



Volume 55

January — February 2000

Number 1



Three Judges Judging and Two Members Voting.
Left to right at table: Allen Phillips, (Unidentified),
Richard Higgins, Alan Frame, Bill Nesbit.

Photo by John Teichmoeller

MER LOCAL

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Stan Knotts, Editor
19808 Falling Spring Court
Laytonsville, MD 20882-1226

C. William Gruber, President
79 Quaker Road
Mickleton, NJ 08056-1306

Norman Garner, Vice President
3408 Wilshire Rd.
Portsmouth, VA 23703

Eric Dervinis, Secretary
632 Bob White Road
Wayne, PA 19087

Ron Schmidt, Treasurer
7110 Riverdale Road
Lanham, MD 20706-1130

Contributing Editors

Roger L. Cason
1125 Grinnell Road
Wilmington, DE 19803-5125
(302) 478-2550

John Teichmoeller
12107 Mt. Albert Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Ron Baile
24 Hampton Road
Westmont, NJ 08108-2202
(609) 858-6644

LOCAL Advertising Manager

Dick Foley
2021 Wallace Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130-3221
(215) 232-4926

LOCAL Publisher

Clint Hyde, 703-803-3068
(chyde@bbn.com)

The MER LOCAL welcomes articles, photographs and model railroad related material as contributions to members' mutual enjoyment of the hobby. Materials should have a wide appeal. Editors will exercise all due care of submissions, but contributors should not send originals without having back-up copies of both articles and photographs. Editors, by definition, reserve the right—and have the responsibility—to make corrections, deletions and changes to accommodate space.

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Nelson D. Garber, Business Manager
Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
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NVNTRAK AT THE HUB CITY LIMITED

By David Freshwater,
NVNTRAK Board of Directors

For the Hub City Limited Convention, Northern Virginia NTRAK saw an opportunity to set up our modular layout and display operations that we don't get to display at other venues. While we have tried dispatching before, our public shows always emphasize running trains on multiple tracked modules. Since attendance at the MER convention would be mostly other model railroaders, our layout emphasized the oNeNTRAK variant of NTRAK. We were able to conduct several operating sessions using dispatchers and car card waybills. After the inevitable last minute adjustments to accommodate unforeseen events (including one module loading accident), we had a 20 x 65-foot layout operating under DIGITRAX DCC radio control on Friday morning.

After an enjoyable Friday running trains and talking to other convention attendees about modules, scenery techniques, DCC, and N Scale trains in general, we set up the first operating session on Friday evening. We recruited several train engineers from those attending the convention and soon had at least two locals and a through train running on the railroad. The dispatcher was placed in a location where he could not see the layout, forcing reliance on radio communications to avoid cornfield meets.

MER Upcoming Conventions

Portsmouth, VA
April 27-30, 2000
Altoona, PA Tri-Regional
Oct. 5-8, 2000
Chadds Ford, PA
Sprint 2001
Lancaster, PA
Oct. 5-7, 2001

Our club uses Motorola and Cobra family band radios for communications and control of operations. Soon, the radio waves were crackling with discussions of track warrants, the rulebook, and what exactly was allowable work under union contracts. Everyone had a great time - so much so that we hurried back from a railfan excursion on Saturday to get in another operations session before we needed to take down the layout and make way for the Awards Ceremony and panel discussion in the ballroom Saturday night.

The NVNTRAK members who attended the convention came away enthusiastic about the experience. Our thanks go to the convention organizers and MER staff who invited us and we look forward to the opportunity to do it again in the future. One great thing about modular railroading, and especially NTRAK, is the railroad can be completely changed for the next set-up, so the operating challenges we present to the crews will be all new!

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Marv Kershner Last Run

Well known Hagerstown, Maryland, modeler and long time South Mountain Division (SMD) member, Marv Kershner, passed away unexpectedly in his sleep on Wednesday, November 17, just three days following the conclusion of the Hub City Limited MER convention. He was 59 years old at the time of his death. Marv was a charter member of the South Mountain Division and was well known for his great layout tour maps and his general creativity. He developed the theme, and designed the logo, for both the 1994 "FunVention 94" and the 1999 "Hub City Limited" conventions. He was an active member of the SMD and over the years served as Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, and as a member of the board of directors. He was a key member of the convention committees for all three of the MER conventions that have been sponsored by the SMD. Marv was a project engineer at the Mack Truck plant in Hagerstown and over the years recruited numerous members for the SMD from Mack. As a result, it is almost an unwritten rule in the SMD that you must have a Mack truck on your layout. Marv was a good friend and a great asset to the SMD. He will be greatly missed by all.

Robert Johnson

Editor's Column

The Hagerstown "Hub City" convention was a good one. It had good clinics, good layouts, good displays and the opportunity to talk with old friends and meet new ones. One of the more interesting displays was the trolley layout with the mysterious car barn. When the trolley approached the car barn it would stop, wait until the doors opened automatically, then enter the car barn and the doors closed behind it. After a mysterious whirring and grinding noise, the doors opened and the trolley emerged going in the opposite direction. This might not seem such a big deal unless you saw it. The barn was too small for a turntable and the trolley entered at one side—not in the middle. What was inside was a Pliny Holt special electro-mechanical contraption. The rails inside the barn are on a two piece platform, the rear piece



twice as long as the front. The trolley would go all the way to the rear and stop wholly on the longer section. The smaller front section then folded up out of the way and the rear section swiveled around using a cam until it was in place at the door with the front of the trolley facing the doors. Thus when the door opened and the trolley came out it seemed it had accomplished the impossible. As the trolley departed, the doors closed and the mechanism automatically reset for the next show. There were some good layouts on tour and one that was receiving rave reviews was that of new MER member Bob Hazard. His layout depicts West Virginia in the steam era and features dramatic and well done mountain scenery. Perhaps we can persuade Bob to do an article for *The Local* in the near future.

I was saddened to hear of Marv Kershner's passing so soon after the convention which he contributed so much towards its success.

Stan Knotts

Publisher's note: If you're preparing a logo like "Rails Meet Sails" or an ad, please make it into an EPS drawing with text outlines before you send it to me (ask for help if you aren't sure what this is). This means I don't have to scan a picture, which results in much more readable printing and better looking pictures—clint

SATTLER'S
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continued from page 1

es, and many of us are, this would have been highly useful information.

There were some nice models in this contest demonstrating creativity and craftsmanship. I heartily encourage the entrants to write an article describing their project for ***The Local, The Bulletin***, or one of the commercial magazines. The models in this contest were as good as any I read about in my monthly pile of enthusiast magazines.

While there was some nice scratch building in evidence, there were also quite a few well-detailed and finished commercial kits in this contest. So if you are proud of a kit you have assembled and painted, don't be reluctant to enter it. This contest drew 33 models, submitted by 12 modelers. The field was somewhat more than the 26 at the Charlotte; one I wrote up. All models were HO scale except where noted.

