

The Local



A PUBLICATION OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION OF THE NMRA

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Number 4

Cultivate the Social Side

Dave Renard, MER Past President



Model railroading can be a “Lone Wolf” hobby as we build and operate our own layouts. Quiet time at the work bench or control panel can be a relaxing break from a busy world. However, contact with other model railroaders can greatly expand our interest, ability, knowledge, and enjoyment of our hobby. Other model railroaders may have interests and abilities which you can add to your own knowledge. Sharing what you know with other hobbyists can be satisfying as well.

Meeting other model railroaders can be done easily if you frequent a hobby shop. Perhaps you can prepare a little business card with your personal information and possibly your modeling scale and era. The shop keeper may be helpful in circulating your info to other model railroaders.

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Visiting other model railroads and their builders can give you new ideas to try out for yourself, and share your own knowledge and abilities can be gratifying. Some builders may host periodic “Open House” sessions which you might discover via the hobby shop or from others you meet there. Exploring the Internet can also lead to announcements of model railroad shows or open houses worth attending.

Naturally your association with the NMRA, its Regions and Divisions, can put you in contact with other model railroaders in your area or a place you may periodically visit. Send out an email to introduce yourself, your scale, and your area of interest. If you have a modeling problem or stumbling block, send it out to others and see how many are eager to reply and help out.

The MER membership count on June 15 was 1967.

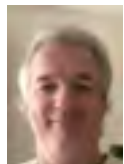
continued on page 6

The Local

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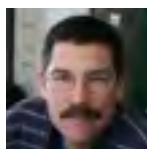
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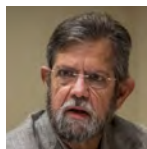
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If you are interested in advertising with the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association, please contact the editor. The current advertising rates (one year) for The Local are as follows, and must include camera ready art (text, doc/docx, jpeg, pdf, bmp, tiff formats):

Callboard ads (30 - 50 words, Div and Clubs Only)..Free

Business Card size\$60
 Quarter Page ad.....\$125
 Half Page ad\$225
 Half Page ad per issue (Div only).....\$25

On page 1, at the top, is a small business building, from the 2018 convention's model contest, Bruce Blackwood, modeler.

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 paper/photo originals without having back-up copies of both. 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 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 email within two weeks, please re-send your submission or contact the editor by email.

If your item is time-sensitive in any way, these dates are the relevant deadlines you need to look out for. Otherwise stories and photos are used in approximately the order they are received.

Publication Schedule Deadline

Jan/Feb	Dec 1st of previous year
Mar/Apr	Feb 1st
May/Jun	Apr 1st
Jul/Aug	Jun 1st
Sept/Oct	Aug 1st
Nov/Dec	Oct 1st

NEW MEMBERS

Charles	Cutler	Carolina Piedmont
Fritz	Dahlin	Cheasapeake
Matthew	Dockery	
Richard	Gines	
Matthew	Hosford	New Jersey
Leonard	Hough	Carolina Southern
Brian	Hughes	Potomac
Norris	Jenkins	Philadelphia
David	Newsome	
Russell	Pratt	Carolina Piedmont
Robert	Rivera	Carolina Southern
Herbert	Seeburger	New Jersey
Marty	Spiwak	Potomac
Lawrence	Thompson	Susquehanna
Kathryn	Tiffany	New Jersey
John	Wubbel	Susquehanna
Kevin	Yutz	Philadelphia

Welcome all new members!

Apologies if you joined recently and I missed your name here. The way join dates are handled in our database makes for slight imprecision on this.

Custom
Layout
Building

Layout Design

By Lance Mindheim

www.shelflayouts.com
301-404-8164

President's Column



Kurt Thompson, MMR

What Do You Like About the MER?

For me the title is a big question. I like a lot of things about the MER. And the list of things grows all the time. I could list many things, but when I look at the list, it comes back to the same answer I have about why I like model railroading and ops sessions. I like the people who are model railroaders.

The MER gives me the opportunity to be with people who understand my love for and fascination of trains, large and small. Whether this is at a Division meeting or Regional Convention, I am with people. I get to be a more social creature.

When you read this, I will have participated in at least two ops sessions. Both will have been on layouts that are now coming into the operating phase of their existence. They each had at the core a fellow model railroader who wanted to share his passion with others. In these cases, their passion came out in the layout that they had built and shared with me.

If you're going to attend the Liberty Bell convention and have a Go Pro, please contact MER President Kurt Thompson. He's looking for four folks for a special project. We need someone to compose some special theme music for whatever it is he is planning, so if you have some skill along those lines, a couple minutes worth should work fine. Probably OK if it sounds like Spike Jones.

Elsewhere in this issue, one of the MER's Past President writes about the fellowship of the hobby.

A few years ago, the motto of the MER was "the Most Enthusiastic Region." I look forward to each and every Division and Region event because I get to see and feel that enthusiasm. If you are not feeling so enthusiastic, maybe you need a shot in the arm. Check out the calendar of events for the Region as well as your Division and neighboring divisions. Nothing inspires me more than being with other modelers.

Another way to feel the enthusiasm is to give others the opportunity to see your stuff. Enthusiasm grows when each of us gives a little. If you want to share some of your enthusiasm, I will be happy to help you find your place to share.

Additional MER Volunteers:

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Alan Mende
alanmende@yahoo.com

The **Reading Railroad Prototype Modelers' Meet** will be held September 20-22, 2019 at the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum, at 503 S 3rd St, Hamburg, Pa.

Friday social hour, & clinics

Saturday clinics, vendors, white elephant table, door prizes.

Sunday home layout tours. For information and a registration form go to:

readingrrmm.com

Reminder: The E-LOCAL is always available from the MER website, at <http://mer-nmra.com/MEReLocalsCurrent.html>

MER IS CALLING YOU – AND IT'S NOT A SCAM

If you are getting a call or email from Howard Oakes or John Hoyt, don't hang up or ignore their emails.

Business Manager Howard Oakes and Assistant Business Manager John Hoyt, as part of their process to administer the Region's database, are contacting members to verify the accuracy of the individual's data in the MER database. MER needs accurate member contact information to carry out its activities, especially for this upcoming election (Maryland law requires MER to send a ballot to each MER member in good standing by the annual close of its membership rolls, which for MER is July 7).

THE MER STILL NEEDS YOU!

Yes, you! If you are a member in good standing and want to support your region with good ideas and real involvement, we need you to volunteer to serve this Region even if you did not choose to run for office. MER especially needs an advertising manager for The Local. If interested, please contact Director Jack Dziadul at

jdziadul@mer-nmra.com

Do you want to do something else? Contact President Kurt Thompson at president@mer-nmra.com.

MER always has opportunities for you.

It's unfortunate that we have to warn you about these phone calls, but whatever. John Hoyt has been boosting the E-LOCAL recipient list quite a bit via these phone calls. This specific issue notification will be sent to every email we have in MER. If you to continue to receive them, reply back and let us know.

Deadlines and Schedules for 2019 Balloting

Our by-laws require the publication of deadlines and schedules for nominations and balloting for every year to be published in the first issue of The Local of that same year. The dates schedule for nominations, ballot and election results are in Executive Handbook, Section 5, Policies, Article VI. The dates for 2019 are:

July 7, 2019 -- You must be a member in good standing (paid up NMRA dues) based on the membership report supplied to the MER Business Manager from NMRA National as of 07/07 (the 7th of July) of every election year to be eligible to vote. If an individual is not a member or if membership has expired as indicated by that record supplied to the MER, and the MER officials have not been informed by NMRA National of a valid renewal of membership by 07/07 (the 7th of July), such individual will not receive a ballot nor be permitted to vote in that year's election.

August 1, 2019 -- Deadline for mailing paper ballots to members and for commencing electronic voting; could be mailed earlier depending on other deadline requirements.

September 3, 2019 -- Deadline for electronic voting, also last day as shown by postmark for mailing paper ballots.

September 7, 2019 -- Deadline for receipt by Balloting Committee of paper ballots sent by mail.

September 14, 2019 -- Deadline for Ballot Committee to transmit results to President, the Director overseeing this committee, and the Business Manager.

September 21, 2019 -- Deadline for The President to communicate the election results to candidates. The Business Manager also notifies the MER Web Master and the NMRA of the election results.

