

The Local

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Number 5

Layout Visitation Etiquette

*By John Glaab
Potomac Division/HO Scale*

I HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE enough to visit many layouts as part of regional and national NMRA conventions. I have also had my layout open for convention tours. I have seen some truly great layouts and I have also visited many layouts in the construction phase that showed great promise, but I have never visited a layout where I didn't see something, or learn something that would be valuable to me at a later date.

In every instance, the host was gracious and genuinely pleased to show his/her work. But I cannot always say the same for the visitors. Too often the rules of basic etiquette are ignored or forgotten. I have made a few mental notes that I observe when visiting a layout and I would like to share them with you.

First. You are a guest in this person's house. Conduct yourself accordingly. If there are snacks and drinks available, don't assume. Ask. Comments such as; "Hi, could I have a soda?", or "Those cookies look very good, may I have one?", will stand you in good stead with the host. Do not pig out on the snacks! The cookies may be the best you have ever tasted, but use some restraint. Do NOT ask for seconds, remember there are other visitors.

Second. In many cases the size of the tour group will be large enough that not everyone can get into the layout room at the same time. Often the group is broken up and half of the group waits while the other goes into the layout room. Ask your tour guide how much time you have. Leave the layout room promptly when the time is up. Do not try to hide in some alcove or under the layout so that you can spend more time. (This is not a face-tious comment.)

Third. Photos. If you have a tripod/monopod, leave it in the bus/car. Do not set up a tripod and start taking photos. This limits the other attendees' ability to move about and view the layout. If you are using flash warn the other visitors. Being blinded by someone's flash is not a pleasant experience! Remember the layout is there for everyone to enjoy, not just you. One solution I have seen is to put all of the photographers in one group, while

the other group(s) get to see the layout first. This way the photographers can experience first hand, just how unpleasant it is to have to try to view the layout while some photographer is trying to trip you with his tripod!

If you need to use the bathroom, ask someone where it is. Do NOT go exploring! (I'm not making this up!)

Inappropriate/thoughtless comments. This is probably the biggest source of irritation for the host. Remember, you are there to see the host's layout. All too often a visitor will start talking about their layout. My advice, bite your tongue if you even think of mentioning your layout. If the host wants to know about your layout he will visit it when the opportunity presents itself. Do not show up with a notebook filled with photos of your layout and corner the host to show him what you have done. (Yes, it really happens.)


Inappropriate comments range from the purely humorous to the downright nasty. Here are a few of my favorites:

A person just entering the layout room. "Wow, some people would be very impressed!" (WHO?) Anyone here?

A person looking at the track construction, "When I build my layout, I'm not going to do it that way!" Or, "I can't imagine why ANYONE would want to hand lay all their track!" (It's because I'm crazy.)

"Well, you've got a good start here!" (My layout is 25 years old. Perhaps in another seventy-five years I'll have it near done.)

Fourth. I probably shouldn't have to mention this. DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING! Don't even ask if you can touch anything. If you want to examine something more closely, ask the host to show it to you. You break it, you bought it, and the price should be prohibitive. Tarring and feathering has gone out of favor, but I'm not sure why.

And my favorite. "Do you mind if I smoke?" I will not repeat my response. (It was something about setting him on fire and watching him smoke...) 

The Local

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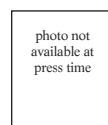


photo not available at press time

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All subscription information, advertising rates and publication deadlines are now located on page 16.

The MER website is <http://mer.nmra.org/>

From The Business Car

By John Janosko
MER President

IF YOU READ the last **Local** you probably saw the article by Fred Miller as to the graying of our membership. I have also gotten some calls recently relating to the same subject. Since there seems to be a good bit of interest on membership, I am going to ask Mike White to put this on our agenda at the annual meeting on Thursday at the convention in Cary in October. I know in the past as a Division Superintendent we have discussed the subject of getting new blood into the NMRA. We have tried to get some interest in the Scouts and it seems there is a lot of interest in the Scout RR merit badge but not in getting into actual model railroading. Teen's that do seem interested will do it for a few years and then when they get a driver license and also find out about girls, we lose them. One place that I have seen some interest is the 50's and older generation that now has sent their children off to college, military or to the job market and now have a spare bedroom. The railroad bug has bit them again and now they also have time to do other things then worry about getting their children to all of the extra activities that happen when you have to provide limo service. Just because they are now back into modeling does not mean that we get them into the NMRA. If

you have some ideas and are coming to the convention, please come to the board meeting and share your ideas. Maybe we can work up a plan to add to our ranks. If you know anyone that is in the above category bring them to the convention and we can get them a rail pass and show them some of the different options that are available to them. They may also find someone that is a member from their area that could turn out to be a mentor and avoid all the mistakes we made the hard way while trying to be a good model railroader.

In other news: Kevin Feeney had to step down as Convention coordinator due to a job change and a move to Europe. Eric Dervinis has agreed to fill the position and will report to PJ Mattson. If you have any future convention questions please contact Eric. Please remember this is a volunteer position and any support you can provide Eric would be appreciated. Welcome aboard Eric.

November is Model Railroad month, if you or your division is thinking about open houses or clinics now is the time to plan not October 31st.

Hope to see you in Cary in October. 🚂

Observing the Longest Model Train Record

Article and photographs by Anthony Jones
MER at Large/N Scale

EDITOR'S NOTE: Below is the documentation and statement of one of the two witnesses as the Wilmington Railroad Museum set the new Guinness World Record for the longest model train. The record was previously held by Miniatur Wunderland in Hamburg, Germany, with a model train of 892 feet, 3 inches.

WITNESS STATEMENT

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

I arrived at the Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington NC 28401, at approximately 8:40 AM on Saturday April 23rd, 2011. Members of the Wilmington Railroad Museum were already present and performing test runs and making adjustments to the train and cars until approximately 1:00 PM. During this time I was introduced to David Jones, Nick Miguel, and Marty Stoughton of McKim & Creed Surveying. The track was setup in two ovals, such as a "figure 8" design folded back over itself, with a fly-over bridge located at the area designated as milepost zero by the surveyors. See photo 1.

