



# UP THE HOLLER



DIVISION 9, MID CENTRAL REGION, NMRA

July 2025

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## FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Sam Delauter, Superintendent

For the second month in a row, the Coal Division was out and about and visiting a layout during our meeting. In June, we met at Don Cipolla's home in Hurricane, WV. Don models the Virginia and Truckee in 1875 and has a large highly detailed layout in his home. Don was nice enough to host us and feed us. Many thanks to Don for welcoming us into his home.

If you have missed the last couple meetings, there are a couple of events coming up that you should be aware of. At the June meeting, John Harris gave us an update on the upcoming railfan trip. On August 16th, the Coal Division will be visiting the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad to catch the train. John has organized this event for us and has reserved enough seating for those interested. However, to finalize your reservations, you will have to contact the WMSR. John will have more on this in his article.

Also at the June meeting, we started making plans for the annual Picnic On the Platform. I passed around a sign up sheet for food for the event. Please make sure that if you signed up to bring something that you do so. If you would like to bring something there are a few things left that we will need. In the past this event has been a great success and I expect this year to be no different. Also this year at the Picnic On the Platform, we will be celebrating the 90th anniversary of the NMRA. We will have a cake in addition to the usual desserts. We are also going to use this event to celebrate the history of the Coal Division and our past members. Jerry is working on a slideshow for this event and several members are going to speak about past members that were influential in our division. If you would like to help out with any of this or would like to speak at the meeting, please let us know.

Lastly, we have recently received a large donation of HO equipment for the raffle from former Coal Division member Walter Mycoff. Due to this generosity, we have plenty of HO stuff for the raffle. However we may be starting to come up a little short on N scale stuff. If any of the N scalers have extra stuff sitting around that needs a new home, please consider donating so that we can keep offering a high quality raffle in multiple scales.

The July meeting will be hosted by Randy Allio in Elkview, WV. Please see pages 2 and 3 in this issue for more info on this meeting. Randy will open his home to us at 10:00 AM and the meeting will start at 1:00 PM. The July clinic will be "Using Modern Scenery Techniques" by Randy Allio. The contest this month will be structures. I look forward to seeing everyone at our meeting and visiting Randy's layout.

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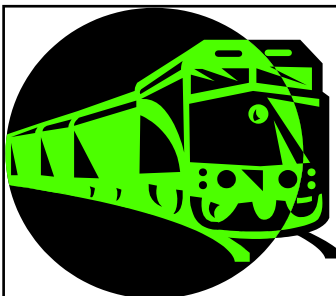
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## Coal Division Monthly Railfun Event

### Saturday July 12

hosted by Randy Allio MMR®

See map next page

- 11AM layout opens.
- Noon Lunch
- 1PM Coal Division Meeting
- Welcome and Call to Order (Acknowledge members present)
- Superintendent's Report
- Assistant Superintendent Report
- Clerk's Report
- Committee Reports
- Old and New Business
- Contest: Structures
- Adjourn Business Meeting
- 5 Minute Break
- Raffle (always need new N scale items)
- Clinic by Randy Allio "Using Modern Scenery Materials"

Next Meeting  
August 9, 2025



## JULY 12 COAL DIVISION MEETING DIRECTIONS

Janet and I will be honored to have you visit for the July 12 Meeting. I will be available from ten AM until whenever you want to leave. We can do tours of my woodshop and check on progress on my double deck On30 Layout. Food and beverage will be available with lunch beginning at noon.