October 10, 2019 -- Deadline for publishing election results on MER-NMRA website

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

2020 Charlotte, NC

2021 Baltimore

2022 James River Div?

Dave Renard, continued from page 1

If there is a model railroad club holding occasional shows or open houses, be sure to attend and make yourself known. They may need new members, or perhaps their members would like to visit you and your layout. Explore any opportunities which may arise.

Exchanging ideas and information with other modelers can vastly expand both your interests and skills. Give what you learn from others a tryout. Then show them how you do it. They might like your idea.

With the MER 75th anniversary coming up, President Kurt Thompson has asked all the living MER Presidents to write something for The LOCAL. Dave Renard's is the first one received.

If you are an experienced model railroader, seek out newcomers whom you can guide and assist. This too can be a rewarding part of our hobby. There is a wealth of knowledge out there waiting to be explored and shared.

Dave Renard, MMR 35.



Clint sez: It was based on the strength of this diorama almost 20 years ago that I told Martin Brechbiel that he needed to bring models to get judged at the next Potomac Division mini-convention. Now he's an MMR.



Keeping In Touch...



Howard Oakes
MER Business Manager

If you have not already done so, it's time to seriously consider attending the fall MER convention, the Liberty Bell Special, in King of Prussia PA October 10-13, 2019. The spring MER board meeting was held in the host hotel, and it is a spectacular setting, having been remodeled just this year. The Philadelphia Division has been hard at work to present a first class event. I have been to the Colebrookdale Railroad, and the excursion and tour will be memorable. Plus all the other goodies you expect at a MER convention – lots of clinics, layout tours, operating sessions, vendors, white elephant and/or silent auction, and there is a huge mall literally a few hundred feet from the hotel if you haven't spent all your money on trains! It's also a good time to renew old friendships and to make new ones. And by a lucky coincidence, the famed Norfolk & Western #611 will be in operation only 65 miles west of the convention. See the convention website for details. Model railroading and a world famous prototype engine in the same weekend. It doesn't get any better than this.

Election time is coming. The three Director's positions are open as you have read elsewhere in the Local. Please vote and support your candidates. To vote, you must be a member in good standing (paid up NMRA dues) based on the membership report supplied to the MER Business Manager from NMRA National as of July 7, 2019.

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.

Moving? Changing email addresses? Promptly notify the NMRA at <http://nmra.org/members/update> or by mail at:

NMRA
P.O. Box 1328
Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328

to insure continued timely delivery of The Local to you, and so we can contact you as necessary. (NMRA notifies the MER of such changes, saving you one more step).

Achievement Program



Achievement Program Update
By Dave Chance

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

Division 1 – New Jersey

Charles Higdon – Association Volunteer

Division 2 – Potomac

Ernest Little – Model RR Author

Alex Belida – Model RR Author

Alex Belida – Master Builder Structures

Benard Kempinski – Association Volunteer

Benard Kempinski – Model Railroad Author

Division 3 – Philadelphia

Joe Walters – Motive Power

Division 5 - James River

Michael A. Garber – Chief Dispatcher

Alan Bibb – Electrical Engineer

Division 11 – Susquehanna

Alan Mende – Master Builder Structures

Brian Kampschoer – Master Builder Scenery

Division 12 – Carolina Southern

Henry Reeves – Golden Spike Award

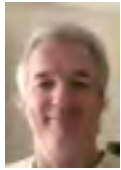
Larry Paffrath – Golden Spike Award

Dave Thrans – Chief Dispatcher

Bob Halsey – Chief Dispatcher

In a perfect world, this information will appear soon in the **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 the **NMRA magazine**.

PROBLEM - PLEASE HELP ME. National does NOT accept R&V forms except for AUTHOR. Please don't send these any more.



Coupler Comments

Clint Hyde, Editor
local-editor@mer-nmra.com

The Future of the Print LOCAL, Part 5

May-June was a pretty clean process for the print LOCAL. I have better envelopes, I was able to print double-sided with no trouble.

The print (hard copy) subscription copy count decline continued, as we know: March/April was 155. May/June was 145, this issue is 130. The bottom number is now 80 for the remaining MER Life Members.

Nearly all the paid subscribers will drop off by the end of the year; looks like 10 are left, with five paid longer than 2020.

Last issue's cost was \$1.45 per copy, because the envelopes were slightly less expensive, printing was double-sided (fewer sheets), and the postage cost was down 15 cents. This should be the cost for the remaining print issues. Cutting out more sheets would only save a couple pennies.

As I wrote last time, both variations of The LOCAL have been merged, so that I only produce a single document, where the print LOCAL is the first 12 pages from the E-LOCAL. This means those pages will be common to both, and the E-LOCAL will have more pages after the first 12.

Ten people dropped print since last issue. If you are reading this on a dead tree extract, please look at your mailing label--it will say "LIFE" or when your

subscription expires, or LAST if this is it. Please try the E-LOCAL! It has become a distinctly better document, with color all over, and way more content--stories that cannot and will not appear on paper. Please also consider letting go of the paper version, and let me know directly.

Unfortunately, we had a series of small process failures with the E-LOCAL, resulting in the email about new issue not going out for several weeks after it should have. One of those failures was mine. That is why you got the message about it directly from me, rather than the usual Business Manager message. Normally that process is out of my hands, but this time the communication failures mean that I need to pay closer attention to what is going on.

In the E-LOCAL are additional/longer stories and photos, as usual, and COLOR!, with more to come while I experiment with fancier layout aspects. A couple of months ago Martin gave me a color print he had made of the Jan/Feb E-LOCAL (he reviews it using a color-laser-printed copy) -- VERY nice looking. MER cannot afford to do that for you, but if you do it yourself, well, it'll look good.

The E-LOCAL is always available for download from the MER website:

<http://mer-nmra.com/MEReLocalsCurrent.html>

My favorite locomotive, in brass. This is the Ken Kidder model, in HO. Not sure about the year. I have the Funaro resin casting of the baggage car, too.



ELECTION CANDIDATES 2019 -- MER DIRECTOR

Randy Foulke

I am running for office of Director of MER to give back to a hobby that has brought joy and sustained me in tough times. My primary goal will be to assist the President and officers of MER be successful, and MER the best region. Other goals include doing what is necessary to encourage young people to become involved in the hobby and NMRA, and to assure MER is inclusive of all, no matter their modeling interests. My passion is passenger train modeling of consists and operations, primarily SP, C&EI, UP, ATSF, and PRR. I have been involved in 3 module groups, building multiple modules. I have been collecting locomotives/rolling stock for over 60 years. For many years I served as Treasurer and Board Member of the Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club. I have been a NMRA member for 43 years. As an engineering consultant, I assisted CSX and NS comply with environmental regulations and emergency response, and I am past member of American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association. I come from a railroading family with one grandfather a yard clerk for PRR, and my other grandfather an interurban conductor. My Father-in-Law was an engineer/fireman on the PRR/PC/CR.



Jerry Lauchle

I suppose my interest in model railroading began as a pre-teen operating the American Flyer set I received for Christmas; I eventually got into HO, building many Mantua and Roundhouse car kits. College, marriage, and kids kept me from the hobby until the early 1980's when I really got serious about HO-scale model railroading. Because of my career as a professor of engineering, this re-entrance into the hobby lasted only six years. I retired from Penn State in 2006, and it's been full-steam ahead since then! I re-joined the NMRA in 2015 and I am interested in serving. I volunteered and gave a clinic at Susquehannock. I have earned a Golden Spike Award and was named Master Model Railroader in September 2018. MER President Kurt Thompson appointed me as the official photographer of the MER in November 2018. Before retirement, I served over two decades as president, vice president, and member of the board of directors of a national professional engineering organization: The Institute of Noise Control Engineering of the USA. I also served the Acoustical Society of America and was named Fellow of both organizations. I served on my church council for several years as president and stewardship leader.



Robert Morningstar, Greencastle, PA

I have been an HO scale modeler since 1978 and member of the NMRA since 2006. I have served as past Treasurer and President of the Hagerstown Model Railroad Museum.

My desire to serve as a director is driven my desire to give back to the hobby and the organizations that promote it. My peers consider me a consensus builder and problem solver. I have presented clinics at the South Mountain Division mini-conventions, last year was on scratch building 3 aspect signals, this year will be a Soldering clinic. My health is excellent and can travel to conventions and meetings. Evidence of my passion for the hobby includes: publishing to the Model Railroad Hobbyist website blog (search for the username: bobmorning) and at my website, wmrwy.com

I have attended the past two MER conventions and open my layout annually during the local Mainline Hobbies hobby shop fall layout tour program.

