



# UP THE HOLLER



DIVISION 9, MID CENTRAL REGION, NMRA

January 2025

## IN THIS ISSUE

## News Bulletin: Randy Allio is our latest Master Model Railroader!

### FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Sam Delauter, Superintendent

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Greetings from 2025. I would like to start the new year by thanking the membership of the Coal Division for a great 2024. We had a great year that culminated with the completion of the Memorial Challenge. I would like to thank Robert Osburn for making that event a success and also thank everyone for their eagerness to complete these modules and make this event a success.

In addition to the Memorial Challenge, the Coal Division had a lot of other successes. We were able to operate on The Crusty Mountain and the G&G while meeting out of town. We also were in attendance at two shows, the Appalachian Model Railroad Society show and the Kanawha Valley Railroad Association show. At both of these shows, the T-TRAK was on display and the NMRA booth was at the KVRA show. Both of these shows were really fun to attend and spend with the members of the Coal Division. Speaking of spending time with our membership, I had a great time at the regional convention with many of our members.

In addition to all of the above, we had a lot of great meetings. As in years past, we had great lineup of clinics, contests, raffles, and plenty of time to fellowship with our members. Looking ahead at this year, I don't think it will be any different. Don't forget that we would not have had these successes without a great membership and a great group of officers. I am looking forward to another successful year and look forward to serve as your superintendent.

Our January meeting will be held January 11th at the St. Albans Historical Society. We will be back to our normal starting time of 1:00 PM with doors opening at noon. At the meeting, Jerry Doyle will be giving a clinic on Operations, we will have our raffle, and the contest will be "Modelers Choice". I look forward to seeing each of you at the January meeting. Let's have another great year.

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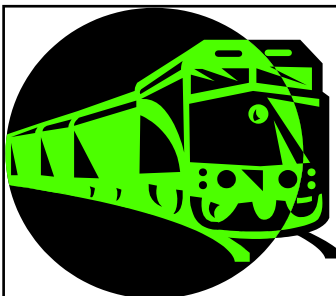
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## Coal Division Monthly Railfun Event

**1:00 PM Saturday January 11**

**St. Albans Historical Society**

**Division Membership Meeting**

Time: Jan 11, 2025 12:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84723303887>

- **Welcome and Call to Order (Acknowledge members present)**
- **Treasurers Report**
- **Superintendents Report**
- **Assistant Superintendent Report**
- **Contest: Modeler's Choice**
- **Adjourn Business Meeting**
- **5 Minute Break**
- **Raffle (always need new items)**
- **Clinic: Jerry Doyle will discuss operations**

**Next Meeting  
February 8, 2025**

## NMRA MCR DIVISION 9 *THE COAL DIVISION*

St Albans Historical Society

St Albans, WV

December 14, 2024

### Minutes

Welcome – Sam Delauter welcomed the group and extended holiday wishes.

Last meetings minutes passed as published

Treasurer – no report

Superintendent report - Sam highlighted the great response to this year's challenge – around 20 modules present, very close to the number given out in August. At the end of the meeting Sam mentioned the division has had a great year, and he looks forward to what next year holds.

Assistant Superintendent report – Bill Stowe recognized Herb Parsons for his efforts as T-TRAK chair over the last two years, with the representation not only at local shows but at events like the regional convention. As we have more modules to show, please keep in mind volunteering to assist Herb otherwise it can be a long show for him.

Newsletter chair: Bob Weinheimer advised that December 30 is the deadline for the January issue.

Achievement chair – Bob Weinheimer and Don Cipolla met with Randy Allio to go over his latest efforts in the Achievement Program. As a result, the last 3 certificates have been submitted with high confidence they will be approved. If so, Randy will be our next MMR. Bob mentioned this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> MMR in a year for our division which is great considering the size of our group. He encouraged members to look at the requirements, and Bob will be conducting a clinic on this next year.

Library chair – Bill Wadsworth mentioned in addition to videos he had there are some great ones on the NMRA website. He also said he has managed to sell some of his books, and there are more should people be interested. He will catch up with Jerry to give him the donation of part of the proceeds.

Contest chair – No contest today. January contest will be modeler's choice.

Clinic chair: Randy Allio told us about upcoming

clinics:

January – Jerry Doyle on operations

February: Bob Osburn on printing signs on tissue paper

March: Bob Weinheimer on Achievement Program

April: Mini clinics by Tony Puccini on 3D clouds and smoke, Randy Allio on the latest tools he has acquired, and David Oliverio on a topic to be determined.

May: Depends on venue (usually a travel meeting)

June: Topic & presenter needed

Membership Chair: John Harris membership is currently 45, one recent new member.

Raffle chair - \$42 from today's raffle. Tony Puccini mentioned the donation 'pool' is running low, and asked folks to bring in things to continue to support the great interest and money the raffle generates.

