



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9 THE COAL DIVISION

Mid Central Region NMRA

November, 2011



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HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Bob Weinheimer MMR

As those of you who get the NMRA Magazine saw, the dues are going up. While this is unfortunate, it is necessary in order to keep the great services the NRMA provides coming to us. In case you did not see it, the dues for 2012 will increase from \$39 to \$44 and the magazine will increase from \$19 to \$22. The total package will increase from \$58 to \$66. That may sound like a lot of money but think of it in terms of the cost of an Exac-trail or Tangent car or some of the newer HO locomotives. Most of us are willing to pay those prices, a few dollars more for the organization that provides the standards that make them all work together should not be a problem.

I know our National President reads this column because he has responded to its content in the past. At the risk of disappointing him and the financial folks, I will suggest that if your renewal date is sometime in the next 6 months or so you might wish to beat the dues increase by renewing on line before the end of the year. My membership expires at the end of March and, while I did not complete the payment portion just yet, it was all set to let me renew 5 months early. Also, consider a two year renewal. There is no discount but you are protected against another dues increase. Of course, this does give the NRMA the use of your money for a few extra months so perhaps it is not so bad after all.

I want to remind all of you that our November meeting is at the NRHS Pocahontas Chapter train show in Bluefield, WV on the 12th. Several of our division members are among those who work hard to make this one of the best train shows in West Virginia. Last year the weather permitted us to hold our meeting outdoors. I hesitate to count on that happening again but Charlie Venable has found a room inside the building for our meeting. Bluefield may seem to be a long way to go for a meeting but keep in mind that we have several members who come from Bluefield or Ronceverte to most of our meetings in Teays Valley or even points farther north and west. I see no reason why many of us should not be able to make the trip to Bluefield once each year.

MEETING NOTICE

The November meeting of MCR Division Nine will be held at the Youth Center on Stadium Drive in Bluefield on November 12th at 2:00PM. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the NRHS Pocahontas Chapter annual train show. The contest for November will be non revenue equipment. So bring you "cabeese" plows, MofW cars and whatever for our enjoyment. Also please consider bringing any unwanted or orphan items you have for donation to the raffle. The clinic for November will be enjoying the train show and getting in your Christmas shopping. Please try and make the meeting; it is a long trip for many but well worth your time. Chuck will be among the many dealers at the show and his prices are often very generous. Hope to see you there!

Probably the easiest access for most would be The WV Turnpike and I-77 to exit 1 just before the tunnel at Bluefield WV. Then follow John Nash Blvd to US 460 West. Take 460 west until you hit the WV/VA State line. At the first traffic signal after you enter the State of Virginia; make a right turn onto Leatherwood Lane. You will then come to another traffic signal at a "tee" intersection with College Ave. Make a left turn onto College Ave then immediately prepare to make a right turn onto Stadium Drive. You will see a used car dealership to your right and Bluefield (VA Baptist) College in front of you as you are turning onto Stadium Dr. Follow Stadium Drive to the show.

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary J. Burdette MMR

As you read this I will have completed an enjoyable operating session on Clint Foster's C&O New River Subdivision, an HO railroad located at the eastern edge of the Coal Division. I know it will be enjoyable because, 1) it always is and, 2) it copies the operations of my favorite road. That is significant. Last month I discussed kitbashing/detailing and scratchbuilding vs. Ready-to-Run. I pointed out that R-T-R has been gaining popularity as many modelers were spending more time building operating railroads than superdetailing structures, motive power, and rolling stock. This is significant. I never said what I thought about this possibility one way or another. I simply threw out the notion for us to ponder. As a scratch builder, you may think I am geared more to the tinkerer and detail hound. To a degree, I love these items. However, once you have operated on a true to life representation of your favorite line (albeit in miniature), you don't really care how it was built. This, too, is significant. Clint has purchased many R-T-R items painted for the C&O and concentrated on building the line from staging at Russell, Kentucky through Hawks Nest/MA Cabin, Sewell, Thurmond, Prince, Quinnimont, Meadow Creek, and Hinton, West Virginia, ending in staging at Clifton Forge, Virginia. Plus, there are branch line operations. To C&O fans, this is significant.