The process of obtaining my MMR has begun. The documentation gathering phase is currently underway and I did obtain my Golden Spike award last year. Last year I entered a structure for the first time into the MER's model contest at their convention in Rockville, MD and was awarded 3rd place.

This is a fascinating hobby which has provided me with 40 years of relaxation, friendship, and personal satisfaction. Contrary to popular thinking I believe the hobby is not headed for a massive decline; but we do need to engage those that express an interest, raise the awareness to the public, and avoid the exclusivity mindset that I have seen from time to time. Leveraging social media, promoting the hobby outside of normal channels, and not being afraid to try new methods will be critical to the continued success of the hobby.



Another fabulous Shorpy.com photo, Telluride, Colorado in 1940.

The original shows a good bit more detail, especially if you zoom in to full size.

(FWIW: the low-res images are free for non-commercial use, like this.)

The Liberty Bell Special 2019 Mid-Eastern Region Convention

Sponsored by
The Philadelphia
Division – NMRA

October 10-13, 2019



Vacation? We don't need no stinking vacation!

by Chip Stevens

Said none of the convention committee for Liberty Bell Special 2019 ever. The committee and the Division are hard at work finalizing what promises to be a great experience for our attendees in October. The host hotel is so excited about our upcoming get-together, they've re-decorated the entire lobby and common areas. Ask the Region Board members who navigated through the plastic curtains and plaster dust to hold their periodic meeting at the hotel last month if the renovations are actually taking place.



Your author is getting older by the day. I remember my high school sweetheart was pleased that she got an IBM Selectric typewriter as a graduation present. Typewriter? I mention this only to show how far we've come since 1961 and to demonstrate the importance of this new-fangled thing called "website". And I mention website because our webmaster is laboring diligently to keep the Special site updated with the latest news regarding the convention. In fact, he's foresworn a vacation this summer to keep the www.libertybellspecial.org site current with the committee's progress. If you haven't all ready done so, bookmark the site to stay abreast of all that is going on in preparation for October. Currently, the clinic schedule is on the site and I have it from good authority that the detailed clinic descriptions are about to be posted. Don't let The Hot Rod Chicken leave you wondering. Check for an explanation.

Also on the site is a list of the Open Houses and OpSig sessions, again updated as we add layouts. There are a great number of super layouts covering all scales and interests. The committee has been in touch with the "Weather

www.LibertyBellSpecial2019.org

Gods” to make sure there will be no rain for the outdoor layouts. Trust me! We would still like to have some of you “outliers” speak up for hosting visits at your empires for travelers to and from the convention.

For those who don’t want to leave our spacious new convention digs, there will be two modular layouts which will offer operating times within the hotel. Our thanks go out in advance to the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society Modular Group and the New Jersey FreeMo Group for donating their time and equipment to make this possible. Your writer spent a Saturday setting up the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society modules at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. This my introduction to the modules and I am impressed by the concepts and the portrayal of actual Reading Railroad landmarks throughout eastern Pennsylvania. The whole 156 foot long, 12 foot wide display is not to be missed. Due to space limitations at Liberty Bell Special 2019, the entire collection of modules will not all be present, but trust their designer to bring the best for display. Fair disclosure: your writer is a new member of the RCT&HS Modular Group. I have intentionally downplayed my enthusiasm to provide fair coverage for The Local. While "down shore" next week, I will attempt to get facts for equal time from our other modular guests, The Jersey FreeMo Modelers.

And what would a convention be without a banquet? Our very talented liaison with the hotel has challenged the hotel Chef to prepare something different for us Saturday night. This won’t be the usual rubber chicken drowned in gravy meal. Our liaison and the chef have agreed to prepare a buffet featuring actual dining car recipes for your enjoyment. We are hoping the banquet hall won’t sway and rock like a dining car, but the fare will equal or exceed what you may recall from the golden age of meals on rails.

So while you’re “down shore”, up in the Poconos, out at OBX, or wherever your vacation plans may take you, make time to register for Liberty Bell Special 2019. There are some deadlines posted on the website. Stay abreast of deadlines, additions, changes, and enhancements throughout the summer.

You’ll be glad you did!



Photos from Al Zoller's
Central PA
layout/setting.



Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA 2019 Convention

Liberty Bell Special

October 10th to 13th, 2019
www.LibertyBellSpecial.org



Use Online Registration for Secure Payment and Better Up To Date Activity Availability. See Info below.

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: _____ MMR? Y / N, Any Title for Badge? _____
 Significant Other Attending (living at same address): _____
 Children Attending (18 & under – list all): _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip + 4: _____
 Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____
 NMRA #: _____ Region: _____ Division: _____
 Favorite Scale: _____ Is this your first MER Convention? _____ Putting Items In Sale/Auction? _____

Description	Act. #	Cost	#	Paying
Early Registration (through August 31)	E	\$50		
Basic Registration (September 1 thru October 3)	B	\$55		
At Door Registration (October 10-12)	D	\$60		
Non-NMRA Member Extra Fee	N	\$20		
Significant Other & Children Under 18	O	\$0		No Fee
Banquet – Saturday Night				
Railroad-Themed Banquet _____ Vegetarian _____ Gluten-Free _____	401	\$50		
Friday Breakfast, price includes tax	402	\$15		
Saturday Breakfast, price includes tax	403	\$15		
Sunday Breakfast, price includes tax	404	\$15		
Supers/Editors - Breakfast, Circle 1, Division Super 405 Division Editor 406	405/406	\$0		No Fee
Call Boards / Ops – Expanded Call Board Info Available on Website				
Steve Salotti's New York, Susquehanna & Western (HO), Thu 7pm-10pm	801	\$5		
Steve Salotti's New York, Susquehanna & Western (HO), Sat 1pm-4pm	802	\$5		
St. Alban's Model Railroad Club (STARR) (HO), Fri 9am-12pm	803	\$5		
Bob Zeolla's Conrail Conemaugh Division (HO), Fri 7pm-10pm	804	\$5		
Prototype Tours – More Info on Website When/If Available				
Coalbrookdale RR Excursion/Tour, Friday, All Day w/Lunch Included	201	\$75		
Extra Fare Clinics – Registration Required, Info On Website When/If Available				
Hunterline 30' King Post Truss Bridge Make 'n Take				
Scale: _____ N (\$39) _____ HO (\$42) _____ S (\$46) _____ O (\$53)	601			
T-Track Hands-On Clinic, Fri 8am-10pm	602	75		
Electrical AP Certificate, Fri 7pm-10pm	603	0		
Hands-On Resin Kit Build –PRR F25 Well Flat Car, Sat 1pm-5pm	604	25		
Would You Like To Be A Contest Judge At The Convention – Circle one	YES	NO		
Have You Been A Contest Judge In The Past – Circle one	YES	NO		
Total Being Paid				

Online Registration Available at: <http://merregistrar.coffeecup.com/forms/2019%20Online%20Registration/>
Fill in Form, Press Submit Form for Invoice, then Press PayPal Button and Make Your Payment. A PayPal Account Is Not Required.

Payment [Check Only] must accompany Print Registrations sent by USPS.
Checks payable to: MER Conventions, Send to: MER Conventions, PO Box 426, Sykesville, MD 21784-0426

Completed PDF Form can be emailed to Registrar with a note requesting an Invoice for Payment to be sent via PayPal.
PayPal Account NOT Required, can use Guest Checkout. Payments by Visa, MC, Discover, AmEx, and PayPal

Any Questions and/or additional information, e-mail to MER-registrar@mer-nmra.com, or 410-422-0446 (leave a message)

Hotel – Crown Plaza Philadelphia-King of Prussia, 260 Mall Blvd., King of Prussia 19406
Reference - Mid-Eastern Region-National Model Railroad Assoc., Hotel Reservations: 610-265-7500
Online Reservations use - <https://www.tinyurl.com/MER2019>
Room Rate - \$109.00 night + tax, Room Rate applies 10/7/18 to 10/16/18

LOCAL
July/Aug

Mid-Eastern Region Blogs

Compiled by Nicholas Kalis

MER Member

Blog Address

Carolina Southern Division 12

Scott Perry <http://modelrailroadersnotebook.blogspot.com/>

James River Division 5

Shannon Crabtree viriniamidlandrr.blogspot.com/

Rod Vance <https://www.sites.google.com/site/willowcreekrr/home>

Philadelphia Division 3

Bill Blackburn PRR-GVD.COM

Bob Dietrich <http://www.dietrichsfam.com/shj/>

Val Pistilli www.rpmvalleyforge.com

Robert Putnick <http://rputnick777.wixsite.com/horseshoecurve>

Robert Putnick <https://sites.google.com/site/ephratavalleyrailroad/home>

Greg Shindledecker <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WMThomasSub/>

