

UP THE HOLLER



DIVISION 9, MID CENTRAL REGION, NMRA

August 2025

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FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER

Sam Delauter, Superintendent

Our August meeting will be our annual Picnic On the Platform and will be hosted at the St. Albans Historical Society. This event is always well received and well attended and I expect this year to be no different. While we will start serving lunch at noon, we will need to make preparations and setup prior to that. If you have volunteered to help or have some extra time that morning, please be there early to help setup. Setup will start at 10:30 AM. This will give us enough time to setup for the event and get everything together so that we can eat at noon. Also if you volunteered to bring something for the picnic, make sure to remember to bring it that day. If you forgot what you signed up for, get hold of me as I have the list. As always, make sure to bring a couple of beverages to the event and invite a friend to attend.

As most of us know, we recently had a very large donation. While most of this will be put in the monthly raffle, there are a number of items that are of too much value to put in the raffle. At the Picnic On the Platform we will be putting these items up for sale. While there are no N scale items, if you model HO, make sure to bring some money and make a purchase to help the Division.

To support the 90th Anniversary event, the clinic will be on the History of the Coal Division. There are several people working on the presentation for this event and there will be a number of people speaking about the division. If you have any photos that would be good to add to the slideshow, make sure to get them to Jerry Doyle. While there are several people working on this presentation, if you would like to bring any artifacts to display, there will be space provided and if you would like to speak on the Division, there will be time provided. While there is an official presentation being worked on, I would love to hear from as many members as possible.

At our July meeting, Robert Osburn announced the plans for this years challenge. Robert has made arrangements with ITLA Models in Canada to provide modular building kits for the challenge. If you are not familiar with ITLA Models, they make really nice laser cut kits and the way they are assembled is really different from other manufacturers. You can find them online if you are interested in finding out more about them. The kit that Robert is providing this year is one of their modular designs. It can be built in many different ways and if you have no place for another structure on your layout, you can build it as a backdrop building. Robert will have the kits available to all Coal Division members very soon. If you would like to participate but have not signed up, please let Robert know at the August meeting.

There is one last piece of business on the challenge. Almost 10 years ago, Robert started the Memorial Challenge. Each year Robert has provided us with an amazing gift allowing us to learn as a group. Robert has announced that he plans to do the challenge next year and then would like to pass it on to someone else in the Division. Robert has always done a great job with the challenge and to help aid this transition, we are forming a committee to help with next year's challenge and also to be ready for the following year when Robert will be passing this on. We would like to see as many members join this committee to help keep this great event going at a very high level.

While I have not mentioned it thus far in this issue of Up the Holler, I would like to thank Randy Allio and his family for hosting us at our July meeting. As always we had a great time at Randy's with a great lunch, meeting, and clinic and as always it was great to see the progress he has made on his layout.

I hope to see all of you at the August meeting in St. Albans.

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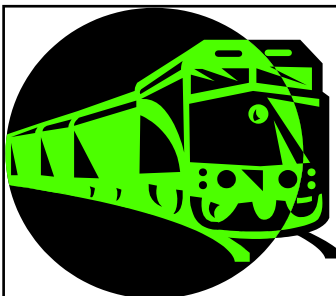
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Coal Division Monthly Railfun Event

Saturday August 9

Picnic on the Platform

St. Albans Historical Society

St. Albans, WV

10:30 AM Setup starts

12:00 Noon Start eating

Later:

- **Short business meeting**
- **Contest: Railroad electronics**
- **Raffle/Sale**
- **Clinic: Coal Division History led by Jerry Doyle**

Next Meeting

September 13, 2025

West Portsmouth, OH

NMRA MCR DIVISION 9

THE COAL DIVISION

Randy Allio's House

Big Chimney, WV

July 12, 2025

Minutes

Meeting called to order by Superintendent Sam Delauter at 1:10 p.m. Members introduced themselves.

Division Clerk Report

June minutes approved.

Treasury Balance is \$9,306.35. Recent expenses were \$25 for WV SOS registration.

Company Store \$0.

Raffle \$57.

Pike Ads \$0.

Superintendent Report

Sam thanked Randy Allio for hosting today's meeting. Mark Maynard pointed out the high number of layout visits Division 9 has had at monthly meetings this year. Sam mentioned how much members enjoyed last month's meeting at Don Cipolla's. Sam noted that MADD has returned to the meeting agenda today. He added it to allow more opportunities for members to share material. Sam noted the large amount of coverage Division 9 received in the current Kingpin

Assistant Superintendent Report

Bill Seowe thanked Randy for hosting today's meeting.

