

Richmond Rails 2002 Contest Results

By Ray Bilodeau, MER General Contest Chairman

The contests held at the MER convention, June 6-9, in Richmond, Virginia, proved once again that Southern hospitality and the spirit of good modeling, photography and craftsmanship are alive and well in this area of our Region where many of us do not often get a chance to visit.

Our hosts, the James River Division, Superintendent Pete Shatswell, and convention Chair Chuck Hladik, provided us with a large and well lit contest room at the Holiday Inn.

Best in show: Riddick's Folly



I was pleased with the quality of all the entries in the contests. Thank you for taking the time to build a model, take a photograph, work on a craft item, then submit it for Richmond Rails. Congratulations to all of the winners of these contests.

We had a good showing in the Photo and Arts & Crafts Contest. Our merged and made over Railroad Pass Contest brought out several interesting and finely done examples of railroad passes. Four modules were entered in the model contest, and one of these was judged and secured a Golden Spike award.

There were 29 model entries judged in the Model Contest and for the Achievement Program, and 9 merit awards were presented. Several modelers built award winning On-, and Off-Line, Structures. Riddick's Folly, an off-line structure of museum quality, was built by John Johnson from the Tidewater Division. This model won both the President's Award and the trophy for Best in Show. There was also an On Line Display (Diorama) by Fred Miller, which won the Clyde Gerald Kit-Bash Award. Dick Landt, from the Philadelphia Division, built an outstanding model of an Abandoned Reading Water Tank. It was judged for the AP and received a score of 115

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MER LOCAL

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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.

Keeping In Touch...

by Rita Lynam
MER Business Manager

Our new tank cars are selling like “hot cakes.” I’d like to thank Roger Cason for his efforts in organizing the purchase of the cars for the Car Project. Now it is PJ Mattson’s and my turn to do our jobs and get the orders mailed out as soon as we receive them. It has been working very efficiently for the last year and a half, and you get your order quicker since we can communicate by e-mail. Thanks for the orders!!

In May I attended the Mid-Atlantic Narrow Gauge Module Meet and had a table for the NMRA and MER. There were a lot of people looking at the information we provided, and they took our samples of the NMRA Bulletin and some of our copies of our newsletter with an application to join. We hope to continue to spread goodwill with this group. They are avid rail fans and enjoy the hobby.

We want to thank all the members of the James River Division for their hospitality and friendship during the Richmond Rails Convention. They sure know how to “throw a party.”

Looking ahead, October is coming quickly, and before we know it the convention in Cherry Hill will be upon us. Hope to meet more of our members there. Please stop in at the Contest Room and say hello to me. I love to link a name with a face!

Recently Deceased Members

Gary Lee McNeal, Lewistown, PA. Born January 1938; died in September 2001. Joined NMRA in 1965 – #L02614. Joined MER in 1966 – #L-220.

Ian D. Smith, Baltimore, MD. Born July 1938; notified of death in June 2002. Joined NMRA in 1994 – L05633. Joined MER in 1994 – L-288.

Our sincere condolences are extended to each family.

Any questions or comments, please contact me at one of my addresses on the masthead.

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President's Column

Norm Garner

Richmond Rails 2002 was one great convention! Those of you who couldn't make it missed a good one. The James River Division can be proud of this and all their hard work. Chuck Hladik, the convention chairman, did a good job. In addition to being the chairman, Chuck also was in charge of advertising, auction, clinics, the banquet, and awards ceremony. The convention handbook was one of the best I have ever seen at a regional convention. Pete Shatswell did a great job on that as well as all the publications and keeping the convention web site up to date and informative. This was a husband and wife team, because Pauline was right in there with him on the door prizes, and they did a great job together. Ken Montero handled the prototype and non-rail tours, and there are many attendees who will remember the ride in the cab of the engines. Thanks Ken, for giving good memories to so many. The layout tours were great with lots of fine modeling to see. Thank you, Howard Heltman, for getting the layouts together. Howard did such a fine job running the company store that they sold out all the tickets much earlier than expected. You just had to know that this was going to be a fine convention when you met Carl Steiner at the registrar table. Tony Demasi and Noll Horan handled manpower. There were three module groups set up at the convention; the Tidewater and Potomac divisions HO modular group, the RanTrak N-scale club, and the Atlantic S Scalars. All the layouts ran continuously and put on a good show. Thanks to Noll Horan, Toni Demasi and Brent Moore who were in charge of this. The auction was a great deal of fun with lots of humor. Jeff Coleman and a bunch of characters ran that show. Jay Manning, who got nice confirmation notices out to the attendees, handled the financial responsibilities for the convention. I know there are many more people behind the scenes who helped put this convention on, and I apologize if I have left anyone out inadvertently. Kudos to the James River Division for a job well done!

The MER/BOD passed two resolutions at this meeting. One was the resolution I brought up to write an official letter to the BOT/NMRA, the Officials of the NMRA, and the region presidents explaining our disapproval of the one dues proposal that appeared in the **NMRA Bulletin**. This resolution passed unanimously. The other resolution was to, in the future, hold only one convention in the Fall. The other good news is that we now have a convention chairman. Brian Kampschroer has accepted the job and will bring years of experience to the MER, welcome aboard Brian. I hope all of you have a nice safe summer and remember model railroading is fun.

Richmond Rails final note

I wish to thank everyone who made Richmond Rails 2002 a success. That would be all of the staff and their spouses, all the folks that had their layouts open, gave a clinic, or just plain helped out and especially all that attended and made it all worthwhile.