Steam:

1st: Ned Carey, HO WM 2-8-0 No. 750. Beautifully finished and weathered, but I saw no paperwork. I assume this was a brass engine, but since I don't know brass WM steam, I couldn't tell what, besides the finish, was done to it.

2nd: Stanley Dworak, HO 2-truck shay No. CV3. This appeared to be a PFM Class B shay, but again I saw no papers. The effect of grease in the crankshaft area was very convincing.

3rd: Ned Carey offered another HO WM 2-8-0, No. 763. No papers but my eyes suggested that it was a detailed



and repainted and weathered Bachmann 2-8-0.

Diesel:

1st: Bruce Barrett's HO UP SD40-2 No. 3593, "Desert Storm" made no secret of its inspiration as it was accompanied by an issue of the June 1991 Bulletin featuring this loco on the cover. There must have been papers describing what Bruce did but I couldn't find them. Perhaps they were tucked inside the magazine.

2nd Paul Backenstose, PRR BP-20 A&B units ("Passenger Sharks") No. 5775-5772. Paul started with Alco Models brass units and completely rebuilt them including new frames. Nicely documented but, Paul, I couldn't find what paint you used. The Pennsy modeler needs to know! **3rd Bruce Barrett offered a PRR Lima center cab transfer diesel No. 8952.** This appeared to be a kitbash (no papers.) Now that Bruce has gone to this trouble, I see that Railworks is planning on doing this in brass. Thanks, Bruce.

CNJ Alco RS3 No. 1549, also entered by Bruce. Clean model in a dark greenish color.

Passenger Cars:

1st and only entry in this category was the Strasburg Railroad's "Hello Dolly" car by Bob Bird. This was an extensively kitbashed or scratchbuilt car backed up with photographs and an explanation of how Bob got the dimensions. The more you looked at this one, the more you saw. I was par-



ticularly impressed by the faithful execution of the unusual roof ventilators. The car was loaded with passengers, and there was even a wedding ceremony in progress on the rear platform.

Freight Cars:

This category kept me busy taking notes.

1st: Minneapolis & St. Louis flat No. 23745 with an Illinois Central side-door caboose No. 9213 on board by Robert Malberti. The flat looked like a Life-Like car with nicely weathered wooden deck, and the caboose appeared to be one of those laser kits (another member confirmed that it was because he said he had one of the same car.). It was bereft of paint and to me the scenario was that it had apparently been in somebody's back yard for years and was on its way to a museum for restoration.

2nd: B&O Wagontop boxcar, No. 175829, by Leonard Beck. Leonard added detail to this Sunshine Models

kit (reviewed in the January, 2000 Railroad Model Craftsman) including scale size cut bars, and enhanced brake rigging including shoes on the trucks.

3rd: Western Maryland Hopper 12234, class H9 by Ned Carey. Ned mounted this car on a ihandle-standi made from brass angles so the judges could examine it from all angles without breaking anything. The paperwork accompanying this and companion "fishbelly" hopper by Ned, No. 10548, was formidable.

He started with the Stewart car which he notes has 28 pieces. He ended up counting 110 pieces when he was finished. He did all the usual hopper upgrading (wire grabs, cut lever, sill steps, slope sheet braces and scratch built the ladders) plus some more than you wouldn't even notice unless you compared the models to prototype photos. Ned scored enough points to win a merit award for this model, and I sure hope he tries for some author points and writes up this project for The Blue Mountain Express to share his extensive research with us. In the meantime, I did pick up a factoid: he says the unmodified Stewart car is closest to the WM's H-12 class. Nice job, Ned. Evenston & Johnson RR WWI emergency wooden hopper No. 8899 by Robert Bird. This is the Ambroid kit of N&W World War I Emergency class HS that does an excellent job of replicating the actual construction of the prototype. Most of us probably have one of these, assembled or otherwise as the kit was "before its time". Robert's paperwork explained the strange coloration: one side and end of the car is painted black, while the complementary ones are painted red to give variety to the appearance of trains on his layout.

The following well-done kits were all entered by Ned Carey with well-done paperwork:

Santa Fe reefer, SFRD 33151. Ned tells us that not all Intermountain kits are accurate, but he did his research with the help of the Internet freight car group and built this one very well with nice, gentle weathering, befitting the SFRD fleet.

AT&SF No. 10287, 50' double door auto car. When I viewed this one from a distance and before I read the paperwork, I assumed it was just an upgraded Proto-2000 car. But Ned notes it is a 1947 metal kit (Varney?), which has been upgraded with lots of details to replicate class Fe24.

Impressive.

PMcK&Y 40 USRA single sheathed boxcar No. 83412. Ned told us this was a Tichy kit rebuilt with lots of details like grabs, etc.

Pacific Fruit Express R-40-2 wood reefer, No. 20071. Another Tichy kit with compete brake rigging and light weathering.

B&O 40' wood boxcar, M15, No. 175829, Westerfield kit with complete brake rigging. I thought Westerfield provided for this, but Ned extended the detail to the trucks.

Caboose:

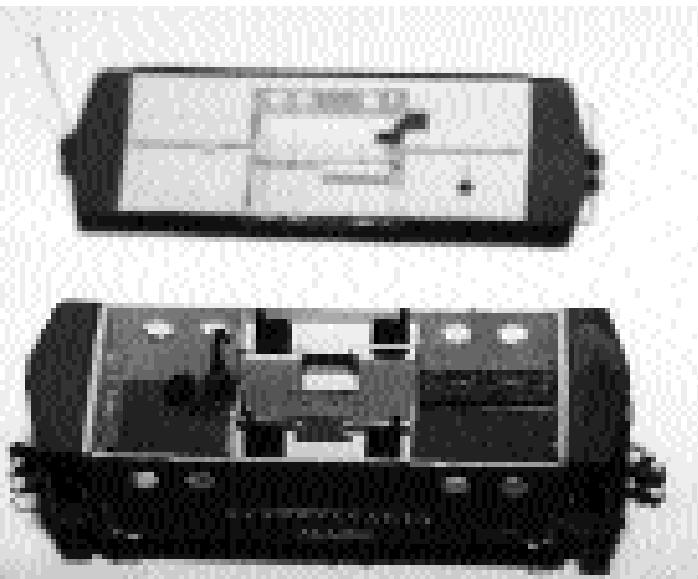
Two PRR cabin cars were entered, and it was interesting to see the different approaches taken.

1st was Leonard Beck's N5c No. 477362. This was a Quality Craft kit with complete interior details and the roof removed to show all this. These

car 491063 and unnumbered coal/water tender by Robert Malberti was accompanied by a nice set of papers that showed the crane was another Tichy product, the boom car a Red Caboose flat and the tender from the Bachmann Spectrum line. Robert included the Morning Sun PRR Color Guide books on the table next to the model to help resolve questions about fidelity.

