



## A Switching Problem at Dixon

*By Dick Genthner*

My railroad, the Arpee & Western, is set in 1937 in the north-eastern mountains of the US. While the Arpee & Western generates a lot of local traffic, both freight and passenger, it is the interconnections with two other railroads that make a big difference. One of these interconnections is with the Glen Wood & Dixon Railroad, which runs two daily through freights that interconnect at Arpee Yard. Recently the G&D asked for the right to provide two passenger trains (including Pullman service) over the entire A&W route. Being the middle of the Great Depression, the A&W did not have enough funds to provide such service itself, so the management was more than pleased to say yes to the proposal.

These new passenger trains begin and end the day at Dixon Yard where the equipment is serviced overnight. In between the two trips, the G&D equipment is serviced at the A&W Berkeley Station and the nearby engine facilities. Since the time frame is 1937, the motive power is all steam and the rolling stock consists of some updated heavyweight passenger cars.

The biggest problem for the G&D is that at the end of the day

the passenger train and engine must be turned to ready them for the next morning's departure. This was expected to be a relatively easy task since there is a wye at one end of the Dixon Yard. The passenger train consists of a baggage car, a coach, a diner, two Pullman sleepers, and an observation car at the rear. The G&D decided that it would like to keep the same car arrangement each day, so the baggage car would always be directly behind the engine and that the observation car would be on the rear. See attached Dixon yard diagram on page 4.

As usual, great plans always find the weakness in a system. The Dixon Wye tail track turned out to be the bugaboo in turning the train. First of all, the wye was designed to fit in a limited geographic area that ended abruptly – not in a brick wall, but at the back wall of the basement. Thought was given to piercing the outside wall to make the tail track longer, but that idea was abandoned when the female co-owner of the house – my wife – vetoed the thought. So the short tail track on the Dixon wye would stay, and the engineer would have to find a way to turn the train using the short tail track that would hold only two passenger cars plus the steam locomotive at one time.

The diagram on page 4 shows the general configuration of tracks and the capacity of each segment. At the first operating session after the new passenger service was introduced, the engineer

*continued on page 4*



## 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

Tank car orders continue to come in. It has been a fast selling car. Be sure to get your order in before they are all gone. PJ Mattson also has a few of the box cars left. We hope to sell some tank or box cars at the Cherry Hill Depot Company Store. We now have CDs available with issues of "The Local" from 1997 through 2001 or 2002. These CDs sell for \$5 each and will be available at the Company Store. Other items that will be on sale at the Company Store are the MER patches and pins. "Altoona Mugs" are also available for the bargain price of \$3 each.

We are looking forward to the Convention to renew friendships and make new ones. I hope you will stop into the Contest Room and say hello to me. I love linking a name with a face – I am repeating myself. I say that every time. But it is true!

If anyone is interested in helping out in the contest room, my husband, Ray Bilodeau and Dick Landt, our Model Contest Chair, would be glad for the help.

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Remember I have a new EMAIL ADDRESS FOR THE MER LAPTOP. It is [mgrmerbus@aol.com](mailto:mgrmerbus@aol.com). Please update your records. Thanks!

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

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# President's Column

*Norm Garner*

This is a follow up to the resolution approved by the MER BOD to send a letter of rejection of the one dues proposal to the BOT/ NMRA, the officials of the NMRA, and the region Presidents. I have received feedback to the letter from four region Trustees. All of them have assured me that the BOT/NMRA is working towards solving this matter

in an equitable solution for all regions. The NMRA realizes that a decision cannot be made on the single membership concept without addressing the percentage of dues that should be allocated for the National and the percentage allocated for the region/division. Therefore, the MER divisions have received a request for financial data to be sent to the NMRA. I hope all division superintendents will comply with this request so that the issue can be resolved in a manner that is acceptable for the members of the MER and NMRA.

## 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 2 – Potomac

Nick Sklias – Golden Spike  
Bill Rutherford – Golden Spike  
John Drye – Golden Spike  
Anthony J. DeMasi – Golden Spike  
Ed Price – Association Volunteer  
Noll Horan – Master Builder – Cars  
Noll Horan – Author  
Noll Horan – Association Volunteer

### Division 4 – Tidewater

James McLemore – Master Builder – Structures

### Division 5 – James River

Franklin C. Schwenk – Golden Spike

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**.