The 180 registered folks for Richmond Rails 2002 had great weather and a great variety of things to do. On the CSX Bryan Park facilities tour, not only did some participants get cab rides, some even took over the throttle from the engineers seat! Talk about extras, wow! Many raved over one of the G-scale garden railroads that ran in the woods pulling 40-car trains. Even though all the layouts and prototype tours were self-guided, we heard no one got lost due in great part to Pete Shatswell's detailed maps. Even though there were about 200 items in the live auction, Bob Charles was finished before midnight, which seems to be a record. And the banquet – the food was top notch and plentiful. Don't miss out again. See you at the Cherry Hill Depot convention in October.

Chuck Hladik
Chairman
Richmond Rails 2002

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 Alan Mende, 526 Pine Hill Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036-8020 E-Mail to afmende@amp.com

September 14 and 15, 10 AM to 4 PM. Tidewater Division, MER, Annual Model Train Show & Sale. The Virginia Beach Pavilion, 1000 19th St., Virginia Beach, VA. Admission is \$5.00 for adults, children under 12 free when accompanied by an adult. Contact: Steve Prescott at 757-426-2811. nawn-eycreek@msn.com.

October 4 to 6, 2002 – Cherry Hill Depot, the Fall 2002 MER Convention. Co-Chairmen: Jim Cope and P.J. Mattson. Additional information may be found at <http://home.earthlink.net/~mikemc-nh/boxcar/fall02.html>.

October 18-20. Potomac Division MIDI-con. Home layout tours of the rich and famous, plus clinics, Ops on the modular layouts, grand fun. <http://members.cox.net/chyde/Potomac-Model-Rails.html>

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Richmond Rails Models

points. The special "Pride of Dixie" outhouse contest was won by Bill Roman from the Potomac Division. Bill's G scale outhouse brought 21st century technology to the humble "biffy."

I want to thank our model contest judges: Dave Messer, MMR, Roger Cason, MMR, Dick Landt, Bob Charles, Alan Mende, Dick Genthner, as well as our apprentice judges, Carl Haslett and Ned Carey.

We would not have conquered the mountain of contest paperwork had it not been for the assistance of Dick Landt, our Model Contest Chair; Brenda Landt, Dick's wife; and Carl Haslett, from the New Jersey Division, who again worked with us as a volunteer. My spouse, MER Arts & Crafts Chairperson, and MER Business Manager, Rita Lynam, made sure the process moved along at a good pace. Rita expertly devised strategies to prevent errors in our paperwork, statistic keeping, certificate construction, and award distribution. She also helped script my remarks for the awards banquet...which if I were as intelligent as I think I am, I would have followed, instead of going off on a tangent, inserting my foot in my mouth, and saying some generally stupid things!

The contest winners:

MODEL CONTEST: Model Contest Chair, Dick Landt, thanks all the modelers who entered the contest and congratulates the winners.

Freight Cars

1 st	Chuck Davis	HO	PRR G29 Gondola #358063*
2 nd	Chuck Davis	HO	Lehigh Valley Milk Car #1132A
3 rd	Jim Crockett	N	Intermountain Overton PFE Reefer—First-Time Entrant

First Place winner
PRR Gondola
with load



Passenger Cars

1 st	Chuck Davis	HO	Lehigh Valley Diner #1005*
2 nd	Jim Dalberg	HO	B&O 8 Section Lounge Car
3 rd	Jim Dalberg	HO	PRR 21 Roomette Car—Cawabunga Falls

First place winner
Lehigh Valley
Diner

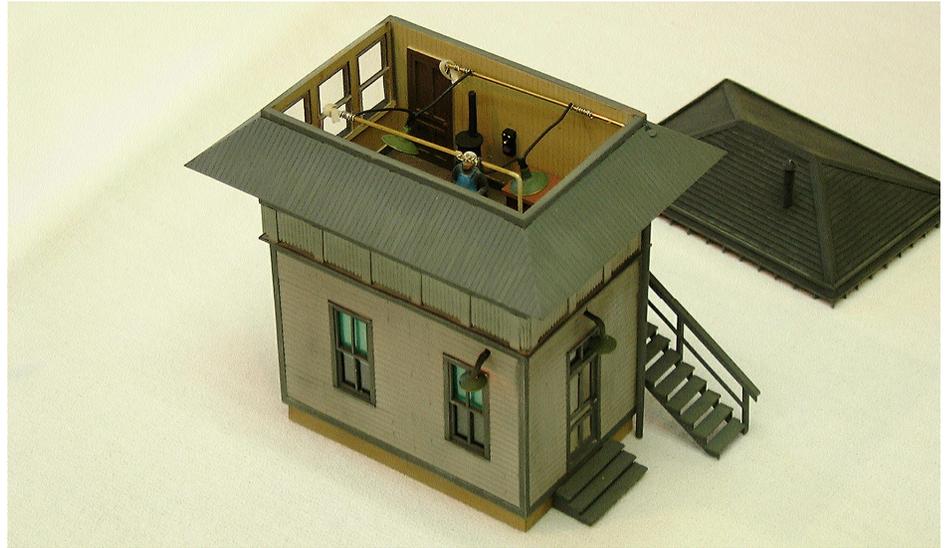


Structures On-Line

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|----|---|
| 1 st | Chuck Davis | HO | Lehigh Valley Coxtan Yard Interlocking Tower* |
| 2 nd | Dale Latham | HO | Waldorf Maryland Freight/Passenger Station* |

First place winner

Lehigh Valley Coxtan Yard
Interlocking Tower



Structures Off-Line

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----|----------------------------|
| 1 st | John Johnson | HO | Riddick's Folly* |
| 2 nd | Allan Phillips | HO | Burdet's Warehouse* |
| 3 rd Tie | Noll Horan | O | Saw Filer's Shack* |
| 3 rd Tie | Allan Phillips | HO | Special Contest—Outhouses* |

Convention model photos by publisher Clint Hyde. Hope they look as good in your copy as the originals do.