Joe Walder <https://prrcambridgesectrk.blogspot.com/>

Paul Welsh www.rrscience.com/Ggauge/

Jeffrey Witt <http://witt-family.com/LayoutConstruction.htm>

Bob Zeolla <https://www.facebook.com/Conemaugh78>

Potomac Division 2

Alex Belida <https://esprblog.wordpress.com>

Nicholas Kalis <http://oahusugarcanefn3.blogspot.com/>

Bernard Kempinski <http://usmrr.blogspot.com/>

Stan Knotts <https://mrrminutiae.blogspot.com/>

Marty McGuirk <http://centralvermontrailway.blogspot.com/>

Lance Mindheim <http://lancemindheim.com>

Norman Reid <https://nfandcr.blogspot.com/>

Dean Ripple <https://sites.google.com/site/monongahdiv/>

South Mountain Division 10

Jay Beckman <http://jaysoscalelayout.blogspot.com/>

Robert Morningstar wmrwy.com

Susquehanna Division 11

Jerry Britton <https://jbritton.pennsyrr.com/>

Listed in alphabetical order by last name

Revised June 12, 2019

If you know of a Mid-Eastern Region (NMRA) member who maintains a personal model railroading-related blog, please contact Nick Kalis at nkalis@verizon.net with the member's name and blog address so that we may include that blog on our list. Thank you.



*Icons courtesy
flaticon.com, freepik.com*

Is a fish car shaped like a fish?

Prototype Model Idea: A Goldfish Breeding and Shipping Operation?

By Alex Belida, Potomac Division, MER,
NMRA

How about this for a prototype modeling idea: goldfish exporting via the rails? That's right, goldfish exporting! All you'll need are some ponds and old cars or wagons to carry containers for transporting the fish to the station. No little water-filled plastic bags allowed.

I wouldn't have known about this unique Maryland business that thrived from the early 1900s to about 1930 if I hadn't travelled up to Woodsboro, outside Frederick, to visit my son and his family. As luck has it, they bought a place right next to Woodsboro's train station. It's no longer a working rail stop but the building, a small combination passenger and freight station, has been restored (and it would make a great scratchbuild project.)

According to the Associated Press, the station was built in 1883 and closed in 1963. The Maryland Transit Administration sold it to the Woodsboro Historical Society in 1997 and restoration has been under way since then.

According to the Woodsboro Times, the station served as an active passenger stop from 1883 to 1948. Trains were first operated by the Frederick and Pennsylvania Line and the route was later taken over by the Pennsylvania Railroad. The segment of the railway running through Woodsboro and other PRR properties in the area were sold to the State of Maryland in 1982. The State later sold about 20 miles of the branch to the Maryland Midland Railway. The track that runs past Woodsboro Station is still used by the MMR to service a nearby quarry. But goldfish are a cargo of the past.

That business thrived in the early 1900's when fish from area ponds were taken to the station for distribution all over the United States.

According to the Maryland Historic Trust, the Powell brothers' family pioneered the goldfish industry in Woodsboro, and the Catocin Banner newspaper reports they eventually had 45 acres of ponds and would ship out 120,000 goldfish a week from September through November.



Even
Goldfish
Get the
Blues



Here's a look at its sad, sorry pre-restoration state

The Banner goes on to state: "These goldfish were sold for \$10 to \$50 per thousand, and the value of the yearly production was approximately \$75,000."

Other local farmers joined in the goldfish rush, and by 1932, The Banner says, "production increased to seven million goldfish on 500- 600 acres, with goldfish selling for \$35 to \$70 per thousand (retail price five-ten cents each). Reports estimated Frederick County goldfish farmers had brought \$1.5 million into the county."

These farmers organized the Gold Fish Breeders Association of Frederick County in 1920, the year it was estimated that 80 percent of the goldfish sold in the United States came from Frederick County.

Bill Powell, a descendant of the Powell family, was quoted in the Frederick News-Post in 1998 as saying he remembers going to the train station "and shipping the goldfish in cans."

The News-Post reported that in addition to cans, larger metal tubs weighing about 80 pounds were used for the fish and had to be stacked by hand on trains.

(Several years ago, Ozark Fisheries in Stoutland, Missouri recovered some galvanized metal railway shipping cans used to send goldfish around the country. The cans had perforated lids. The company says blocks of ice were placed on top to slowly melt, dripping into the can, allowing fresh oxygen to circulate in the water. Ozark was selling the cans: a large one weighing 31 pounds, 22 inches in diameter and 18 inches tall; the smaller weighing 22 pounds, 18 inches in diameter and 13 inches tall. The company didn't respond to an inquiry about whether any of the cans, like the one shown in the photo on p17, are still available.)

But back to Frederick County and Woodsboro. Why were the goldfish from this area in demand? Experts say lime in the soil and water gave the fish a much-desired intense golden hue.

Unfortunately by the 1930s business began to fall off as more farmers elsewhere in the U.S. got into the goldfish busi-



And here's what it looked like when it was still in service in another photo displayed by the Historical Society. Those jugs on the platform were used for goldfish transportation.

ness, especially in the south where there was a longer growing season. By the 1960s, the use of plastic bags to hold goldfish and the expansion of air freight shipping ended Maryland's heyday as a center for breeding operations.

It's not known what kinds of freight cars carried goldfish from Woodsboro. But the Mid-Continent Railway Historical Society and Museum in Wisconsin has documented the past use of special kinds of rolling stock used by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission to transport native fish for the state's waterways. The specially-commissioned cars resemble old-style passenger wagons. The fish, in cans resembling milk jugs, were loaded by hand through a side door as seen in this photo from the Museum.



According to Mid-Continent, the federal government had 10 such cars. Wisconsin had two. The first, a 55-footer, was built by the Litchfield Car Company in 1893. It was replaced in 1912 by a larger Pullman-built car which the Historical Society says stayed in service through the 1940's.

Model railroaders interested in duplicating these cars will probably be better off scratchbuilding their own. An on-line search reveals there are some HO scale cars from MTH, one for transporting tropical fish, another for large-mouth bass and a third for sharks.

Woodsboro station is located on Creagerstown Road in Woodsboro, across the tracks from N.Z. Cramer and Sons hardware and JSB Woodworking. The nearest remaining goldfish hatcheries are located in nearby Thurmont, Maryland. Eaton's Goldfish hatchery is at 10701 Putman Road and Hunting Creek Fisheries is at 6916 Black Mill Road.



Alex Belida was a news executive, editor and correspondent for the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe for 40 years. He and his wife live in Rockville, MD where he has a small HO freelance layout called the Eureka and South Pass Railroad, a turn of the century short-line situated in Nevada. It has a creek but no goldfish ponds.

The story of the E&SP is documented in his blog:

<https://esprblog.wordpress.com>

The Train Collectors Association has also documented a series of “aquarium cars” in O gauge made by Lionel.