T-TRAK chair – Herb Parsons asked that folks let him know if they are planning to have their module at the February show in Charleston, so he knows how much table space to ask for.

New Business

Randy Allio offered to host the Division meeting at his home this coming July as he did last year. It would be combined with a scenery clinic put on by Randy.

Some discussion on space needed for February show  
Randy would like a vendor table near the NMRA group

Bob Osburn. does not require a table for book sale

Desire to have NRMA and display close together as done last spring

Herb to provide Sam with table needs for T-TRAK

Sam to take point to on communicating with show organizers on our group needs.

Meeting adjourned, each member with a challenge module gave a short talk on their modules.

Bill Stowe

Acting Clerk

## FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

**Bill Stowe, Assistant Superintendent**

Let me start by simply saying how much I enjoyed the December meeting, and thanking all who participated. This includes Bob Osburn for the modules, Herb Parsons and others who answered questions, all who built modules, and all who brought food on Saturday. And if I missed anyone, just a plain old thanks for being part of the group. It was interesting to see everyone's different approach to the module. There were many good ideas and much great modeling.

For my part, I was pleased with the outcome of my module despite its' rough edges. It is now 'back in the shop'. Plans are to trade out the Majestic Hardware and Feed structure for Shaw's Ridge Equipment (Bar Mills kit) which should fit better in that space. The module also needs some tweaking on scenery and details such as signage. For the Majestic Hardware and Feed structure my

current plan is to finish the model with castings, signage, and maybe some weathering. Beyond that I have some longer term thoughts on how to reuse it.

And now a final note. If you're looking for a relatively simple New Year's resolution think about taking a moment to sign in to the NMRA website and having a look around at the content. Based on some of Bob Weinheimer's comments it sounds like changes are coming to enhance its use, and I see constant promotion of its content in the monthly NMRA magazine. I encourage folks to sign in now so we can resolve any issues with access including user name, password, etc. I would be glad to help if any struggle with accessing the site. To 'practice what I preach' I used the website to renew my membership with no issues at all.

## Passenger Manifest

**John Harris, Membership Chair**

It is hard to believe that I actually wrote 2025 as part of the title for this article. While you will not see it per se, it will be in the date for the newsletter and it will be 2025 when you read this. It is difficult for me to wrap my head around how quickly 2024 passed by. I look back at the goals I set for myself for the year, particularly the ones I made regarding the Alleghany & New River Road, and I ask "what happened"? The year just started. I have plenty of time to get more things done, but here we are looking squarely at 2025 and few of those goals have been completed. Sure, a few things were done and several structures and nearly complete. I few more cars have been assembled and weathered, and even a purchase or two was made. But largely I will start 2025 with virtually the exact same list of things to do. I suspect there are a few others that might feel the same way. Still, I am impressed with those who have made significant progress on their railroads over the past year. A few even have certificates attesting to the progress made. Congratulations to all of you. May this year bring several of us closer to our goals.

Last month's Challenge was particularly satisfying. First, it allowed me to try something new. While the techniques, of course, were similar to what I normally do, the scale was a bit more of a challenge. Secondly, the fact that so many took advantage of the opportunity to enter into the world that is T-TRAK. While some took a more basic approach, there is still a foundation to add scenery and expand on what has been started. As expected others were a little more aggressive in adding scenery, buildings, and even lighting but the end result was a fully operational layout that required little tweaking to make trains run in both directions with only minor hiccups.

As I have stated before, I am excited about the ability

for the Coal Division to now take so many new modules and add them to those already completed to make a very impressive layout. This, I believe, will be a great promotional tool for the Division at the next and future train shows. I suspect that as a recruitment tool, potential newbies to the hobby that are not ready to start their own layout might see T-TRAK as a way of getting their feet wet in the hobby without a major commitment to space or dollars. And what better way to get into the hobby than to have one of our members talking to them about the benefits of NMRA joining thru a "Rail Pass" membership?

With the February show with KVMRA coming up shortly, I plan to get some of the newly or soon to be published promotional materials that Bob Weinheimer has been telling us about. This should help tremendously when telling the story of the benefits of NMRA membership. This combined with some "how to" demonstrations and having T-TRAK next to us may be a compelling recruitment opportunity.

I will have a sign-up sheet at the January and the February meetings for anyone interested in taking a turn at manning the Division Display. I will also include space on the sheet for volunteers that plan on providing a demonstration during their time at the booth. I am planning to assemble and weather a craftsman kit while manning the booth and I encourage others to consider doing the same. It is a good way to start a conversation promoting the hobby and it helps to pass the time. Besides, it may help you get closer to one of those goals you have for your layout in 2025.

Keep modeling and I hope to see you at the January meeting.