I observed cards placed along the HO-scale track marked with numerals for each one-half scale mile. See photo 2. I inspected the control area located near the center of the layout. I observed the track powered by an MRC Power G power pack, connected to other miscellaneous circuitry such as heat sinks, toggle switches,

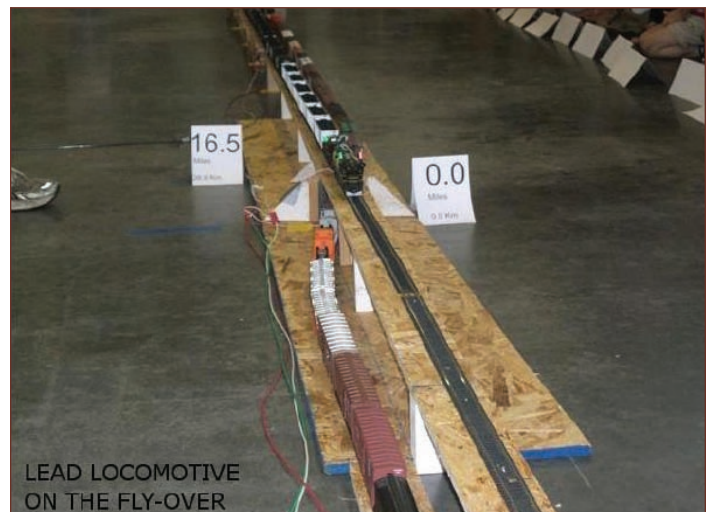


Photo 1: Lead locomotive on the fly-over.

continued on page 4

Keeping In Touch...

By Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, I have referenced the problem of copies of **The Local** being returned to me marked by the Post Office as “temporarily away.” This situation is caused because the original recipient apparently had suspended their mail, probably because of vacation or move to a summer residence. Our postage permit does not allow holding mail, as First Class mail would be.

Of course **The Locals** are also returned because the subscriber had moved and a change of address notification had not reached me before mailing time. Since each returned copy of **The Local** costs the MER \$1.08 and a subsequent resend another \$1.28 plus supplies, I have adopted a practice of not resending returned

issues. If any subscriber realizes he is missing a particular issue and would like to receive it, I would suggest they contact me and I will send a new replacement if such is available. Incidentally some of the returned **Locals** are from dates several issues back. The USPS seems to move rather slowly for this “labor intensive” activity.

Speaking of back issues of **The Local**, you will read elsewhere about Bob Price’s wonderful contribution to all of us in his role as MER Archivist. I have combined Bob’s work into the already available *The Locals Archive CD* that you can order for \$5.00, handling and shipping included. (See the MER Products page.) Time permitting I will also be adding Bob’s work to our MER web site (<http://mer.nmra.org>) which will enable access to the archives directly online.

As always *Keep in Touch* with any questions or changes in your subscriptions or addresses. A current address on file saves the MER some money. 📧

Longest Model Train Record continued from page 3

and PC boards, connected with what appeared to be 12-gauge stranded copper wire connected to the layout on each side. Connections to the track were made with plastic “suitcase connectors” commonly available commercially, and with crimp on “spade connectors” joined to connector strips at distribution junctions. See photo 3.



Photo 2: Mile marker place cards (milepost 5.5).

The train was an HO-scale model consisting of 31 Bowser locomotives, with one locomotive in the lead and the remainder placed intermittently throughout the train. The rolling stock was HO-scale and consisted of a number of freight and passenger cars of various styles and lengths, mostly boxcars, connected with Kadee-style knuckle couplers, but I observed several cars at the rear of the train connected by plastic horn-style couplers. The total number of cars was 1,563 on the track that was over 1000 feet long.

Doors opened to the public at 10:00 AM and spectators began arriving immediately. See photo 4. During the time from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM I observed test runs being made and adjust-

ments to locomotives, track, and rolling stock being continually made. Unserviceable cars were continually replaced or moved to another location within the train.

During the time of the record attempt from 1:00 PM until the finish at 3:50 PM I positioned myself within a few yards of the lead locomotive observing its movement the entire time. The crew attempting to break the record consisted of approximately 35 members of the Wilmington Railroad Museum as well as about 75 volunteers consisting of observers stationed at intervals around the track, crowd control, ticket personnel, and others assigned various miscellaneous duties.

THE WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT

The whistle blew to begin the world record attempt at approximately 1:00 PM. The train moved forward from milepost zero to about milepost 2.5 before an emergency stop occurred at 1:06 PM.

The **second attempt** began at 1:12 PM and the train moved forward from about milepost 2.5 to about milepost 5.5 before an emergency stop occurred at about 1:20 PM.

The **third attempt** began at about milepost 8 and the train moved forward to about milepost 10 before an emergency stop at about 1:34 PM.

The **fourth attempt** the train began moving from about milepost 10 at about 1:36 PM and moved forward until an emergency stop was sounded a short distance past milepost 11.

The **fifth attempt** the train moved forward from the area of milepost 11 and moved about six inches before an emergency stop.

The **sixth attempt** the train moved forward from the area past milepost 11 and moved to an area past milepost 12 before an emergency stop was called.

The **seventh attempt** the train moved forward from just past milepost 12 to a position just past milepost 13 before an emergency stop.

The **eighth attempt** the train moved forward from just past milepost 13 at 1:47 PM to a position close to milepost 15 before an emergency stop.

The **ninth attempt** the lead locomotive moved from the posi-

tion approaching milepost 15 at 1:54 PM and moved about six feet before an emergency stop.

The **tenth attempt** the train moved forward from about the milepost 15 at 1:57 PM to the 0 milepost before an emergency stop.

The **eleventh attempt** the train moved forward from about the 0 milepost at 2:02 PM to a short distance past milepost 2 before an emergency stop.

The **twelfth attempt** the train moved forward from the area of the milepost 2 at 2:11 PM and moved about four feet before an emergency stop.

The **thirteenth attempt** the train moved forward at 2:12 PM from just past milepost 2 and proceeded to just past the milepost 6 before and emergency stop.



Photo 3: The engineer.

The **fourteenth attempt** the train moved forward at 2:25 PM from about half way past the milepost 6 for a few feet before an emergency stop.

The **fifteenth attempt** the train moved forward at 2:30 PM from about 3/4 the distance between mileposts 6 and 7 before an emergency stop was called at milepost 12.