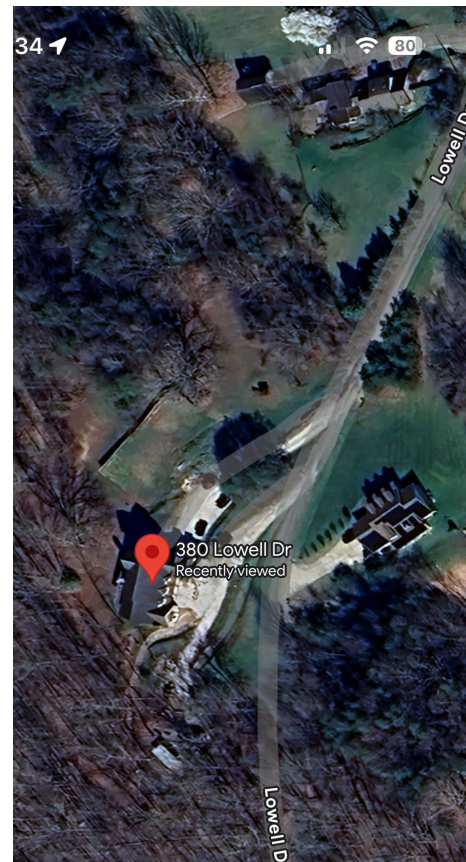
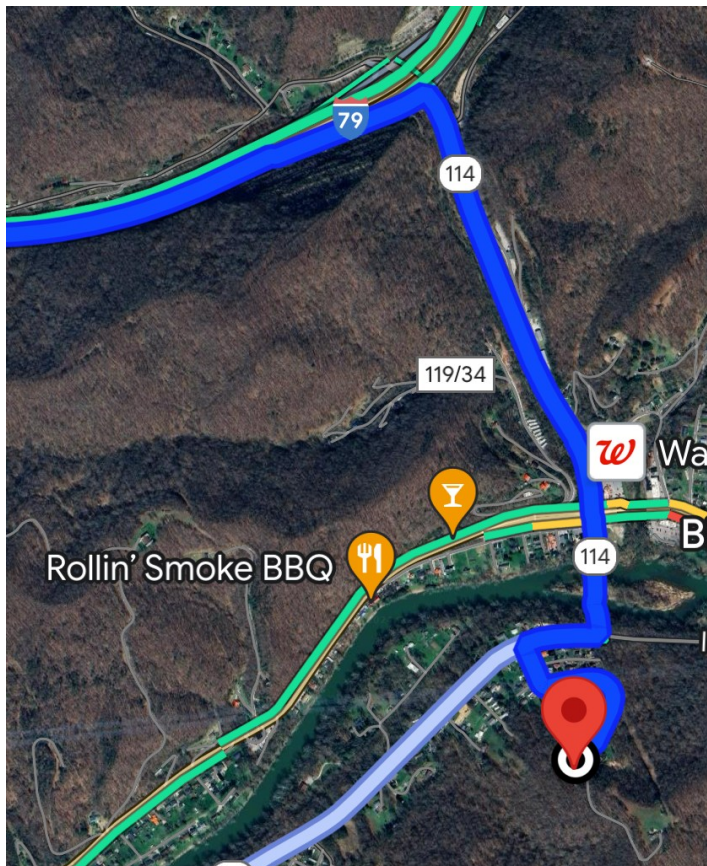
Directions: North bound I-79 Get off exit 5 and turn right. Proceed to four way stop. Go straight across bridge and turn right at the light. Go about 300 yards and turn left on Lowell Dr. Proceed up the hill till you come to a gravel drive on the right. Turn in and you are here. If this drive is full more parking on second driveway on up the hill.

GPS

380 Lowell Dr. Elkview, WV

If lost call 304-389-6445

Randy Allio



To the left is a map showing directions for the last little bit. To the right is a better view without the heavy blue line. Zoom in as necessary.

**NMRA MCR DIVISION 9**  
***THE COAL DIVISION***  
**“SILVER IS KING”**  
**Don Cipolla’s House**  
**Hurricane, WV**  
**June 14, 2025**  
**Minutes**

Meeting called to order by Superintendent Sam Delauter at 1:05 p.m. Members introduced themselves.

#### **Division Clerk Report**

May minutes approved.

Treasury Balance is \$9,281.35 (after accounting for SAHS uncashed check)

Company Store \$0.

Raffle \$50.

Pike Ads \$0.