3rd: PRR boom car No. X-3. by Bruce Barrett. No papers but apparently another Tichy model with removable roof and detail inside. PRR F30a flat 474124 with H22 coke car in lightly weathered but mechanically almost pristine condition

blocked on board with its archbar trucks inside, all by Robert Malberti. I saw no papers on this one, but here's another scenario from my imagination: someone found this H22 in pretty good shape in some backwoods and it has also, as with Robert's caboose, been rescued for museum preservation. Hope it makes out better



kits give me the willies just to look at them in the box, and I know what Leonard was up against.

2nd was an N5b, No. 477665 by Bud Kaiser using the Bowser styrene kit. Bud followed the detailing approach for this car offered by Ed Martin in Mainline Modeler.

Non-Revenue

1st: Southern steam crane D-12 and boom car by Alan Bibb. Lots of Tichy kits in this contest. Alan portrayed the crane with a respectable coat of grime. I was curious as to whether the Southern would have let their crane look like this, but there were no photos to satisfy my curiosity. This model also copped the "Chairman's Award".
2nd: PRR steam crane 495776, boom

than the poor H21g Gallitzin ice-breaker that finally went to Strasburg. PRR FM flat No. 491354 by Robert Maliberti.

Beautiful job, wooden deck, fine details, but no papers and I don't know my model freight cars well enough to recognize what kit this is. PRR H21a 70-ton hopper No. 495906 in the gray PRR MW paint with the "old style" doors by Robert Maliberti. This was a recognizable Westerfield kit.

Structures-On Line:

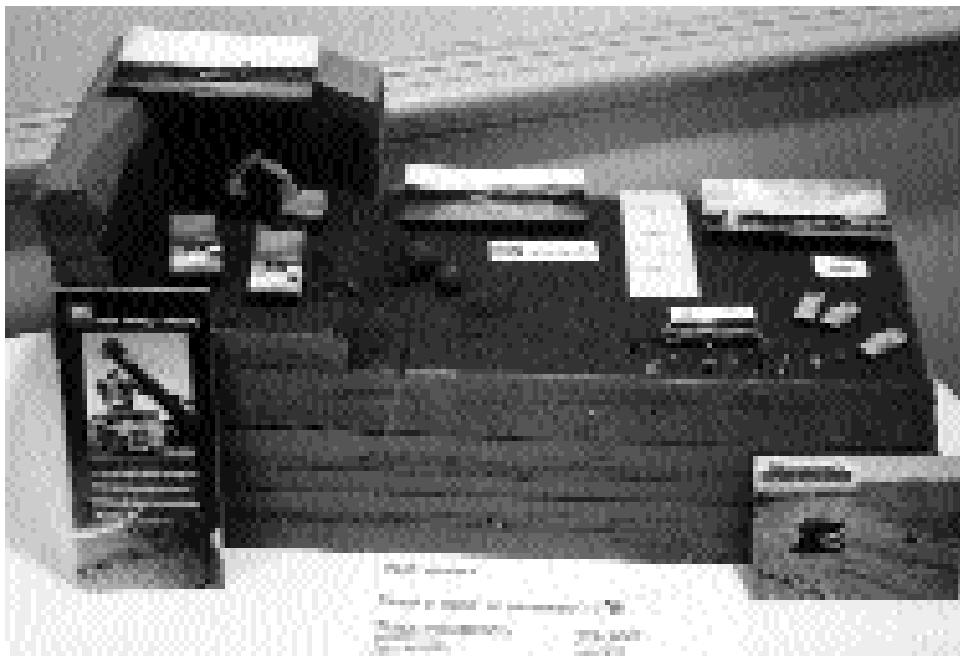
1st Acme Paint Co., wooden, wedge shaped building by Dale Latham. Heavily weathered with burned spot on the side. Nice roof detail. This model had to be appreciated from several levels. This was a model where

paperwork showed up after I made my notes, but my notes clearly show that the level of detail was reasonable and well executed. Dale demonstrates a good sense of humor by executing a model of a paint company that needed a good coat of paint. And I didn't notice this but someone told me the back side of the building was not finished. Efficient modeling!

2nd: Ramsey Station by Bruce Barrett. This was a wooden, board and batten siding station with complete interior detail a brand new wooden shake roof and a wooden platform with passengers. No papers visible, but the contest results identified it and I do seem to recall this in a painting that was reproduced years ago in RMC.

Structures-Off Line:

1st and the only entry here was an N scale waterline model of a 550' long Croatia Line container ship by Lawrence Hayes. Skip provided a broadside photo of the prototype that allowed you to verify that he did, in fact, build this to full scale size. All you had to do was count the 40' containers on the deck. Marine modeling has traditionally required some selective compression, but if you model in N scale you can avoid that.



Convention where we got lost looking for what turned out to be a pipe mill in Struthers, Ohio, driving aimlessly around streets of Youngstown being led by a well-known personality in our organization who shall remain nameless. Afterwards I made "I survived it" badges for some of my friends who were on that tour.) Well, Kevin, all I can say is join the Society for Industrial Archeology and come with me at our Annual Conference in Duluth

be proud to have any of these on the tracks of my layout. Here are what my notes said:

1st: Western Maryland passenger train by Paul Backenstose, RS3 No.110 pulling Baggage/RPO No. 182 and coaches 833 and 835. The coaches appeared to be Bachmann products with nice roof and interior detail.
2nd: Reading GP35s No. 3632 and 3645 pulling a lightly weathered 12-car freight, modeler unknown.

3rd: PRSL wreck train with Baldwin RS something Nos. 6000 and 6015 pulling 10 cars including a crane and road caboose, modeler unknown.

"Maine Central Plow Extra, 1966, Bartlett, NH to Crawford Notch," said the title card. This was a single track plow, pushed by an F and RS unit, followed by a caboose. Nice. Modeler unknown.



Diorama:

1st: and only entry was labeled "The Giant Tour," in N scale by Kevin Feeney. This exhibit was a creative expression of Kevin's obvious disappointment in Tour 4461 at the St. Paul National Convention last June. He contrasts what "they promised," with what "we got." (I had to smile and thought of the infamous "LTV Steel Tour" from the 1992 Columbus

June 1-4, 2000.

There were no traction entries and I did not have time to search out the entrants in the module categories, nor did I make notes on the photo contest.

There were four entries in the **Favorite Train category**, and all were well-executed, thoughtful entries. I'd

followed by a caboose. Nice. Modeler unknown.