The **sixteenth attempt** the train moved forward at 2:47 PM from the area of the milepost 12 for a distance of about 2 feet before an emergency stop was called.

The **seventeenth attempt** the train moved forward from the area just past the milepost 12 at 2:50 PM and proceeded for less than a foot before an emergency stop was called.

The **eighteenth attempt** began at 2:54 PM and the train moved



Photo 4: Visitors watch the attempt of the "Longest Model Train."

forward from the area just past milepost 12 and proceeded to just past milepost 13 before an emergency stop.

The **nineteenth attempt** began at 2:59 PM and the train moved forward from just past milepost 13 and moved approximately 380 feet to just before milepost 3 before an emergency stop.

The **twentieth attempt** began at 3:18 PM and the train moved forward from just before milepost 3 and proceeded several feet until it was just past milepost 4 when an emergency stop was called.

The **twenty-first attempt** the lead locomotive moved forward at 3:25 PM from the area just past milepost 4 and proceeded forward. It continued forward around the track and passed milepost 11 at 3:41 PM. It continued along the track and passed milepost 12.5 at 3:45 PM. The lead locomotive passed the area designated as the finish line by the survey crew at 3:50 PM. The lead locomotive continued forward past the finish line to the area of the milepost 0 a short time later. I observed the entire event of the locomotive beginning its twenty-first pull at approximately 3:25 PM and continuing without interruption and past the area designated as the finish line by the survey crew at 3:50 PM, and I also photographed the locomotive actually crossing the finish line. I was present while the survey crew made the final measurements of the length that the train moved, as well as while the survey crew made the measurement of the train after it passed the designated finish line. The survey crew stated to me that the train moved 750.09 feet without a stop, and the length of the train was 925.55 feet. I departed the Wilmington Convention Center at 5:15 PM that evening. 📷

NOTICE TO ALL MER MEMBERS: ANNUAL MEETING

The 2011 annual meeting of MER members will be held on Sunday morning, October 30th in conjunction with the MER Fall Convention in Cary, NC.

Exact time and room will be announced later.

Mike White
MER Secretary

Model Railroad Open House Month

*By Pat McTeigue
Philadelphia Division/HO Scale*

IF IT'S ALMOST NOVEMBER, it must be Model Railroad Open House Month. That is the common knowledge in the Delaware Valley.

You might be wondering why I'm talking about November now. Well, it's because the NMRA wants to increase the recognition of November as Model Railroading Month, and they are wondering what we as local modelers are doing to support this effort and the growth of the hobby.

To that end, I'd like to share with you some history on our Model Railroad Open House List, how it exists today, and request your participation this November as either a visitor or a layout owner open for visitors.

Over twenty years ago, Bruce Friedman started managing a list of fellow modelers that existed in Northern Delaware that would open for visitors. This gave the Northern Delaware modelers a chance to visit each other's layouts to keep up with the progress and changes each had made. It also gave new modelers a chance to meet others with a common interest. The inspiration gained by these new modelers would hopefully result in the growth of the hobby.

The list was originally printed in hard copy form on 8 1/2 by 11 paper using both sides. The layout list contained the November schedule consisting of the modelers name, address, scale of the layout along with the date and time they chose to be open.

Each modeler supplied a 4 by 4 inch map for getting to their home from main roads in the area. On the handout pages there would be four maps on each side. The list was then duplicated and delivered to hobby stores in the area for distribution to their customers.

This process was so successful that word of mouth about the list dramatically increased the number of layout owners willing to open their layouts.

Bruce's original list contained twenty layouts. Over the years, the list steadily grew in number as well as in geographic scope. Dur-

ing 2010, there were over 200 layouts on the list. According to Bruce, there have been over a hundred open layouts each year. Currently, the area covered by the list includes Eastern shore Maryland (and Baltimore) north to the Delaware border, Delaware itself, Southeastern PA (west to Harrisburg), and southern New Jersey including the Trenton area.

As the number of layouts grew, the size and costs of the handout packet increased and it was also becoming more difficult to distribute. At the height of printed schedules, there were close to 3,000 copies distributed and they were still running out!

The decision was made to replace the printed copies with a website. In addition to the elimination of hard copy printing costs,

there was an interest in appealing to younger modelers who are far more web oriented. The website address is www.modelrailroadopenhouse.com.

Bruce said, "Our sponsors who paid for the printing of the Open House List and maps were mostly hobby shops and they were closing at a rapid rate, so our distribution system and sponsors were going away."

Today, donations are accepted and appreciated to pay for the website. The Philadelphia Division intends to help the effort by making a donation.

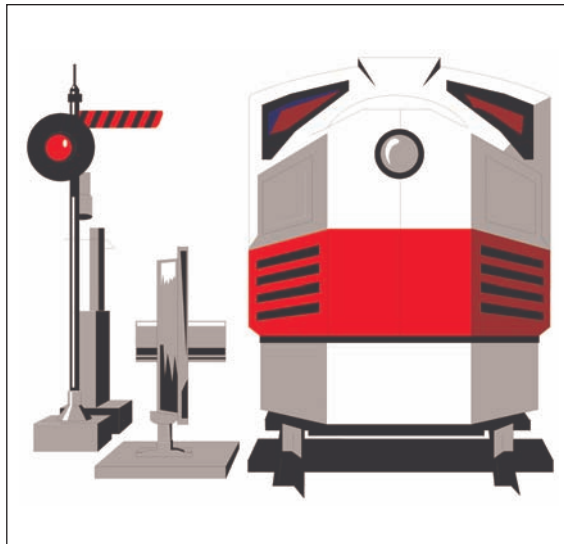
On the website, the layouts are linked to a Google Map so that you can see

where the layouts are individually located, as well as their physical relation to each other on a given day. Visitors can download the schedule and use Google map's "directions feature" to plan their visits.

The hope for this year is that modelers will bring some friends and family with them to generate some more interest in the hobby.

If you live in the area covered by the list and you would like to participate as a layout owner opening your layout for display, registration directions and contact information can be found on the website.

If you live outside the area covered, you might want to consider starting a paper list like Bruce did. You could probably recruit some other modelers, in your area, that would like to open up for



visitors sometime during the month of November, with the help of a local Hobby Shop.