#### **Superintendent Report**

Sam Delauter thanked Don Cipolla for hosting today’s meeting. He spoke about attending the recent MCR convention in Columbus. Contest entries were down this year, but Division 9 made a good showing in the awards. Sam mentioned his experience submitting his NKP 2-8-2. He distributed awards for T-TRAK to Robert Osburn. Overall Division 9 had the largest number of modules, and our members received first, second, third, and People’s Choice awards.

#### **Assistant Superintendent Report**

Bill Stowe mentioned other contest awards received by Division 9 members, there were 11 in all.

#### **Newsletter - Up the Holler**

Bob Weinheimer noted the deadline of June 30 for the July newsletter. The address for contributions is [edi-tor@coaldivision.org](mailto:editor@coaldivision.org).

#### **Achievement Program**

Bob Weinheimer presented Sam Delauter with his merit award. Randy Allio has been named chair of the NMRA committee regarding dead rail.

#### **Library**

No report.

#### **Clinic**

Today’s clinic: *What If* by Bob Weinheimer, details about how you can document your collection and insurance issues that come with it.

#### **Contest**

Today’s contest is non-revenue models. Next month: Structures.

#### **Membership**

John Harris discussed the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad trip on August 16. We have 16 spots reserved. Members will need to contact the WMSR to pay for tickets before August 1. Membership remains steady at 41. There was discussion about recent

phishing emails received by Division 9 members.

#### **Raffle**

Tony mentioned Walt Mycoff’s donation of his extensive collection of HO railroad items and railroadiana.

#### **T TRAK**

Herb Parsons mentioned Bruce DeMaeyer challenged everyone participating at the MCR convention to bring new modules (in addition to the ones already built). He also mentioned the yard used at the convention. Bob Mershimer is donating a two-foot module to any member who wants one. Herb also reported on the N Scale show at Marion, Ohio.

#### **Education**

No report.

#### **Old Business**

Sam mentioned observation of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NMRA. We will have a cake at our August Picnic on the Platform. There was discussion about activities that day.

#### **New Business**

Sam distributed a signup sheet for the August Picnic on the Platform.

Robert Osburn mentioned wireless LED’s. He brought several for people to inspect.

#### **Announcements**

NMRA National Convention Novi, MI the week of July 14.

#### **Future Meetings:**

July 12 – Randy Allio’s Big Chimney, WV

August 9 – St Albans, WV Picnic on the Platform

September 13 – Mark Maynard’s Portsmouth, Ohio

Meeting adjourned at 2:10.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk

## FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

**Bill Stowe, Assistant Superintendent**

Well, I hope everyone has managed to survive our heat wave along with the associated thunderstorms. My month has been spent trying to do outdoor chores in the morning, and then most of the afternoon inside where it is cool. It has been a chance for delayed spring cleaning inside along with some modelling time.

I've been making some progress with my latest structure kit. It is an HO structure from FOS models, the Sarno Woodworking kit. I'd rate FOS models as similar to the Bar Mills kits and would say it falls into the craftsman kits arena. I'm thoroughly enjoying the build. Like many of the Bar Mills it is a unique structure layout. I'd say the instructions are better than Bar Mills, although a lot of

reliance on the modeler's experience is necessary. Quality of parts is good. This kit has some unique features which I have not experienced before. One portion of the building is card stock braced inside with 1/8 inch stock, and the outside to be covered in '2 x 10' vertical planks. They also refer to other stock as 2 x 4, 2x6, so it has been interesting trying to sort all the parts. The only fault I would give the kit is they provide the bare minimum of wood stock for the construction, so you need to plan cuts accordingly or have a backup supply. I had hoped to have it ready for the July meeting structure contest, but that's not going to happen.

## T-TRAK

**Herb Parsons, T-TRAK Chair**

I do not have any thing about T-TRAK this month, so I thought I would write a short history of T-TRAK.

In July of 2000, the Japan Association of Model Railroaders invited Jim Fitzgerald to speak at their annual convention. Mr. Fitzgerald, the founder of the NTRAK Newsletter for the modular NTRAK system of modules, accepted the invitation and he and his wife, Lee Monaco-Fitzgerald, went to Japan in August 2000. While there, he saw the Hino N Club layout of 12"x12" modules using a 2-track mainline and Kato Unitrack.