Links to items in this article:

<http://www.tcaetrain.org/2d-articles/collecting/Aquarium/index.shtml>

<https://www.midcontinent.org/?s=fish&x=0&y=0>

<http://www.ozarkkoi.com/Railway-Cans-a-142.html>

<https://thedailyrecord.com/2011/07/14/woodsboro-historical-group-restores-town's-train-station/>

https://www.fredericknewspost.com/archive/county-folks-find-treasure-in-goldfish/article_bb70887b-3c63-5906-bbbe-623a56836237.html

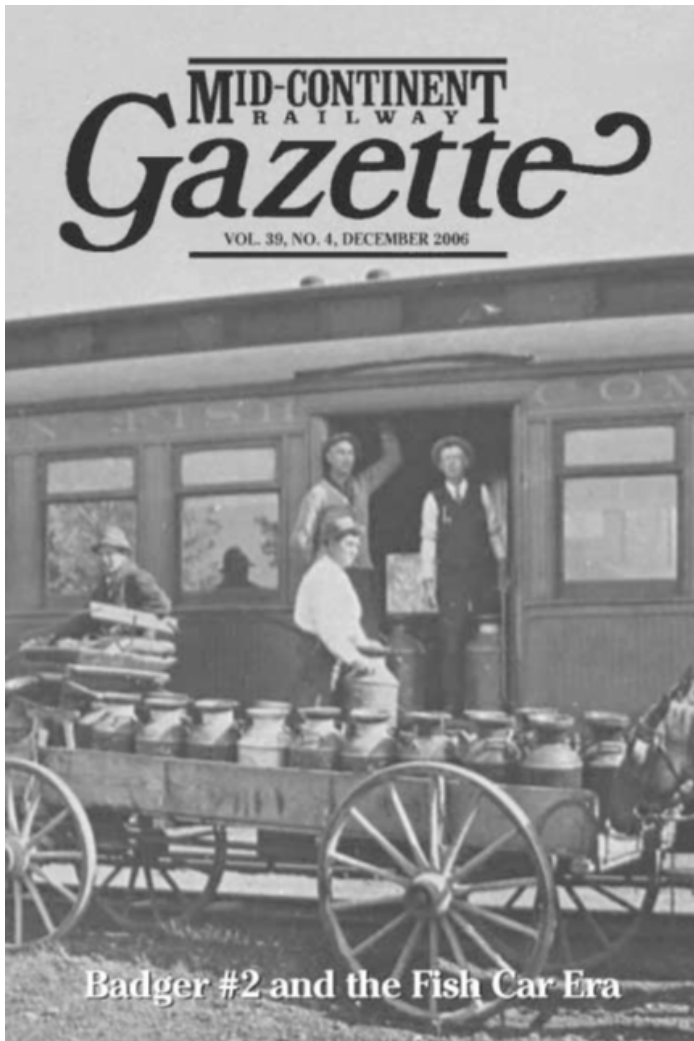
<https://www.thecatocinbanner.com/gone-fishin-frederick-county-once-the-largest-producer-of-goldfish/>

<https://mht.maryland.gov/secure/medusa/PDF/Frederick/F-8-61.pdf>

<http://www.woodsborotimes.com/content/files/wt-oct-2013.pdf>



Inside Woodsboro Station: the hat once worn by the Pennsylvania Railroad's Woodsboro Station agent and telegrapher.



Badger #2 and the Fish Car Era

Ballots will be in your hands in early August.

The Annual Members Meeting of the Mid-eastern Region of the NMRA will be held on Oct 12th, 2019 at approximately 8 pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, King of Prussia, Pa at 260 Mall Boulevard, King of Prussia, PA 19406.

2019 Elections are for DIRECTOR.
Candidate info is earlier in this issue. Nominations are now closed, but please consider running next year.

GOLDFISH PHOTOS

Another interior with local bric-a-brac from the Historical Society.



Think Regionally, Act Locally Growth by 75% How 75 Equals 2021

Kurt Thompson

In 2021, the Mid-Eastern Region will be 75 years old. Our original charter date was April 1946. What an amazing piece of history that is for me to consider. As a relative latecomer to work at the Region level, I'm struck with a bit a awe that the MER has grown over the years and still is in existence and that I'm part of it.

In light of our upcoming anniversary, I am making it the mission of the MER as of the 2021 Fall Regional Convention to increase two significant numbers by 75%: our region membership and the number of Master Model Railroaders in our Region. That is 30 months from now.

According to the October 2018 regional roster, we had 1996 members and 63 Master Model Railroaders (with several more added recently). So the target numbers are 3500 active members of the Mid-Eastern Region and 105 MMRs.

To make this mission a reality, we don't need rocket science. We only need to build on the very thing all of us have about our hobby: enthusiasm. Our region motto used to be the "Most Enthusiastic Region." With our enthusiasm showing, we need to take a more active role in presenting and inviting people to join us in our hobby and in the NMRA.

How does the title work with this mission. Just as stated. The Region will help out in all ways that we can to achieve the goal. I do need everyone's help.

The local divisions have always been where everything comes together. The Region Board and staff will be working with the Division Superintendents and the divisions to move this.

Where the results will come from will be the local level. Before we get bogged down in huge numbers, remember I'm speaking about this from the regional perspective, not the local one. Acting locally would mean that you and three of your friends would need to each find 75% of an interested newcomer. Or more realistically, the four of you should find three newcomers.

This "invite a newcomer" project will take many directions. Chief among them is using all of them. Each fall at the Convention, the Division Superintendents sit down for a working breakfast to discuss their successes and their needs to be more successful. This mission will be part of that discussion.

If you have any suggestions on ways to further this mission, please contact me, your Division Superintendent, or a member of the MER Board of Directors. Along with your suggestion, please come along with a solution and a willingness to help implement it.


So here are the interim milestones as well. A 15% increase by year's end 2019. 35% more by the end of 2020, and the balance by convention time in 2021. Remember the motto about eating the elephant.

Growth by 75% is a worthy, and I believe, achievable goal for the MER. As Robert Browning said, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, Or, what's a heaven for?"



During the late 1800s a baboon was employed by the railroad as a signalman. He never once made a mistake and worked for the railroad until his death.

Source : Blowingfacts.org

 @blowingfacts365

Clint asks: If you try to read the E-LOCAL on your favorite gadget and it fails, would you please let me know?

I've have one report of it failing on an Android phone. The PDF is created by Acrobat Pro X, with Version 9 compatibility. I don't have a way to test all possible devices, even if I wanted to. But please let me know.

The Baltimore Society of Model Engineers: Finding Locomotion, Part 1

By Chad W. Tyler
Director at Large
BSME Board of Directors

This three-part series explores the past, present and, most important, the future of the historic Baltimore Society of Model Engineers, the first club of its kind in the Nation dedicated exclusively to model railroads.

Building up the Consist – The Early Years of the BSME

To trace the origins of the Baltimore Society of Model Engineers, we must travel back in time to the early 1930s. At that time, there was only one magazine being published in the US dedicated to model making. Published by Spon & Chamberlain, “The Modelmaker” magazine was a small publication covering the entire model making field, from stationary steam engines to ships and locomotives.

In late 1931, George Nixon wrote a letter to the magazine, which was published in the back of the January 1932 issue, seeking modelers in the Baltimore area to contact him regarding the formation of a model railroad club.

Two months later, in March 1932, fourteen gentlemen met in the Northwest Baltimore home of Kenneth R. Henry and formed a model railroad club. At this first meeting, all in attendance agreed on naming the club The Baltimore Society of Model Engineers and a working scale of 1:48, now commonly referred to as “O” scale.

George Nixon was elected the first president of the club, and along with the other members, he began the hard work of laying the tracks of a what has become a legacy of model railroading in the heart of Baltimore City. Beyond his work with the BSME, George Nixon would go on to found the Baltimore Streetcar Museum, the Baltimore Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, and the Friends of President Street Station, now the home of the Baltimore Civil War Museum.



O Scale layout at 1613 N. Chester Street

Shortly after their first meeting, Nixon and fellow founding members took a bold step: they leased a 15' x 15' room on the second floor of a plumbing shop at 1613 N. Chester Street and began constructing a double-track O scale layout around the room. Initially, it was flat, had no scenery, and only a few yard tracks on one side. By 1934, enough track had been laid and enough models completed to allow for their first test runs.

At this time, word began to spread about the work of these dedicated modelers, and visitors began to drop in to marvel at their creations. This led to the adoption of a regular Society practice of offering a

“fishbowl” for guests to drop in a donation to say thank you and support the ongoing work. Many of these visitors would eventually become members. By 1935 the membership had grown to 44.

The Society faced many challenges during their time on Chester Street. They had built their layout and models to scale, but not to any standards, because there were none. Wheel flanges varied in thickness and depth, and couplers were brass castings with solid knuckles and of varying heights. Power was delivered to the temperamental electric motors through an outside third rail, but rail heights varied, and rail shoes were a constant source of trouble. Nevertheless, the members were having fun, even if they had to throw tape around their couplers to keep the train from uncoupling.

Beyond the operating challenges, the clubroom itself posed its own hardships. It was so hot in the summer that members worked and sweated in just their pants and undershirts. When the heat became unbearable, the members would call off the work and walk two blocks over to the Pennsy main line and watch the K-4s go by. In the wintertime, they worked in their thickest overcoats and warmed up around a potbellied stove.

In 1937, the Baltimore Society of Model Engineers became a registered non-profit corporation, and their ambition was boundless. They expanded their club room to 15' x 30', consuming the entire second floor, and took out a loan to finance the enlarged layout. In a short amount of time, they had the new layout in operation and more visitors were taking notice.