Second place winner

Burdet's Warehouse



Display On-Line

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 st | Fred Miller | N | Traction Operating Diorama* |
|-----------------|-------------|---|-----------------------------|

Richmond Rails Models

Display Off-Line

1st Jerry Kay G Tankar Gas Station

Modules

1st Marion Manning N Church of the Rails

2nd Marion Manning N Village of the Rails

3rd Jay Manning N Bridges of Beer Valley

*Denotes AP Merit Award – scoring a minimum of 87.5 points

The following modelers submitted entries for AP judging only:

Merit Award received by:

Richard Landt Structure On-Line HO
Abandoned Reading Water Tank



Reading Water Tank

Golden Spike received by:

Franklin Schwenk Module HOn3
Short Plank & Poor Rock Railroad

SPECIAL AWARDS

The President's Award: given to the best model of an Off-Line Structure.

John Johnson HO Riddick's Folly

The Blue Lantern Award: given to the model that best represents branchline or private line equipment or facility with no more than 40% commercial parts.

Allan Phillips HO Burdet's Warehouse

The Clyde Gerald Award: given to the kit-bashed model that scores highest in the model contest.

Fred Miller N Traction Operating Diorama

The Philadelphia New Modeler Award: given to the first-time entrant in the model contest with the highest point score. (A cash prize as well as a plaque from the Division.)

Robert Alvis HO Godsey's Old Time Country Store

The Pride of Dixie Award: popular vote

Bill Roman G Thoroughly Modern Outhouse

Best in Show: given to the entry with the highest point score in the model contest.

John Johnson HO Riddick's Folly



Bill Roman's Outhouse

PHOTO CONTEST: Although Jim Atkinson, our Photo Chairman, was unable to attend the convention, he extends his congratulations to the winners.

Model:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 st | Pete Shatswell | Downtown |
| 2 nd | Pete Shatswell | Main Street |
| 3 rd | Fred Miller | Downtown Bustle |

Prototype: Steam

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 st | Pete Shatswell | Power At Rest |
| 2 nd | Ed Price | Cowichan Shay |

Prototype: Other

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| 1 st | Roger Cason | Across the Continent |
| 2 nd | Pete Shatswell | Waiting |
| 3 rd | Roger Cason | Back East for Another Load |

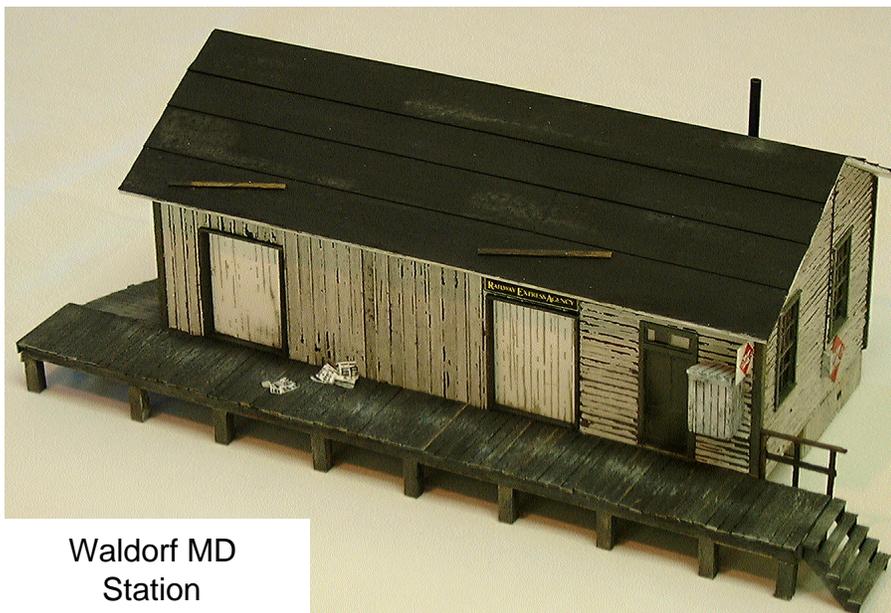
ARTS & CRAFTS CONTEST: Rita Lynam, our Arts & Crafts Chair, extends her congratulations to the winners.

Rail:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 st | Dave Lynam | McGiffert Log Loader—Wood Burning |
| 2 nd | Pauline Shatswell | Steam Engine Pound Cake |
| 3 rd | Dave Lynam | Forney Engine—Wood Burning |

Non-Rail:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1 st | Verna Kay | Christmas Quilt |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|



Waldorf MD Station

Railroad Pass:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 st | William McGilvary | Blue Ridge & Western Railway Pass |
| 2 nd | Pete Shatswell | N.O.R. Pass |
| 3 rd | Max Robbins, Jr. | Arm Chair Modeler's Pass |

CHERRY HILL DEPOT CONTESTS: Just a word about the upcoming fall MER convention to be held in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, October 4-6, 2002. We will have a judged Model Contest, and a popular vote Photo, Arts & Crafts, and Railroad Pass Contest.