Contest Results

Reported by John Johnson

There were 33 models entered in the contest. Although the models were scored by popular vote, there were 16 models entered for merit judging. I want to thank the judges, Ray Bilodeau, Bill Flichman, Alan Frame, Norm Garner, Jim Kellow, Alan Mende, and W. T. Nesbit. I also want to thank Rita Lynam for helping us in the contest room. The winners were:

Steam

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------------------|
| 1st | Ned Carey | HO W.M. 2-8-0 #750 |
| 2nd | Stanley Dworak | HO Shay |
| 3rd | Ned Carey | HO W.M. 2-8-0 #763 |

Diesel

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|------------------------|
| 1st | Bruce Barrett | HO U.P. SD40-2 |
| 2nd | Paul Backenstose | HO PRR BP-20 (A&B set) |
| 3rd | Bruce Barrett | HO PRR Lima center cab |

Passenger Cars

- | | | |
|-----|-------------|----------------------|
| 1st | Robert Bird | HO "Hello Dolly" car |
|-----|-------------|----------------------|

Freight Cars

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1st | Robert Malberti | HO Flat (with I.C. caboose load) |
| 2nd | Leonard Beck | HO B&O W. Top box car |
| 3rd | Ned Carey | HO W.M. Hopper * |

Caboose

- | | | |
|-----|--------------|--------------|
| 1st | Leonard Beck | HO PRR N5c * |
| 2nd | Bud Kaiser | HO PRR N5b |

Non-Revenue

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1st | Alan Bibb | HO steam crane/boom car |
| 2nd | Robert Malberti | HO PRR work equipment |
| 3rd | Bruce Barrett | HO Boom car |

Structures-on-line

- | | | |
|-----|---------------|-------------------------|
| 1st | Dale Latham | HO "Acme" paint factory |
| 2nd | Bruce Barrett | HO Ramsey Station |

Structures-off-line

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------------------|
| 1st | Lawrence Hayes | N container ship * |
|-----|----------------|--------------------|

Diorama

- | | | |
|-----|--------------|----------------|
| 1st | Kevin Feeney | N "Giant tour" |
|-----|--------------|----------------|

Module

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1st | Noll Horan | N Broadtop transfer |
| 2nd | Paul Diley | N golf course |
| 3rd | William McMillan | HO MA & PA station scene |

* Denotes merit award

Favorite Train Contest

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1st | Paul Backenstose | W.M. RS3/passenger mixed |
| 2nd | G. Thomas Todd | RDG mixed freight |
| 3rd | Thomas Cancelmo | PRSL maintenance |

Best-in-show and the Blue lantern Award

Dale Latham "Acme" Paint Co. factory

Photo Contest

Color Model

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1st | Bernard Kempinski | "Sunrise at Quinnimont" |
| 2nd | Bernard Kempinski | "Cresting the Summit" |
| 3rd | Richard Flock | "Laurel #28 face" |

Color Prototype

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|------------------|
| 1st | Patrick Goodrich | "1218 on Bridge" |
| 2nd | Joseph Goodrich | "261 at Night" |
| 3rd | H.W. Kaiser | "Water Tower" |

Black & White Prototype

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----------|
| 1st | Joseph Goodrich | "EBT #12" |
|-----|-----------------|-----------|

Craft Contest

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1st | James F. Daley, Jr. | Cross-stitch train |
| 2nd | Bob Johnson | HO Shadow box scene |

Photo Contest

The Hagerstown Convention had a very nice number of photo contest entries all of nice quality. Congratulations to the winners. Considering the quality of the photographs there were some close vote counts. I encourage all of you that entered to do so at Portsmouth this coming spring and at Altoona in the fall. The rules are: you must be an NMRA-MER member. Photos must be of railroad or model railroad subject matter - black & white or color - size 5x7 to 8x12 mounted on a rigid board (no frames) - no slides. You may enter up to 5 photographs. Sorry no professional photographers allowed to compete. We are eliminating separation of the color and b&w categories due to the low number of b&w entries. They will now be judged together - the two categories now are model & prototype. As the 2000 fall convention is being held in conjunction with other regions we are going to have slides judged there as well since the MCR is willing to provide the necessary equipment and judges.

Jim Atkinson, Photo Contest Chairman

Rails Meet Sails

MER Spring Convention — April 27-30, 2000
Hosted by the Tidewater Division of the
MER/NMRA
Portsmouth, Virginia

The Tidewater Division is proud to sponsor the first Mid-Eastern Regional Convention of the Third Millennium, which will be held on April 27, 28, 29, 30 in railroad-rich Portsmouth, Virginia. Just across the Elizabeth River from Norfolk, and across the James River from Newport News and Hampton, the Rails-Meet-Sails convention will be hosted by the Holiday Inn Olde Towne.

Rail tours of three major coal-loading facilities in the Hampton Roads area and Norfolk International Terminal (intermodal) will be augmented by tours of the area's extensive U.S. Naval facilities. You'll have an unusual opportunity to see the widest range of transportation: from railroads to automobile manufacture, to the Navy's hottest fighter jets, to a nuclear aircraft carrier. We've got it all, and you'll see it all, in Portsmouth — where Rails Meet Sails.



In the afternoon you'll tour a fleet aircraft carrier at Norfolk Naval Base, headquarters of the Navy's Atlantic Fleet. There are no camera restrictions on this tour.

Ford Assembly Plant Tour (limited to 92 participants) — Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. — This tour will take you to Ford's award-winning Norfolk Assembly Plant where F-150 pickup trucks are built. The plant is served by the Norfolk & Portsmouth Belt Line Railroad.

Norfolk Southern/Norfolk International Terminal Tour (limited to 46 participants) Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon — This 4-hour tour will take you to the Lamberts Point coal loading facility where you'll view the rotary coal dumper, coal loader and engine terminal from the bus. You may depart the bus at the Redgate Avenue station to take photographs of NS equipment.

The next stop will be Norfolk International Terminal (NIT), an intermodal facility served by Norfolk Southern. There'll be lots of double stack trains, and you'll see various types of equipment, cargo, and cargo handling operations.

Newport News Rail Tour (limited to 92 participants) — Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon — This 4-hour tour will take you to Pier IX, which exports petroleum, coke and coal and imports cement. The tour then visits Dominion Terminal Associates (DTA), a ground-storage bulk coal loading facility. Both Pier IX and DTA are served by CSX trains.

Clinics

William Mosteller: Installing Flawless Couplers

John Teichmoeller: Modeling Pennsy Hoppers

Monroe Stewart: Ships in Railroading

Stan Knotts: The Coke Industry: from Beehive Ovens through Modern Ovens

Jim Teese: Kitbashing to a Prototype

Bob Charles: Conversations with the President

John Hammond: Weathering with Pastels

John Johnson: 50 years of HO Freight Cars

Prototype Tours

Navy Tour (limited to 92 participants) — Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. — This all-day tour will begin with the Naval Air Station Oceana, the world's largest Navy master jet base. The first stop will be the Landing Signal Officer School, where officers train to land a high-speed jet on the moving deck of an aircraft carrier.

You'll visit either an F-14 (Tomcat) or F/A-18 (Hornet) squadron, where your hosts will show you're their Maintenance Division and Ready Room. You'll go down the flight line where take-offs and landings occur every 2 minutes.