As a thirty-five year veteran of the Chesapeake and Ohio Historical Society, I have read many articles and publications concerning operations in the New River Gorge. The most impressive of all were articles by the late Gene Huddleston, especially his book "Riding That New River Train." He described the locations, structures, and operations - what was there and how things were done was explained in detail. From the mainline passenger trains, to the hotshot freights, to the coal drags, and lowly shifters and branch line runs, all were portrayed as the actors in a play- a concept coined by pioneer modeler, Frank Ellison, in the 1940s and 50s. Gene told us stories of the C&O giving them life. This intrigued and inspired us. Clint took these stories and built a C&O railroad with bridges, main yards, small classification yards, wyes, branches, and a plan which places the operator in the New River itself so you can run both the north main and the Southside Subdivision out of Thurmond, a technique most C&O modelers don't address. This is significant.

One of the first trains I ran was the Arbuckle Turn. I picked up my loco, a C&O H-6, 2-6-6-2, Mallet, and caboose at the Thurmond shops. I ran across the bridge to Southside Junction. There were six empty hoppers in the

small Southside yard which I picked up. Reversing, I backed beyond the junction and shoved the cars up the Rend Subdivision which travels along Arbuckle Creek to the mine at Minden up on the plateau. When the coal was loaded, I proceeded down the branch and deposited the loads back into the yard. I ran light back to Thurmond where I dropped my cab, took on fuel and water, and tied up in the engine house. Another run involved the 2-8-0 Consol and two passenger cars making that same trip across the bridge to the junction where ole "Fanny" took the Loup Creek Subdivision up to Mount Hope, West Virginia and back to Thurmond. Later in the day, the "around the horn" local coal train would leave Thurmond and travel to the Junction where it would enter the Southside Subdivision, pick up the loads previously spotted and head down the gorge to gather loads from other operations, returning to the small yard at Thurmond on the north side of the river. Once this was done, the "sweeper" would roll by picking up loads for Hinton and beyond. Wow, what action.

You don't like locals? Well there are two sections each of the George Washington (eastbound and westbound), two each of the Sportsman (both ways), as well as the same for the Fast Flying Virginian. The manifest trains the Expeditor and the Speedwest, along with the coal drags, and locals make up an intricate show for the operator and spectator alike. Clint, the former Band Director, has orchestrated a performance second to none, duplicating the actions once seen on the old C&O (and in keeping with his best musical renditions). With timetables, fast clocks, train information sheets, waybills, and DCC everything is run "on the bell" as the old-timers would say. This is significant.

Why is everything I have mentioned "significant?" Well, Clint has actually (over about a one year period) built a realistic C&O railroad which duplicates the action of the steam-diesel transition era. He may, now, spend time refining and detailing his creation as operations are in good shape. Lin Westcott (Former editor of *Model Railroader* Magazine) once wrote, "Operation comes before the surgery." He promoted building it, running it, then rebuilding things if you need to. Sometimes we worry it to death (planning), never really building anything. Railroad artist Angela Trotta Thomas' husband noted a quote from a sports ad in a TM Books video when he said, "Just Do It!" With many R-T-R items available to speed his efforts, Clint did!

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Bob Weinheimer MMR

From what I hear around the Division there is a fair bit of Achievement Program activity. Dennis McGeeney is working hard putting lots of detail into a modest sized layout. We hope to be able to judge it for scenery before the end of the year. By my count John Harris is closing in on the Association Volunteer certificate for his work as convention layout tour manager and Membership Manager. Mark Maynard has submitted his Electrical Engineer Statement of Qualifications and Greg McCartney is working on his wiring as well.

On a recent visit to Clint Foster's layout, Gary Burdette and Jerry Doyle, both holders of the Scenery certificate, judged Clint's scenery to a merit level. They also pointed out to Clint that he should pick some more of that low hanging fruit: certificates for Chief Dispatcher and Electrical Engineer. He has already done the work, all that remains is the preparation of the Statement of Qualifications, the dreaded paperwork.

Oh, that paperwork. Please do not let that stop you. In most cases, what is required is some sort of description of how you did something. Think of it as a written form of the description of the contest models or how you might describe it to another modeler. Any of us can help you with the paperwork, all you have to do is the fun stuff, the modeling. An added reward for you paperwork might be an article in Up The Holler or the MCR's Kingpin. If you did something interesting, others would like to hear about it. Publication will earn points toward Model Railroad Author.

Speaking of Author, you can get half the points you need for this certificate from content on a web site. Photos of your layout or other modeling subjects count. If you supply 32 photos with captions to the webmaster, they will be posted on the Coal Division web site and you will be halfway to Model Railroad Author.

OCTOBER CONTEST RESULTS

October's contest was Open Loads. There were several entries but Paul Lapointe's load of Christmas trees on a flat car was the big vote getter. Paul tells us the load started as a block of florist's foam. He then liberally applied ground foam to simulate the foliage. Finally, he jammed pieces of wire into the foam to simulate the trunks. I suspect many of us thought he had made a bunch of trees then tied them together. We were all fooled by Paul's great work.