Some layout owners go beyond the Open House List and advertise their open dates in their community newspapers and at their local libraries. Their goal is to attract many of their neighbors and share the fun with the future modeling generation.

Registration information is collected from August 15th to September 15th and the new schedule of Open Houses is made available to all on October 1st.

The last weekend of October is usually reserved for Garden Railroads to take advantage of the weather. All scales are Welcome.

If you have participated in the past, you know how enjoyable it is to have fellow modelers stop by and check out and discuss your layout. This year, I'm hoping more of you will open again to show your progress, and on your non-open days, get out and visit some layouts that you haven't seen for some time. The rumor is that Model Railroads are never done; they are always changing.

I hope I've stimulated some thought about your participation in the Open House List this November. If so, you have some lead-time to get ready. Enjoy and have Fun! 🏠

CLASSIFIED

ATTENTION ALL MER MEMBERS:

Do you have a wanted/trade/for sale item(s)? Looking for carpool options to an event or options for sharing a room? **The Local** publishes a FREE classified section for all MER members. Send your classified ad to the Editor at stevesxpressrr@yahoo.com, or see all the editor's contact information on page 2. The ad must include full name and contact information and will be limited to one issue. Word count is also limited to seventy-five (75) words. Please include your NMRA number for verification purposes (number will not be published). 🏠



Achievement Program Update

By Charlie Flichman,
MER AP Manager

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

Division 1 – New Jersey

Ralph S. Deblasi – *Golden Spike*

Division 3 – Philadelphia

James E. Dalberg – *Master Builder, Cars*
James E. Dalberg – *Model Railroad Author*

Division 5 – James River

Charles Hladik – *Chief Dispatcher*
Gareth D. Quale – *Model Railroad Engineer, Electrical*
Gareth D. Quale – *Model Railroad Author*
Gareth D. Quale – *Chief Dispatcher*
John A. Siegle – *Master Builder, Structures*
John A. Siegle – *Chief Dispatcher*

Division 12 – Carolina Southern

Dave Draxler – *Golden Spike*
Joe Howard – *Golden Spike*

Please offer your special congratulations to the MER NEWEST MMRs: (The formal presentation will be made at *Piedmont Crossing*.)

Robert Minnis #462
P.J. Mattson #467

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

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03/11

Just a Couple of Weeks Away... PIEDMONT CROSSING 2011!



By R. Stephen Milley

IT'S BEEN A HOT SUMMER here in North Carolina (the hottest I can remember!), and the MER Convention, **Piedmont Crossing 2011**, will be the hottest model railroading activity of the Fall. We have a great line-up of activities – you won't want to miss it! **Piedmont Crossing** will be held October 27 through October 30 in Cary, NC – just Southwest of Raleigh. Be sure to register soon, before the early-bird price expires on September 15th.

Piedmont Crossing will include many of the activities that you would expect in the annual convention; this year's convention will include 60+ hours of clinics, including 5 “make-&-take” workshops, several prototype rail & industrial tours, 30+ home & club layout tours, 10 layout operating sessions, the model contest room, dinner banquet with speaker, model displays, company store, raffle table, white elephant table, live auction, model railroad & dealer train show, and modular layout displays.

If you have items you would like to sell, you may bring them for presentation at either the white elephant table or live auction. For the white elephant table, simply set an asking price, and maybe someone will purchase your item. If you prefer to sell items through the live auction, simply set a minimum price, and see how high potential buyers drive the price. Items that don't sell at the white elephant table may be added to the live auction – which will be held during the banquet dinner on Saturday evening.

An important note – purchases at the company store, white elephant table, raffle tickets, and live auction will only be able to take payment with cash or personal check – so don't forget that check book!

If you have been reading along in **The Local** during the year, you have seen publicity write-ups that have covered details of many of the activities for the convention. In this issue, we will provide an overview of some of the clinics on the schedule. This is just a selection of the more than 60 hours of clinics available for attendees.

CONVENTION CLINICS

Backdrops by Marshall Abrams

We will cover commercial backdrops, backdrop painting ideas especially clouds, getting and using pictures from the internet, manipulating pictures, sharpness, resolution & printing, how to touch-up pictures, and perspective. We will see how to mock up the scene, paste buildings to backdrop, and use stand-off spacers for 3d appearance. Two worked examples will be presented, a downtown urban scene and a light industry. Reference material includes lots of pointers to web resources, a list of top free or shareware photo editors, and a book list. Presentation will include a computer briefing with many examples with a briefing handout provided.

Using Model Railroad Switch-List Software by Marshall Abrams
Computer generated switch-lists use tables of the cars on the layout, their type, and potential delivery locations. The system generates moves of appropriate cars to appropriate destinations, attempting to avoid repetitious activity. I will describe how I use the RailOp program. The presentation handout includes extensive web references.

The ET&WNC-A Railroad to Model by Steve Benezra
Steve will provide a brief history of the sixty-six mile narrow gauge railroad from Johnson City, TN to Boone, NC, and the modeling potential of this fascinating railroad.

Training to be a MER Judge by Martin Brechbiel
Martin will provide the basic background training required for becoming a certified MER Judge. Attendance is a pre-requisite to being an apprentice judge in the contest room. Anyone and everyone that has any interest in being a judge need to attend.

Resin Casting: Basics, Intermediates, Tips & Hints by Martin Brechbiel

Martin will present the basics of resin casting through a Power Point presentation with a matching handout; showing one part and “squish” molds and results thereof with lots of examples of all components of the processes. Various tips, hints, thoughts, and assorted philosophies will be shared. We will even try to cast a few things given time, opportunity, and a healthy amount of general foolishness.

C&O Coal Branches in West Virginia by Mike Brestel

Mike will present C&O Coal Branches in West Virginia and will cover the history, equipment, operations, scenery, etc. of the C&O's coal subdivisions from the 1930s until the early days of CSX.

Meet the NMRA President and Vice President by Mike Brestel & David Thornton, MMR

Dave Thornton, MMR was appointed Vice President – Administration, a new position created last year, and made permanent at the 2010 Winter Meeting of the NMRA Board of Directors. Dave will discuss his responsibilities and provide updates from National.