Assuming you've worked up an appetite watching the jets, the next stop will be a buffet lunch at the Officers Club, which offers much in the way of Naval Aviation history. Outside the O Club, you'll be able to visit History Park, where approximately 20 naval aircraft are on display.

Layout Tours

Friday a.m. Tour

Ed Williams (HO) — The 24' x 14' Hokie Junction is modeled after the N&W of the 1960s-'70s. It's a mainline switching layout with DCC control.

Jim Lewis (N) — The 10' x 7' freelance Catesville & St. Lewis features UP, SP, and CSX in the '70s-'80s. The 2-helix layout consists of two large dioramas: one a city and the other the Rockies with 6' mountains.

Fred Jordan (HO) — The 21' x 16' Darnel River follows an N&W prototype of the '50s-'60s. There are a number of humorous touches to be found if you look closely.

Louis & Tim Dunn (HO) — The 22' x 16' Dunn Division of the N&W is a '70s-'80s continuous-loop, double-track mainline with two classification yards and several industrial switching areas.

Don & Dale Orr (N) — The 7.5' x 5' freelance D&D Railroad features an Eastern U.S. railroad between 1940-1955.

Friday p.m. Tour

Bob Burke (HO) — The 18' x 24' Sandy Creek is a freelance layout modeling an Eastern U.S. railroad of the '70s-'80s. It's a mainline switching layout with DCC control.

Mike Greene (HO) — The 18' x 23' Chesapeake South follows an N&W prototype of the mid-1950s. It is a mainline switching layout with DCC control.

Dave Spanagel (HO) — The 19' x 34' Old Point Comfort Lines features most Virginia railroads of the 1950s. Dave, who runs the HO Scale Collectors & Historical Society SIG, will be glad to point out the many "museum pieces" on his equipment roster.

Teya Capel-Woods (G) — This recently completed layout fills Teya's back yard. It's a must-see civil engineering effort undertaken by Teya, her husband and several fellow G-Scale modelers.

Saturday a.m. Tour

Chesapeake Bay & Western (HO) — This is a 30' x 40' "mushroom" club layout with a double-track helix that distributes trains to multiple layers of the layout over a 6-foot elevation.

The railroad operates equipment from all eras.

Harry Werner (HO) — This 13' x 20' layout models the Pennsylvania Railroad of the late 1950s.

Peninsula N-Scale Club (N) — This permanent club layout has resided for 22 years in the 25' x 30' freight room of the former C&O Lee Hall station.

Non-rail Tours

MacArthur Center Mall — **Friday, April 28, departing 9:30 a.m.** — Be a VIP shopper. Our group will travel by river ferry to Norfolk, then catch a free shuttle bus to the region's newest and most upscale shopping center. You'll receive a shopping bag and discount coupons for the day. Stores include Nordstrom, Dillard's, Pottery Barn, Restoration Hardware, Sephora fragrances, Rainforest Café, and many more. Return by shuttle bus and river ferry to the hotel.

Walking Tour of Portsmouth's Olde Towne — **Saturday, April 29, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.** — Walk though 300 years of history and see the exterior of many restored historic homes. The 1.5-hour tour will also include a visit to Hill House, a 4-story English basement dwelling built in the 1820s that contains the original furnishings collected by generations of the same family. Tour Guide Verna Kay will provide insightful information on the architecture and history of many of the homes. Wear comfortable shoes. There is a \$2.00 admission to Hill House.



Chesapeake Bay & Western

Non-rail Clinics

Culinary Clinic — Thursday, April 27, 7:00-9:30 p.m. — Learn the secrets of a staff chef from Johnson & Wales University at Norfolk College of Culinary Arts. The instructor will create a dish the audience will enjoy seeing prepared and eating.

Virginia Sampler Gift Basket Clinic and Tasting — Friday afternoon, April 28 — Learn how to make attractive individualized gift baskets, as demonstrated by Virginia Sampler staff, while enjoying the best of Virginia food products throughout the clinic.

Foundation Piecing Clinic — Friday, April 28, 9:00-10:00 p.m. — If you can sew a straight stitch on a line, you have all you need to make foundation pieced patchwork. In this clinic, you will choose a pattern and sew squares of fabric onto a foundation. Once you've done two or three seams, you'll be able to foundation piece even large quilts or small items. Bring your own scissors, but patterns, fabric and other supplies will be provided by Instructor Verna Kay.

On-Your-Own

Children's Museum of Virginia — The largest museum of its kind in the state, with more than 80 hands-on exhibits for children and adults. The museum, which draws more than a quarter million visitors each year, also features a \$1million antique toy and model train collection, as well as a state-of-the-art planetarium.

Naval Shipyard Museum — At the foot of High Street, you'll find artifacts depicting the city's rich history in this museum.

Lightship Museum — London Street at the waterfront. See how turn-of-the-century mariners lived and worked in a lightship built in 1915 and restored to its original condition.

Dinner Cruise

Dinner Cruise on the Carrie B — Friday, April 28, 5:30-8:30 p.m. — Enjoy a delicious Southern Fried Chicken dinner while viewing the Hampton Roads harbor at sunset. The Carrie B is an exact replica of a 19th-century Mississippi riverboat. You'll see panoramic views of the nation's oldest shipyard, the first U.S. Naval hospital, and the world's largest naval base. You'll also see a waterside view of Lamberts Point coal piers and intermodal terminals.

Contests

- **Regular judged contests.**
- **Blue Lantern Award** for branchline or shortline equipment.
- **Clyde L. Gerald Award** for best kitbashed model entered in the regular contest.

Silent Auction

Open Friday all day for bidding and registration; open Saturday morning; closes 2 p.m. Saturday, with pickup between 5:00-6:30 p.m. Saturday.

Trade Show

Open to the public all day Friday through Saturday afternoon. Operating layouts.

Saturday Night Buffet

Choose from Roast Round of Beef Au Jus or Chicken Marsala. Award activities will follow.

Convention Patch

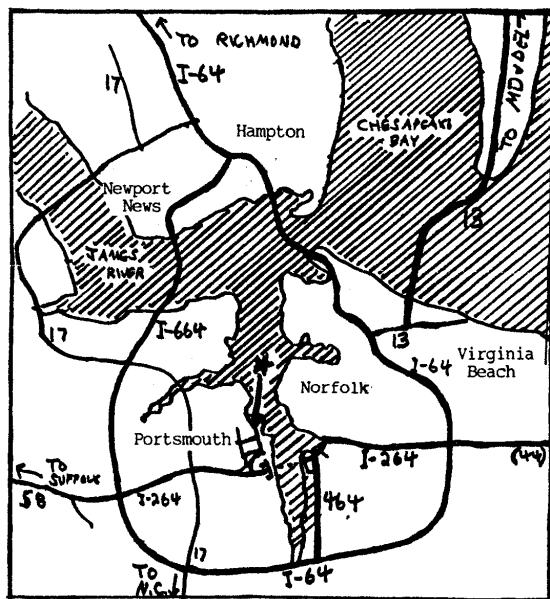
Primary convention registrants receive a Rails-Meet-Sails convention patch to commemorate participation in this millennial event.