In March 2001, Lee started writing articles for the NTRAK Newsletter concerning attracting new people to the model railroad hobby. The articles had ideas to try to interest people while they were at train shows or at open houses for clubs.

In the July 2001 newsletter, Lee published photos of the Japanese modelers and the Hino Club modules. The September 2001 issue introduced the T-TRAK modules for the first time. The modules were based on the Tram modules designed by RM Models of Japan. The concept pulled all the topics Lee had been writing about together: table top modules, Kato track, and getting new modelers

into the hobby.

The first three T-TRAK modules were built by Lee and displayed on the NTRAK layout at the Gateway 2001 National Convention and Train Show in St. Louis, MO. in July 2001.

In the May 2002 NTRAK Newsletter was the inauguration of a regular T-TRAK column. The article featured the double modules made by Paul Musselman.

The Capitol Limited 2004 convention in Chantilly, Virginia had the first full layout for T-TRAK modules with 114 feet of modules. There has been a T-TRAK layout at every convention since.

I would like to remind everyone that in 2026 at the convention in Chattanooga, TN there will be the largest T-TRAK layout with over 1400 modules filling the available space. committed and many more on standby in case of no shows.

I got this info from the Nrail web site where they have a full history of not only T-TRAK and photos of the first modules by Lee and the Hino N Club, but also a history of NTRAK.

## Passenger Manifest John Harris, Membership Chair

It was great to visit the home layout of Master Model Railroader® Don Cipolla earlier this month. His eye for detail and ability to build from photos was inspiring. I am sure this has been a rewarding project to build and an exciting railroad to operate. I was perhaps just as impressed with the organization of his work area. While hidden “under” or behind the layout it was easy to see that everything had a place and everything was in place within reach. It was no surprise that the underside of layout was just as fastidious. This leaves little doubt on how Don was able to meet the requirements of MMR. I again am stoked.

Seats are reserved and on hold for our August 16<sup>th</sup> trip to the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad in Cumberland. As stated at our last meeting, space is reserved and blocked out, but not paid for. The dining car was previously booked to changed reservations to the Lounge car. At the same price. So far, several have called to make payment arrangements for requested seating. At least one who did not initially sign up has requested space. I’m not sure that is a problem as there will undoubtedly be someone who planned to go but can not. Regardless, it is important to contact the WMSR (301)759-4400 to make payment and guarantee your spot on the train.

I have a significant project going on at home which has taken my focus away from the A&NRR. Still I have found the time to cut plywood as the base for the future Carbide and Carbon Chemical Corporation (Union Car-

bide) plant in South Charleston. I showed the layout and outline for the extension to the wife to be sure she was onboard with the acquisition of additional basement real estate. She bought into it so I guess I have a green aspect signal to proceed at normal speed. I hope so, cause I cut the hole in the wall Sunday.

I was happy to see the several from the Coal Division will be traveling to Novi, MI for the National Convention. I plan to leave Sunday morning after our Saturday division meeting. It looks like a pretty full agenda for the week. I like the way the organizers provided a way to create your own itinerary for the week thru the app. It should keep me on schedule and also keep me from double booking events. It seems to be a well-organized event. It is not too late to sign up and join us.

I have reached out and received artwork for the 90 year NMRA Anniversary Celebration at our August event on the platform. It is not overly elaborate so there should be no problem adding it to front of a sheet cake. The bigger question, what flavor cake are we most interested in? I lean to the side of white with vanilla cream icing that will work well with the black and blue logo. But I am open to suggestions.

Regardless, keep modeling and I hope to see you at the July meeting.

## CLINICS Randy Allio, Clinics Chair

July: Randy Allio Using modern scenery materials

August: History of Division 9

September: No Clinic

October: Mini Clinics

November: David Oliverio Modeling Techniques

December: Annual Challenge

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at my layout for the July meeting.