**NMRA MCR DIVISION 9
THE COAL DIVISION
West Virginia Hobbies & Crafts Winfield, WV
October 8, 2011**

Welcome and Introductions Meeting called to order at 2:00 by Bob Weinheimer. Members introduced themselves. Michael Hohn was present to promote the Pittsburgh MCR Convention.

Division Clerk Report

Division 9 minutes approved as published.

Division 9 balance \$8354.44 with \$85.70 in income last month.

Superintendent Report

The MCR Board met last Sunday. Two counties in Ohio would like to join Division 5. The process will be a lengthy one. The 2013 Dayton convention will focus will focus on operations. The idea of a Division Facebook page was discussed. Several divisions have done this in the MCR. Bob and Greg have been discussing this for our division. We have been invited to the Division 6 June 16 meeting next year. The meeting will be in Marion, Ohio depot where there is considerable railroad activity. The November 12 meeting will be at the Bluefield show. The show is usually very good. The concept of a cruise for the 2016 National Convention was mentioned. This is a serious proposal. Bob encouraged members to voice their opinions on this topic.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Gary was away riding the Western Maryland Scenic Railway.

Boy Scout Programs

Tony was away in the United Kingdom today.

Achievement Program

Bob reminded folks that help is available for paperwork.

Webmaster

Web traffic is up over the past two months.

Nominations Chair

Bob mentioned that the time is approaching for this committee to begin work.

Raffle

There were six HO items for raffle.

“Up The Holler” Editor Report

Pictures, stories, and other stuff is always welcome.

Membership

No report

Old Business

New Business

Dennis mentioned a recent trip to Roanoke and visited several railroad museums. He asked for ideas for future trips. He also requested we have a group picture.

Bob mentioned that our division has had increased attendance over the past few years.

Announcements

Future Meetings

Nov 12 in Bluefield

December 10 in Winfield at WV Hobbies & Crafts.

Contest

Open Loads: Paul Lapointe’s flat car loaded with Christmas trees was the hands down winner.

Respectfully submitted

Jerry Doyle

Division 9 Clerk

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The goal of the newsletter team is to have this document reach you by email or snail mail at least one week prior to our meetings. We typically do the layout work the Wednesday 10 days before the meeting with distribution Thursday or Friday. For example, this issue was prepared November 2. For this to happen reliably, we need all items for publication by the Monday 12 days prior to the meeting. If we don’t get it on time we can’t print it.

Please help us give you the most up to date information possible.

Upcoming Newsletter Deadlines:

December:	November 28
January	January 2
February	January 30

MY WORDS

Dan Mulhearn, Editor

This has been one of the busiest months I have had in a long time. One of our paramedics left the ambulance company for Conductors School with CSX in Atlanta. So, I went from one 24 hour shift a week to full time for most of October. That meant a 24 hour shift every third day followed by a night on call and hopefully one day off. But, despite that my model railroading activity peaked during October. On October 4th Charlie Venable and I worked on N gauge T Trak modules to help Tom Hullet prepare for exhibiting his modules at Hinton and Bluefield. The next day was the Roanoke Ramble described in a separate article in this newsletter. Saturday, the 8th was Coal Division meeting day and Charlie and I hooked up with Clint Foster and Jack Ewart for the pleasant ride to Teays Valley. We had a great lunch at Diehl's Restaurant en route and enjoyed the meeting. The following week really got busy and I was able to sneak a day off from the ambulance so I could enjoy it. Thursday, the 13th I traveled to Bob Weinheimer's for another good session on the **Pennsylvania Southern**. The following day was a 3.5 hour drive in the other direction to Appomattox VA for an afternoon on Bob Burke's **Southern and Sandy Creek**. I started my shift on Sandy Creek train 403/404 which is a way freight out of Bedford Yard which turns and ends back in the yard. Bob uses the Ship-It software and I obtained my computer generated switch list and train orders and was ready to go. The Southern main and the Sandy Creek main are both dispatched by computer using the JMRI freeware known as Panel Pro. As I arrived in each town I figured which DS controlled turnouts I would need to complete my work and got permission from the dispatcher as well as local control of the turnouts. Occasionally the DS would take the turnouts back and require me to clear up for another train. Since it was my first time on this run and the DS was a rookie on the panel there were some glitches but overall it was an enjoyable experience. Don't tell the DS but at one point where he put two trains in town at once we just talked each other by and temporarily disregarded the signals! The next day, Saturday the 15th I spent the day in Hinton helping Tod Hanger from the C&O Historical Society man the society's table at Hinton's Railroad Days street fair. Last, but certainly not least Saturday, the 30th was the final op session for 2011 on Clint Foster's C&O New River Gorge layout. Gary Burdette wrote his article in the month's