## Letter to **The Local**

Recently my wife and I were in Brunswick, Maryland and came upon the Brunswick Railroad Museum. We have lived in nearby Virginia for many years and did not know that this railroad treasure was so close. The first two floors of the museum are B&O Railroad memorabilia, exhibits, and a history of the railroad's impact on Brunswick. The museum is excellent and every rail fan would find it fantastic. On the top floor is an unbelievable HO model railroad layout of the B&O Railroad from Washington's Union Station to Brunswick, Maryland. The layout has numerous push buttons to sound whistles, move a train, operate crossing gates and lights. There are too many trains to count. This is a model railroader's dream. Behind the museum is the main line of the old B&O, which is now CSX. Numerous freight and passenger trains pass this point daily. Brunswick is close to the famous railroad station at Point of Rocks, MD. Harpers Ferry, West Virginia is only a few miles away. I would like for rail fans and modelers to know that this museum and the surrounding area should be on their list of places to visit. The Brunswick Railroad Museum is located at 40 West Potomac Street, Brunswick, Maryland 21716, Phone (301) 834-7100. A volunteer point of contact is Vic Barker, 220 Wintergreen Lane, Brunswick, MD 21716-1849. You can phone him at (301) 834-7870 or send him e-mail at [barkertv@aol.com](mailto:barkertv@aol.com).

Bob Conley  
Alexandria, VA

## Call for Articles

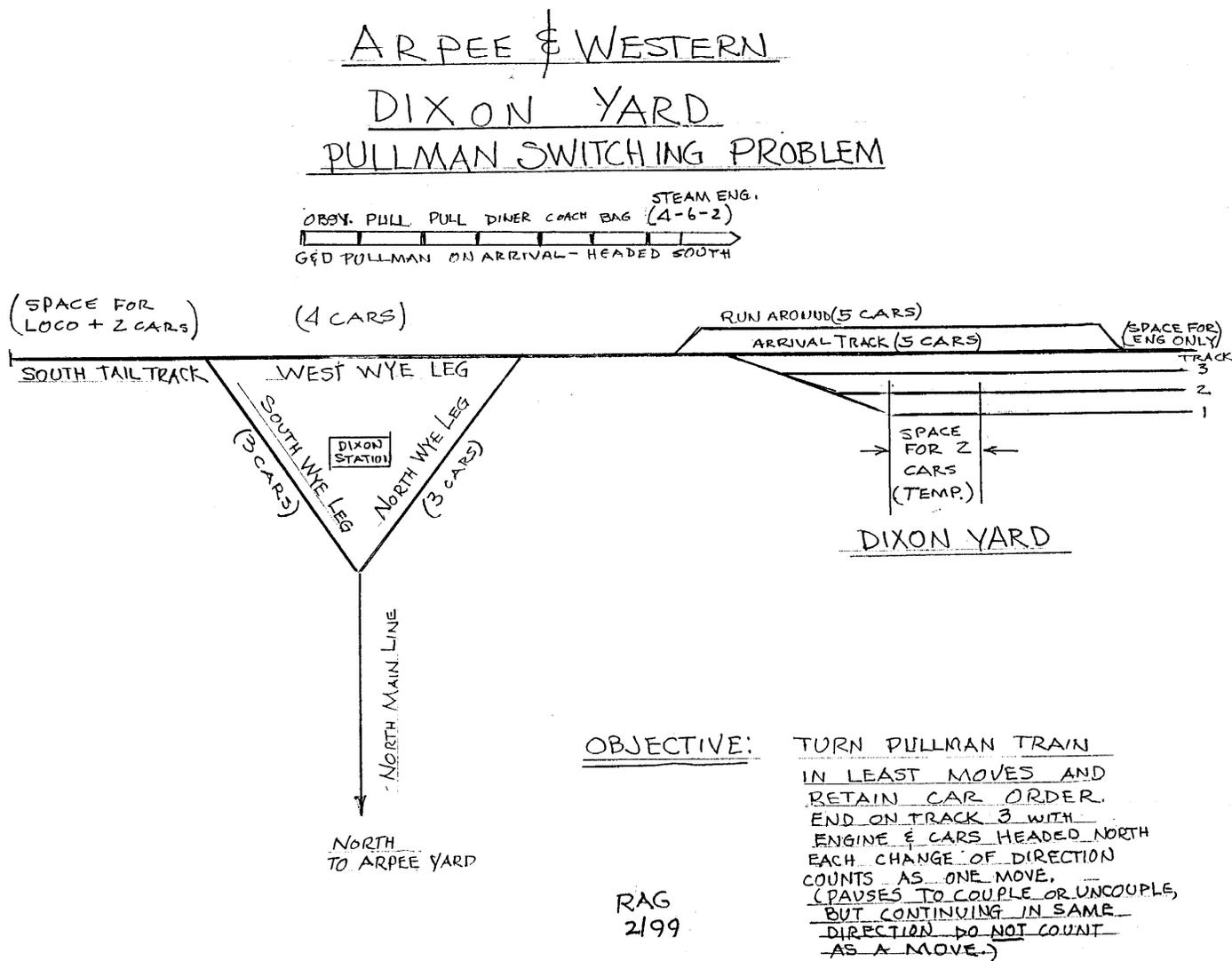
Now is the time for all good MER members to come to the aid of their newsletter. My backlog of article manuscripts is getting perilously low. If you have ever given any thought to writing for publication, now is the time to get your fingers dancing across your keyboard. We need a stockpile of short articles so that **The Local** doesn't just become a means of reporting MER news to its members. You *do* want to see articles on how others have approached a design problem, or how they engineered a tool to help them get a particular task done, or how they redetailed a commercially available freight car kit, don't you? If you have ever asked the question, "Why doesn't **The Local** publish more model railroading articles and less Region news," the answer is that *you* haven't sent anything in to us!