How to Get There

From the North: Take I-95 South to Richmond. Exit on I-64 East toward Norfolk/Virginia Beach. In Hampton, Exit on I-664 South and cross the Monitor-Merrimac Bridge Tunnel. Take I-264 East into Portsmouth, exit at Crawford Street, and follow Crawford to the Holiday Inn Olde Towne.

From the South: Take I-85 North to South Hill and exit at Route 58 East. Or take I-95 North to Emporia and exit at Route 58 East. Follow Route 58 past Suffolk until entering I-264 into Portsmouth. Take the Crawford Street exit.

Alt. route: Take Highway 17 North to Dominion Boulevard (Route 104). Enter I-464 North to the Down-town Tunnel to Portsmouth. At the first exit after the tunnel (Downtown Portsmouth), bear right to Crawford Street.



Convention Registration Form

Rails Meet Sails – April 27-30, 2000

Name of Primary Registrant: _____ Phone: () _____

Mailing Address: _____ E-mail Address: _____

City/State/Zip+4: _____ N.M.R.A. #: _____ M.E.R. #: _____

Early Full Registration (**before 2/1/2000**).....\$30.00 x _____ = \$_____

Early (**non-NMRA member**)\$45.00 x _____ = \$_____

Full Registration (**after 2/1/2000**)\$35.00 x _____ = \$_____

Full Registration (**non-NMRA member**).....\$50.00 x _____ = \$_____

Name of Spouse: _____

Spouse\$10.00 = \$_____

Children (under 18).....\$5.00 x _____ = \$_____

Children (18 and over).....\$10.00 x _____ = \$_____

Ford Plant Tour (Friday morning) (limited to 92 people).....\$10.00 x _____ = \$_____

Navy Tour (all day Friday, includes lunch) (limited to 92 people).....\$32.00 x _____ = \$_____

Norfolk Southern/Norfolk Int'l Terminal Tour (Sat. a.m.) (limited to 46 people).\$10.00 x _____ = \$_____

Newport News Coal Piers Tour (Saturday morning) (limited to 92 people).....\$10.00 x _____ = \$_____

Friday Layout Tours (2 different tours: one a.m.; one p.m.—circle choices) Ea.\$10.00 x _____ = \$_____

Saturday Layout Tour (morning).....\$10.00 x _____ = \$_____

Cooking Clinic (Thursday night) (limited to 30 people).....\$17.00 x _____ = \$_____

Foundation Piecing Clinic (Friday night) (limited to 30 people) \$7.00 x _____ = \$_____

Va. Sampler Gift Basket Clinic & Tasting (Friday afternoon).....\$3.00 x _____ = \$_____

Harbor Dinner Cruise (Friday evening).....\$30.00 x _____ = \$_____

Walking Tour of Olde Towne (Saturday morning)..... \$2.00 x _____ = \$_____

Banquet (Saturday)

Meal #1: Roast Round of Beef Au Jus Meal #2: Chicken Marsala

Number of Meal #1 orderedx \$25.00 = \$_____

Number of Meal #2 orderedx \$25.00 = \$_____

Total Amount Enclosed = \$_____

Convention cancellations must be received by April 15, 2000 for a full refund of registration/banquet fees.

Make checks payable to: "Rails Meet Sails"

E-mail address: jkellow@widomaker.com

Mail registration form and payment to: Jim Kellow, 104 Elizabeth Page, Williamsburg, VA 23185

—Cut Here—

Hotel Registration Form:

Send this portion of form to:

N.M.R.A. Mid-Eastern Region Spring Convention

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Two Double Beds

Two Double Beds

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Total number of persons to occupy room: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone Number: Day () _____ Evening () _____

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**MADE IN
THE MER**

**COMPILED BY
ROGER L. CASON**

R&S Enterprises

Model railroad "manufacturers" are wherever you find them. And you'll find R&S Enterprises in a partly-log farmhouse on sixty-six very rural acres near Lebanon, PA. In many ways, this location represents quite a change for Russell Becker, owner of R&S. Russell grew up in Corpus Christi, TX. At one point, he owned the usual kid's Christmas train set. But, if anything, sailing may have been a more important hobby interest. College years found him attending Texas A&M. In due course, he went to work for Bell Labs in northern New Jersey as a condensed matter physicist.

Sensing a dormant but potentially strong interest, his wife gave him a new standard gauge train set for Christmas about ten years ago. This triggered the "collecting virus," an ailment which all of us have observed, and with which many of us are infected. Russell now has about thirty three-rail O-gauge locomotives in addition to his standard gauge equipment.

Under the circumstances, it was hard to not start playing with layout design. To borrow a phrase from his web page, he quickly tired of templates—and messy erasing and scribbling. This led to experimenting with layout design via computer, which in turn evolved into RR-Track!, the layout design software Russell now sells. He left AT&T in 1993 to devote nearly

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

full time to his layout design software business.

There are versions of RR-Track for everything from Z through G gauge. Most buyers currently are O-gauge people, with G and HO following behind in that order. The software accommodates sectional track, and the available graphical options include all turnout manufacturers. Most readers of *The Local* are probably HO folks who use flextrack or who hand lay their own. They may ask themselves: could I use RR-Track when I design my next layout? The answer is yes. The software includes provisions to insert easements and to specify your own curvature radius. Voila! — A flextrack design. The software will run on a 486/Windows 3.1 or better personal computer. For people with Windows 95 or 97, a 3-D add-on is available free from the R&S website, or direct from Russell for a nominal charge.

Model railroaders come in all sizes and shapes. The difference in orientation between the toy, the model, and the outdoor people presents a major challenge to a software designer. Another challenge involves usability vs. complexity. Past a certain point, adding options, bells and whistles introduces so too much complexity—even for a person comfortable with personal computers. The learning curve becomes forbidding, and the software sits there on the hard disc unused. Russell's aim has been to keep it simple, and to make it manageable for anyone with a little PC experience.

Anyone trained as a physicist has a hard time avoiding R&D, and Russell is no exception. The gleam in his eye for future offerings includes

tying computers in with command control, plus the added possibility of voice recognition control.

Most sales of RR-Track are direct from R&S Enterprises, PO Box 643, Jonestown, PA, 717-865-3444. Russell personally exhibits twice a year at the TCA shows in York, PA. The informative R&S Enterprises website is <http://www.rrtrack.com/rrtrack>

The Last Word

The "Made in the MER" article above will probably be my last one. My reasons for passing the baton to someone else are partly altruistic and partly selfish. Altruistic: eventually, readers will get tired of any one writing style in a series like this. Selfish: I find that I have to go farther and farther away from home to find manufacturers to interview. At some point, the radius of travel exceeds the threshold of pain.