Newsletter - Up the Holler

Bob Weinheimer was on his way to the NMRA National, Sam mentioned the deadline of July 28 for the August newsletter. The address for contributions is editor@coaldivision.org.

Achievement Program

No report

Library

No report.

Clinic

Today's clinic: Creative Scenery Techniques by Randy Allio.

Contest

Today's contest is structures. Next month: Electronics

Membership

John sent word that those riding the WMSR should contact them and pay for tickets now.

Raffle

Tony mentioned the items in HO and N up for raffle today.

T TRAK

Herb Parsons mentioned the July N Rail newsletter had photos of the MCR T-TRAK N displays and Robert Osburn's on the cover. Herb mentioned a YouTube channel, DIY and Digital Railroad, featured Matt Kearn's Christmas layout.

Education

No report.

Old Business

Sam mentioned observation of the 90th anniversary of the NMRA at the August Picnic on the Platform meeting. There was discussion about activities that day.

New Business

Robert Osburn told everyone about this year's modeling challenge. This year the challenge will be building an ITLA laser-cut structure. The model will be available in N and HO. They will be available at the August meeting. Robert mentioned the amount of supplementary material that is available for the ITLA kits.

MADD

Matt Kearns asked about removing lettering from a Bachmann 44 Tonner. He also mentioned the Rail Explorers in Clay County WV and how much he enjoyed the experience.

Announcements

WV Hobbies & Crafts and Nitro Hobbies will be closed July 13 – 21 for vacation.

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

Future Meetings:

August 9 – St Albans, WV Picnic on the Platform

September 13 – Mark Maynard's Portsmouth, Ohio

October 11 – St Albans Historical Society

Meeting adjourned at 2:17.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL

Bill Stowe, Assistant Superintendent

My first item is in regards to this year's challenge discussion at the meeting at Randy's. I voiced concern on the overall price tag of the challenge that Bob Osburn is proposing. On thinking it over since the meeting, I've come to the point of view my comments on the amount were inappropriate, as it is Bob's money to do with as he pleases. I did reach out and apologized to Bob.

I am concerned about how we transition when Bob has had his fill of running the challenge. The challenge, to my mind, really provides a common focal point for the group on developing and enhancing their modelling skills, along with a great sense of group pride in our accomplishments as a Division. I would hate to see us lose that during the transition, and look to Bob to help us with that.

My second item is a personal comment on the clinics. I thoroughly enjoy them and appreciate folks for stepping forward to run clinics. I always take away something from the detailed information to help enhance my modelling,

but also have found benefit in some of the simple 'one-liners' the presenters have used. A few examples to show what I mean (and they will not be exact quotes!) Dale Osburn a couple of years ago during a talk on structures: 'if you just leave your models in your basement, you're the only person who will see them'. This helped encourage me to bring some of modelling to show the group. Randy Allio, at the last meeting on scenery: 'just try something'. My 4 by 8 HO layout has been stalled the last few years, needing mainly scenery to complete it. So that was great encouragement for me to stop worrying about having the 'perfect plan', and just get started. Finally, Jerry Doyle last winter: 'remember that model railroading is supposed to be fun'. Sadly something I lose focus on from time to time. So a few words provided some great motivation for me to focus on scenery for my HO layout, and begin to select structure kits for my 'new' N scale layout, and make sure I'm having fun in the process!

CLINICS

Randy Allio, Clinics Chair

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ August: History of Division 9 ◆ September: No Clinic ◆ October: Mini Clinics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ November: David Oliverio Modeling Techniques ◆ December: Annual Challenge |
|--|--|

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.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September: September 1 • October: September 29 • November: October 27 • December: December 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January: December 29 • February: February 2 • March: March 2 • April: March 31.0 • May: April 27 • June: June 1 • July: June 29 • August: July 27 • September: August 31 |
|---|--|

CONTEST

Don Cipolla and Mark Maynard Contest Chairs

July 2025 Contest

The contest category for July was Structures. Four entries were displayed and the results of the voting were:

- 1st place Dale Osburn – Stewarts Rods
 2nd place Randy Allio – Downtown
 3rd place Herb Parsons – Wicked Wanda's

The August contest category is: Railroad Electronics.

The September contest category is: Photo, Model or Prototype.

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



Dale Osburn – Stewarts Rods (HO scale)



Above, Randy Allio
Downtown, (O scale)



Left, Her Parsons
Wicked Wanda's, (N scale)

T-TRAK Herb Parsons, T-TRAK Chair

In the last issue I gave a history of T-TRAK, this issue I thought I would give a short history of the T-TRAK Special Interest Group of the Coal Division.