The success of their “fishbowl” led the BSME to open their doors to the general public during the '38-'39 holiday season. The Society was rewarded handsomely by the admiring public – their trains were a big hit and the holiday shows were cemented as an annual tradition. By 1940, the BSME was on easy street. The loan had been repaid and

they had money in the bank. Many of the members were now considered experts in the field. Each had a different specialty and all shared a common bond formed over their many hours in the clubroom and out on the frequent BSME sponsored scenic rail excursions.

By March of 1944, the success of the Society allowed them to absorb an HO scale club and soon after the BSME decided to sign a three-year lease for a new headquarters at 3305 Greenmount Av-



HO Scale Layout at 3305 Greenmount Avenue

enue in order to accommodate new layouts in both scale and all the new members. Once moved in, they hit the ground running with new layouts built up and running by December 1944, ahead of the busy holiday season. To celebrate, then Governor of Maryland, Herbert O'Connor presided over a "Golden Spike" ceremony celebrating the completion of the layouts and the opening of the open house season.

At the Greenmount location, the Society continued to grow its library and began publishing a quarterly newsletter called “The Switcher.” This publication allowed the activities of the club to reach a wide audience across the Mid-Atlantic region and featured news snippets about individual club members, progress on the HO and O scale layouts, upcoming events, news from other clubs, and

planned rail fan trips. "The Switcher" continued to be published until 2001.

After three short years on Greenmount Ave., the Society received notification that the landlady decided to increase rent from \$50 to \$150. With monthly income for the club at about only \$90 per month, this began a "frantic" search for a new space. In spite of this news, the Feb '47 Switcher reported that at the close of the Open House season on Jan 12th, BSME had hosted 16,566 people! The membership had exploded as well and the club decided that the senior membership had to be limited to 100 members.



HO scale layout at 1217 W. North Avenue

After leaving Greenmount Avenue, the BSME was able to quickly find a new home in the basement of a Baltimore Post Office at 1217 W. North Ave. It was there in the post office, at the February 1951 general meeting, that club members voted for the club to become a Life Member of the NMRA, the first club organization to be so affiliated.

The basement space did not afford the luxuries of space that Greenmount Avenue did, and the local fire marshal cracked down on the Society's ability to put on its annual Christmas shows, saying the space was too small for the number of visitors who usually attended the shows. Although two layouts were built in the post office space, only those modelers who attended the annual anniversary celebrations had a chance to see them. As the annual public holiday shows had become a Baltimore tra-

dition, and was the main source of income for the club, it was decided a new location should be sought, and in October of 1952 the Baltimore Society of Model Engineers left North Avenue for their next home.

Full Steam Ahead – On Saratoga Street

In the 1950's, the area of Howard and Lexington Streets downtown, was the place to be. Baltimore's four big department stores -- Hutzler's, Hochschild Kohn, Hecht's and Stewart's -- all faced Howard Street, and people from all over the city flocked to the area. Just around the corner from Hutzler's, the Baltimore Society of Model Engineers landed a great new home smack in the middle of all the hustle and bustle on the third floor of 225 W. Saratoga Street. For some of the 106 members, it wasn't perfect – even though the space was much larger than their others at 30' wide by 70' long -- there was grumbling at the beginning that the space wasn't adequate for an O scale layout. Nevertheless, the members set about building two layouts, one for the HO modelers and another for the O scale crew, each measuring 12' wide by 60' long.

In 1954, the Society opened their doors to the public for the first time since 1947 they were overrun by the crowds flocking to see the exhibition. Over 14,000 people showed up at that first open house



O scale layout prior to adding scenery at 225 W. Saratoga Street

on Saratoga Street. Lines for their open house events for many years after regularly stretched around the corner and club members had to man the door allowing one person in just as another left because the upstairs space was filled to capacity. These massive public open house events continued for several decades, until the late '70s, when interest in the hobby began to wane and the surrounding department stores started to close.

The Society had been incredibly lucky to be able to hold onto their space for as long as they did, even as it changed hands from one owner to the next multiple times. This wasn't always part of the plan, of course. Digging through the archives and oral histories of the BSME, one might find a dozen or more proposals to find a new location. In 1991, the BSME submitted a detailed proposal to the Maryland Stadium Authority to occupy a space within the old B&O Railroad's Camden Station at Camden Yards and have pursued a number of other opportunities; but, after so many decades of passionate work on their two layouts and large library, it was always going to take a blunt, outside force to throw the rusty switch and send the heavy train down a new set of tracks.

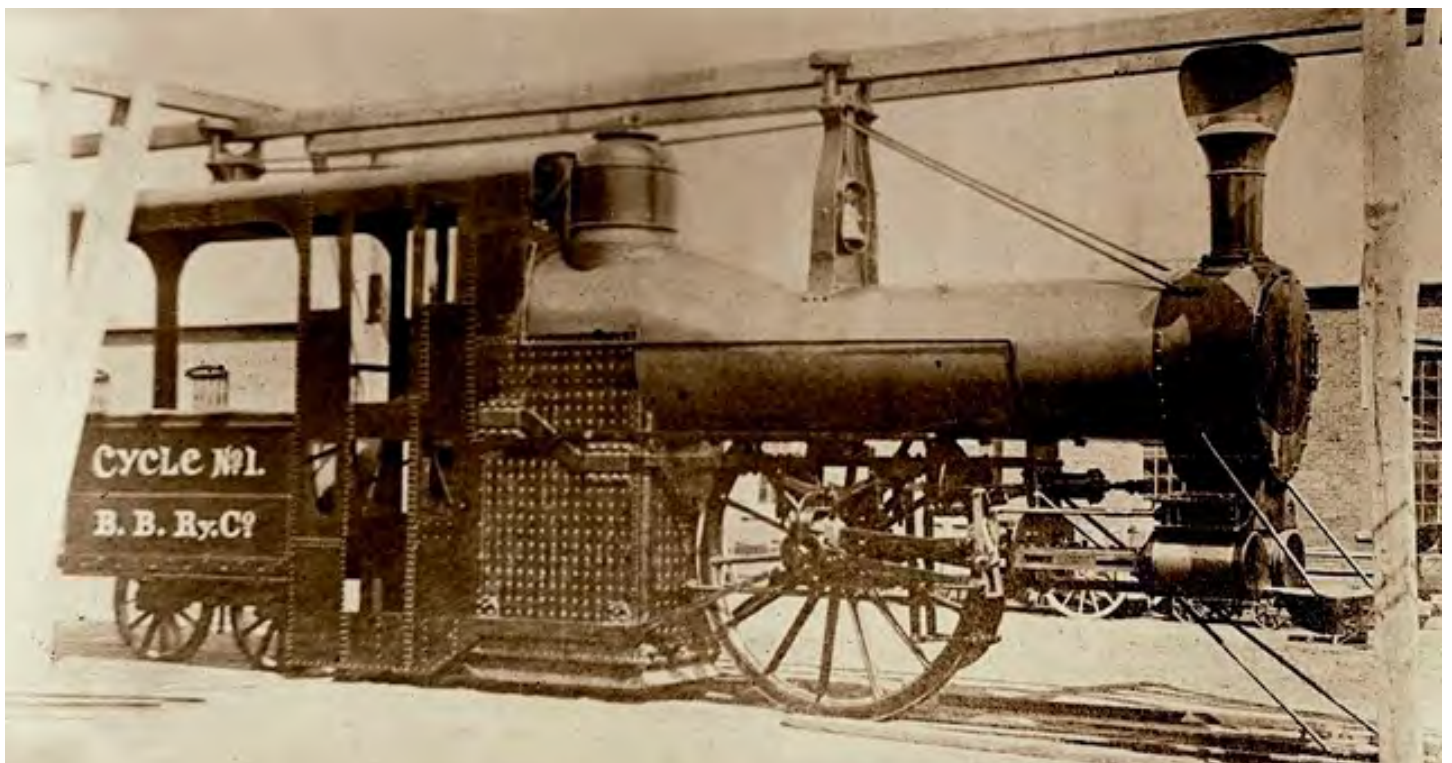
Early HO scale layout at 225 W. Saratoga Street



Over the almost seven decades that the BSME rented the space, the layouts changed and evolved. Most notably in the 1980s the O scale layout was totally rebuilt, going from outside third rail to what is now standard two rail. The HO scale layout underwent numerous scenic updates through the years, including a full reworking of the urban scene featuring many Baltimore landmarks, multiple iterations of the trolley routes and a full modernization of the operating layout to DCC.