Producing the articles has been a lot of fun. I got a lot of support from within the Region, and I was privileged to interview many interesting and cooperative manufacturers. Giving credit where credit is due, I should also point out that the original idea for the series came from MER President Bill Gruber. There's no substitute for starting with a good idea!

Roger L. Cason

Editor's Note: We need a volunteer to continue this column!

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William Mosteller, 2813 Hogan Court, Falls Church, VA 22043
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Chesapeake Bay & Western Railroad

The Chesapeake Bay Railroaders Club

The CB&W portrays a fictitious railroad with an eastern terminus in Phoebe's, VA, on the Chesapeake Bay, and a western interchange in St. Louis, MO. The layout models significant portions of the entire main line, and traffic is controlled from a single central dispatcher's office.

CB&W freight and passenger traffic is based on the era of a particular operating session. Freight traffic includes coal from West Virginia mines headed eastward to export piers on the York River, or westward to Midwestern industries and power plants. Other freight trains include grain, cement, merchandise, autos, and steel — utilizing rolling stock from several eras.

Modern trains may include TOFC or single and double stack containers, while trains operating in earlier eras may include ice-cooled reefers, stock cars, and small tank cars hauling anything liquid.

Passenger trains equipment ranges from WW-II heavyweights to '50s lightweight streamlined cars to

modern Amtrak equipment. Motive power ranges from steam and early diesel in the '40s to the most modern high-horsepower units of the 1990s.

Locomotives from Midwestern and Western railroads are frequently seen on the CB&W, operating high-priority run-through trains. The CB&W has major interchanges with CSX (C&O) and Norfolk Southern (N&W and Southern), and connects with several major Western railroads in St. Louis.

Club History

The Chesapeake Bay Railroaders began in July, 1973, with the first layout built in the Grafton Hobby Center. In 1975, members dismantled the layout and moved it to a farmhouse in Grafton. Then, in April, 1983, the club rented the east half of the present building at 110-F Dare Road, Grafton (ZIP 23692), and began construction of the current layout.

In February, 1995, the club rented the west half of the building and initiated plans for expansion of the layout. As of June, 1998, considerable progress has been made with

track, wiring, and scenery in the new area, as well as with redesign of the dispatcher's panel. Work on the western quarter of the CB&W and revision of major yards will be the club's next priority.

Membership is now about 35, which is half of the club's capacity. Present members live in York County, Hampton, Newport News, James City County, Williamsburg, Gloucester, Mathews County, Portsmouth, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach.

CB&W Layout Description

Scale: HO

Power Control: Cab control, central dispatch, 6 radio remote throttles, provision for DCC.

Mainline Min. Radius: 42 inches

Max. Grade: 2 percent

Motive Power: A wide variety of steam and 1950-present diesel

Layout Size: Three levels in a 2,400 sq. ft. building

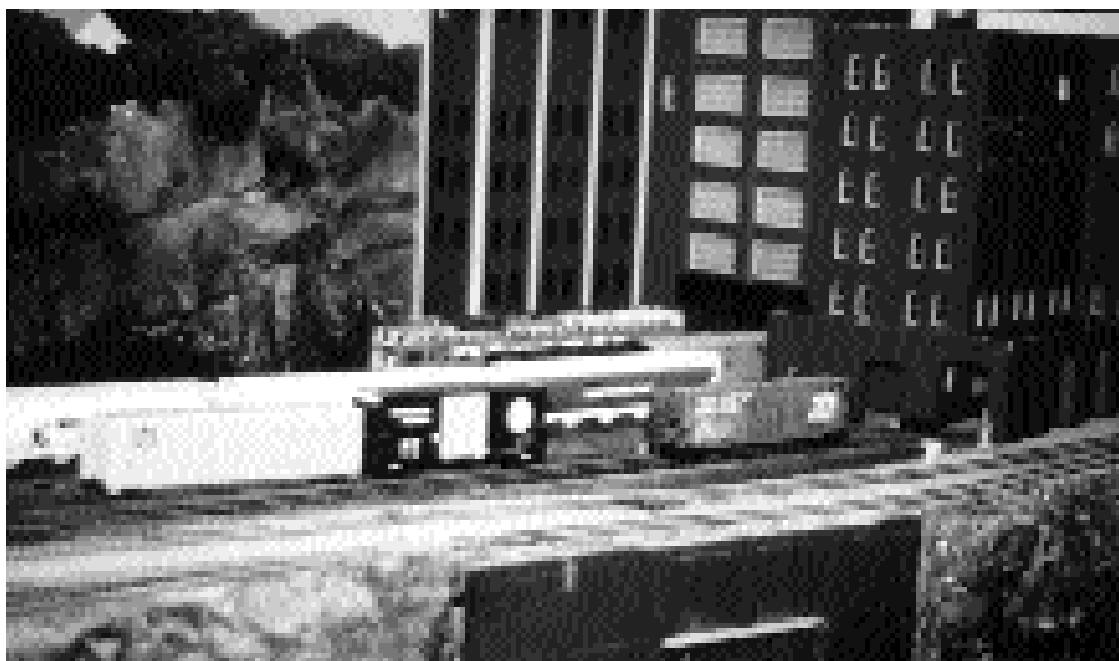
Mainline: 1,007 ft. (16.6 HO miles)

Double Track: 654 ft. (10.8 HO miles)

Website: <http://trainweb.com/cbw/>

Club Activities

Membership in the Chesapeake Bay Railroaders is usually open, and prospective members are encouraged to apply. The club is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and operates as a non-profit hobby organization. It derives its income from monthly membership dues (presently \$20.00 per month), and income



from semi-annual railroad flea markets held in conjunction with the CB&W Open House.

The club meets every Thursday night at 7:30, with business meetings on the first Thursday of the month. Normally, Thursday nights are reserved for railroad operation. Major layout construction and maintenance are normally done on Tuesday nights or other times convenient for the workers involved.

Members are issued clubhouse keys upon acceptance, and are free to work on or operate the layout at any time, provided they have been qualified in the details of its operation.

Members' train equipment must conform to NMRA and club standards—such as wheel gauge, weight, and Kadee-type couplers—before it can be used during club operating sessions.

The club is not only a place for work, but also a place for members to meet and discuss all facets of prototype and model railroading. Inexperienced model railroaders have the opportunity to learn the "tricks of the trade" from more experienced members. The club's recent expansion provides room for slide and video shows and clinics to be held on various aspects of model railroading.

The club holds a free Open House in April and November to allow the public to enjoy the railroad. A Railroad Flea Market is usually held at the same time. Members are expected to assist at the Open House and Flea Market.

For further information concerning club activities, call:

Joe Watts (804) 725-0198
jwatts@inna.net

George Downer (757) 868-7505
gdowner@exis.net

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.