In the spring of 2018, Sam Delauter presented an idea to the members of the division to organize a T-TRAK SIG. He got approval of the board and the membership, and we started to make up some standards in addition to the T-TRAK standards. One of the standards was to use modules from Masterpiece Modules (now out of business) with a objective of having the modules assembled and ready by August for our Picnic on the Platform. The attached photos show our first layout for T-TRAK. The modules are the work of Sam Delauter, Robert Osburn, Dale Osburn, Bob Weinheimer, and Herbert Parsons. The modules with scenery were brought to the picnic by Bruce DeMaeyer then of Division 10.

The next get together for our modules was when we were invited to participate with Division 10 at a model railroad show in Morehead, Kentucky.

Coal Division members took their modules to the MCR convention in Boardman, Ohio in 2019 where Robert Osburn won the People's Choice Award with his inside corner module of a drive in theater.

Because of the pandemic, there were no shows or

conventions, but we spent that time building new modules and improving our old ones.

The Coal Division exhibited at train shows in Huntington and Charleston during 2022 - 2025 where we got a lot of attention from the public.

With the Memorial Challenge of 2024 to build a T-TRAK module, we increased to the number of modules we could display. At our Christmas dinner we had 14 modules assembled and ready. Where in the past, we had enough to only assemble an L shaped layout. We now had enough to assemble a T shaped layout. As we continue to grow, maybe soon we can have a larger layout in a U shape.

I still get asked where to buy T-TRAK modules, below is a list of the current vendors.

CMR Products	cmrproducts.com
Klawndyke's.	klawndyke.com
Stewart Denniston.	ttrakbydenniston.com
Osborn Model Kits	osbornmodelkits.com

Be aware that Osborn is a Canadian company and a tariff may be applied to the purchase.



First T-TRAK layout Summer 2018 Photo by Herb Parsons

Passenger Manifest

John Harris, Membership Chair

Division 9, MCR was well represented by 6 of its members at the Station No. VI 2025 National Convention in Novi, MI. earlier this month. Attending were Randy Allio, MMR; Don Cipolla, MMR; Jim Moon, Bob Weinheimer, MMR; and myself. It was also great to see and spend some time with former Coal Division Superintendent Dan Mulhearn. I attended several well-presented clinics and came away with a few tips and tweaks to techniques. Randy presented 2 clinics, each two times that were well received. The Train Show on Saturday was a bit disappointing as I did not see any really good deals or new “got to have items”. That is not to say I did not spend a few bucks and come home with a few new toys.

The highlight for me was the home layout tours. The Detroit area has a plethora of club and home layouts. I particularly enjoyed seeing Norm Charbonneau’s O scale 3 rail Northbrook Railroad. I have enjoyed his YouTube videos for many years and found is modeling skills and weather techniques to be first rate. Seeing it in person was a treat. Additionally, I have followed Mike Burgett for several years thru his presentations to St Albans C&O Modeler’s weekends. More recently I had seen articles and video of his HO scale C&O Clifton Forge Division. Still, I was a bit surprised by the overall size of the layout and attention to detail. While I did not sign up for an operating session, it is obvious that use of prototypical signaling, CTC system, and communications with the dis-

patcher thru the period correct phone system would be awesome.

I had just finished a major construction project at home on Sunday morning before heading to the convention, the reason I could not make the July Division meeting. After returning, I had some minor clean-up to do but, with new found enthusiasm for model railroading, was able to install the benchwork for the planned Union Carbide facilities for the A&NRR. I am refining the track plan as I go but it looks like there will be an opportunity to add a small commercial district to represent a corner of South Charleston. Outside of the suggestion of N scale partial version of downtown Hinton, most buildings on the layout are railroad related.

Moving forward, I am looking forward to our annual Picnic on the Platform. I have ordered the 90th Anniversary NMRA decorated cake and will be picking it up Saturday morning before the event. I think you will be pleased with how the cake turns out. It is large enough for 30 pieces so come hungry and save room for dessert.

I hope everyone planning to join us for the WMSRR has made arrangements to pay for the tickets as the deadline is the 1st of August. My wife and I will be staying out of town on Friday and hope to see you in Cumberland by 10:45. Boarding scheduled to start by 11:00 with departure at 11:30. We will be driving home Saturday evening.

I hope to see you at the August meeting.



General National Train Show overview



Mike Burgett's C&O Layout



Norm Charbonneau's 3 Rail O Scale Layout

My Word Bob Weinheimer MMR®

I'm back home after the convention and some rail-fanning at Fostoria and Deshler, Ohio and Fort Madison, Iowa.

