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Reminder: We need zip+four from everyone. Check your mailing label—I may have it.

Potomac Division Minicon March 10, 2001

by Clint Hyde

It's that time again—the Potomac Division's minicon is coming shortly! March 10, 2001, at Dulin Methodist Church in Falls Church, VA. You may recall this location from 1999; it worked pretty well for us then, so we're going back (also, the very low cost to rent the facility helps!).

Our featured guest this year is Norm Garner, the newly elected President of the Mid Eastern Region of NMRA the region the Potomac Division is part of). He lives in Portsmouth, VA, and will be driving up specifically to see us. I expect he will visit all the MER Divisions during his term as President. In addition to whatever his presentation is, this is therefore your opportunity to ask him questions about the MER and NMRA, like this business about the unified membership cost (some of which revolves around insurance liabilities), or what the MER really provides its members, and air your grievances against the NMRA—or, you can ask him about helping out with MER activities (no shortage of opportunity there).

We are also inviting Jim Kellow, Master Model Railroader, now MER VP and previously AP Chair (who lives in the vicinity of Norm Garner, so they might arrive together). He can talk with some authority on the AP program, maybe help judge models, etc.

The primary activity this time, revolving around module building, is evolving. It will still have a little of that cooking-show feel, where an complete module in both N and HO scales gets built between 9 and 2, but since that isn't really possible, we'll see several modules, in both scales, at different stages of construction (you know, just like on a cooking show, where you see the chef start with an empty bowl, mix a bunch of ingredients, then pull out a different bowl with a completed casserole, and then five minutes later he pulls a finished casserole out of the oven).

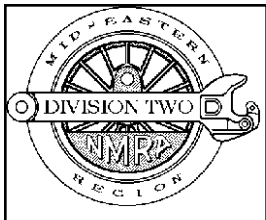
Going along with this will be two modular layouts, one in N and one in HO, which will be coordinated with the construction clinics. We think there will be the opportunity for you to get some driving time in towards the AP Chief Dispatcher certificate if you're interested.

There's also the opportunity for you to participate in this—build your own module along with the experts. For about \$20, we'll provide a "starter kit"; you won't have to cut any wood for the frame, that will be all ready to go, and you'll get enough of all the right materials to get the basics done in a single day (well, we'll see how far this actually goes, refine it a bit for a repeat next year, either at the 2002 minicon if we have one, or at the MER Regional convention we will be hosting: we'll have a lot more time at an MER convention, since that is a three-day event, including enough time to do considerably more work, cover a lot more territory—it is my hope to have a well-coordinated and well-connected set of modeling clinics that take you from start to finish on as many things as there is time to fit in the weekend, and covering as wide a scope as we have instructors for).

The NTRAK guys will be providing clinics at the minicon this year, we're aiming at having a number of them that go with the progress in module building—but they haven't been pinned down yet. Keep an eye on the Potomac Division website for late-breaking details. We're aiming at instructional and make-it-and-take-it episodes, as we have had the past couple of years (but not the same ones). I'll be working on having a tree-making clinic (something I personally need practice at). The theme will be scenery, since that's what was requested in that survey a couple of years ago.

The usual time-frame will be in operation: we'll start at 9AM, lunch will be at noon, Division business meeting will be at 1.30 or so

continued on page 6



The Potomac Division

Division 2 ("Potomac"), Mid-Eastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

The Potomac Division includes: the District of Columbia; Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, and Rappahannock Counties in Virginia, as well as all area independent cities.

