



UP THE HOLLER

Newsletter of Division 9
THE COAL DIVISION

Mid Central Region NMRA

January 2014



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HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Bob Weinheimer MMR

As I sit down to write my column this month it is December 30. I hope you all had a good Christmas and, by the time you receive this, will be celebrating a Happy New Year.

I hope as many members as possible will attend the January meeting, that will be the last opportunity to nominate members for the upcoming election of a new Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. Nominations will be accepted from the floor. Also, Paul Lapointe will present the clinic, see the meeting notice below for a description. Yes, this is the one scheduled for last month that had to be rescheduled.

As most members know, the membership of the Coal Division is spread over an area of about 50,000 square miles. While there is a core group in the Charleston-Huntington corridor, about half the members live closer to the edges of the Division's area. Indeed, we annually have meetings at outlying spots such as Portsmouth, Ohio, and Parkersburg and Bluefield in West Virginia. A close inspection of the membership list shows two members in Jane Lew and Elkins. I've been in contact with both in an effort to introduce them so they can join us at meetings in an economical way. I have also mentioned the idea of adding Elkins to our list of outlying meeting sites, July fits in our scheme of having such meetings in the odd number months. I also hear there are several good modelers in the Elkins area, perhaps our membership can increase reaching a critical mass in that area.

Don't forget that the June 14 meeting will be a joint meeting with Division 6. We will meet at the Marion, OH depot, a real hot spot. The Mid Central Region will also hold its Annual Meeting at the depot that day, the Board of Directors will meet and all members are welcome to attend. I expect there will also be several clinics available. Recall that the last time we had such a meeting more Coal Division members were there than Division 6 members! Let's turn out in large numbers.

MEETING NOTICE

The next Coal Division meeting will be Saturday January 11 at the St. Albans Depot, Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue, St. Albans, WV. The clinic will be presented by Paul Lapointe, the title is "Operating a Model Steel Mill: Ore and Iron". The clinic is in two parts: Ore: Set up realistic shipments of raw materials to a blast furnace ore yard using a loads-in, empties-out layout design with little or no paperwork. Iron: Switch the Walthers blast furnace slag and hot metal bottle cars using removable loads and an event-driven jobs list. The contest will be non-revenue equipment including cabooses. The raffle returns so you should come prepared to grab a goodie. A key piece of business will be to determine the slate of candidates for Division offices, nominations will be taken from the floor. The meeting starts at 2 PM with a social hour at 1 PM.

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Gary J. Burdette MMR

While I have enjoyed some of the events held at the St. Albans C&O depot over the years (like “Whistles by the Depot”), the recent activities with which I have been associated have proven to be even more meaningful. Several of us noted that the public will respond to the programs presented in this special place by showing up and participating. It is like the *Field of Dreams* movie theme: “build it and they will come.”

Several projects have been noted in this column over the last few months as well as some of the results of our hosting of the New River Train crowd. Members of the St. Albans C&O Modelers and Museum and the Coal Division have joined forces to make things happen. As a result, the holiday activities have been most enjoyable beginning with the open house on December 7th and concluding with Santa’s visit on December 16th.

John Stephens, Matt Crouch’s family, and I set up the Christmas tree and decorated the depot for the holiday season. Some cleaning and sprucing up saw the “old girl” shine for the Community Tour of Homes that same evening. Several visitors stopped by during set up, and a couple pitched in. Close to sixty folks stopped by the station during the allotted time and “talked history” and railroading. Several really showed an interest in some of the things we have been planning. Meeting these people was a joy, and I hope they come back for more.

The Coal Division monthly meeting was held on the following weekend, and I believe everyone really appreciated the festive atmosphere. We had a little different table/chairs set up with a lantern display and a couple of grant documents and other information of which we have been discussing. We did something similar for Bob Osburn’s servo clinic and hope to have some more hands-on presentations with the group clustered around.

The highlight of the month was the evening with Santa and his helpers on Monday. The reading of the *Polar Ex-*

press was well received as were the story of *The Christmas Train* and the poem titled *A Modern-day Santa Claus*, from the C&O employee magazine from the 1930s. There were 16 children and as many adults in attendance. Santa’s helper (Matt) passed out hot chocolate and his other helper (Jonathan) passed out Amtrak goodie bags with caps, coloring books, etc. Many of the kids sat on Santa’s lap and told him what they wanted for Christmas. Many photos were taken and the mood was joyous. Being involved was special.