One big convention impression was the wide variety of scales of the layouts available to be visited. N, HO, S, O, On30 and 3, O 2 rail, O 3 rail, and even some G were on the self guided tours. Others have written so much that there is little more for me to say. Nobody, however, has mentioned the banquet. The speaker was a key player in the restoration of the Michigan Central train station, now used by Ford for office space. That was quite a project. Due to water damage caused when the building was unoccupied, numerous decorative parts had to be recreated. It was noted that the steel skeleton was in good shape!

The Board of Directors met Monday July 14. Two major decisions were made. First was to award the 2028 convention to Rochester, New York. Rochester, like Chattanooga and Novi, is not terribly far from the Coal Division. The 2027 convention will be in Tacoma, Washington so that one is a bit farther away.

The other decision was to adopt a new logo. That logo will be unveiled publicly on or about September 1. The new logo should give the entire NMRA including its Regions and Divisions a better level of recognition. As it is introduced, existing Division, Region, and National

logos will be retired. The new logo will have a space for Division or Region names but it will be clearly NMRA.

You will not be required to discard your shirts or other items with the current logo, it's just that any new items will use the new logo. Obviously, there will be a transition process but the goal is to have this well underway by the time of the big train show in Springfield in January. We will be supplied with all the artwork needed to make the change including embroidering the new logo on future apparel.

I anticipate there will be some resistance to this change but it is something we really need to do to increase our name recognition. We have always preached that the value of the NMRA is delivered at the Division level so it is important to harmonize our appearance across all levels of the organization. I will have some work to do to revise the front page of this newsletter as well as resolving issues with the website.

I can explain more at our August membership meeting and I can answer your questions as well.

Finally, as noted many of us saw Dan Mulhearn at the convention. Dan tells me that after he got back home he fell and broke his femur. While he sounds chipper in his text messages, that will definitely slow him down for a while.

NMRA National Convention
Novi, Mi
July 14 – 19, 2024

Jim Moon

As an attendee, I would like to share a few thoughts and pictures of the NMRA National Convention. This is the third national convention I have attended and this may be the best. The convention sold out at 950 registered attendees. The convention was held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Novi, Mi. The facility was excellent. Here are some highlights. The convention hosted a member's yard sale from Monday through Thursday. The Operations Special Interest Group utilized a large N scale modular layout this year. The contest entries were in the same ball room at the Op Sig layout, this room also had an HO modular layout and an other N scale layout. 121 Clinics were held from Monday through Saturday. Each clinic was repeated so you could work around conflicted clinics. 60 layouts were open for tours with about an even split each day. This convention decided to do away with bus tours of layouts and was well re-

ceived from attendees I talked with. The convention did have a few bus tours to local industries and museums I did not attend as they were all extra expenditures.

The highlight of national conventions is the National Train Show. This year's show was held in a cavernous Suburban Collections Showplace in Novi. I will share a few photos from the train show. Many vendors were present at this year's show.

I finally managed to participate in a Modeling With The Masters event. The only opening when I registered in early June was on modeling telephone poles along railroad tracks. I learned several facts about railroad phone line systems.

If you have never attended a National Convention, consider next years convention at Chattanooga, TN. Registration is open for this convention which will be from July 27 through August 2,



Convention Hotel



Convention Memorabilia



Steel Furnace Model on Modular Layout



Scratch Built Factory on Modular Layout



Orange Grove Sante Fe Modular Layout



Engine Maintenance Shop Sante Fe Layout



Crude Oil Collection Facility Sante Fe Layout



Craftsman Kit Display

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 the Monday of the week preceding the second Saturday of each month.. Items can be sent to editor@coaldivision.org

Mid-Ohio Valley Model Railroad Club
By Mark Suek

PARKERSBURG- The Mid-Ohio Valley Model Railroad Club is gearing-up to celebrate the long and glorious history of railroading in the Mid-Ohio Valley with an open house on August 9. The event will be hosted at the club's facility, located in the rear basement of NOE Office Equipment at 610 Green Street in downtown Parkersburg. Hours are 10-3 with free admission and parking and a drawing for multiple prizes. New additions to The Todd Atkinson Collection of historic railroad photographs will be on display as well as artifacts and model trains running

in HO, O, N and G scales.

Additionally, MOVIMRC was featured in the Wood County Historical and Preservation Society's Summer 2025 newsletter in a story written for the organization by club secretary Mark Suek.

Lastly, MOVIMRC's membership roster dwindled by 13% (now standing at 62 members) during its annual dues payment cycle. Three new members have joined the club this summer.

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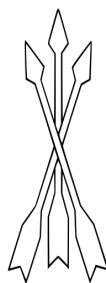
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Mark Maynard, President
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CRESCENT VALLEY

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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



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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

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

January 10, 2026

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