## 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 to be the dates below by which I need articles for the coming year.

- August: July 28

- September: September 1
- October: September 29
- November: October 27
- December: December 1



## CONTEST

### Don Cipolla and Mark Maynard Contest Chairs

The contest category for June was Non-Revenue. Five entries were displayed and the results of the voting were:

1<sup>st</sup> place

Herb Parsons – Virginian caboose

2<sup>nd</sup> place

Sam Delauter – Conrail caboose

3<sup>rd</sup> place

Mark Maynard – N&W wheel car

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

The July contest category is: Structures.

The August contest category is: Railroad Electronics.



Herb Parsons's N Scale Virginian caboose



Sam Delauter's HO Scale Conrail caboose.



Mark Maynard's HO Scale N&W wheel car

### My Word Bob Weinheimer, Editor

I had another visit from the guys from Louisville the week of June 23. They are all NMRA members, one of the big advantages of NMRA membership. Without the NMRA, I likely would not have met these fine folks. Two are very active members. Ron Ellison is the Division 8 Superintendent. Fred Soward MMR® is the Division Assistant Superintendent as well as a member of the NMRA Board of Directors where he serves as our Lead Director.

After arriving Monday and having lunch, they ran trains for the rest of the afternoon on David Oliverio's wonderful Baltimore and Ohio N Scale layout. The next day we all ran for about 10 straight hours on my Pennsylvania Southern. The third day after breakfast they stopped at Don Cipolla's railroad then they went on to Jerry Doyle's for an operating session. They finally made it back to Louisville late that afternoon.

As my June operating session used up all the trains, it was necessary to restage my railroad for the visit. I want to thank David Oliverio and Bill Stowe for their wonderful assistance in that effort. Without their help it would not have gotten done in time.

As several columnists have noted, the NMRA National Convention is the week of July 14 to 19 in Novi, Michi-

gan, a suburb of Detroit. The National Train Show will be Saturday and Sunday, July 19 and 20. I will miss the meeting at Randy Allio's home as I have to travel that day so I can be there in time for Board events on Saturday evening, Sunday afternoon, and Monday morning.

The Board's agenda will include a number of Standards and Conformance changes to approve. This is a normal result of that group's ongoing work that started 90 years ago. We also expect to approve a change to the guiding documents to make the transition from one Lead Director to the next more efficient and effective. We are continuing to work on what the NMRA should look like in ten years when we are 100 years old.

After the convention I plan to take another week to do some railfanning in the Midwest while taking the long way home. This will be nothing like the monster month long trip last summer to California and back!

Our August meeting should be nice, it's the usual Picnic on the Platform with the added feature of a cake to celebrate the 90th birthday of the NMRA. As Sam Delauter has noted, we plan to have a presentation on the Division's history. While it will be led by Jerry Doyle, I hope many of you will offer some of your experiences and reminiscences.





**Midland Atlantic**  
**Anthony Parrish, CEO**  
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NORFOLK AND WESTERN



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**DIVISION (HO)**  
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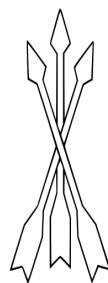
**CRUSTY**  
**MOUNTAIN**  
**AND**  
**WILOBY**  
**SPRINGS R.R.**

**Mark Maynard, President**  
 Portsmouth, OH



**CRESCENT VALLEY**

**Jerry Doyle, President**  
 Barboursville, WV



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

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 tharris@va.net

(276)620-3493  
 www.lakesidelines.com



**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**

**July 12**

**Hosted by Randy Allio  
Elkview, West Virginia**

**August 9**

**Picnic on the Platform  
St. Albans Historical Society  
St. Albans, WV**

**September 13**

**Hosted by Mark Maynard  
West Portsmouth, OH**

**October 11**

**St. Albans Historical Society  
St. Albans, WV**

**November 8**

**St. Albans Historical Society  
St. Albans, WV**

**December 14**

**Location To Be Announced**