Remember: anything that **The Local** staff publishes – or accepts for publication – may be counted toward your Model Railroad Author Achievement Program certificate. Be sure to read the Author AP information on the NMRA web site at <http://www.nmra.org/achievement/apc10.html>.

## Dixon Yard

finally determined that the train could not be turned at all, and the next run was made with the observation car somewhere in the middle of the consist. After a good bit of discussion, there were several alternate methods derived, but they took so much time and so many moves that a better way had to be found. I came up with the thought of a contest and asked for entries. I thought I had the best solution that made the turnaround in 17 steps. A step is defined as a change in direction. A pause to uncouple and then to continue in the same direction was not considered a step, but only a little pause. So given the diagram, the train consist, and the definition of a step, how many steps does it take you to turn the train?

The best solution to date (also included) does it in 11 steps. Can you do better than John White's solution? John is a member of the AWOs, the Arpee & Western Operating Group, which started with four member about five years ago and now has a membership of over sixteen. We are all retired and meet almost every Tuesday afternoon to run one of three railroads belonging to members of the group. John White's solution is now framed and posted at Dixon for the enlightenment of newer engineers who think they know better - only to find out that so far, eleven steps turns out to be a winner. If you have a better solution, the G&D management would be pleased to hear from you. You can write me at 311 Highlands Bluffs Drive, Cary, NC, 27511 or at argent1@att.net on the Internet.



# Dixon Yard Pullman Switching Problem Winning Solution

*by John White*

## Arrival

Arrange to come into the Dixon yard on the arrival track, but stop at the Dixon station and drop the last two cars at the Dixon station. Pull remainder of the train forward onto the arrival track.

### 1. (Reverse)

Throw turnouts, uncouple the engine and run in reverse around the four cars, backing into the north leg of the wye. Couple up with the Pullman and observation car and continue backing onto the North main line.

### 2. (Forward)

Throw turnouts and pull forward into the South tail track.

### 3. (Reverse)

Throw turnouts and back engine and two cars onto Track 3.

### 4. (Forward)

Throw turnouts, uncouple engine and pull forward past the end of the arrival track.

### 5. (Rev)

Throw turnouts, back engine onto the arrival track and couple up to the remaining four cars.

### 6. (Forward)

Throw turnouts, pull all four cars onto the North leg of wye and drop the coach and baggage car at the station platform. Proceed with engine and two cars to North main line.

### 7. (Reverse)

Throw turnouts, back engine, diner and Pullman onto South tail track.

### 8. (Forward)

Throw turnouts, pull forward with engine and two cars onto West wye leg and drop diner and Pullman. Pull engine forward onto arrival track.

### 9. (Reverse)

Throw turnouts, back engine onto North wye leg and couple with baggage and coach. Continue backing engine and two cars onto North mainline.

### 10. (Forward)

Throw turnouts, pull engine and two cars onto South tail track.