The Division Crew

Superintendent	Garret Nicholson (301) 593-7699 (garretnicholson@hotmail.com) 411 Kerwin Rd Silver Spring, MD 20901
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Clerk	Clint Hyde (703) 803-3068 (ch Hyde@bbn.com)
Achievement Prgrm Rep.	Ed Price (703) 354-1438 (Edmund.W.Price@USACE.ARMY.MIL)
HOModule Crew	Bruce Strickland (703) 361-5620 (bstricklan@aol.com)
Northern Virginia NTRAK	Matt Schaefer (703) 978-2946 (nvntrak@erols.com)

The Potomac Flyer

Potomac Division's quarterly newsletter © 2000

Editor **Clint Hyde**
13443 Brookfield Drive
Chantilly, VA 20151-2614

Submission Deadlines	Spring issue	January 1
	Summer issue	April 1
	Fall issue	July 1
	Winter issue	October 1
Advertising rates:	1/8 page business card	\$25 per year
	1/4 page	\$10/issue
	1/2 page	\$20/issue
	full page	\$40/issue
	back cover, half-page	\$40/issue
Change of Address	Send a completed USPO COA form to: Clerk, Potomac Division, PO Box 3204, Manassas, VA 20108	

For more local information, see the
Potomac Division website at:
<http://home.cox.rr.com/hydesystems/Potomac.html>
(that's a capital P)

From the Business Car

by Garret Nicholson
Division Superintendent

garret.nicholson@hotmail.com

Over the past few months I have been contacted by our MER President, Norm Garner regarding membership of our division members in the Region and the NMRA. He has been charged by the NMRA to get members of the local divisions to become members of the MER and NMRA. The NMRA has produced a tremendous amount of model railroad information that is available to members. I recently purchased a CD-ROM from the NMRA which has NMRA data sheets, standards, recommended practices, the achievement program and the DCC handbook. The NMRA publishes clinics from the National Conventions as well as maintaining a large historical library which is open to members. The organization deserves our support for the work that it does to promote the hobby. The Region sponsors and funds two conventions a year in different parts of the region. For a nominal fee we can go on railroad related tours all over the Mid Atlantic and attend interesting new clinics as well as renew friendships with modelers in the region. I believe that the Region deserves our support as well. In addition to the above benefits, the NMRA also provides an umbrella insurance policy. I have recently been informed that this policy covers NMRA members only. This policy does not extend to people who are only members of the division and are participating in an NMRA sponsored event.

Norm Garner will be our keynote speaker at the mini convention and will address this issue and answer any questions that we have regarding this new policy. In the meantime, please contact me or any member of the board to tell us your thoughts.

Hometown boy makes good...Decals.

Division member Bill Mosteller started producing RR decals a couple of years ago—all area railroads which have folded or been acquired by others: Virginian, W&OD, RF&P, N&W, and others that passed through the area on a regular basis. I have a few of them, they're nicely made. Many are based on originals from Champion. Scales vary from N to G, not every one is available in every scale. Your best bet to find out is to look on Bill's website, www.greatdecals.com, and see what he has available—many have online images of models carrying these decals. See his ad on page 11.

-- clint

Achievement News

by Bill Roman & Ed Price
NMRA Achievement Program Representatives

wroman@starpower.net, edmund.w.price@usace.army.mil

Ed Price:

Congratulations to our newest Golden Spike Award winner, Art Bohn. I would like to encourage those of you that have been thinking about the Golden Spike Award to complete your paper work (available on the NMRA web site) and contact me so that arrangements can be made to view your work. The requirements for this award are (1) display 6 units of rolling stock; (2) construct a minimum of 8 square feet of layout; (3) construct five structures; (4) install three types of trackage that is ballasted and installed on proper roadbed; (5) wire the trackage so that two trains can be operated simultaneously, and; (6) provide one additional electrical feature.

The Division will have a model contest at the mini-convention in March. Categories will be: structures, diesel and other power, steam power, traction, passenger cars, freight cars, cabooses, non-revenue cars, displays, and dioramas, modules, beginner's structures, beginner's rolling stock, and favorite train. This is not a comprehensive list and additional categories will be added if needed. I would like to encourage anyone who has not entered a contest before to enter one of the beginner categories. There is still time to complete your models and it's not too late to start building that structure or new car. Models entered into the contest can be judged for AP merit points, but this is not a requirement of the contest.