In the Model Contest, **The President's Award** will be given to the modeler building a caboose (or cabin car if you model the Pennsy). Other special awards will include: **The Favorite Train**, the **Blue Lantern**, the **Philadelphia Division New Modeler Award**, and the **Marv Kershner** award for creativity in modeling, presented by the South Mountain Division.

Our popular vote Photo Contest will include a "theme" topic of railroads which were specific to, or at one time or another passed through, the state of New Jersey. Think about this one!

More about Cherry Hill contests in the next issue. If you have any questions, write, please! Raybilodeaujr@aol.com

Richmond Rails help needed

Hi!

I attended the Richmond Rails 2002 convention and brought some equipment of my own to run. I wasn't there when the HO modules were packed away and the members' equipment was removed from the track, so someone else gathered up my items.

While I did get all of my equipment back (in perfect shape, of course!), there was a boxcar packed in with my stuff that wasn't mine. I'd like to get it back to whomever it belongs to, but I have no idea.

The model in question is a B&O 50' boxcar, road number 481214. It was packed with my equipment by mistake at Richmond Rails 2002. If this is your car, please call Safaa H. Al-Abdulla at 804-784-2223 or email safaa@crosswinds.net

Thanks!

The New Jersey Division is proud to host the Fall 2002 MER Convention in the southern heart of the Garden State.



Friday, October 4th—
Sunday, October 6th

Here is what you can expect when you attend this convention:

CLINICS

The highlight of most New Jersey Division Meets is the clinics, and this convention will feature many of our local clinicians with educational, informative and sometimes humorous presentations. Here is a sampling of the topics/presenters we have rostered up so far:

- Alternative Tortoise Mounting - Dick McEvoy
- New England Railroads - Mike McNamara
- Railfanning the Local Area - Gary Stroh
- Computer-Assisted Model Railroading - Richard Perry
- Creating Buildings from Strathmore Board - John Rahenkamp
- Making Forests – Bob Utley and Brenda Murphy

We have more clinics planned and will add them to the web site as they are confirmed.

CLINICS, NON-RAIL

The Great Pumpkin Project #301

For the non-rail enthusiasts, here is a chance to make a unique fall centerpiece from a section of ordinary plastic dryer hose.

This clinic requires advance registration, see the registration form.

Gardening in the Garden State

A presentation on gardening topics by a member of New Jersey's Master Gardeners, an association of volunteers dedicated to sharing their horticultural knowledge and skills with their community.

TOURS

Cape May Seashore Lines Trip #101

The Cherry Hill Depot has arranged for a combined rail and non-rail trip for this convention. Our 3 hour visit to Cape May offers a sample of life from the Victorian era. The trip will begin with our guests being transported to the Cape May Seashore Lines station at the Cape May County Fairgrounds for a nostalgic rail trip to Cape May. The train trip will be on the beautifully restored Budd RDC cars of the Cape May Seashore Lines. The train travels on trackage of the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad (PRSL) into the center of Cape May.

The city of Cape May has many marvelously restored Victorian structures. A short walk from the railroad station is the Washington Street Mall, with numerous restaurants and specialty shops, most housed in restored period structures. For the railroader, these offer an opportunity to observe structures that would be appropriate on any period model railroad. For the non-rail visitor, there are numerous opportunities to purchase special gifts.

Other than shopping, various walking tours of the city of Cape May are available, individual or guided. Also "trolley" tours of Cape May can be taken, beginning at the Washington Street Mall. Many restored Victorian homes are open for visitation.

Homasote Factory Tour #102

Homasote is a sound-deadening, insulating, tackable, structural, environmentally-friendly building material made from recycled post-consumer waste paper. This material is a favorite among model railroaders. A factory tour of the West Trenton Homasote plant on Friday afternoon will give a first-hand look at the manufacturing process behind the material that makes our railroads quiet. Both Tours require advance registration, see the registration form.

LAYOUTS

Another highlight of the NJ Division is the large number of layouts in the area. The Convention will feature layouts that meet the need of every modeler. The layouts range from small home layouts to large club pikes. Traction, 1950 steam/diesel era pikes and modern systems are all represented in N, HO, O, G scale, standard and narrow gauges. Scenery, although present on many layouts, is just getting under way on other pikes, so modelers interested in construction techniques, benchwork and wiring will really want to see these layouts.

During the convention, over 25 layouts will be open for visitation, some Friday evening from 7 to 10 PM and others on Sunday from noon to 5 PM. Along with the traditional description of each layout and its particular visitation schedule will be a summary listing of all layouts that groups the layouts by scale.

In addition to the usual layout visitation times, several outdoor railroads will be open to visitors on Saturday afternoon, weather permitting.

OPERATIONS CALL BOARD #201

The Cherry Hill Depot will offer an Operations Call Board on Saturday, from 1 to 4 PM, where participants travel to one of several local layouts and operate for the afternoon. Those without prior experience are especially encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about this fast-growing aspect of our hobby. Transportation to and from the layout destination will be provided.

This event requires advance registration, see the registration form.

CONTESTS

Contests will be a prominent part of the Cherry Hill Depot and entries are anticipated in all of the usual categories.

Every registrant is encouraged to participate at some level in the contests, whether it is to advance skill levels, work toward achievement certificates, or share ideas with other attendees.