### 11. (Reverse)

Throw turnouts, and back engine and two cars onto West wye leg. Couple with diner and Pullman. Back entire string onto track 3 and couple with Pullman and observation car already there.

Done in 11 steps.



# Report from the Board of Trustees Meeting in Florida

*By Trustee Eric Dervinis*

The substance of this report is different from my previous columns. The board meeting in Fort Lauderdale was a watershed event for the organization, and one that will change the course of our organization. If you wish to read a detailed report of the meeting, see the **Bulletin** for a column from NCR Trustee Thornton. He does an excellent job of summarizing the meeting, and for more detail, the minutes will be posted on the NMRA website.

Over the last twelve years a number of long-term planning committees had meetings to study the future of the NMRA. All of that effort resulted in little action. The status quo was the only choice the board could seem to make. As one with an inside view on the NMRA, I can tell you that this was not working. The NMRA was becoming less and less relevant, while our finances continued to deteriorate.

Despite the efforts of some board members to move forward, things stayed the same. Finally, our past president Bob Charles took action. He hired an unaffiliated non-profit consultant. After much study, and a daylong meeting with the board, a plan of action started to become clear. A new committee was formed under President Allen Pollock and chaired by Charlie Getz, the former PCR Trustee.

The new Long Range Plan (LRP) was built from the consultant's report and our own analysis of the future. At each of the last four meetings, parts of the plan were presented to the board, and much sent back to committee. This spring, a special committee was formed to hammer out the details. This committee included your trustee and met for two days in Chicago. We worked to come up with new concepts based in part on the premise that the NMRA never existed.

Over the next year, the final bylaws changes will be published and put up for member vote. If ratified, the plan will go into effect in the summer of 2004 at the Seattle convention. I urge you to read the bylaws and the explanations published in the **Bulletin**. Your comments and ideas are solicited. We can continue to fine-tune the LRP and will make further changes in the future.

What are the major changes? First is a new emphasis on Standards, Conformance and Inspection and our role as an "enforcer" of standards. We are uniquely qualified to create and police standards in our hobby.

Second is Single membership. We are all members of the NMRA and should be treated as one group. We want to make membership easier to join and renew. Yes, we are still working on the financial details for regions and divisions. The board is collecting information from all levels and each Trustee is looking for great ideas on how to make this system better.

Third is a reduction in the board size. We are changing the way the board is elected; at the same time we are making it smaller. By approving the plan in Florida, the board approved a smaller, more effective organization to set policy for the NMRA. In the past, it was often clear that trustees were voting for regional or local interests. That is completely counter to the Ohio law we are created under. The trustee's responsibility is to the corporation, and the preservation of the NMRA. The long term success or failure of the NMRA has a dramatic effect on the hobby. After our formation in 1935, the hobby grew in large leaps. Without the NMRA it could have remained a small, balkanized pastime. What does the NMRA mean to the hobby? The best recent example is the growth of DCC after the NMRA standards were approved.

There is much more information to come. Your comments are an important part of the process. Please write, call or email – my address is page two of **The Local**. And plan to attend my clinic at the Fall Convention in Cherry Hill. Remember model railroading is fun, and when the heated discussions are over, we will still have our trains.

## James River Division Election Results

I would like to inform you that as of July 1 2002, the James River Division Officers are as follows:

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I have thanked the JRD for allowing me to serve as their superintendent during my term. I wish the new officers the best in bringing the nuts and bolts of the hobby to the divisional level and the community, and hope you have successful dealings with them that enrich the hobby for all. As of now I have offered to continue as the JRD newsletter editor through 2002, so I am sure I will remain in touch with some of you in that regard.  
– Pete Shatswell

## 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](mailto:afmende@amp.com)

**September 14 and 15, 10 AM to 4 PM. Tidewater Division, MER, Annual Model Train Show & Sale.** The Virginia Beach Pavillion, 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. [nawneycreek@msn.com](mailto:nawneycreek@msn.com).

**September 14, October 19, November 16, and December 14 Noon to 400 PM.** Northern Virginia Model Railroaders, Inc. open house. Located in historic Washington & Old Dominion Railroad station, 231 Dominion Road (at the intersection with Ayr Hill Road), Vienna, VA. Admission free, donations accepted. More information at <http://www.nvmr.org>, by e-mail at [nvmrinc@hotmail.com](mailto:nvmrinc@hotmail.com) or call 703-938-5157 on the day of the open house.