Aspect Signaling with JMRI by Dick Bronson

This is a two-part presentation: The first hour will be “How to use the new Aspect Based Signaling rules in JMRI”, followed by “Add your own prototype's Aspect Signaling rules using JMRI”. A preview of the presentation has been posted to www.rr-ciruits.com/Clinics/Clinics.html.

The Steel Mill Industry by Dick Buchan, John Glaab, & Pete Slugg

Attendees are encouraged to bring models for display during the all-day Friday session.

The 1st clinic will cover the components of a steel mill, the various components of a mill, and overall operation.

The 2nd clinic will be on mill arrangements of facilities with a discussion on layout designs.

The 3rd clinic will be given by John Glabb – on his modeling of bottle care.

The 4th clinic will be given by Bill Wolf – on blast furnace high lines.

The 5th clinic will be given by Pete Slugg – on steel mill cars.

The 6th clinic will be given by Pete Slugg – on modeling steel mill cars.

Discussion workshops will be held during the lunch break and after dinner. There will be at least 4 steel mills on the home layout tours list.

For those interested, there will be operating sessions at Dick Buchan's steel mill layout on Thursday from 12 to 3 PM and Sunday from 12 to 4 PM. The operating sessions will be limited to 5 people per session. Dick's layout is not a highly detailed layout, but is operational. The track arrangements are similar to that of an actual steel mill. No car cards are used. Trains will be made up and delivered to parts of the modeled mill.

Add a River to Your Railroad by Robert Clegg

Bob will present a step-by-step process used to remove a section of ordinary scenery and replace it with a point of interest – a river with multiple bridges to span it. Included will be discussions of techniques and sample materials, with tips and tricks.

Why I Started Over... or...Drat You Tony Koester! by Robert Clegg

Bob will facilitate discussion of why someone would tear down a perfectly good 250+ foot double track mainline railroad and start over from scratch. Discussion will include pros and cons of multi-deck railroads, helixes, point to point vs. continuous running, use of EPS foam in construction, and other thought processes involved in designing and building my new railroad.

Dual-Magnet Uncoupling by Chuck Davis, MMR

The clinic describes the installation and use of small cylindrical magnets for uncoupling described in the November 2008 issue of **RMC**. His system offers a cheap, reliable and unobtrusive method of uncoupling, which can be used in any scale and which significantly improves operating a layout realistically. Methods to improve uncoupling reliability will also be discussed.

Lessons from the CSX Shenandoah Division: Designing a Railroad Inspired by the Clinchfield by Bruce Faulkner

Bruce shares insight into the design of the CSX Shenandoah Division, a 17' x 43' N scale double-deck layout heavily based on CSX's former Clinchfield Railroad route. Bruce discusses the prototype and operating influences on the design of his layout. He also describes design techniques applicable to any scale or any size layout. Prototype images illustrating various design decisions

are included along with a virtual layout tour showing the latest construction progress on the layout. Bruce's layout was featured in **Model Railroad Planning 2010**.

Lessons from the CSX Shenandoah Division: Helpful Hints for Hosting Operating Sessions by Bruce Faulkner

Successful operating sessions require some advance thought, as they don't just happen by magic. Drawing from his experience hosting operating sessions on two different layouts, Bruce provides insights into a variety of operating topics, including session planning and setup, personnel responsibilities, car routing, dispatching, and the supporting paperwork. Hosting an operating session often involves significant planning and preparation, so both session hosts and crewmembers alike may learn useful techniques in this clinic.

Hand Laid Track – Track Done Your Way by Danial Fisher

This clinic will demonstrate the tools and techniques required to hand lay a turnout. Content will include how to bend, shape, file, install, and solder the various parts pieces of a turnout. The techniques used will be demonstrated as a turnout is hand laid during the clinic.

Modeling Steel Framed Structures – Extra Fare Clinic (\$12) by Danial Fisher

A discussion of both prototypical steel framed structures, and how to model them. Covers the different types of steel structures, what shapes are used, and how they are connected. Modeling information includes materials available, techniques used, and how to assemble and paint a steel-framed structure. A kit with plans and details will be provided to build an HO scale 26' x 24' shed building suitable for any era from the 1920s to modern day.

Modeling B&O Boxcars in the Steam Era by William Hanley

Bill will present a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the major classes of B & O boxcars and how to model them. Slides will show photos of prototype cars, discussion of sub-classes, model availability, and photos of HO scale models. Models will be displayed for attendees.

Modeling Utility/Telephone Poles – Extra Fare Clinic (\$5) by Joseph Hofmann

Each participant will make 5 telephone poles with/without a transformer to take home in HO Scale.

Log Cars I Have Known by Ed Keith

Ed will present an overview of log cars in HO and N scales, some built from kits and some from scratch.

Light, Sound, and Motion Animation for Model Railroads by Fred Miller, MMR

Lights and sounds have become commonplace in our model locomotives. Various projects will be described and demonstrated, some using commercial products, others with electronic circuit construction details and exploring ways to enhance your layout by adding light, sound and motion. Animation of semaphore signals

continued on page 10

and crossing gates will be covered referencing actual implemented projects on the Clinician's Gotham City Traction modules.

Programming the Digitrax Sound Decoders by Fred Miller, MMR Sounds have become commonplace in our model locomotives. Many manufacturers offer sound decoders. However, the Digitrax Sound products provide significant flexibility in not only replacing manufacturer provided sounds, but also programming the behavior of the decoder in reaction to function keys and locomotive motion. Various projects will be described and demonstrated from simple sound replacements to more complex decoder re-programming, taking advantage of the Digitrax decoder's flexibility.

History of Charlotte Trolley by Fred Miller, MMR

This Power Point presentation traces the history of the streetcar system in Charlotte from its inception in 1898 through to abandonment in 1938. Additional material is presented about the Charlotte Trolley restoration projects and Vintage Trolley service, the Lynx Light rail service and the early electrified Piedmont & Northern Railroad.

Overview of the CPD13 2010 Raffle Layout by Stephen Milley

In this clinic you will see an overview of the design, build, and sale of the 2010 CPD13 Raffle Layout. This raffle layout was a huge fundraising success for our local division of the NMRA – bringing in just under \$1,200. You will see details of the layout design, track plan, structures, and scenery. You will hear about the hard work members of the division put into the layout and some lessons we learned along the way. We hope you'll be able to take some ideas home to your division for your own fundraising efforts.