newsletter prior to that session. But, Gary was there and spent the day standing in the New River and running 'em up and down the main, on the southside and up and down the branches. Several members of the Coal Division made the journey to Clint's for a great session. Of course, as is traditional, the whole gang enjoyed a wonderful lunch courtesy of Clint and Joan prior to a very fun op session.

I do have one regret to express. Last year at the Coal Division meeting at the Bluefield Train Show I rashly stated that I would have something up and running in my basement for this year's November meeting. Sorry guys, it ain't gonna happen! When we moved into this house back in November of 2000, complete with a large finished basement, my thinking was working full time on a layout. The N&W Pocahontas Sub was about to magically appear downstairs. Well, that is not how it worked. I became involved in and active with the Pipestem Volunteer FD which takes a lot of time for training. Then EMT school followed by three semesters in college to get my paramedic certification. I also became involved in, and held several offices in, our Church. That can be rather time consuming also. There is a joke we tell on ourselves. How many Methodists does it take to change a light bulb? We won't know until we form a committee, have a meeting and vote on it. At any rate, my point is that important to me as a layout is; it is not my first priority. Part of that is all the opportunities I have had to operate on other people's layouts. I do have the staging in place and wired for the Clinch Valley Branch on my layout. The George Branch leading to a woodlot and a large coal mine is started above the staging yard. I am hoping this winter to complete the Clinch from staging to Bluefield, VA. The next project will be the large Bluefield yard. Then I will begin planning for the Poky main line. I am hoping to incorporate some signature scenes such as the large trestle at Coopers where the main crosses the Bluestone branch, the still standing coal dock at Farm where most east-bounds pick up helpers and the wye at Lager leading to Auville yard and the Dry Creek branch. I am inspired by those of you who have layouts up and running; particularly Clint Foster who got his C&O to the point of being an operating railroad in just about a year! I hope you enjoyed these musings and that as winter approaches you are able to find the time to enjoy our fine hobby. Dan

NEWS FROM NATIONAL NMRA INFONET

In order to ensure the financial wellbeing of the NMRA into the future, there will be a dues increase on January 1, 2012 for U.S. members and overseas members served by the Chattanooga office. Regular memberships will increase by \$5 to \$44, and subscriptions to *NMRA Magazine* will increase by \$3 to \$22. Sustaining memberships (including the magazine) will increase by \$13 to \$110, and student memberships (including the magazine) will increase by \$4 to \$32. In addition, our highly successful RailPass trial membership program will continue at \$9.95. The current RailPass conversion rate to regular memberships is around 65%. Memberships administered by the A, B, and C offices are not affected.

Di Voss, who's heading up the Cruise Convention committee, continues to receive results from the survey published in the October issue of *NMRA Magazine*. To date he's received around 200 responses, and estimates those "in favor" to be about 75%. In addition, Di would like to remind those who think there won't be enough time on a Cruise Convention for layout tours, OPSIG meets or other activities, that the ship will be in port from about 8:00 a.m. until about 10:00 p.m.

For some reason, the story that the NMRA membership has been declining over the past few years continues to persist. IT AIN'T TRUE. NMRA membership is holding steady at around 19,500. According to the latest "Membership Thermometer" figures compiled by Market-

ing, Advertising and Promotions manager Tom Draper, the NMRA lost 104 members between August 2009 and August 2011, but gained 91 members between August 2006 and August 2011. Please help us set the record straight by mentioning this to your membership!

Convention news: Even though Grand Rails 2012 will have dozens of top notch model railroads open for self-guided tours, the convention committee wanted to make sure everyone has a chance to see some of their great layouts. So there will also be several bus tours to some of the area's best layouts. Layouts include every scale from Z to G, and every level of completion. They're also offering a very special, exclusive seven-hour limo layout tour for groups of 6 to any of the six layouts on the self-guided list. The price for the limo is only \$120 per person. Get all the details and registration info at www.gr2012.org.