**October 4 to 6, 2002 – Cherry Hill Depot, the Fall 2002 MER Convention.** Chairman: P.J. Mattson. Additional information may be found at <http://home.earthlink.net/~mikemcnh/boxcar/fall02.html>.

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

**November 16 - 17, 9am - 5pm. NEUSE RIVER VALLEY MODEL RAILROAD CLUB, INC.,** Eighteenth Annual Train & Railroadiana Show and Sale. Kerr Scott Building, NC State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, North Carolina. \$5.00 for both days. George W. Lasley (919) 834-5531 or Peter K. Hansma (919) 217-0407, P.O. Box 19573, Raleigh, NC 27619-9573

**November 30, December 1, 7, 8, 2002 and January 4, 5, 2003 (snow dates January 11 & 12) Noon to 4 PM. Cheltenham Model Railroad Club open house.** 8000 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027-1411. Admission by donation. Contact Bruce Binder, 7430 Bingham St. Philadelphia, PA 19111, (215)-722-4542 or (215)-635 9747.

# 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:

- Paint with Polly Scale Paints – Bruce Barrett
- Bridges and Buildings – Al Buchan
- Detailing the Right-Of-Way – Al Buchan
- Passenger Operations – Jim Dalberg
- The NMRA And You – Eric Dervinis
- Design for Industrial Switching RR – Dick Foley
- Reading RR Equipment – Win Gross
- Alternative Tortoise Mounting - Dick McEvoy
- New England Railroads - Mike McNamara
- Model Railroad Wiring – Bill McGilvary
- Computer-Assisted Model RRing - Richard Perry
- Buildings from Strathmore Board - John Rahenkamp
- Railfanning the Local Area - Gary Stroh
- Using Del-Aire Switches – John Tomchick
- Making Forests – Bob Utley and Brenda Murphy
- ...and more coming!

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 struc-

tures. 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.

This trip requires advance registration, see the registration form. Transportation to and from the railroad provided. Limited to 90 people.

### **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. Transportation to and from the plant will be provided and will be leaving the convention hotel at 12:00 noon. The Homasote Tour requires advance registration, see the registration form. Limited to 45 people.

### **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.

A large map will be provided for driving to the layouts. Also indicated on the map will be various dining locations to get food while you are in the area for the weekend.

### **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. A limited number of operating positions are available, so be sure to register early.

### **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.

**New Jersey Division Photo Award** - This award, based on popular vote, will be given to the prototype or model photograph depicting a railroad that at one time operated in New Jersey (i.e. PRR, Conrail, Reading, E-L, CNJ, etc.)

**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** for creativity in modeling - Awarded by South Mtn. Division

#### **Favorite Train Award**

Contest registration and viewing will be Friday from noon to 9pm and Saturday from 8am to 9am. Judging will commence at 9:30am.

### **DOOR PRIZES**

Lots of Door Prizes from major manufacturers will be available using the "arms length" of tickets for the drawing.

### **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. The Auction Registration is available on the web site. 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 6 at 9 AM. 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 4 at 1 PM, and is also open to all MER members.

## **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 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station on the right. About 2 miles south of 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

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

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

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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	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL FEES Enclosed</b>			<b>\$ _____</b>

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 NMRA National Convention: Contests and MER participation

*By  
Ray Bilodeau,  
NMRA Assistant Contest Manager and  
MER General Contest Chairman*

Just to refresh the collective MER memory, there was a National Convention in Fort Lauderdale this July. I thought it would be hot and sticky; instead it was warm and sticky not unlike the weather north of the Florida line. For some reason most of our members are wary of attending a national convention, but in this case, well...even with palm trees and sandy beaches, good food, and the hope of maybe finding a decent Cuban cigar somewhere nearby, attendance at the convention was quite low. In fact a story circulated on Tuesday that the Toronto group who are sponsoring next year's Maple Leaf 2003, had already pre-registered a third more people than were actually attending the festivities in Fort Lauderdale.

But I was there to help administer the contests. Also I wanted to report back to everyone in the MER, the good fortune of several, maybe a few, or possibly one or two members, who did well and won awards in the model, photo, and arts and crafts contests.