Carolina Coastal Railroaders "Fifth Annual train Show". March 18-19, 2000, New Bern, North Carolina, New Bern High School cafeteria, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm both days. Adults \$3.00, children under 12 with adult free. Contact: Joseph T. Hofmann, 601 Tyndall lane., New Bern NC 28562, (252) 638-8872, e-mail hofmannjoe@cconnect.net

Northern Virginia Model Railroaders, Inc. Open House. March 18, April 15, May 28 and July 15, 2000. Washington & Old Dominion railroad station, 231 Dominion Road (at Ayr Hill Road), Vienna, VA 22180. 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm each day. Club meets on Tuesday evenings. For more information call (703) 938-5157 or web site:
<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/6120>

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MER Annual Report MER Vice President Norm Garner

New Jersey Division (1)

This past year, the New Jersey Division has kept very busy. Five division meets were held from September through May, each featuring clinics and layout tours, along with one outdoor garden layout tour in June. Division dues were lowered for the year, but the division still ended the year with more money in the treasury than when we started. In September, we held a joint meet with the Philadelphia division in Ringos, NJ aboard the Black River & Western RR. The division completed an overhaul of the bylaws started last year. The division's web page on the internet has had a complete makeover and now features all the basic information, a 2 year schedule of events, our bylaws and a division history timeline page. All financial obligations were met and the division is in good shape for the coming year, with many activities planned.

Potomac Division (2)

The Potomac division had one home layout tour per month. They published a quarterly newsletter as well as having a web page. They held a spring mini-convention and a fall swap meet. The division had a layout tour for the Mount Clare Division. They offered a styrene clinic for the membership. A mentor program for new members has been developed.

Philadelphia Division (3)

This has been a busy year for the Philadelphia division. In September 1998, they had a joint meeting with the New Jersey division. This was held at the Black River & Western RR in Ringos, NJ with a trip from Ringos to Flemington. In November, a meet was held at Fairview Village, PA, during which they toured several layouts. In March 1999 the division met at St. Albans Church and again toured several fine layouts. In May 1999, they had a meet in northern Delaware which included a tour of a large HO layout at the Hagley museum. The

Hagley museum is the original Dupont Powder Mills. They also visited several fine layouts in northern Delaware. In September 1999 they had a joint meet with the Susquehanna Division at the Strasburg Railroad. The highlight of the meet was a tour of the Strasburg shops.

Tidewater Division (4)

In November the Tidewater division placed several static exhibits in local libraries during National Model railroad Month. The division set up operating exhibits at the Bayside Recreation Center, the Hampton Garden Council Christmas Show and the Norfolk Southern terminal in December. The annual business meet and members only auction was held in January. The division also set up layouts and demonstrations at the annual Greenberg Show. In March, they set up traveling modules and conducted operations at the Chesapeake Library for a weekend in support of "Train Days" sponsored by the library. An estimated 3,750 people visited the exhibits. Also, the "O" module group participated in the train show in New Bern, NC. An open house and swap meet was held in May at the Bayside recreation Center in Virginia Beach. In October, the division hosts its famous train show and sale at the Virginia beach Pavilion. The division is exploring an opportunity to design and develop an HO exhibit that will operate in the old passenger station in Suffolk. Formerly owned by the CSX, the terminal has a history dating back to the early 1900s.

James River Division (5)

During the period beginning July 1999, the James River division held four meets in Richmond, Danville, Farmville, and Richmond again. New officers elected in June 1998 were in charge. The general format is to have 2-3 clinics, a contest, a display area, an informal flea market, and a short business meeting followed by a layout or prototype tour. To promote the Achievement program, one of the clinics at each meet is devoted to one of the achievement program certifi-

cates, and is presented by a person who has the certificate. Another division activity was the 1999 Lynchburg MER convention, which was organized by the Lynchburg Blue ridge model railroad club. Division dues were increased to \$3.00 per year. Division membership has grown to 40 paid members, with growth occurring at the Lynchburg convention. The challenge is to recruit members, and no small part of the challenge is to show that members get their money's worth when they join the NMRA and MER. They have an easier time seeing what they get from the division. The bylaws were amended in June 1999 to eliminate a one-term restriction on officers and directors.

Mt. Clare Division (9)

There has been very little activity in the division. We had an excellent clinic in May on weathering. The we had an annual meeting in December and a layout tour is planned for January. The superintendent reports very little help in managing the division.

South Mountain Division (10)

The division had monthly meetings most months from July 1998 through June 1999. There was a lot of activity preparing for the fall 1999 MER convention in Hagerstown. All scheduled meetings were well attended.

Susquehanna Division (11)

The division had the following events, all well attended: Williams Grove Historical Steam Engine Association, Mechanicsburg, PA; Reading Society of Model Engineers and Boy Scout Explorer Post #902 in Reading, PA; open home layouts in Mechanicsburg, PA; Keystone Historical Model railroad Club, Mechanicsburg, PA; joint meet with Philadelphia division in Newton Square, PA; South Penn Model Railroad Club and annual business meeting; and a joint meet with the Sherman's Valley Live Steamers, Shermansdale, PA. The division's HO scale modules were set up and running at the NMRA convention in Kansas City, MO; the Train Show, Philadelphia, PA; and the MER spring

convention in Lynchburg, VA. The division by-laws were updated to come in line with changes in the NMRA and MER by-laws.

Carolina Southern Division (12)

The division membership was 23 as of October 31. The record membership was 50 before NMRA/MER membership was required. The division is undergoing re-organization in an attempt to refocus activities onto model railroading. More meetings were held this past year than in any previous year, yet each meeting has been of limited scope. Once enough hands-on projects are established to keep the membership busy a regular monthly meeting should be successful.

Carolina Piedmont Division (13)

The division has been busy this year with 12 division meetings, 2 home layout tours, and once again co-sponsoring the Southern Junction model train Show for its second year. The HO modular layout has grown to 19' x 106' and has been displayed at four area shows this year. Several members also have an "O" scale modular layout under construction. Interest in the achievement program continues to grow with four Gold Spike Awards presented this year and several members working on projects for points. Division 13 is now incorporated and is currently pursuing its tax exempt status. New division officers were elected in October 1999: Superintendent—Todd Hathaway, Asst. Super—Jack Frame, Clerk—Karl Kleeman, Paymaster—Jim Kozuch, and board members John Wallis, Frank Mansfield and Ed Dougherty.

The region video project has hit a snag as our professional expert, Brad Bowers, has taken another job and had to step down. Brad had suggested we video several conventions to get enough material to edit into a final product. I will start the first video at the Hagerstown convention. I urge other board members to assist us in this project.

MID-EASTERN REGION, NMRA, INC.

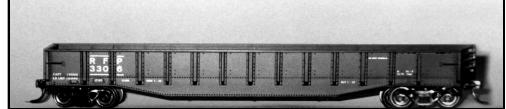
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