholesale business supplying other local hobby shops. His wholesale product line grew to include airplane kits and some model trains (the first was from A.C. Gilbert). He became a national distributor for manufacturers, starting with Cleveland (an airplane kit manufacturer), and

*A feature profiling model railroad manufacturers located in the Mid-Eastern Region. To be included in a future issue, contact:*

Roger L. Cason  
1125 Grinnell Road  
Wilmington, DE 19803  
(302) 478-2550

he started to advertise in national magazines. By the early 1940's, space needs for the hobby shop and the wholesale business (known as B. Paul Model Distributors) had grown to 30,000 square feet. Particularly during World War II, model airplanes were big sellers.

Meanwhile, he started carrying more and more model railroad merchandise. Mantua was added in 1942, followed by Varney, Penn Line, and many others. By 1945, he was probably the largest U.S. wholesaler in the hobby business. Associated wholesale operations were opened in Buffalo, Hartford, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Chicago. The product line included a full line of model airplanes, trains, vehicles, and boats.

A curious thing happened in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Industry "experts" pronounced the model train business to be dead. Stated causes were scale autos, slot cars, crafts, you name it. A number of well-known companies, such as Varney and Penn Line, went out of business. Going against the conventional wisdom of the moment, B. Paul Model Distributors bought up residual stocks of many such manufacturers, and financially did very well in the process. In retrospect, it appears that no one told the customers that model railroading was dead, and they just kept up their steady and growing volume of purchases.

Bernie's trip around the world in 1958 put him in contact with model manufacturers in Europe and Asia. This, in turn, led directly to the formation of AHM as an outlet for foreign-made American prototype models. By the late 1970's, the combination of B. Paul Model Wholesalers and AHM occupied 1,000,000 square feet of space, employed 50 salesmen, and serviced over 20,000 retail outlets (hobby shops, chain stores, etc.). In 1979, Bernie sold both businesses.

So, what to do now? In 1981, he began to gradually get back into the wholesale hobby business, starting in one bedroom of his house. This business quickly became today's IHC (International Hobby

Corporation). IHC now occupies a 80,000 square foot turn-of-the-century industrial building at 413 East Allegheny Avenue in Philadelphia (brick wall, wooden floors and beams). Interestingly, Bernie bought it from the same person he sold it to twenty-five years earlier. Bernie describes IHC as an "imfacturer." IHC does its own product development and designs, and contracts out the manufacture to firms in ten different countries all over the world. Shipment from overseas is typically in large containers. There are about 25 employees at the Allegheny Avenue location, plus sales representatives all over the country. IHC-label model railroad items are 90+% of IHC's business. The product line includes about 60 structures, and a wide variety of locomotives and rolling stock.

IHC is now one of the model railroad industry's largest advertisers, with a monthly budget exceeding \$15,000. IHC recently acquired the entire product line formerly marketed by Tyco. New product development is a continuous process at IHC, with product quality being the first requirement. Ideas for new products typically begin with customer surveys or informal conversations with customers. Impending new products include additions to the passenger car line, plus a line of good-looking HO-scale vehicles that will retail for about \$3 each. Increasing emphasis is being put on IHC's Magic Mate coupler which will mate with a hook/horn coupler or a Kaydee-type coupler.

In many cases, new products that are successful in HO are then brought out in other scales. Bernie observes that the model railroad business in growing in all scales, with great growth in N, HO, and G. He is also quick to observe something that is frequently overlooked—namely, that model railroading is largely an ADULT hobby. Without stopping programs aimed at young people, more effort needs to be spent on attracting adults to the hobby (I'll drink to that! I got started again when retirement was on the horizon - Roger.) IHC exhibits at the annual NMRA train show, some regional NMRA shows, and a large number of hobby industry trade shows. Most IHC sales are through dealers, but you can order direct or get product literature by calling 1-800-875-1600. People with a complicated product question are urged to write rather than call. IHC's mailing address is 413 East Allegheny Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19134. The E-mail address is rons99@ally.ios.com. IHC prides itself on answering all correspondence promptly.