Like our regional conventions, we had fewer entries in the national model contest this year – a total of fifty models. We had no traction entries – sound familiar? A third of the models entered, however, did win merit awards in the Achievement Program. Given such a small entry base, the quality of models was exceptional...believe me, there are still real craftsmen out there building great models. Beside myself, three other MER members helped judge the Model Contest: Terry Nesbit from the Susquehanna Division, John Johnson from the Tidewater, and Larry Lau from the Carolina Southern.

For the second year in a row, John Johnson received the First Place trophy in the Model Contest for Off-Line Structures. Riddick's Folly, which won top honors at the MER Richmond Convention this past June, did well at the National. Besides the first place award, this model won special awards for the Structure Matching a Photograph of the Prototype and the popular vote trophy for Member's Choice – First Place in Structures. John also won the Achievement Program Kit-bashing Award in Freight Cars, for his Western Maryland Covered Hopper. John also received a

merit award in the AP for his National Plate Glass Covered Hopper. Then there was his First Place in the Favorite Train contest. A PRR freight train took the honors here. Last but not least, J.J. won a first place plaque in the Original Railroadiana category of the Arts and Crafts contest for his, 20th Century Limited Stamp Display.

In the Railroad Pass contest, Bill McGilvary, from Petersburg, VA in the James River Division, received a first place plaque for his Blue Ridge & Western Pass. This pass also took First place in RR Passes at the June, 2002 MER Convention in Richmond.

Good Job! Congratulations to both John and Bill for their entries and winnings in Fort Lauderdale. Thanks as well to our MER judges. But, only two contest entrants from the MER? I found this hard to believe. I had to listen to a lot of bad jokes about "stealth" modelers and phantom photographers from the MER for a good part of the convention week.

As you can see, we give out quite a few special awards for the National contests. Model craftsmanship is rewarded, photography and crafts skills, definitely! All you have to do is enter. You can even do it by proxy! The next convention is up the road in the Niagara Frontier Region in Toronto. Please, spend your vacation and your money in Canada next summer...eh? I have been following the Weather Channel daily temperature forecast over the past few months. I'll tell you it is a lot cooler up north in July than it is here in the Middle Atlantic "Cradle of Liberty," AKA "swamp."

On to New Jersey, for the fall MER convention – Cherry Hill Depot, October 4 to 6, 2002. Again, I am asking our members to think about becoming model contest judges. If you have built or are building models, whether you have entered a model contest or not, or are active in the AP, why not try your hand at judging the model contest. You can start as an apprentice judge. One caveat: our regional by-laws say if you enter models in an NMRA sponsored model contest at an MER regional convention, you cannot be a judge for this model contest. This prohibition does not exist for the national model contest. There you can enter models and judge the model contest as well, as long as you excuse yourself from judging your own models, and the category in which they are entered. If model judging has crossed your mind, contact me or Dick Landt, our Model Contest Chair.

If you wish to bring a model to be judged for the

Achievement Program only, please do so. We will arrange to display your model in the contest room, and we will judge it separately from the other models entered in the model contest. We will of course have a judged model contest. Special awards will include:

The President's Award – President Garner would like to see MER modelers bring a caboose or cabin car to Cherry Hill Depot; the Blue Lantern Award; the Philadelphia Division New Modeler Award; the Marv Kershner Award, for creativity in modeling, sponsored by the South Mountain Division, and chosen by members of the Division; and the Favorite Train – a popular vote award sponsored by the Tidewater Division. We will also have a popular vote photo contest. There will be a special theme contest and award given by the New Jersey Division, sponsors of Cherry Hill Depot. The photo contest at this fall convention will include the theme of railroads that now or at one time passed through the state of New Jersey. This does not mean that you cannot bring a photo or photos of other rail related model or prototype scenes.

After careful study we have decided to allow each member to submit fifteen entries through four categories. Photos can be color or black and white prints. Photo categories include model, prototype, steam, and all others. All prints must be mounted on hard board of some kind, but they do not necessarily need to be matted. Frames, glass or plexiglass enclosed photos are not allowed. Each print must be at least 5x7 inches, and no larger than 8x12 inches. Mounting board must be at least 8x10 inches, and no larger than 11x14 inches.

We will continue the Pass contest at Cherry Hill Depot. Again, this will be a popular vote contest. I have seen passes; I know that there are others scattered throughout the MER!

Crafters, October is a perfect month to go craft-crazy. Bring an entry or several to the convention. Guys, we had some nice examples of locomotive wood burnings at Richmond. The Arts and Crafts contest will be by popular vote. There will be both Rail and Non-Rail categories.