In addition to the usual judging, there will be five special awards presented at the Cherry Hill Depot:

The President's Award - Construct a caboose, cabin car,

crummy, or hack and bring it to the Depot for the President's Award contest.

Blue Lantern Award - This award is for a model containing not more than forty percent commercial parts that best represents branch, short or private line operating equipment and/or facilities.

Philadelphia Division New Modeler Award - This award is given to the highest scoring entry of a first time modeler entering the NMRA model contest at an MER regional convention.

Marv Kerschner Award
Favorite Train Award

Further details on these awards and the contests will appear in the September-October issue of The Local.

BANQUET #401

On Saturday evening, the Cherry Hill Depot will transform into a more social affair. A Happy Hour cash bar begins the festivities, followed by the traditional banquet. Our menu choices are Chicken Medallions Sauté or Roast Sirloin of Beef. (For special dietary requirements, please notify the Convention Committee).

Following the banquet will be a brief awards ceremony. Our guest speaker will be Steve Barry, Editor of Railfan & Railroad Magazine. Steve's photo slide program is titled "On The Road Again" and features the railroads of NJ, PA, NY and other close-by states in the 1980s, including Conrail, CSX, steam, traction, and more.

Requires advance registration, see the registration form.

LIVE AUCTION

Traditionally, an auction of treasures and trash and everything in between follows the Saturday night banquet at the fall convention. The Cherry Hill Depot continues this tradition. Your entries will once again be hawked by our own Bob Charles, so we are assured of an evening of good deals and good fun.

The auction registration will be open Friday evening from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM and Saturday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. We will publish a handy Auction Registration form in the next edition of the Local. You may also simply type or print legibly your name address and phone number, a brief description of the item (as you would have it presented by our auctioneer) and your reserve price if any. Preparing this information ahead of time will speed the registration process. Multiple items may be entered on the same form, with separate descriptions and reserves for each item.

We will be trying something a bit different this time, what with all these new fangled computer things. Your entries will be entered into a computer database and your claim check will contain a bar code for tracking, along with the

“human readable” information. Hopefully, having the database available will speed the registration process for future auctions, and will streamline the process for matching up the buyer’s money and the seller’s items. This will also enable us to have an auction item list available for your reference so you can plan your budget. If all goes well, it will be distributed at the banquet entrance.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual Business Meeting of the MER will take place Sunday, October 6th. All MER members are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion of business matters before the Board. Newly elected Officers and Directors will also be installed at the Annual Meeting.

A Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Friday, October 4th, and is also open to all MER members. Further details on both meetings will be published at a later date.

LOCATION

The Clarion Hotel & Conference Center in Cherry Hill is the convention hotel. The hotel has 204 rooms and a fitness center with pool. Call (856) 428-2300 or 1-800-CLARION for reservations. See the hotel registration form below.

The Clarion Cherry Hill is located at 1450 State Hwy. 70 (at the junction of NJ - Rt. 70 and Interstate 295, exit 34B), in Cherry Hill, NJ 08034.

The on-site restaurant and pub is the renowned Elephant & Castle, serving great food and lively spirits! Among many food choices, you can enjoy British-style Fish and Chips. And 18 beers on tap!

State Highway 70 is a major South Jersey thoroughfare and is lined with shopping centers, restaurants, convenience stores, and all major fast-food outlets. Also, the Cherry Hill Mall and Moorestown Mall are both within 5 miles of the Hotel.

DRIVING INSTRUCTIONS

From Washington, DC/Maryland/Delaware:

Take I-95 North to Delaware Memorial Bridge. After crossing the bridge, take I-295 North towards Trenton. Follow I-295 North to Exit 34B for Route 70, approx. 35 miles. Exit onto Route 70 and the Hotel is only 100 yards away, on the right, just past the first traffic light.

From PA, via Commodore-Barry Bridge:

After crossing the bridge, follow signs to I-295 North. Take I-295 North to Exit 34B for Route 70, approx. 25 miles. Follow directions above.

From Philadelphia, PA Airport:

Take I-95 North to the Walt Whitman Bridge (about 5 miles) and cross into New Jersey. Follow Route 42 South for 2 miles to I-295 North. Take I-295 North to Exit 34B for Route 70, approx. 7 miles. Follow directions above.

From New York and Northern NJ via NJ Turnpike:

Take the New Jersey Turnpike south to Exit 4 - Route 73. Take Route 73 North to I-295 South, approx. 1 mile. Take I-295 South to Exit 34B for Route 70, approx. 2 miles. Follow directions above.

From Western PA, Harrisburg, PA Turnpike:

Take the PA Turnpike I-76 to Exit 24 Valley Forge. Proceed straight through the toll plaza (still I-76, now the Schuylkill Expressway) and travel about 25 miles, passing through Center City Philly and past 30th Street Station on the right. About 2 miles south of 30th Street Station is the exit for I-76 and the Walt Whitman Expressway / Bridge. Take that exit straight to the Bridge (2 miles) and cross into New Jersey. Follow Route 42 South for 2 miles to I-295 North. Take I-295 North to Exit 34B for Route 70, approx. 7 miles. Follow directions above.

EXTRA FARE TOURS

#101 – Cape May Seashore Line – \$25.00

Ride on an RDC down the Jersey Coast to Historic Cape May. Roam the town for three hours then ride back up the shore.

#102 – Homasote Plant – \$15.00

Visit the plant that makes our Railroads quiet.

#201 – Operations Call Board – \$15.00

Go for an operating session on one of the areas fine layouts.