# CALLBOARD

## Coming Events

Notices must be typed and have complete addresses. Use the style shown below and be brief as possible. Be sure to include a contact telephone number. Send items for CALLBOARD to Stan Knotts, 19808 Falling Spring Court, Laytonsville, MD 20882-1226. E-Mail to Srknotts@erols.com

**Delmarva Model Railroad Club  
Fourteenth Annual Holiday  
Open House, December 5-6,  
January 9-10, and January 16-17.**  
11:00 am to 5:00 pm Saturdays  
and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm Sundays.  
No admission charge. The club is  
located at 103 E. State Street,  
Camelot Hall, second floor, in  
Delmar Delaware (right on the  
Maryland-Delaware border). This  
is one of the largest permanent  
model railroad displays on the  
Delmarva peninsula with over  
5000 square feet of operating  
model railroads in N, HO, O  
(scale), O (hi-rail), and Standard  
**Gauges. Information call: Bill  
Shehan (410) 742-9325 or Ken  
Kidd (302) 875-7043.**

**Northern Virginia Model Rail-  
roaders, Inc. Open House, No-  
vember 14, December 12**  
Washington & Old Dominion  
Railroad station, 231 Dominion  
Road (at Ayr Hill Road), Vienna,  
VA 22180. 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm  
each day. Information call (703)  
938-5157 or **HYPERLINK "http://  
www.geocities.com/Heartland/  
Plains/6120"**  
www.geocities.com/Heartland/  
Plains/6120

**Northern Burlington Model  
Railroad Club Open House,  
November 21-22**  
Bordentown, NJ, 28 Van Drive, .  
Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm,  
Sunday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.  
Information: Bob Lieberman,  
(609) 298-7337 or John Adams  
(215) 757-1937.

# Chessie System

Continued from page 5

had to rewire some turnouts. Where the routed rail happened to be the common rail, we had to add a relay to switch the power rail instead. This leaves the common rail connected through the detector so that trains can be detected even while the block is power routed off. We also had to wire all of the power rails to a 12VAC transformer through a 4.7 K ohm resistor. When all cabs are connected, a very low AC current may be detected while a train or cars with detectable wheel sets, are present in the block.

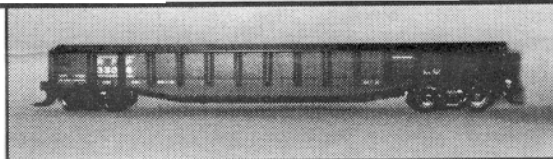
After all this, was it worth it? You bet. We can now run meets and passes, or spot trains, on hidden track just as smoothly as if all the track was visible. And we don't have to remember where

trains are parked. Just look up at the display, and you can see the layout status at a glance. This is a real benefit to our operating sessions.

## MARYETTA DIVISIONAL PASSENGER TERMINAL

By Ed Martin

The location for the new station is shown in the picture on page 5. The building is made from kitbashing two of the Riggs Bank kits by Dan Rousseau. Unfortunately it was not available for this picture taking session. The new much larger station will serve as a Division terminus for off-division trains as well as Division trains in the new operating scheme. We are thinking about conversion to DCC on the insistence of the group. What will it cost to put receivers in 50 locomotives? Until next time. . . .



## MER RF&P MILL GON ORDER FORM

GON	QUANTITY	MEMBER PRICE *	NON-MEMBER PRICE	TOTAL
#3306	_____	\$8.95	\$9.95	\$_____
#3310	_____	\$8.95	\$9.95	\$_____
			TOTAL	\$_____

MARYLAND RESIDENTS ADD 5% SALES TAX

SHIPPING: \_\_\_\_\_ CARS @ \$2.50 PER CAR

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$\_\_\_\_\_

\* MY MER # IS \_\_\_\_\_

### SHIP TO:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MID EASTERN REGION.

MAIL TO:

THE MID-EASTERN REGION INC.  
Business Manager  
13212 Bellevue Street  
Silver Spring, MD 20904-1703