Later it came to Santa’s attention that some kids weren’t going to have a very nice Christmas. The word went out over the internet and gifts came pouring in. The depot looked like Santa’s workshop. Thanks all you generous elves.

Soon a presentation on the status of the depot and possible future events and activities will be discussed. The mayor of St. Albans is “on board,” and many others have shown an interest in supporting projects either through restoration or educational backing. Matt and I hope to talk to the mayor at length and discuss his ideas as well as ours. The things he has said in phone conversations are exciting.

The hope is to draw in members of the community (much as the ladies did as they restored the depot in the 90s) to participate with their time, talents, and treasures. Positive response has come in regard to ideas such as “Art Show at the Depot,” “Photo Show at the Depot” (with possible contests for both events), and “Stage Play at the Station,” with the presentation of *Chessie Finds a Home*, and *John Henry: The Black Sampson*.

It has been said, “The sky is the limit.” We will be looking at what that means in the near future.



Left: Santa takes an order from a customer.

Right: Matt Crouch delivers hot chocolate.

Both photos by Gary Burdette



RAFFLE REPORT

Paul Lapointe

The raffle at December's meeting took \$24. Again, thanks go to Bob Weinheimer for handling the raffle in my absence. January's meeting will feature another raffle, hopefully with a variety of donated items.

MY WORD

Dan Mulhearn, Editor

Where has 2013 gone? It seems like only a few weeks ago I was looking forward to it and here we are in 2014. I have to start this column with sad news. Brenda Venable, the widow of Charlie Venable passed away the Saturday before Christmas. She had gone in to the hospital for a blood transfusion and they discovered pneumonia. Brenda ended up in CCU on a breathing machine and just went very rapidly and unexpectedly downhill. Those of you who have attended the Bluefield train show run by the Pocahontas Chapter will remember Brenda as one of the pleasant ladies manning the food concession. The 2013 show was the first show Brenda was unable to work at; but she still prepared the chili for the hot dogs. Brenda would, as her daughter Charli MeShelle related at the funeral, put on her ear rings and her pink lip stick and go out and cut lawns and pick up bottles off the roadside when Charlie was sick and things were tough before he got his disability. It was my honor to know her.

Hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and that Santa brought you just what you needed for your layout. I am still waiting for my present, which is a set of Broadway Limited Wabash streamlined cars. They will fit nicely on my 1968 era N&W operations as they became N&W property in 1964 and they are beautiful cars. Recently, at Chuck's, I picked up an Athearn Genesis GP38-2 in NS livery. It came with a Tsunami sound decoder and has operating ditch lights. The only drawback is that it has the "horsehead" NS logo on the sides which is beyond my 2000 era NS operating scheme. Maybe I will just live with it and tell nitpickers it is an early test version of the later graphics. It looks like when the Genesis GP50s arrive they will have the older NS scheme which works for me. I have just sent in my registration for the NMRA National Convention in Cleveland and it looks like it is going to be a great event. Hope to see a whole lot of Coal Division members there!

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Bob Weinheimer MMR

As I have noted before, one of my favorite parts of the Achievement Program is recognizing fellow Coal Division members for their accomplishments. That happened at the December meeting when Dan Kennedy was presented with the certificate designating him a Master Builder Structures. That's Dan on the left in the photo taken by Jerry Doyle.

AP activity has slowed in our Division, perhaps all that low hanging fruit I always mention has been picked. There are a couple of more members whose work is just about ready to evaluate but beyond that I am not aware of anything that is getting close. Let suggest each member look at the AP requirements on the NMRA web site and pick one certificate to work on in the coming year.



NMRA MCR DIVISION 9
THE COAL DIVISION
St Albans Depot St Albans, WV
December 14, 2013

Meeting Called to order at 2:00

Elkins.

Superintendent Report

Clinic change, Paul's clinic will be presented early next year. Kingpin issued November 15. It was emailed to all members with an email address on file with NMRA national. Some members received it via snail mail. Some received it via both ways. The NMRA is conducting a fund raising effort to raise the \$200,000 needed to complete the museum in Sacramento. This works out to about \$10 per member. The national headquarters has moved to a rented space in Chattanooga. The former HQ is being sold to the Tennessee Valley RR Museum.