Repeat announcement: The Howell Day Museum is issuing a new release of its highly successful Gorre and Daphetid bobber cabooses. Two new bobbers, numbered 3 and 5, are available from Headquarters immediately. A single car is US\$19.95 + \$4 shipping and handling, and the set of two is US\$34.95 + \$4 shipping and handling. The new cars are available in HO scale only, and are ready to run. They feature operating magnetic knuckle couplers and free-rolling metal wheels. Watch for the ad running in *NMRA Magazine*. To order, call HQ at 423-892-2846.

MILLION DOLLAR SMILE Dennis McGeeny

The activities of our Coal Division are many and varied including our meetings, trips, home layouts, Boy Scout program and fellowship. One of the rewarding things we can do is to get the young folks involved in our hobby. A few weeks ago, a neighbor asked if I was building a model railroad. When I told him that was so, he mentioned he had a four year old great grandson who just loved trains. He was immediately invited to have the boy visit and see the layout. The picture you see is the young man's joyful reaction at seeing the layout. After his visit, I presented this future model railroader with a copy of the 2011 Walther's Catalog, a locomotive, box car, caboose and a few pieces of snap track. A week later I received a wonderful thank you card from the lad with his name meticulously printed across the card. Building a layout: fun. Seeing this reaction: priceless!



A Future Model Railroader see his first layout
Photo by Dennis McGeeny

THE ROANOKE RAMBLE

Dennis McGeeney and Dan Mulhearn

As many members are aware, Dennis has been promoting increased fellowship and enjoyment within the Division through trips to various places of interest to us as modelers and train buffs. On Wednesday, October 5 a group of six of us journeyed to Roanoke, VA and visited the Museum of Transportation as well as the O Winston Link Museum. It was a beautiful fall day and after meeting at Lewisburg the two car loads of us took off for Roanoke. In our car we decided to stop and take a quick look at the C&O Historical Society yard and buildings at Clifton Forge. As we arrived at the parking lot; there was Dennis and his group who had the same idea. We got a look at the 614 locomotive in its garish green Greenbrier Express paint job and had a chance to chat with a couple of the volunteers on site. Next was the ride down US 220 towards Roanoke with bright sunny skies, beautiful fall colors and the pleasant farmland of rural Virginia. We started at the Transportation Museum and enjoyed the collection of preserved equipment; especially the N&W steamers 611 and 1218.. Some of us then walked the rail

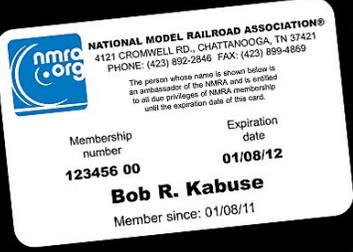
trail to the overpass to the O Winston Link Museum which is in the beautiful old N&W Roanoke station. Along the trail are various artifacts and you can blow a five chime locomotive horn, ring a locomotive bell and change aspects on a couple of old N&W position light signals. The Link Museum is a fabulous collection of Mr. Link's beautiful imagery of the last days of steam on the N&W and the loss of a gentler, less hurried way of life in rural Virginia. Following this visit, we had lunch at the New Yorker Deli. I have to say I walked in, took one sniff and was transported back in time to the 1960s and Katz' Delicatessen on Delancey St in Manhattan. Needless to say, lunch was another high point. Last but not least, we paid a visit to Jim Molinari's well stocked RAILYARD Hobby shop. As afternoon moved into evening a group of tired but happy Division members began the pleasant ride home.



“The Ramblers” in front of the Deli
Not sure what that says about our priorities
Photo by a Passerby using Bill Wadsworth's camera



Virginia Museum of Transportation
Complete SD40 cab donated by NS
Photo by Bill Wadsworth



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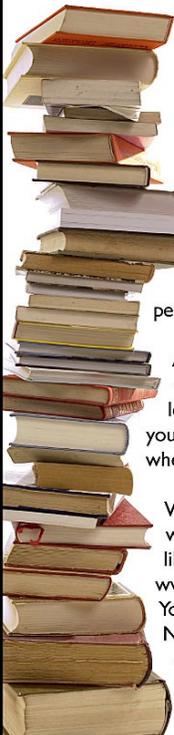
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So do the thousands of plans, photos, and slides from our Kalmbach Memorial Library that we're working to digitize so that members can access them from their own computer. The good news is that the scanning is well underway. The better news is that our image library is even larger than we thought!

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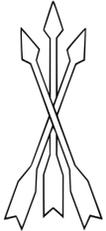


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Upcoming Coal Division Meetings

November 12
Bluefield, WV

December 10
West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV

January 14
West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV

February 11
West Virginia Hobbies and Crafts
Teays Valley, WV