EXTRA FARE FOOD FUNCTIONS

#401 - Cherry Hill Depot Banquet – \$30.00

Delicious meal followed by Steve Barry’s slide presentation.

EXTRA FARE NON-RAIL CLINICS

#301 - The Great Pumpkin Project – \$10.00

**Cherry Hill Depot 2002
Mid Eastern Region, NMRA Fall Convention
October 4, 5, & 6, 2002 – Cherry Hill, NJ**

Electronic publishing note: the MER web-site is being changed, and in fact, the old one is dead. My ISP got switched on me, and I haven't gotten the new stuff online yet. It should be ok again by the end of July, if not sooner. — clint hyde

Names as you wish to have them appear on your badges:

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

NMRA# _____ MER # _____ E-Mail: _____

	Quantity	Price	Total Cost
Full Registration	_____	@\$30	\$ _____
Non-NMRA Member Fee	_____	@\$15	\$ _____
Spouse	_____	@\$15	\$ _____
Teenagers (12-16)	_____	@\$35	\$ _____
Children (under 12)	_____	0	\$ _____
101 Cape May Seashore Line (Saturday)	_____	@\$25	\$ _____
102 Homasote Plant (Fridam PM)	_____	@\$15	\$ _____
201 Operations Call Board (Saturday PM)	_____	@\$15	\$ _____
301 Great Pumpkin Clinic	_____	@\$10	\$ _____
401 Banquet	_____	@\$30	\$ _____
TOTAL FEES Enclosed			\$ _____

Make Checks payable to: **Cherry Hill Depot '02**

Mail to: **Cherry Hill Depot
P.O. Box 9012
Collingswood, NJ 08108-9012**

All Activities are ala cart including the Banquet.

Payment must accompany registration form. Bounced checks will not be put through twice - you will be required to pay your entire fee by money order or cashier's check through the mail or in cash at the convention. You will be responsible for all bank fees charged. DO NOT enclose hotel room reservation requests with your registration. If you pre-register and later need to cancel, a full refund will be given only if the request is received by the registrar in writing by September 15, 2002. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for processing of your refund. DO NOT mail a registration after September 15, 2002; register at the door. DO NOT staple your check to your registration form. Call (856)-467-3385 for a recording of current changes and updates. All activities are subject to change, substitution, addition or cancellation.

Cherry Hill Depot Web Site: <http://home.earthlink.net/~mikemcnh/boxcar/fall02.html>

The following members have submitted their resumes and photos as candidates to be placed on ballots for the next officer's election.

For President:

Norman W. Garner

For Vice President:

Jim Kellow

Clint Hyde

For Secretary:

Bill Roman

For Treasurer:

Ron Schmidt

Nominating Committee

Alex Pope, Chairman

Yep, it's election time again. Mostly the same candidates. Please send the ballot back promptly!



Norm Garner – Candidate for Re-election as President

Achievement Program Attaboys

By Roger Cason, MMR

Since my last report in **The Local**, the people listed below have been awarded the following Achievement Program certificates:

Division 1 – New Jersey

Peter N. Butler – Golden Spike

Division 2 - Potomac

Dick Schwanke – Golden Spike

William R. Lyders – Golden Spike

Ken Jones – Association Volunteer

Division 3 - Philadelphia

Richard Newmiller – Model Railroad Engineer – Civil

Division 4 - Tidewater

James J. Curth – Golden Spike

James McLemore, III – Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical

Division 5 – James River

Jeff Coleman – Golden Spike

And we have one correction. In Division 13 – Carolina Piedmont, Richard Genthner was awarded his certificate for Association Volunteer. In the May-June issue of **The Local**, I incorrectly listed his award as Association Official. My apologies.

In a perfect world, all these names will appear in the **NMRA Bulletin**. This should not deter you from recognizing them locally. Normally you will be able to recognize an accomplishment long before the name appears in the **Bulletin**.

I am a life member of the National Model Railroad Association and the Mid-Eastern Region and the Tidewater Division, MER. I served as Superintendent of the Tidewater Division 1991, 1992 and 1995 and manager of the 1992 MER Hampton Convention. I have served as the Vice-President (1998-2000) and President (2000-2002) of the MER. I am seeking re-election as President of the MER. I currently hold 5 AP certificates – Dispatching, Association Volunteer, Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical, Engineer Civil and Association Official. I have also participated in contest and won awards at national, regional and local levels for modeling and photography.

During my tenure as President of the MER, I have personally visited 6 of the 9 divisions. All of the divisions now abide by the NMRA by-laws for membership. The MER had their first official audit of the finances. We are fiscally sound and my goal is to ensure that the MER maintains or increases our financial status. Despite the NMRA increase in dues the MER has gained 88 new members. I will continue to be a spokesperson for the betterment of the MER, focusing on the members of the organization. For example, the BOD approved purchasing a computer that allowed us to improve the services offered to the members.

If re-elected as President of the MER, I will continue to fight for whatever the members feel is in the best interest of and fair for the MER.



Clint Hyde – candidate for MER Vice-President

Potomac Div clerk, LOCAL Publisher.

MER needs to become internally stronger and more outward looking. I intend to work on improvements that strengthen the Divisions, and aim at recruiting and retention. Most members' active participation in NMRA takes place at the Division level, so Division activities need to be enhanced to attract new people and keep them active. This means working on recruiting ideas, expanding our visibility outside our own group, and minimizing or eliminating negatives.