Division Clerk Report

Treasury balance is currently \$8,534.57
 The proceeds from the raffle were \$24.
 Tee Shirt proceeds \$2.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Gary thanked those who helped with the Christmas tree in the depot. He mentioned an article on Luxor prefabricated homes. He also mentioned a potential source for grant money to help in the restoration of the depot. Still no word on when work will begin on the depot repairs. We have an estimate of \$800 for two custom-made windows. We also have books and other items for check out. Gary had materials for potential BSA activities. Dennis McGeeney presented a small sign for Division 9. Gary showed a sign he is working on showing the different agent stamps used in the depot. He mentioned continued activities for the educational mission using our website.

Nominations Chair

Bill Wadsworth mentioned the upcoming elections and encouraged people to participate. Nominations need to be made by the January meeting or can be made from the floor at the following meeting. Bob Weinheimer also mentioned the duties involved for the Super and Assistant Super.

Membership Chair

John mentioned a new member from Barboursville. Currently we are at 50 members with several members recently lapsed. Bob W. mentioned two members in the Elkins area. We are exploring the potential for a meeting in

Achievement Program

Dan Kennedy was presented a certificate for Master Builder Structures which he earned in early 2013.

Newsletter Chair

Bob mentioned the change from color to black and white. Nathan Robinette thanked Gary for his tribute to his father.

Raffle

Bob handled the raffle today.

Clinic Chair

Today's clinic was changed to one about EMD Geeps by Jerry Doyle.

Old Business

None

New Business

We discussed starting a library based on Lin Young's magazine collection to be housed at the depot. Bob Osborn mentioned additional information about his recent clinic about using servos for switch machines.

Announcements

Matt Crouch mentioned the recent passing of Swipe Brooks. Swipe was always willing to share his knowledge about Keeny's Creek and the New River.

The Polar Express will be read and Santa Claus will be at the depot on Monday December 16.

The O gauge depot in the baggage room has found a home and will be moved soon. This will free the space for an educational display.

Matt also showed a box for volunteers to document their time working on the depot. This information is useful when applying for grants.

Continued from page 4

Nathan Robinette thanked everyone for their support after the passing of his father, David Robinette.

Future Meetings

January 11 St. Albans Depot
 February 8 St. Albans Depot
 March 8 St. Albans Depot

Meeting adjourned 2:45

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk

Post Meeting Activities:

Contest

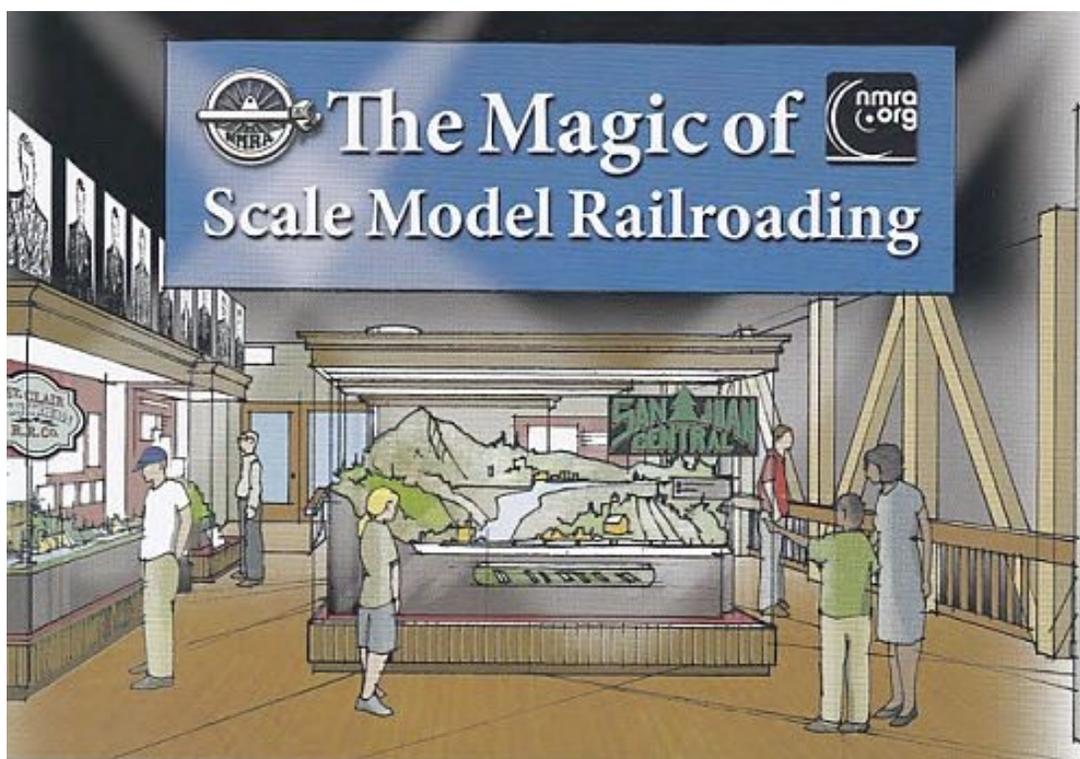
Dale Osburn won the Modeler's Choice contest but escaped before we could photograph it! He had done a great job of modifying a craftman structure kit.

