



COAL DIVISION

UP THE HOLLER

DIVISION 9, MID CENTRAL REGION, NMRA

June 2026

FROM THE HEAD OF THE HOLLER
Sam Delauter, Superintendent

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The May meeting saw the yearly tradition of the “Steel Is King” event. Once again, the Coal Division had the opportunity to visit the clubhouse of the Mid Ohio Valley Model Railroad Club, Dave Stout’s layout and Paul Lapointe’s layout. Lunch was provided by Paul and his family and afterward we had our monthly meeting. The event saw a good turnout and everyone seemed to have a great time. Thank you to each of our hosts for making this a memorable event.

There has been a change to our schedule that everyone should be aware of. Don Cipolla has had to postpone the “Silver Is King” event and it has been rescheduled to November. For the June meeting, we will be back at the St. Albans Historical Society. Due to logistical issues, there will be no Zoom meeting.

It looks like progress is being made for this years Memorial Challenge. Robert Osburn and company have been working hard on this and it is coming along. I believe he will have an update for us at the June meeting. More to come on this in the near future.

The 2026 MCR convention is coming up quickly and by the time you read this will only be a couple days away. The convention is June 4th-7th, 2026 in Dayton, OH. If you have not signed up for the convention, there is still time. The convention is always a great time and a great time to spend with your fellow Coal Division members. Many of our T-TRAK modules will be displayed.

As stated above, our next meeting will be June 13th at the St. Albans Historical Society. The meeting will begin at 1:00 PM with the doors opening at noon. The clinic will be Scenery on The Allegheny & New River Road by John Harris and the Challenge is “Non-Revenue”. I look forward to seeing all of you at the June Coal Division meeting

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Coal Division Monthly Railfun Event

1:00 PM Saturday, June 13, 2026

St. Albans Historical Society

- **Welcome and Call to Order (Acknowledge members present)**
- **Treasurers Report**
- **Superintendent Report**
- **Assistant Superintendent Report**
- **Challenge: Non-Revenue**
- **Adjourn Business Meeting**
- **5 Minute Break**
- **Raffle (always need new items)**
- **Clinic: Scenery on the A&NRR-John Harris**

**Next Meeting
July 11, 2026**

NMRA MCR DIVISION 9 *THE COAL DIVISION*

Steel is King Event

Waverley WV

May 9, 2026

Meeting Minutes

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

Division Clerk Report

April minutes were approved.
Treasury Balance is \$10,171.56
Company Store \$25.
Raffle \$63.
Pike Ads \$0.

Superintendent Report

Sam gave everyone an update on his situation.

Assistant Superintendent Report

John Harris was away on a cross-country Amtrak trip.

Newsletter - Up the Holler

John Harris was away but Sam reminded everyone of the May 25 for the newsletter. The address for contributions is editor@coaldivision.org. He also thanked Bob Weinheimer for his work as editor for many years.

Achievement Program

Don Cipolla mentioned that Paul Lapointe was working on his Structure AP certificate.

Library

No report.

Clinic

Randy Allio gave a short clinic at the meeting.

Model Bring and Brag

Today's category is steel.

Membership

Dale Osburn gave a short update on current membership.

Raffle

Tony Puccini mentioned there were several train items at the raffle table. He mentioned that the funds generated usually pay for the meeting space.

T-TRAK

Herb Parsons reminded anyone planning to take a module to the Dayton convention should fill out the paperwork. He also mentioned the Marion N meet April 16.

Jerry Doyle also mentioned that registrations for the Dayton convention have been lower than normal and to register as soon as possible.

Education

No report.

Old Business

Sam reiterated that anyone going to the Dayton MCR convention should sign up as soon as possible.

Robert Osburn mentioned that the newly-formed Memorial Challenge committee is working on planning this year's challenge. This year the topic will be cast resin car kits with open loads.

New Business

Randy Allio mentioned plans to move a portion of Bob Weiheimer's layout to WV Hobbies & Crafts in Teays Valley.

Announcements

None

Future Meetings:

June 13 – "Silver is King" Hurricane, WV *

July 11 – Randy Allio's Big Chimney, WV

August 8 – Picnic on the Platform St Albans, WV

September 12 – Mark Maynard's Portsmouth, OH

Meeting adjourned at 1:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Doyle, Division 9 Clerk

* later determined this is postponed to November

FROM THE OFFICE DOWN THE HALL
John Harris, Assistant Superintendent

May was my first official meeting as your Assistant Superintendent and I was not there. While my excuse was not division related, it was train related. As previously reported in a Passenger Manifest article, I was on an Amtrak Trek across America. I used the USA RailPass but missed the discounted price deadline in January and paid full price at \$499.00. Still this was a bargain compared to individual tickets for each leg of the trip. In total, I traveled approx. 6000 miles total.