In the next installment, we will dig in to the events leading up to, and following, the Baltimore Society of Model Engineers' move from 225 W. Saratoga Street after 67 years.

If you've enjoyed reading this article, head over to www.ModelEngineers.com to show your support for our efforts to continue this great history or drop us an email at BSME.Development@Gmail.com. We'd love to hear your BSME stories and the Society is always seeking new members.



From www.boweryboyshistory.com -- gotta be one of the strangest things I've seen that ran on rails.

Clint sez: Another couple of cool photos I found online. Completely by accident.
Find something interesting yourself? Send it along!

Quite a bit more conventional, this is in downtown DC, as you can guess from where it says "Catholic U"



Building a Hobby barn next phase by Jerry Stanley

Much has happened since I last submitted an article to the Local for the “Local #73” issue in Jan./Feb. of 2018. Then I wrote an article on building a Hobby Barn. At that point, we had installed the framing, shingles and exterior siding. However, on the interior, we only had studs and nothing else!

After we were “dried in” the exterior of the hobby barn, I got to work soliciting bids for the electric, audio visual system and the HVAC systems. This took months to send out plans, answer questions, receive bids and evaluate prices, scopes etc. After carefully evaluating bids, I settled on three vendors to perform the audio visual, electric and heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC). I based the selection of the vendors on reputation, availability, price, how they responded to bids and re-

search on how they performed once they were awarded the work. Obviously we didn’t want to hire anyone we had to constantly beg to return communications, calls, etc. Once we had settled on the vendors, we set up a schedule. That’s when the project started moving rapidly again!

For the different trades, we selected for electric--Country Side Electric, rough in (RI) for the speakers, TV audio visual system -- Trinity wiring solutions, HVAC system - Classic Homes, and the Ramp – Long Fence. I self-performed the following: insulation, drywall hanging and finishing drywall.

First the HVAC system (mini split) went in; we do that for several reasons: in most houses the HVAC contractor installs duct work. The main trunk lines are not very flexible and to operate efficiently have to be installed in certain areas that are usually built into the structure. Next we installed our electric RI. This follows HVAC because the electrician is responsible for the wiring of the HVAC. Lastly, we installed our audio visual system rough in. He has to go last because his wires should not run next to electric power wires. Typically, there has to be a space or some distance from electric so that it does not interfere with their product. Once all of the trades were installed, we were ready to insulate. Insulating is a rough job, and I do not recommend insulating if you can afford to pay someone else. I wanted to save this money and use it elsewhere on the project. I do not like insulating! So the only way I could get through it was to set a goal of one bag at a time on the ceiling area. On the walls, I had some friends help on that. If you have a friend that will help you insulate hang onto that friend because they are better than gold!

After the insulation was complete, I called in family and friends, and we hung almost 40 sheets of drywall in a little over a day. We used 5/8 Type X and 1/2” both in 4’x12’ sheets. We glued every stud and rafter, and just used screws to fasten the drywall to the studs--no nails. The ceiling and the wall adjoining the garage area of the building received the 5/8 Type X. We also installed 5/8 Type X on the end wall. On the front and rear wall we installed 1/2” drywall. The selection of the Type X for the ceiling is not code (required by law). We chose using fire rated drywall just to add a bit of extra fire protection should a fire ever break through the wall next to the garage area. Fortunately, we had lots of help to install this on the ceiling. It is EXTREMELY HEAVY drywall.



I immediately started taping the drywall after we hung the walls, and while writing this article I started sanding the drywall. After the first day of sanding I looked something similar to the abominable snowman. My teenage daughters laughed hysterically at the sight of me covered in drywall dust. Ha!

Long Fence installed the ramp for us. It runs from the door towards the outside corner of the building. A length of about 24'. Even though a ramp is not required I thought it prudent to install a ramp due to the difficulties of some of my modeling friends to access certain buildings. I wanted them to be able to attend functions at the Hobby Barn. The ramp is built with PT wood floors, maintenance free railing with a handicap bar mounted on the interior side to the post. The slope of the ramp is approximately 1:12. Which is the code slope for handicap ramps. For Christmas, my son gave me a gift card to a building supply company. I used that to purchase solar lights and mounted these on the interior of the post. The solar lights provide light at night for safer access on the ramp and the effect of the lights shining at each post is actually very pleasing.

By the time this is read I hope to have a built is cabinet installed, walls and trim installed. All of this painted and bench work started! I am SO EXCITED for the next phase--I am like a kid waiting for Christmas. It seems like it will never get here.

On the advice of one of my sons I have started documenting the process on an Instagram account and my Facebook page. If you are interested in following along, my Instagram account is public, and the name is @tracksalltheway. On Facebook I have an album called "Tracks all the way."

That's all for now. Let's keep building together, sharing this wonderful hobby and the fine fellowship that comes along with it.



That is good looking. My basement should look so good. And so empty.

Another tale of two layouts...by Clint

In June 2019, James River and Tidewater Divisions held a joint open house episode, in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Both were in the same gated community neighborhood, and not far apart.

The first one we went to was Jim Taverna's. You've probably heard this name before.

After that, we went to Ed Rappe's; Noll Horan and I had seen Ed's layout in Fairfax just before he tore it down and moved to Williamsburg about 15 years ago. His Fairfax layout was meticulous, and I was very excited to get to see the new one.

So here's a few photos from each one. Both are O scale.



This page is just Jim Taverna.

(below) He had a lot of brass. A LOT.

(right) Plenty of vertical in the hillsides.

(above) Good weathering on some freight cars.



These photos are at Ed Rappe's.
Guess where his setting is...



A fabulous town scene. Pretty big, probably at least 10 x15 feet.

This view through an overpass was great.



Membership has its benefits...

Your NMRA membership entitles you to all these benefits, plus the fellowship and assistance of more than 18,000 members across the globe.

Partnership Program

The NMRA has partnered with model railroad manufacturers of all sizes who have agreed to give discounts to NMRA members. Discounts range from free shipping to 20% off all purchases. From Micro-Mark to Rusty Stumps, more manufacturers are being added every month. To see the current listing, see our website's Partnership page in the Members Only section.

Model Railroad Directory

Whether you're at home or traveling, you can contact other NMRA members for a layout tour, to talk trains, or even to join in an op session! There are maps, descriptions, photos, videos, and more.

NMRA Online Archives

More than 10,000 photographs, slides, plans, drawings, erection elevations, paint schemes and more, with additional scans being added all the time. High-resolution files are available for download at a discount to members.

Achievement Program

The AP helps modelers get more out of the hobby by providing an incentive to learn and master the skills necessary. Those who have completed the AP receive Master Model Railroader (MMR) certification.

Liability Insurance for Clubs

\$1 million liability insurance is available to model railroad clubs in which every member is an NMRA member. \$50 administration fee and completed application required.

Special Access to Places and People

As an NMRA member, you'll have access to all kinds of railroad locations you'd never otherwise see. Often National and Regional conventions will tour prototype facilities such as yards and maintenance shops, and will charter special excursion railroads that are usually never open to the public. You'll have the chance to see top-of-the-line model railroads that usually don't accept visitors. And you'll be able to spend time talking with some of the most famous personalities in model railroading today.

Bi-monthly NMRA eBulletin and NMRA Turntable

Every other month we publish the electronic NMRA

eBulletin, containing late-breaking news and reports of happenings in the organization. The NMRA Turntable is a monthly electronic publication that rounds up some of the most interesting model railroad websites, videos, blogs, and articles on the web. We do the searching so you don't have to! Every member with a valid email address receives a copy of both publications.

Clint sez: This was in NMRA Magazine in 2017. I asked for permission to reprint it here. Theirs was prettier, but this is important information to tell folks in recruiting them. More info on the NMRA website.

NMRA Magazine

NMRA Magazine is the monthly publication of the NMRA, and features news about the organization and its Regions and Divisions, along with modeling articles, product performance reviews, and other information. Because the subscription rate/postage depends on where you live, check www.nmra.org for your rate.

"Members Only" Company Store

The NMRA's Company store offers many items, from apparel to mugs to gauges, available only to NMRA members.

Online Video Library

The Members Only section of www.nmra.org features dozens of helpful "how-to" videos produced by professional video companies, as well as over 50 videos of clinics presented at national NMRA conventions.