Judging guidelines for AP merit points include (1) construction; (2) detail; (3) conformity; (4) finish and lettering, and; (5) scratchbuilding. You will also need to fill out a Judge's Score Sheet. This sheet is where you describe your model and how you built it. The categories that need to be described on the score sheet are:

Construction, which focuses on the quality of workmanship as demonstrated by the proper handling of materials, applied labor, modeling skill, and craftsmanship of the finished model. Detail, which includes the refinement of the model and the addition of subordinate parts. This includes details that are integral parts of the prototype, added for appearance, and working details. Conformity, which deals with achieving a prototypical appearance and following prototype practice in construction and application of parts. Finish and lettering, which deals with the general appearance and proper application of paint schemes, lettering, and weathering. Scratchbuilding, which deals with all parts of the model which have been fabricated by the modeler from basic wood, metal, plastic, or other shapes and materials.

To apply for an AP award you will need to submit a completed Statement of Qualification (SOQ) itemizing evidence of the requirements applicable to the award. AP requirements, SOQ's and forms can be found at the NMRA web site: <http://www.nmra.org/achievement/apc9.html>. This site includes all the awards available with descriptions and requirements.

This site includes the record and SOQ forms. There is also an article in the September, 1992 NMRA Bulletin about service awards.

Coupler Comments

Electronic Gadgets &
Communications

by Clint Hyde
Clerk and Flyer Editor

chyde@bbn.com

I goofed it badly last issue—database errors on my part caused some folks not to receive their issue of the Flyer. Yikes! All straight now...Check your mailing label to see when yours expires. If it's sometime soon, I will have highlighted the date in blue or green

The Division web-page is now:

<http://home.cox.rr.com/hydesystems/Potomac.html>

If there's something you'd like to see on our web-pages, let me know.

In addition, you can now find the Mid-Eastern Region web-pages nearby:

<http://home.cox.rr.com/hydesystems/MER/MER.html>

Submissions to the Flyer:

Please send them to me electronically, I don't have the time or interest in retyping them...I am happy to fix grammar and spelling, etc., but please, if you're already typing it once, don't make me type it a second time. Pictures can be sent in the mail, I can scan them for inclusion (albeit imperfectly). This works fine. You could send a photo-scan as a JPG file, that would be fine too, those are generally small enough to email (a typical scan file size is 20 megabytes, far too large to email).

There is always room for a submission here, and you do get AP Author points for it (up to a limit, see the NMRA AP Regs for exact details).

MER announced at the Altoona convention that the theme for the president's award at Frasier, PA (3/29 - 4/1/01) is bridges/trestles.

Northern Virginia NTRAK News

by Matt Schaefer & David Freshwater, NVNTRAK President.

NVNTRAK's John Cook assumed responsibility for mailing newsletters and shipping merchandise orders for Jim Fitzgerald's world wide NTRAK Model Railroading Society. Yes folks, that's from right here from Northern VA, NTRAK's center of the universe! For the big NTRAK shopping list see: <http://www.ntrak.org/ntkordfm.html>. Our Holiday Party was at Bill Palmer's house which hangs over the tracks at Franconia. We say this party is always worth the club dues alone.

As usual our members Noll Horan, Mark Franke and Nick Sklis took a bunch of awards at the MER, MCR and NER convention at Altoona. We're just keeping N scale rolling along. We made it to all the regular train shows and took layouts also to Spotsylvania Mall Fredricksburg, the National Burn Camp and the Fairfax Hospital Center for Women and Children. We lapped a thousand trains around the railroad last quarter and even simulated a hot box. You just put one pair of lighted passenger car wheels in backwards. It's a no brainer. Our Holiday Party was at Bill Palmer's house which hangs over the tracks at Franconia. I say this party is always worth the club dues alone.