Each Division needs help and support from the Region, and I will work to ensure this help is forthcoming at all times—MER can't be holding Divisions back in terms of growth.

I will visit every Division each year, to meet the members, hear complaints, requests for help, etc. I am available via telephone and email all the time, and will make sure that adequate communication is taking place where the members need it.

Some MER members live in locations outside of Division boundaries, and need a separate approach. I would like to encourage these folks to form their own local groups, even if small, and will be happy to help facilitate this—there is more than enough opportunity and information available to do a good job at this.



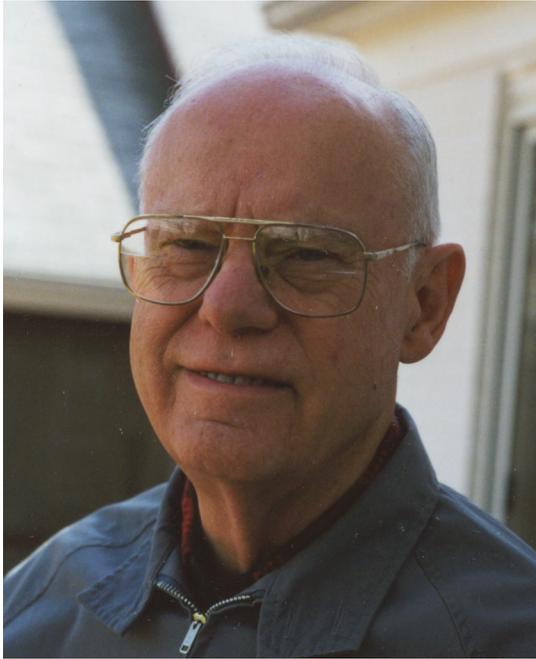
Jim Kellow – Candidate for Re-election as Vice-President

I have enjoyed being the Mid-Eastern Region's Vice-President for the last 2 years, and wish to thank the members of the region for giving me this opportunity. I look forward to continue serving the region as Vice-President for another term.

I have been a model railroader for over 50 years and am a Life Member of the NMRA and the MER. I have served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Tidewater Division, the editor of the Tidewater Division's newsletter, the MER's Achievement Program Chairman, the Registrar for the MER's Spring 2000 Convention in Portsmouth VA, the acting MER Convention Chairman, and the current Chairman of the NMRA National Achievement Program Steering Committee.

The national NMRA is currently considering changes in policies and operation that can have major impacts on our region. I believe my commitment and willingness to work for the region, as well as my practical experience in finance and management will enable me to make sound decisions, on behalf of the MER membership, on these issues.

In addition I believe there are programs that need our attention in the next few years including, efforts to retain and increase our membership, programs aimed at providing model railroad experiences to young people, and educational opportunities for all of our members, designed to increase their enjoyment of the hobby. I look forward to being a part of developing these programs for our organization.



Ron Schmidt – Candidate for re-election as Treasurer

I have been involved with model railroading since 1952, have been a member and President of the Northern Virginia Model Railroaders, and am a member of the Chesapeake Trainmasters Club. I have earned Achievement Certificates for Chief Dispatcher, Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical, Association Volunteer, and Association Official.

I served as Chairman of the MER Budget Committee for 16 years and worked closely with three different Treasurers during that period. I presented the operating budget to the Board of Directors every year and have attended most of their meetings, contributing to the discussion of fiscal matters. Since being elected Treasurer in 1996, I have set up an accounting system, which is used to record all income and expenses with the ability to provide frequent financial reports to the BOD. I have a thorough knowledge of the MER's financial operations and an understanding of the policy actions taken by the BOD in past years.

In 1994, I took over the responsibility of maintaining the MER membership database and developed a procedure for transferring the membership data from a commercial computer to my own. This simplified the format for greater efficiency and added the ability to provide reports needed by the Business Manager, Treasurer, and BOD. The Business Manager now maintains the database.

I believe that my service as Budget Committee Chairman and my extensive experience dealing with the financial matters of the MER indicate I am uniquely qualified to continue as the Treasurer of the Mid-Eastern Region.

Bill Roman – Candidate for re-election as Secretary

I am seeking re-election as the Secretary of the MER in order to continue the work of our organization. Since taking office in this position in October 2000, I have helped in the revision and updating of our Bylaws, and looking ahead. I am drafting a revision of the Division Superintendent's Handbook to incorporate certain policy changes and to perhaps streamline this document, as well as revising and updating any other materials, which require modification.

I have been a member of the Potomac Division for nearly thirty years, and presently share Division AP Coordinator responsibilities. Additional memberships include the NRHS, Western Maryland Railway Historical Society, and the B&O Museum. Over the years, I have attended several National conventions and perhaps 35 MER conventions. It has been extremely interesting and helpful to see the workings of MER and to participate as an officer. Although the last two years of the NMRA and MER have not been without some controversy, I believe that MER is on the right track, is operating on a sound financial basis, and is providing responsive service to members. I would like to continue to work to maintain and expand our Region's activities and membership.

Why *This* Car? A Quick Look at the Selection Process

By Roger Cason, MMR

You will find an order blank for the latest MER for-sale car elsewhere in this issue. I thought it might be useful to give you some insight into the selection process for the cars we sell. In effect, it's a mixture of **commercial reality** and **policies/preferences**. Future car selections will also be influenced by some **future decisions**. Let's take each of these in turn.

Some Commercial Realities

The cost of a new set of dies for a styrene car is in the high five or low six figures. We can't afford to commission a set of dies just for our car. We must choose a basic body for which dies already exist.