First leg of the trip was from Charleston to Chicago overnight on the Cardinal, train #51. After a 4 hour lay-over, I was then off on train #5, the California Zepher across 6 states, over 52 hours to Sacramento, CA. This of course meant 2 nights sleeping in Coach. Upgrades to Roomette or Bedrooms are not available using RailPass. Even if available, I could not justify the \$1600 and \$2300 respective in additional cost. Besides, sleeping in Coach is like camping out in a tent so I figured I could handle that.

After 2 day and 2 nights in California wine country sleeping in hotels, I was refreshed and ready to board the Coast Starlight #14 at 11:55PM and traveling north overnight to southern Oregon at Klamath Falls. Here again was a 2 night stay in a hotel as I toured Crater Lake National Park and the northern California Redwoods.

Then, re-boarding the Starlight, I was off to Seattle for another overnight rest and shower. Departing late the next afternoon on the Empire Builder #8, we headed north then east across the Cascades of northern Washington & Idaho. Unfortunately we traveled across some most scenic areas of the Pacific Northwest overnight. I awoke to see the western portions of Montana before arriving at 8:00 AM in Whitefish, MT.

There I de-boarded and took a day to visit portions of Glacier National Park that were open. Still plenty of snow on the ground even in early May. Returning to train #8 the next morning, I journeyed across central and eastern Montana at 20 to 40 mph. Strong winds across the plains reduced speed significantly from the normal 79 mph resulting in an 8 hour plus delay arriving back in Chicago. Fortunately, I had built in an overnight lay-over so catching the Cardinal on Saturday for the return to Charleston on #50 was not an issue.

It was a great experience, albeit a little tiring. All in, the trip including hotels and car rentals including the Rail-Pass was approx. \$2100. It was a great way to see the country and as a bonus, you get to ride plenty of trains. Would I do again? yes. I also suggest it is not for everyone. But for those of us with a love of trains, Go for it!!!



Chicago Union Station



Chicago Union Station



Denver Union Station



Typical Coach Seating



Typical Roomette



Typical Bedroom



Dining Room



Lounge / Observation Car



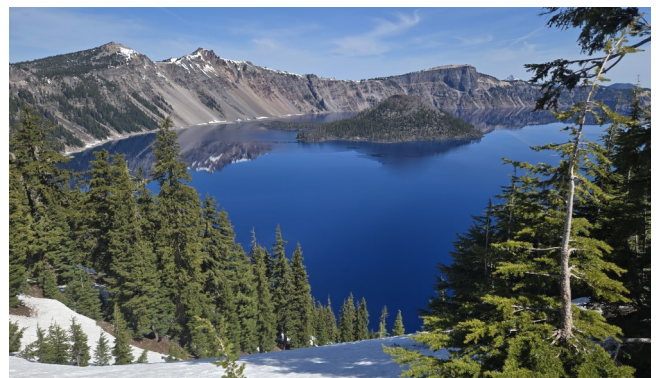
Flat Iron Steak Dinner w/ complimentary wine



French Toast Breakfast



California Wine Country



Crater Lake National Park, Oregon



California Redwoods



Oregon Coast



Glacier National Park, Montana

CLINICS

Randy Allio MMR®, Clinics Chair

Clinic Schedule for 2026

- ◆ June: John Harris, Scenery on the A&NRR
- ◆ July: Randy Allio, Tips for building Craftsman kits
- ◆ August: John Harris, Rock Castings
- ◆ September: No Clinic-Crusty Road Trip
- ◆ October: Mark Maynard
- ◆ November: Don Cipolla, Prototype Modeling
- ◆ December: 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.

- July: June 29
- August: July 27
- September: August 31
- October: September 28

My Word

As I edit the June version of Up the Holler, I have made only minor tweaks to format and will be continuing to look for ways to keep it in step and compliant with NMRA branding guidelines. Still I am not looking to make any drastic changes to what has worked well for several years now.

Thanks to all contributors as each of you got your articles to me in a timely manner. Thanks also to Bob

Weinheimer for continuing to assist with distribution. We are working to get web hosting changed over to new provider so that we can take this burden off Bob and make it easier for future changes to website and our on-line presence. I also want to work with Matt Kearns and Dale Osburn to see if Facebook posting of the newsletter is an option. These in an attempt to provide more exposure and increased membership.

CHALLENGE**Don Cipolla MMR® and Mark Maynard, Challenge Chairs****May 2026 Modelers Challenge**

The Challenge category for May was Anything Steel Related. Two entries were displayed.