Annual NMRA Calendar

Features spectacular model photographs, as well as dates for Regional conventions and more. Free to every U.S. member. Additional copies can be ordered for \$5 each from HQ. Outside the U.S., contact HQ.

Liability Insurance for Meets and Shows

This insurance covers liability claims for all Region, Division, and NMRA SIG-sponsored events up to a specific limit of liability provided for in the policy. (For clarity and assurance of coverage, we prefer that SIG events be co-sponsored by National, a Region, or a Division.) Please see the website for important details.

Conventions

The annual National convention runs one week and usually features about 100 clinics, more than 50 layout tours, and dozens of prototype tours. The National Train Show runs for the final three days of the convention.

Regional conventions vary in duration from two to five days. Many feature prototype and layout tours, plus clinics and other activities.

Modeling With The Masters (MWTM)

This is an intense, multi-day regimen of direct instruction by Master Model Railroaders. Modelers get hands-on experience in beginning and intermediate modeling techniques. MTWM classes are usually offered at the National convention, but MTWM courses have also been offered in various cities and at Regional conventions across the country.

Discounts and Advance Registration on New KML Books

Kalmbach Memorial Library periodically offers special books and book reprints to the general public. NMRA members receive a substantial discount on the retail price and can reserve copies in advance.

Local Divisions

There are more than 150 local Divisions in the NMRA, located in large and small communities across the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Britain. Most hold regular meetings and meets featuring clinics, presentations, layout visits, and more.

Standards and Conformance

The NMRA constantly researches and sets Standards and Recommended Practices for all scales and gauges of train models, as well as adjunct items such as DCC and modules. The NMRA continually checks new products for conformance to Standards and RPs.

Private Insurance

This service offers NMRA members group property insurance for collections, layouts, live steam, tools, slides and photographs, books, magazines, railroad memorabilia, and more. This insurance also covers an individual's property if it resides on a club layout. Members receive NMRA Group Rates.

• Free quote or brochure, contact J.A. Bash & Co: 1-800-654- 2256 or 300 Mt. Lebanon Rd., Suite 225, Pittsburgh, PA, 15234.

NMRA Standards Gauges, Data Sheets CD ROM, and Turnout Templates

NMRA members can purchase Standards Gauges at significant price reductions over retail prices. Data Sheets CD and Turnout Templates are available only from the Company Store. Many data sheets are being updated and will appear in NMRA Magazine, as well as available for free download from the Members Only section of www.nmra.org.

Beginners' Guide

The Beginner's Guide pages on www.nmra.org offer those new to the hobby help in learning the basics of track, wiring, scenery, and more.

www.nmra.org/beginner/



I have received some photos from Stan Knotts, editor of the LOCAL 20 years ago.

He was visiting Cripple Creek in 1983, and that trip resulted in these photos. Will be using them here and there for a few issues.

Do you have some nifty photos like this? Would be pleased to publish them here.

INVITATION TO AUTHORS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS. BY JACK DZIADUL, MER DIRECTOR

Do you have a modeling tip, a how-to article, a step-by-step scratch-build, kit-bash, or kit build to share with your 1,800 friends in the Mid-Eastern Region? Perhaps you have photo exhibits of a recent train show, from a layout tour, or of an operating session. With our e-Local, we have an expanded page count available to publish your contribution and sharp color to give some pop to your photographs.

Among our Region's objectives are:

- Expand interest in and publicize the hobby of model railroading
- Promote membership growth (and retention)
- Support the National Achievement Program

Each member can play a role in achieving these objectives.

We have a great deal of talent in the MER as evidenced by so many Master Model Railroaders in the Region, and in the variety of high-quality contest entries at our conventions. Let us all share those talents more broadly. For those participating in the Achievement Program and working toward their Railroad Author Certificate and MMR, the Region and Division level requirements below are excerpted from the NMRA web site. Refer to www.nmra.org Education tab for the full statement of requirements that encompass clinics, etc.

To qualify for this certificate, you must prepare and submit material on any of the following subjects:

- 1 Model Railroading
- 2 Prototype Railroading, Applicable to Modeling
- 3 NMRA Administration (e.g. Officers or Committee Reports)

The material being claimed must be the work of the author, photographer, artist, draftsman, etc. applying for the certificate. A total of forty-two (42) points must be earned. This is material that appears in printed media, such as newsletters and may include text, photographs, drawings, etc. Material that has been published or accepted for publication may be claimed. A copy of the published material or of the acceptance receipt from the publication must be submitted as proof.

Item	Region	Division
Article or Column	2	1
Photos or Art Work	2	1
Scale Drawing of Prototype	4	2
Scale Drawing of Track Plan	2	1

A "page" is approximately 1200 words. Credit may be claimed for partial pages down to quarter pages. No more than half of the total required points (21) may be claimed for Division or 100% NMRA Club publications.

You will note that your article does not need to actually even be published before submitting your Region level points for credit. You only need certification from the Editor that your work has been accepted for publication. For guidance or questions pertaining to the Achievement Program, please contact Region AP Coordinator Dave Chance or your Division AP Coordinator.

What is the next step? Submit your article, photographs or inquiries to Editor Clint Hyde (local-editor@mer-nmra.com) with a copy to Jack Dziadul (jdziadul@mer-nmra.com).

As the E-LOCAL is expanding, there is room for more writing and photography by YOU!

Train Simulator Clint Hyde, Your Editor

If you've read *Model Railroader* over the last 10-15 years, you'll have seen the "Microsoft Train" software ads. Before there was an announced software product, there were various jokes traveling the Internet about Microsoft doing such a thing, mostly implying what a screw-up it would be. There were a couple of others as well. In essence, you "create a layout via 3D software models," put buildings on it, and then select a consist from a set of cars and engines, and "run it." And you can watch the simulation from inside the cab. All very nice, and directly based on a large body of 3D computer game capabilities.

Recently, while playing one of those *other* games ("Just Cause 3"), I came across an in-game train that was actually running. Not a long train, because the game isn't about trains, per se, but you do have to watch out for them. The trains are unmanned mag-lev with one or two each of dual 20-ft well cars, steel pipe cars, missile attack cars, and flat cars that might carry military vehicles or a fighter jet. The missile cars have a hackable control terminal which turns the missiles from hostile to friendly, and then they will auto-launch at the local military vehicles instead of yours. Occasionally there's problem of some sort, a crash, and the fighter jet pops off onto the concrete. You can get in and fly it; it's a "little" fighter jet if it fits on a flat car. This is the Hollywood game flavor: absurd, but fun.

This mag-lev train travels approximately 100 miles per hour (in-game scale speed), and you can ride on top of it (photo 1), and jump off while deploying a parachute to fly away. This is actually pretty slick, especially when all of a sudden the missile tube doors open and 20 rockets launch out. Hollywood, remember? Also—it's dual track, so trains go in the opposite direction, there are tunnels, and bridges.

There's a full physics model in the game, for free/unconstrained movement with friction, gravity, mass/inertia, explosions. The game is a combat game, you play solo, and mostly you run around blowing up things. Great fun, really—the physics model is more Hollywood than perfect real-world fidelity, with exaggerated everything.



In a tunnel...I'm on the left, on top of the missile car. Locomotive is in front. Other track on the far left...



This isn't going to end well for me.

I discovered that the trains had missile cars after getting shot out of the sky in my helicopter, when I got too close to one. I ejected and parachuted in to have a look at them. That's when I discovered that you can get on one (yes, at full speed), and then discovered you can hack the controller, which means the missiles target things other than you in a vehicle. They never stop moving.

But I was annoyed, so first I shot one with my RPG. WHOA! Yeah, you can cause a train wreck. It was fabulous. And funny. The cars don't go far, and they will stay near--or ON--the "track." Until the next train comes, two minutes later, and then—who knows where things end up? Yep, if you stick around and watch—which I did—you can see as many collisions as you want.

Next up: again with the RPG: it turns out you can blow up a concrete train bridge. Uh huh, you know where THAT is going. Remember the exaggerated physics? Sometimes the weight of a 250-ton locomotive is less than you think.

Train WRECK simulator. That's what I was playing with.



Those truck springs on freight cars? Apparently they're stronger than we thought. Railfanning here is pretty cool, especially after you blow out the bridge.



Locomotives occasionally act like they're made of Flubber. One time one of them launched so high it was out of sight for 10-15 seconds.

What's even more Hollywood than this: Aquaman is going to star in the movie version of this game. I hope it has flying trains.

Countless hours of fun. Haven't laughed that much in a computer game EVER.