The big news for Northern Virginia NTRAK is that the club will host the N Scale East Convention in 2004. With the NMRA convention in Seattle that year, N-Scalers and NTRAKers look for something a little closer to home. We've been exploring the feasibility of hosting this convention for over a year and now have approval from the international NTRAK organization. In many ways, the 2004 convention will be a bigger and better reprise of the successful RunniN TraiNs 96 convention we held in Alexandria. We attracted over 500 attendees and an estimated crowd of over 12,000 for the weekend train show. Most of the members who made 1996 are still available to help us avoid old mistakes and to advise the many additional members we've gained since 1996.

One thing I am sure we will repeat from 1996 is including all scales in the convention. In 1996, we had space for the other modular groups and the garden railway folks. Most of the schedule was made up of things you find at every convention. We had clinics throughout the convention, layout and prototype tours, and tours that had nothing to do with real or model railroads. The biggest difference at an N Scale convention is a large N Scale layout. NVNTRAK, by itself, put together a layout as large as the NTRAK layout planned for the 2001 NMRA convention. Undoubtedly, we'll attract attendance and modules from across the country and overseas. There will be something for everyone in our 2004 convention. You'll hear more about it as we continue our planning.

Because many of our members are dual hatted,

Potomac HO Crew Module Notes

by Bruce Strickland

Check us out at the 2001 miniconvention. We'll have a modular layout, as we normally do, and will be performing some side-by-side construction demos of modules. See how easy it is to get started with one, how easy it is to get involved with the group, learn about our ongoing activities outside the miniconvention (we often have a modular layout at the same MRR shows as NVNTRAK, except that we don't use those teeny weeny cars and engines).

For someone wishing to participate, we will have a module starter kit (wood framing parts precut) available for about \$20, and other materials as well. Bring some track with you? We'll get through the frame assembly, wiring, track-laying, and the beginnings of scenery (as far as time will allow—who knows what that will amount to?).

We are always looking for new members. If you think Modular railroading is for you please contact us via our Web page, E-mail at Bstricklan@aol.com, phone at 703-361-5620, or by mail at:

Bruce Strickland
10766 Tullamore Court
Manassas VA 20111

members of both our club and the MER and Potomac Division, we are also excited about the potential to assist the division and region with their upcoming conventions. Not only do we help grow the hobby locally—we also get some additional experience for our turn in the national spotlight in 2004. Some of our folks have been very successful in the contests and AP judging at recent MER conventions. I know that I saw several projects being worked on at Chantilly for the Spring MER convention. We also have members looking at potential clinics. The joint module clinic for the Division Mini-convention, involving our club and the HO Module crew, is discussed elsewhere in this issue. But it is an outgrowth of the type of clinic that we often do. Even when we have to do scale dependent things, there are still things we can learn from each other. That's why this series of conventions excites us so much. It provides so many opportunities to learn and share across the entire hobby.

NVNTRAK helps conventions and shows where we can by providing layouts or in assisting other clubs coordinate big shows. Conventions can attract a repeat crowds with modular layouts. For the Richmond GATS show we attracted the same old clubs from all over the world that came to our '96 Alexandria convention. For more info on your local NVNTRAK club, the past shows and the schedule of coming activities see <http://www.nvntrak.org/>

THE LAYOUT TOUR PROGRAM

by Ed McGill, layout tour coordinator

The Division activity that members have said they like most is the opportunity to visit—and learn from—the layouts and modeling work of others. As you know, the Washington metropolitan area is home to a few of the best layouts in the country, built by people whose names are well known in the hobby press. We also have a number of very fine but less known layouts in this area, giving all of us an opportunity to see the hobby's potential. But the success of the Layout Tour program depends entirely on the generosity and willingness of our members, and occasionally others, to open their homes for a brief visit by the Division's membership.

I am the Division's new Layout Tour coordinator and I am presently putting together the tour schedule for 2001-2002. Thanks to member Doug Gurin, I have been able to schedule a number of promising layout tours from among his SIG members in this area. I also inherited a list of prospects from my predecessor, Nick Kalis, but many are folks whose layouts we have visited before, recently—I would like to find people whose accomplishments we have not yet seen.