Long-winded? You bet. Anything to get you to notice what we are doing and what's up in the future. If you have any specific questions about the national or MER contests please write, anytime. [raybilodeaujr@aol.com](mailto:raybilodeaujr@aol.com).

## More Information on the Anchor Tank Car

By Roger L. Cason, MMR,  
Car Project Coordinator

Elsewhere in this issue of *The Local* is an order form for the latest MER car-for-sale, an Anchor Petroleum butane/propane car. In addition to *The Local*, ads for this car have appeared in the *NMRA Bulletin*, *Railroad Model Craftsman* and *Model Railroader*. We received the following information in a letter from William Anderson of Spring, TX. Thanks for the background, Bill!

"I work for ExxonMobil (Natural Gas Liquids Business Analyst) and previously was with Mobil Oil's Gas Liquids group for years. I have some industry information and a recap on 'whatever happened to Anchor' which might be of interest to your group.

"In the petroleum industry, Gas Liquids (NGLs) refers to the raw stream of liquids distilled from natural gas production or which is separated from crude oil as it is produced. There is also a stream of NGLs produced when crude is fractionated at the refinery. Under normal pressure, NGLs are gaseous, but with moderate pressure they become liquid (i.e., butane lighters).

"The Gas Liquids raw mix stream is of no use per se, and is typically fractionated into its purity components at a stand alone gas plant or one located within a refinery complex. The components and their uses are: Ethane – used for plastics feedstock; Propane – used for heating, crop drying, and plastics feedstock; Normal Butane – used to pressurize gasoline (so your car starts in the winter); Isobutane – used in gasoline blending to raise the octane level; and Natural Gasoline – used in the gasoline blending process at the refineries (its natural octane level is low).

"Anchor Petroleum was (as I understand) a fairly profitable company with excellent NGL resources and facilities (lots of tank cars), among other things. Mobil Corporation acquired the company in 1960."

# Model RR "Midi"-Convention

Oct 18-20

Hosted by Potomac Division and Northern Virginia NTRAK

**Tastes great:**

- Clinics
- Contests
- Railfanning
- Modular Layouts
- White Elephant Table
- GREAT Home Layout Tours

**Less filling:**

- \$15.00 Admission
- Easy to get to
- Register at the door
- Inexpensive local hotels (see web-page)

**Home Layout tours:**

Dick Patton	On3	Oct 18
Andrew Dodge	On3	Oct 18
John Armstrong	O	Oct 19
J D Smith	HO	Oct 19
Pliny Holt	N	Oct 20
Paul Dolkos	HO	Oct 20

Where else can you see ALL of them in one week-end?

Dodge and Patton are Friday evening, make the trip early to avoid the local traffic!

**AP and Popular Vote Contests  
Modular Layouts in HO and N: Come operate!**

**Hands-on Clinics:**

- making trees
- open loads
- backdrop painting
- making/painting signs/people
- car weathering
- scratch-building with styrene

*AND MORE!*

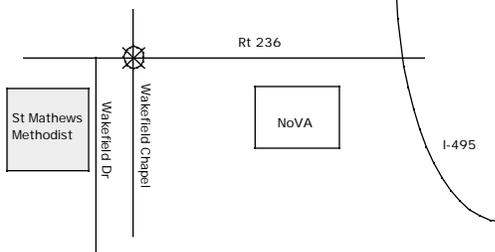
A special convention goodie will also be available, not like anything you'd gotten before.

**Hotel Information (suggestions)**

Hampton Inn	703-385-2600	\$79
Econo Lodge	703-273-1160	\$66

**WHERE:**

**St Mathews Methodist Church**  
**Little River Turnpike (Rt 236)**  
**Annandale, VA** (2 mi outside beltway)



**FOR MORE INFO:**

**Clint Hyde** 703-803-3068  
**chyde@cox.net**  
**Garret Nicholson** 301-593-7699  
**garret.nicholson@hotmail.com**

web-site: <http://members.cox.net/chyde/Potomac-Model-Rails.html>  
 keep an eye on it for updated info

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

Non-profit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
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 York, PA  
 Permit No. 200

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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				\$ _____
SHIPPING: _____ CARS @ \$2.50 FOR FIRST CAR, \$1.50 FOR EACH ADDITIONAL				\$ _____
* MY MER # IS _____		TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____		

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

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

**Ship to:** NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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**