Many manufacturers don't do custom painting. Some will sell unpainted bodies to custom painters, and some won't. (Many large manufacturers never even bothered to reply to our recent inquiry letters.)

Many of the costs associated with custom painting are fixed for each batch or order (setup, artwork, etc.), rather than for each car. As a result, the cost per car will be high if we place a very small order, or an order with too many variations. On the other hand, if we place a very large order, we may not sell the cars for years. Recent orders have been in the 300-500 car range.

A lot of model railroad manufacturing is done overseas. Using an unpainted car body made overseas is frequently feasible. Having the custom painting done overseas is not feasible for our orders.

Policies/Preferences

Over the past few years, a number of practices have evolved which seem to make modeling and business sense. We sell cars as a modest fundraiser and as a service to our members.

"Service to our members" means offering a car that is not commercially available, and is closely associated with the MER. This can mean a railroad in the MER (for example, the CNJ). For private owner cars, this can mean a car owned by business in the MER, or a car used in large quantities to ship material to customers in the MER.

"Service to our members" has also meant selling to MER members at a price lower than the price to non-members.

"Not commercially available" touches on another policy issue. We try to avoid item-to-item competition with tax-paying for-profit businesses.

From the standpoint of quality, difficulty, and price, we have aimed above the toy store/train set market but below the super-craftsman market. In other words, we have tried to offer a good layout-quality car at a reasonable price. More on this later.

Within reason, and limited somewhat by economics, we try to offer a car that is prototypically accurate. This particularly applies to painting and numbering. If at all possible, we need to start with a photo rather than someone's memory of what they saw years ago, or an old derelict car whose lettering is long gone.

We have assumed that our offering should look like something used in actual prototype interchange service. This helps insure that it will make sense for the largest number of layouts. This eliminates captive cars (MOW, cabooses, etc.) and structures. It also rules out cars lettered for the Region, the World Series, Washington Redskins, etc.

We have sold cars at MER conventions, and by mail through pro bono notices in *The Local*, the *NMRA Bulletin*, *Model Railroader*, and *Railroad Model Craftsman*. This approach has brought reasonable results.

Future Issues and Decisions

When the current car is sold out, our intention is to offer another. Within the limits of commercial reality (see above), we would appreciate getting your input on the selection.

What kind of car to offer – box, gondola, etc.? On the one hand, many people get bored with the "same old same old" box cars. On the other hand, a car that is unusual or weird may not have a place on many layouts. Do you have any thoughts here?

What era to offer? Past selections have tended to focus on transition-era cars on the assumption that lots of people model this era. What do you think?

Other things being equal, I have assumed that it's nice to offer something with a little pizzazz (for example, the over size CNJ herald on the previous offering). Should this be a future goal?

The latest hobby shop trend: numerous offerings of high quality fully assembled HO cars. Prices are typically in the \$25-\$30 range. Should we consider such an offering?

Going to the other end of the scale, assembly difficulty for kits is another issue. If we offered a more difficult kit (for example, a resin kit or a Proto 2000 tank car kit), would we sell enough of them? Or would we be stuck with a big unsold inventory?

So far, we have limited our offerings to HO. Should we try an N-scale offering? A confession is in order at this point. All my experience is in HO. I'll be happy to investigate, but would appreciate specific suggestions on N-scale manufacturers and custom painters.

MID-EASTERN REGION, NMRA, INC.
9 Roosevelt Ave.
Wilmington, DE 19804-3044

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MER Special Tank Car Order Form



Car	QUANTITY	MEMBER PRICE *	NON-MEMBER PRICE	TOTAL
#2960	_____	\$9.95	\$14.95	\$_____
#3020	_____	\$9.95	\$14.95	\$_____
TOTAL \$				_____

These Anchor Petroleum tank cars are Athearn bodies custom painted by Con-Cor – tan tank, black letters.

SHIPPING: _____ CARS @ \$2.50 FOR FIRST CAR, \$1.50 FOR EACH ADDITIONAL \$_____

* MY MER # IS _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$_____

Ship to: NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE ____ ZIP _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MID EASTERN REGION.

MAIL TO:
 THE MID-EASTERN REGION INC.
 Business Manager
 9 Roosevelt Ave.
 Wilmington, DE 19804-3044

The Mid-Eastern Region Inc., NMRA
 An IRS Tax Exempt Organization
 Business Manager
 9 Roosevelt Ave.
 Wilmington, DE 19804-3044

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/DUES RENEWAL NOTICE
 YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION
 TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State ____ Zip (+4) _____
 email _____
 NMRA # _____ Expire Date _____
 MER # _____ Expire Date _____
 Scale _____ Birth date _____
 Tel # _____

Remittance Enclosed for:
 NMRA Dues: New Renewal _____
 1 year: \$45.00 2 years: \$90.00 \$ _____
*Life membership cost is based on your age.
 Send your Birth Date to the NMRA for a quotation.*

Region Dues: New Renewal _____
 1 year: \$8.00 2 years: \$16.00 \$ _____
Life membership cost is based on your age. Send your Birth Date to the MER for a quotation. Only NMRA Life Members qualify for MER Life Membership

MER Lapel Pin/Tie Tack @ \$6 each _____ \$ _____
 MER Cloth Patch @ \$3 each _____ \$ _____
 Donation _____ \$ _____
 TOTAL ENCLOSED _____ \$ _____

Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region