Models Displayed in May:

2026	Monthly Model Challenge
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

Sam Delauter — PRR flat cars



Randy Allio — Cable Shed (steel roof)



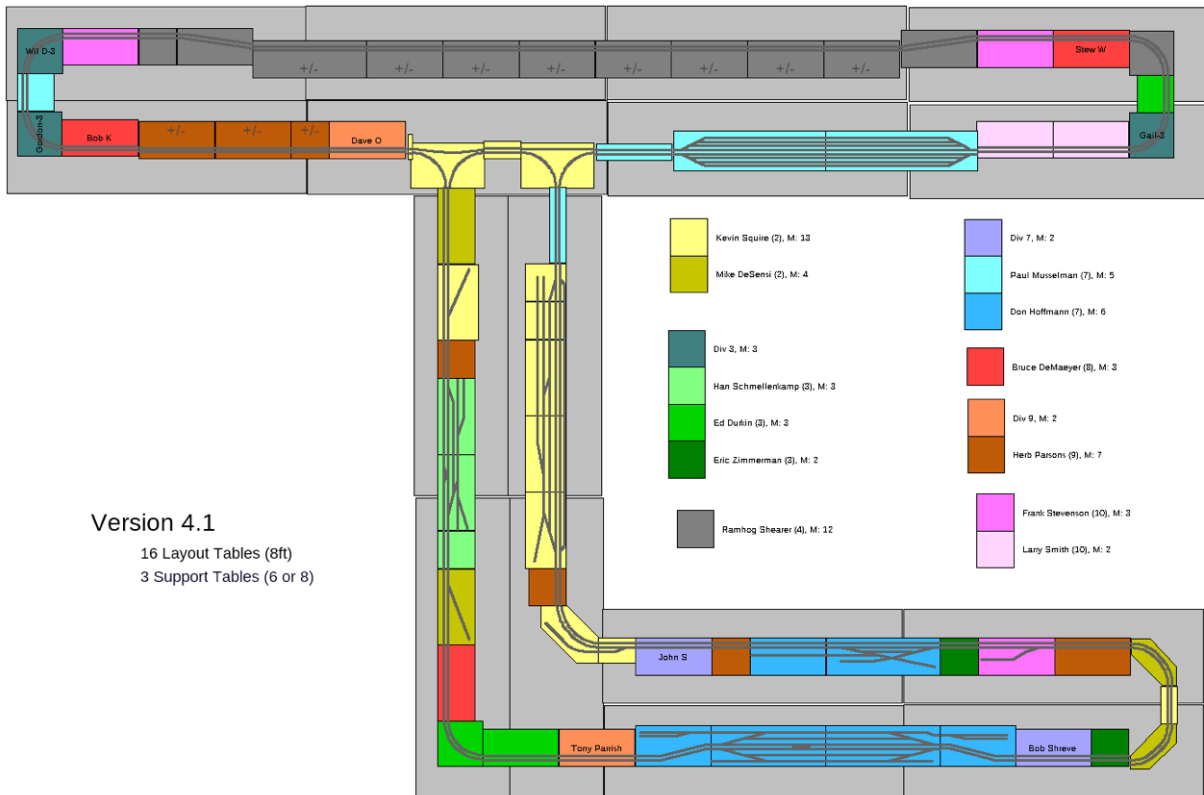
Passenger Manifest Dale Osburn, Membership Chairman

I was recently reminded of a saying “a little each day goes a long way”. In today’s fast-paced world, instant gratification seems to be standing in the way of patience needed to build a quality layout or a small T-TRAK module. As many of you know, I enjoy building Jordan cars for my layout and believe me patience is very important when putting these small kits together. So, what’s the key for us modelers who have been building for a few years? The best tool we have on the workbench could simply

mean sitting back and taking a break or completely leaving the workbench for a period of time. At the most recent model train show I attended I ended up with (yes) more Jordan cars to build. But for now, they sure look good on the shelf. More breaks to come!! As of June 2026, Division 9 has 39 active members. Please keep in mind, August is our recruitment month. Please start thinking of just one person who might be interested in our group.

T-TRAK Herb Parsons, T-TRAK Chair

This is how the T-TRAK layout at the MCR Convention in Dayton, Ohio will be set up for the operations sessions. If you are going to attend the convention, be sure to sign up for some ops time. See you there.



Upcoming Coal Division Events

June 13, 2026

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

July 11, 2026

**Randy Allio's Home
Elkview, WV**

August 8

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

September 12

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

October 10

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

November 14, 2026

**Silver is King
Don Cipolla's home
Hurricane, WV**




Midland Atlantic
Anthony Parrish, CEO
 tony765@aol.com

NORFOLK AND WESTERN




PIPESTEM BASEMENT
 DIVISION (HO)
DAN MULHEARN
 304-466-9188
 danmulhearn@gmail.com



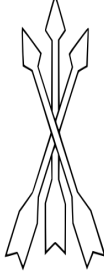
CRUSTY MOUNTAIN AND WILOBY SPRINGS R.R.

Mark Maynard, President
 Portsmouth, OH



CRESCENT VALLEY

Jerry Doyle, President
 Barboursville, WV



THREE ARROWS RAILROAD

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Bob Weinheimer, President
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Ed Keith, MMR
 Assistant Superintendent
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LAKESIDE LINES RAILROAD
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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



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 Superintendent
 Ronceverte WV