Weathering Structures – New Techniques to Make Them Look Old by Jim Murphy

Jim will present an engaging mixture of new and traditional techniques for weathering all types of structural surfaces. Aging of clapboard, siding, brick, masonry, shingles, corrugated steel, and more will be demonstrated, mimicking natural weathering. Supplies and brushes will be available, so bring a structure with you or use some of our wall and roof samples to try your hand.

Thomas the Tank and the Next Generation by Kim Parker, "Train Buddy"

This clinic is geared to the grandparents and parents among us who would like to use Thomas the Tank to introduce the fun of model railroading to the next generation.

Running Your Railroad Using JMRI by Kim Parker, "Train Buddy"

JMRI (Java Model Railroad Interface) is a suite of programs to program and run a model railroad using a DCC (Digital Command Control) Command Station/Booster, a PC (Personal Computer) and a DCC/PC Interface module. The clinic is targeted at those interested in JMRI and curious about what it can do or those who have tried this package and need a little guidance. We

will explore the major options and set up. We will be examining the major pitfalls and solutions. We will also be demonstrating the software with a Digitrax Zephyr, a laptop running Windows XP and a small N-scale layout. The major emphasis of this clinic is Panel Pro, which runs a railroad. It is not intended to be a clinic on programming decoders using Decoder Pro although that topic will be covered briefly.

Modeling the Durham & Southern by Robert Rousseau

The Durham & Southern was a 59-mile short-line operating in the Raleigh-Durham area of North Carolina. It was primarily a bridge line interchanging with the original Norfolk Southern, Norfolk & Western, Seaboard Coast Line and the Southern in the early 1970s. In this clinic, the presenter gives an overview of the short-line and his design considerations while basing it on historical dispatcher sheets and other records for operations.

Trackside Diorama: Make & Take – Extra Fare Clinic (\$30) by Gene Sing & Stephen Milley

In this 8-hour clinic, learn how to create a complete trackside diorama. Bring no tools, paints, or glues; everything will be provided except maybe for a work apron if you have a case of the dropsy. The diorama will be built on an 8" x 10-3/4" x 1/2" piece of Homosote. This very involved clinic is limited to 12 persons. Instructions and hands-on work to create your diorama will include:

Visual clinic on the basics of hand laying a switch. Due to time constraints, a visual clinic will be conducted showing several techniques of creating a switch.

A special thanks to Art Fahie, owner of Bar Mills Model Works, for his donation of structure kits for this clinic.

Turning an Athearn Blue Box SD50 into a Highly Detailed Model by Tony Sissons

Tony will present a Power Point presentation highlighting and comparing areas of the prototype against the incorrect areas of the Athearn model with detailed step by step images and discussion showing the changes that are required to bring this Athearn model as close as possible to the prototype and to competition entry level.

Building a Lightweight Module by David Thompson

This clinic covers the benefits of constructing lightweight modules over traditional methods, and shows one method of construction. Material selection, construction techniques and jigs are discussed, and examples of NTRAK and T-TRAK modules will be shown and be available for inspection. While the modules shown are N scale the techniques can be used for modules in all scales and for home layouts where the owner expects to have to move to a new home.

Achievement Program Lessons Learned by Mat Thompson

This clinic will discuss the lessons learned and tips to success

focused on the certificates for Cars, Structures, Scenery, Civil Engineer, Electrical Engineer, Chief Dispatcher, and Author. Included will be suggestions on how to handle the paperwork, what judges are looking for, and understanding the requirements.

Railroad Worthy Industries by Mat Thompson

Both for modeling and for operations, industries big enough to need rail traffic add to the realism of your layout. The clinic will consider workflow in buildings, the potential of multiple tracks, how to suggest more size, industries which need many cars with little infrastructure, and special car handling requirements.

Getting Started in Operations by Bob Weinheimer

Bob will discuss things to consider as you plan to implement operations on your layout including ideas on logical layout setting, era, dispatching systems, car routing systems, car and locomotive fleet suggestions, train scheduling, and staffing.

Digital Command Control Troubleshooting by John M. Wallis

This clinic covers methods for troubleshooting DCC problems encountered in an operating layout, with emphasis on modular layouts set up at a train show. It includes methods for detecting the problem component (such as a locomotive, the track, wiring, a throttle, a DCC component, and radio issues), testing, replacing and verifying proper operation after a repair. Tools for use in managing DCC layouts will be demonstrated, and recommendations made for setting up the layout for optimum DCC operation.

Modeling Southern Railway 50 foot steel boxcars – the 30's, 40's and 50's by Fenton Wells,

Fenton will present kit-bashing techniques to make models of the first three series of 50 foot steel boxcars purchased by the Southern Railroad.

The Southern Railway Smooth Side Passenger Car Rebuilding Program by Fenton Wells

This is a presentation on how the prototype took older cars and rebuilt them into modern cars, and the reasons for how and why they built the cars – plus, a description of how the cars were done and the trials and tribulations the SR experienced while they were completing this task. The presentation will include lots of prototype data and photos from the Southern Archives.

HOTEL

The convention will be held at the Embassy Suites (Raleigh/Durham/Research Triangle) at 201 Harrison Oaks Boulevard, Cary, NC. The hotel rate is \$89/night (plus taxes) and includes a full cook-to-order breakfast each morning and an evening “manager’s reception”.

TRANSPORTATION

Consider a rail-fanning transportation method – Amtrak serves Cary, NC, with several trains each day. Unfortunately, the hotel does not provide free transportation from the Cary Amtrak station. There is taxi service available for a low fee; however, our convention volunteers will be happy to pick you up. You may arrange a pick-up through John Janosko at (919) 656-6897.

If you are arriving by plane to RDU International Airport, the Embassy Suites Hotel offers free transportation from the airport.

REGISTRATION

NMRA members \$45; early registration \$40 (by September 15); non-members \$55/\$50.


There is an extra fare for the dinner banquet and the “make-&-take” workshops.

Complete information and registration information are located on the convention website www.mer2011.org. 