## CLINICS

### Randy Allio, Clinics Chair

January 2025. Jerry Doyle. Operations

2. David Oliverio to be announced

3. Randy Allio. More tools of the trade.

February. Bob Osburn Printing signs on tissue paper.

May. Need a volunteer.

March. Bob Weinheimer. Achievement Program.

June. Need a volunteer.

April. Mini Clinics

1. Tony Puccini. 3d Clouds

July. Randy Allio Using modern scenery materials.

## CLUB NEWS

Clubs within the boundaries of the Coal Division are welcome to submit items of interest for inclusion here. The next editorial deadline for this column is Monday December 30. Items can be sent to [editor@coalddivision.org](mailto:editor@coalddivision.org)

Mid-Ohio Valley Model Railroad Club  
By Mark Suek

The Mid-Ohio Valley Model Railroad Club welcomed 491 guests to its annual Christmas Open House and another 86 guests, a week later, in conjunction with a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus aboard Belpre Industrial Parkersburg Railroad's Christmas Train. A big draw for the Christmas Open House was the raffle for a Lionel O scale Polar Express train set and a Lionel Polar Express station. The open house occurred on National Lionel Trains Day.

MOVMRC, whose roster now stands at 67 persons, elected its 2025 club officers at the December meeting, Jonathan Insley (Marietta, OH) remains president and Mark Suek (Vienna, WV) is back as secretary. Todd Noland (Belleville, WV) and Kelly Offenberger (Vincent, OH) were elected as first-time officers and will be filling the vice-president and treasurer roles, respectfully. The four officers will join Todd Riffle (Belpre, OH) and Joe Stephens (Vienna, WV) to form the club's the 2025 board of directors.

## Newsletter Deadlines

In order to produce Up The Holler about ten days before the monthly membership meeting, editorial work starts the Monday of the week preceding the meeting. That works out the be the dates below by which I need articles for the coming year.

- February : January 27
- March : February 24
- April : March 31

- May : April 28
- June: June 2
- July: June 30
- August: July 28
- September: September 1
- October: September 29
- November: October 27
- December: December 1

## T-TRAK

### Herb Parsons, T-TRAK Chair

The KVRA Train & Craft Show is coming up in February 15 & 16 2025. Everyone who has a T-TRAK module and would like to be included in this show, let me know by the February meeting so that I may know the number of tables we will require.

Photos of the various Memorial Challenge entries are on the contest page, (number)



## CONTEST

### Don Cipolla and Mark Maynard Contest Chairs

Below and on the following pages are photographs of the various T-TRAK modules built by Coal Division members for the Memorial Challenge held December 14. Unless otherwise noted, photos are by John Harris.

The January contest will be Modeler's Choice so if you have something that doesn't fit the various categories for the other months, bring it along in January.

2025	Monthly Model Contest
January	Modeler's Choice
February	Steam Locomotives
March	Locomotives Other Than Steam
April	Kitbashing/Scratch Built, (Anything Railroad Related)
May	Anything Steel Related
June	Non Revenue
July	Structures
August	Electronics of a Railroad
September	Photo, Model or Prototype
October	Open Loads
November	Passenger Cars
December	Annual Memorial Modeling Challenge