Clinic

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 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. Here are the deadlines for the next few issues.

February	January 27
March	February 24
April	March 31
May	April 28
June	June 2
July	June 30
August	July 28



Please consider donating to the NMRA Gallery project. We all recently received another mailing requesting donations and while it may seem like HQ is always looking for money, if each NMRA member donated only \$10 the project would be fully funded.

NMRA INFONET
Tom Draper

Message from Frank Koch
NMRA Chief Financial Officer:

NMRA ECONOMICS – PART 1
A VERY BRIEF INTRODUCTION

This provides a very broad perspective of NMRA economics. Subsequent articles will provide more detail on individual elements and explain how we fund the various parts of our organization. We have committed to place the annual audit results and budgets on the website once it is redesigned. The IT department is busy with other higher priority work and this project is a bit down the list.

The NMRA is not a club but is a non-profit corporation, must conduct its business in strict accord with laws and regulations, and must have an annual outside professional audit (We pass with no major issues.). Like many corporations, we have multiple “business” units (four) and each plays a role in our overall financial strategy. Each of the four units serves a specific purpose and we manage them accordingly. The four units are Operations, NMRA Magazine, Non-Dues Programs, and Howell Day Museum (HDM). The first three are interdependent while HDM is treated as an independent financial unit, but still a part of the NMRA. The overall strategy is that the first three units balance each other every year. We do plan for a small surplus in each annual budget to cover unexpected opportunities or expenses during the year.

Within each unit, there are income and expense streams that are budgeted, tracked, and monitored. The challenge is to balance the first three against today’s mix of member services, while finding ways to increase net revenue so that improvements and/or new services and benefits can be provided. We can also choose to redistribute our resources to change the mix of member benefits. As an example, in 2013 the BOD chose to increase the budgets for IT and Marketing so that we could increase our reach and communication to members and non-members over the next few years. The website is being redesigned and responsibility for some content is moving to the Department Heads. The increased Marketing effort includes

membership applications in all mail orders from several major suppliers, distribution of materials at railroad museums, and a trial of the Build A Memory initiative.

The total annual NMRA budget varies, but about \$2.3 million in 2013. This may seem like a lot but remember that it includes the annual convention, the National Train Show, and a major fund raising effort by HDM in 2013. Each area has its own budget which is reviewed by a Department Manager, the Finance Committee, and then approved by the Board of Directors on an annual basis. Each fiscal year starts with a zero budget and we build it based on the funds needed to deliver the agreed and planned programs. The chart below shows how the 2013 budget was distributed between the four units.

NMRA 2013 BUDGET (\$ Thousands)

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>
Operations	668	720
Magazine	352	441
Non-Dues Activities	871	673
Howell Day Museum	<u>458</u>	<u>456</u>
Total	2,349	2,290

This has been a very brief introduction. Over the next year, I’ll expand on each of the four areas and provide an introduction to the various types of assets and liabilities that make up the NMRA. If you have any questions or thoughts, my contact information is in the Magazine and on the website.

Frank J. Koch, NMRA CFO

If you have any questions or comments about any of the above, please send them directly to a Director or Officer. You’ll find those addresses at www.nmra.org or in the NMRA Magazine.

Regards,

Tom Draper – HLM, DSA, FA
Director – Support Services

Now that Up The Holler is a monthly publication, your Pike Ad support is much more important. If you don't already have an ad, please consider buying one. We can help with the art work if necessary.



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a few tons at a time



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If you received this newsletter via the US Postal Service and have an email address, please let us know so we can save printing and postage costs. Send a note to editor@coaldivision.org to get onto the email distribution list for Up The Holler.

Upcoming Coal Division Events

January 11

St. Albans Depot

Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue

St. Albans, WV

February 8

St. Albans Depot

Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue

St. Albans, WV

March 8

St. Albans Depot

Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue

St. Albans, WV