MER Archivist Update

*By Bob Price
Archivist and Director*

THE EFFORT TO SCAN the MER archive paper copies of **The Local** into pdf formatted computer files has been completed. The Business Manager and V.P. have copies of these files, which provide a digital backup of the paper collection in case it was to suffer loss or damage. It also means that the Business Manager can make these files available to the membership for a small fee (see order form on page 14). On the CD, you will get over 300 issues of **The Local** in pdf format **dating back to 1949**.

The next effort is to organize the remaining paper documents for scanning. This includes meeting minutes, financial reports, budgets and other various paper items in the archives. Once scanned, this will simplify search requests by using a computer instead of looking through stacks of paper. It will also provide additional digital back up protection. 

Mid-East Region, NMRA Fall Convention
PIEDMONT CROSSING 2011
 October 27th to October 30th, 2011
REGISTRATION FORM
 as of Friday, July 15, 2011

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

Primary Registrant's Name: _____

Significant Other Attending (living at same address): _____

Children Attending (Under age 16 – List all): _____

Address: Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

NMRA # _____ Region: _____ Division: _____

Description	Cost	#	Paying
Early Registration (Till Sept. 15 th 2011, then \$45 Till Oct. 22, 2011)	\$40		
Non-NMRA member	\$10		
Significant other	\$15		
Children under 16	\$10		
Banquet Saturday Night	401	\$45	
NC RR Passenger Yard Saturday (No cost but only 30 allowed)	201	0	
Ready-Mixed Concrete and Historic Railroad House (for Count)	202	0	
Emergency Services Training Center (for Count)	203	0	
Scratch-building With Styrene Saturday 8am (15)	601	\$15	
Make & Take Bar Mills Kit Clinic Friday (all day)(12)	603	\$30	
Make & Take Steel Shed Friday 10pm (10)	604	\$12	
Make & Take Telephone Poles Thursday 7pm	605	\$5	
Make & Take Telephone Poles Friday 7pm	606	\$5	
Call Board Buchan Thursday 12pm (5)	801	\$5	
Call Board Faulkner Thursday 7pm (10)	802	\$5	
Call Board Huey Friday 9am (10)	811	\$5	
Call Board Dougherty Saturday 12pm (10)	821	\$5	
Call Board NTRAK #1 Saturday 10am (10)	825	\$5	
Call Board NTRAK #2 Saturday 12pm (10)	826	\$5	
Call Board Koss Sunday 9am (5)	831	\$5	
Call Board Benezra Sunday 10am (10)	832	\$5	
Call Board Buchan Sunday 1pm (5)	833	\$5	
Call Board NTRAK #3 Sunday 10am (10)	835	\$5	
Convention Golf Shirt – Circle size S M L XL	700	\$25	
Convention Golf Shirt – Circle size XXL XXXL	700	\$27	
Total Advance Registration Paid			

Additional events will be added when their cost is known.

Payment must accompany registration. Make checks payable to:
MER Fall Convention 2011

Send all registrations to:
MER Fall Convention
P.O. Box 447
Swedesboro, NJ 08085

For questions and / or additional information e-mail **MER-Registar@comcast.net**

CONVENTION HOTEL:

Embassy Suites
 201 Harrison Oaks Boulevard
 Cary, NC 27513

The convention rate is \$89.00 per room (plus taxes) per night. All hotel registrations must be made directly with the hotel at 919 677 1840. These rates are in effect until 9 September 2011. When registering, specify the **Piedmont Crossing MER Convention** to get these special rates.

New Membership Recruitment Program

As an aid to membership recruitment, NMRA recently instituted a six month "Railpass" trial membership program which costs the applicant \$9.95. Building on this idea, the MER is instituting a program whereby it will pay the \$9.95 Railpass fee for interested applicants in the MER. In other words, we are making available FREE six month Railpass trial memberships to encourage recruitment of regular members.

What's covered?

Same as Railpass—receive six issues of **NMRA Magazine**, three issues of **The Local**, eligibility to attend conventions and meets, eligibility to participate in contests.

What's not covered?

Same as Railpass—applicants cannot vote or hold office, and will not receive the New Member Pak from national (it's rather expensive).

Who can be recruited?

Anyone living within the MER who has not been a member of NMRA during the past two years.

How will the recruitment process work?

(1) The prospective member fills out the MER trial membership application form which was sent to all division superintendents (not the standard NMRA Railpass form) (2) The "recruiter" should

also sign the form, and then forward it to: Fred Miller, MER Business Manager, 333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504, Charlotte, NC 28202-1961. (3) Fred will record the information he needs in his data base, and will forward the application to the MER Treasurer. (4) The Treasurer will add the necessary check and forward the application and check to the national headquarters in Chattanooga.

What happens after the member's six month trial period?

The Railpass trial member will receive a standard dues notice from national headquarters. We hope a substantial number of Railpass trial members will sign up to become regular members.

Are there limits on the program?

The MER initially allocated \$2,000 for this program. The Board recently allocated an additional \$1,000 to extend the program to the end of 2010, or when the funds are spent – whichever comes first. When and if we approach either limit, Division Superintendents and members of the MER Board of Directors will be notified. At that time, the program will be evaluated by the MER Board of Directors. If successful, we will try to continue it.

For questions?

Contact Fred Miller, MER Business Manager (mailing address is above, 704-332-1753, tractionfan@aol.com), or John Janosko, MER President (see contact information on page 2). 

National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) Mid-Eastern Region Application for Free "Railpass" Trial Membership

YES, please sign me up for a free six month Railpass trial membership in the NMRA—which includes membership in the Mid-Eastern Region, and in my local Division. During this six month period, I understand that I may attend conventions and meets, and participate in contests. I will receive **NMRA Magazine**, the monthly national magazine, and **The Local**, the bi-monthly regional newsletter. I will not be eligible to vote, hold office, or receive a New Member Pak.

I also understand that the \$9.95 cost of this six month Railpass trial membership is being paid by the Mid-Eastern Region. (Regardless of who pays, six month \$9.95 memberships are available only once to each person.)

At the end of the six months, I may join NMRA, paying the regular active member dues.

During the past two years, I have **not** been a member of NMRA.