Module by  
Steve  
Vickers



Module by  
Sam  
DeLauter





Module by  
Bill Stowe



Module by  
Bill Grosse



Module by  
Tony Parrish





Module by  
Tony Puccini



Module by  
Mark  
Maynard



Module by  
Matt Kearns





Module by  
Dale Osburn

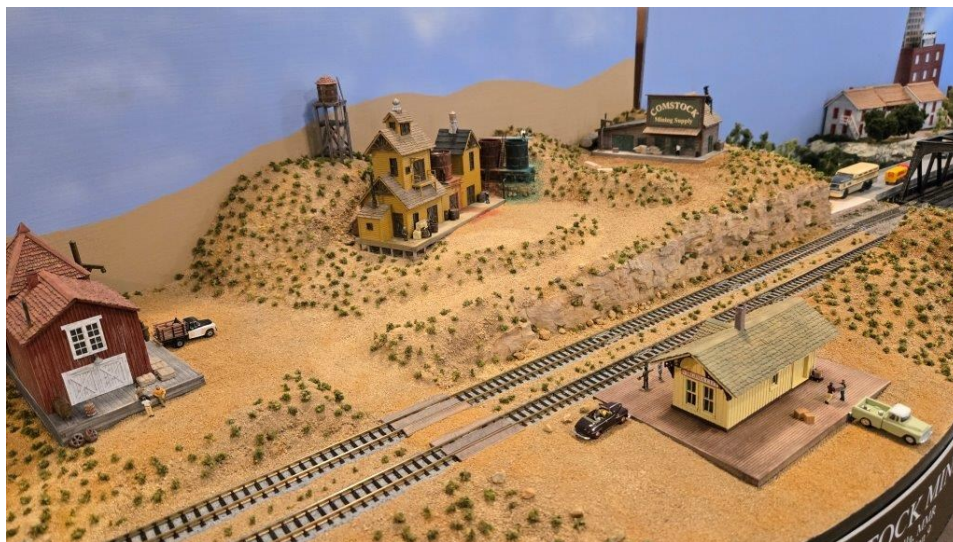


Module by  
Herb Parsons



Module by  
David Oliverio





Modules left and  
below by  
Don Cipolla



Module by  
John Harris



Module by  
Bob Mershimer

Photo by Herb Parsons



And we close in memory of those who inspired the Memorial Challenge. This module was commissioned by Robert Osburn and was photographed by Herb Parsons.



## My Word

### Bob Weinheimer, Editor

As others have noted, the Memorial Challenge was quite an event. For a variety of reasons I was unable to submit a module to the event but I was impressed by the wide variety of modules that our members created. I can't imagine what we will do in 2025 to match the recent challenge.

As noted in the December meeting minutes, Don Cipolla MMR® and I visited Randy Allio and evaluated his Civil Engineer, Electrical Engineer, and Scenery certificates and the work behind them. We found them to be outstanding and they were submitted to the Region Achievement Program Chair, Frank Koch. Since the December Coal Division meeting we have heard officially that Randy is now MMR® 785! Congratulations to Randy for his fine work.

Of particular note is that Randy, as we should all know, uses locomotives that receive their power from batteries, not the rails. The usual electrical work therefore does not apply. Even so, Randy cheerfully did a few of the things required for the certificate including wiring up a temporary bit of track to show he can do it. His layout does not contain all the required elements for the civil certificate so he built some temporary track to cover that

as well. Keep that in mind in case a similar issue is stalling your progress.

With two members earning their MMR®s this past year, there is yet one more member who is very close to that goal. All I need to do is to inspire him to step out his comfort zone to complete the job.

Randy's plaque and certificate should be here in time for a presentation at the February Coal Division meeting.

On the National front, the Board of Directors will be meeting in Springfield, MA Friday January 24. If you plan to be at the show, get there a day early and sit in as an observer. After the meeting, stay for the weekend for the incredible train show!

Other news is that we are getting close to implementing the technology that will allow you to, optionally, allow your membership to automatically renew. For those who forget to renew, this will be a great feature. There are now so many commercial services that do this already so this should not be a big deal. When it goes live, give it some thought.

As Bill Stowe notes in his column, there is more to come so stay tuned!

## Improve your modeling with a few sheets of paper.

That's exactly what happens when you participate in the National Model Railroad Association's Achievement Program. One Merit Award here, another there, and pretty soon you're on your way to becoming a Master Model Railroader. All the while learning and having a ton of fun.

The Achievement Program is modelers helping modelers become better modelers and get the most out of their hobby. And it's yet another benefit of NMRA membership.

Visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org).  
Then improve your  
skills. And your hobby.



**We make it even more fun.**

[www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)  
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NORFOLK AND WESTERN



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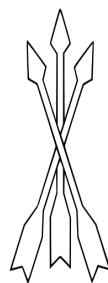
**CRUSTY**  
**MOUNTAIN**  
**AND**  
**WILOBY**  
**SPRINGS R.R.**

**Mark Maynard, President**  
 Portsmouth, OH



**CRESCENT VALLEY**

**Jerry Doyle, President**  
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 Assistant Superintendent  
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**Thomas K. Harris, President and CEO**

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 www.lakesidelines.com



**The**  
**POSSUM**  
**HOLLOW**  
 Branch

**Under Construction**

A small N-scale layout of a fictional Appalachian branch line of the Chesapeake & Ohio set in the early 50s or late 70s.

**Matt Kearns, Chief Engineer**  
 South Charleston, WV  
 mattkearnswv@gmail.com

**Alleghany & New River Road**

An Appalachian Coal Hauling Railroad set in the 50's



Bringing a little bit of West Virginia to the rest of America  
 a few tons at a time



**John Harris, Chief Engineer**  
 AandNRR@aol.com



**HINTON DIVISION**

**Gary Burdette - Superintendent**  
 Point Pleasant WV



**NEW RIVER GORGE**  
**SUBDIVISION**

**Clint Foster Superintendant**  
 Ronceverte WV

## **Upcoming Coal Division Events**

**January 11**

**St. Albans Historical Society  
In Person and Zoom**

**February 8**

**St. Albans Historical Society  
In Person and Zoom**

**March 8**

**St. Albans Historical Society  
In Person and Zoom**

**April 12**

**St. Albans Historical Society  
In Person and Zoom**

**May 10**

**St. Albans Historical Society  
In Person and Zoom**