=====

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Scale(s): _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____

Signature of Sponsor: _____ (Required)

(A Regional or Divisional officer or board member)

=====

Date of form: 1/31/07

When this form is completed,
mail it to:

Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager
333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504
Charlotte, NC 28202-1961

Do **not** mail it directly to MMRA
headquarters in Chattanooga, TN.

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These 40' Western Maryland N-Scale box cars are Micro-Train bodies custom painted by The Freight Yard. They are box car red with prominent white "speed lettering".

Small Freight Station, Tichy windows and detail parts, laser-cut walls, roof, tar paper, and stripwood for the platform.



CLINT HYDE

Milk station.
Simplified structure.



CLINT HYDE

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Shipping \$2.50 for first car, + \$1.50 for each additional car				\$_____

* Please list your MER or NMRA Membership # _____

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Milk Station QUANTITY _____ \$25.00 postpaid \$_____

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CALLBOARD

Coming Events

September 2nd – 4th. NC RAILRUN 2011 hosted by the Carolina Southern division and the Operations Special Interest Group. For more detailed information and registration information please visit <http://ncrailrun2011.blogspot.com/>.

September 10th. New Jersey divisional meet held at M. Joan Pearson Elementary School, 1301 Burlington Avenue in Delanco, NJ. Registration begins at 8:30 AM. Two clinics are currently scheduled from: 9 AM until Noon: “Getting Started with Operations” and “Using DCC and a Computer to Control Signals.” Layouts open from 1 PM until 5 PM. The contest will be Color Model Photographs. Door prizes, refreshments, and camaraderie come standard! White elephant tables are also available. For more information or to reserve table contact Bob Clegg at (856) 696-0463 or bobcats@comcast.net.

September 10th. Wade’s Train Town monthly open house. Operated by Carolina Southern division members at the Brookford Town Center located at 1700 South Center St in Hickory, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

September 17th. Potomac division layout tour in Manassas, VA. 1 PM till 4 PM. For more information contact Brian Sheron at (301) 349-5754 or bwsheron@mac.com.

September 17th. Philadelphia division meet held at Lukens Office Building, 505 First Avenue in Coatesville, PA. For more information contact Greg Shindledecker at (610) 383-7767 or greg@shindledecker.com

September 24th. Potomac division - White Flag Extra Clinics. “Modeling The Chemical Industry” by Stan Knotts and “Railroading along the Waterfront with Walthers” by John Teichmoeller. 2901 Leisure World Boulevard in Silver Spring, MD. 2 PM until 4 PM. For more information contact Marshall Abrams at (301) 588-1005 or Abrams_railroad@comcast.net.


September 30th and October 1st. Lehigh/Susquehanna Operations Weekend 3 sponsored by the Susquehanna division and the Operations Special Interest Group. For more information visit www.susquehannamra.org/lsops/ or contact Jeff Warner at (717) 932-9929 or jwarner@susquehannamra.org.

October 8th. Wade’s Train Town monthly open house. Operated by Carolina Southern division members at the Brookford Town Center located at 1700 South Center St in Hickory, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

October 22nd. The Susquehanna division will visit the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum and the Reading Society of Model Engineers. For more information contact Jeff Warner at (717) 932-9929 or jwarner@susquehannamra.org.

October 27th – 30th. Piedmont Crossing in Cary, NC hosted by the Carolina Piedmont division. For more information visit www.mer2011.org.

(Advance Notice) November 12 - James River Division Fall Meeting will be held at The Redeemer Episcopal Church, 2341 Winterfield Rd in Midlothian, VA. 10 AM until noon. As part of the business meeting the On30 module group will present a report on the National Narrow Gauge Convention. Clinics, model contest and layout tours will be announced. There will also be Door prizes and the 50/50 raffle. For more information contact Robbie Alvis at (804) 329-4060 or rwalvis@mac.com.

Divisions and Clubs tell MER members about your upcoming event!! Send your FREE event listings to the editor (contact information is listed on page 2.) Be sure to include all the specifics for the event: including the date/time, place, cost, a contact person, and a means of getting in touch with him/her (address, phone, e-mail, etc.), and if available a web site for updates or to get more information. Please see the publication deadlines on page 16 to make sure your event is published on time. 

Mix-it Puzzles

By Dr. Charles Wood
Carolina Piedmont Division/HO Scale

These are puzzles of scrambled words. The letters on each line can be rearranged to form a word that relates to models or to prototype railroads. Answers below.

Puzzle #25:

- a. U U O O E N R H D S
- b. U D E L G
- c. G A S I D N N
- d. L S A O D
- e. O O V S R N B A I E T

Answer to puzzle #25:

- e. Observation
- d. Loads
- c. Sanding
- b. Clued
- a. Roundhouse

Puzzle #26:

- a. E E E M N C D T
- b. O E R R R D C I T S
- c. O L I M M B A E R A I
- d. C N S O I I I C S A F L T A
- e. T T U E R C A A I D L

Answer to puzzle #26:

- a. Cemented
- b. Directors
- c. Memorabilia
- d. Classification
- e. Articulated



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Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip (+4) _____

Email _____

NMRA # _____ Expire Date _____

Scale _____ Telephone # _____

Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region

The Local welcomes articles, photographs and model railroad related material as contributions to members' mutual enjoyment of the hobby. Materials should have a wide appeal. The editor 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. Upon receiving any submission the editor will also confirm receipt and at a later date indicate the anticipated edition the submission will appear in **The Local**. If you do not receive a postcard or e-mail within two weeks please resend your submission or contact the editor by phone.

Publication Schedule:	Articles/Callboard items due to Editor by:
Jan/Feb	December 1st of previous year
Mar/Apr	Feb 1st
May/June	Apr 1st
Jul/Aug	Jun 1st
Sept/Oct	Aug 1st
Nov/Dec	Oct 1st

If you are interested in advertising with the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association please contact the Editor, as listed on page 2. The current advertising rates for **The Local** are as follows and must include camera ready art (jpeg, pdf, bmp, tiff formats):

Callboard Ads (30-50 words) (Div. and Clubs Only)...	Free
Business Card size (6 issues)	\$60.00
Quarter Page ad (6 issues).....	\$125.00
Half Page ad (6 issues).....	\$225.00
Half page ad (per issue) (Div. Only)	\$25.00