The layout tours do provide a number of benefits to the host. They offer an opportunity to gain a new perspective, through the comments of visitors, on the strengths or weaknesses of the lay-

out. They are also a good opportunity to meet others who share one's interest in a prototype railroad or theme, such as urban modeling. If the "superintendent" has a railroad large enough to operate with a "crew", then an Layout Tour is a chance to find others to join the group. The Division will also give hosts two years of free membership.

Layout Tour announcements are published only in our Division newsletter, so attendance is limited to Division members and occasional guests. The number of visitors is usually never more than 30 or so (unless you're John Armstrong). Tours are normally held on a Sunday afternoon between 1 and 5 pm. There are several reasons why we don't recommend Saturdays unless it's a club layout, but we can accommodate a Saturday date if necessary.

So if you have anything larger than a module or two, even if it is only partially finished, and if you have never hosted a layout tour before, please consider volunteering. I can send you a handout with all the details about this program. You don't need to commit to anything by calling, just ask for a copy of the notes. My home number is 703-528-5419. I'm also going to have copies available at tour locations and the miniconvention.

Finally, I would like to thank those members who have already hosted an open house and would like to again that you are not being ignored. If you would like to be a host again, I would be

Reminder:

The Flyer is *always* accepting submissions for publication—and you get NMRA AP Author points when things get published! Don't wait, get that stuff in now! You can see that there are holes to fill. If you don't do it, Nick Kalis is going to...

Reminder: If you haven't been receiving division-related emails, it means we don't have your address in our database—send an email to the clerk (chyde@bbn.com) in order to get added. You get a monthly notify about the next layout tour, about a week ahead, and you can also receive this very flyer electronically, as a file to read using Adobe Acrobat Reader (a freebie).

Miniconvention, continued from page 1

(and will include something resembling elections involving the unopposed re-running of the existing BoD, award announcements, etc.), Norm Garner, our featured speaker will be on at 2 or so.

Think about bringing in some of your modeling work for either AP judging or just fun viewing, the popular vote contest...We will have a more official AP judging group this year—I plan on having a few items in there (unlike last year, where I had nothing, having had to sacrifice my xmas vacation for job probs). Why go for the AP judging? Well, the judges are typically folks who have some significant experience at doing what they're judging—they'll give your work a worthwhile critical eye, and tell you how to improve what you've done enough to score over that magic 87.5 point threshold for an AP Merit Award (my personal goal for my models). We'll be trying to have a clinic about doing the paperwork for this, as that seems to be a common complaint preventing people from actually go ahead with the judging—so if you have a top-notch model, but are put off by the paperwork involved, bring it along, with whatever you have in the way of notes (or not, if there aren't any), and we'll see about getting you the help you need on the spot to get enough written down to satisfy the AP Merit Award documentation requirements. With luck, we'll get Jim Kellow to present this for us, as he's the outgoing MER AP coordinator. And even if you don't have a model that is necessarily finished, magazine-quality ready-for-closeup-photography stage of completion, bring it along anyway and get some suggestions about what it takes to really finalize it. Last year Brian Eiland brought along a couple of items, just to get an opinion on his progress, not really attempting to get formally judged. (Also note that the rules on this have changed recently, changing the percentages for elements making up the final number, in many of the AP categories—check on "The Web" for the latest published details, and be aware that not all the latest info is there yet: I just found out about a significant change to the Author scoring a week ago that isn't online yet.)

This year we'll be having the traditional white elephant table, but not the swap-meet attempt which failed last year. So, if you have something to unload, bring it along, we will have volunteers (and may need more) to sell your stuff (but not an infinite amount of table space—most of the main hall will be taken up with the modular layouts and the module building clinics).

Potomac Division territory is the place to be seeing good, big model railroad activities in the next few years, beginning with this year's minicon, next year's MER Fall Regional Convention (we hope—we need to find an affordable facility for it, and that isn't easy in this town), and a major NTRAK convention in 2004.

Models for the Miniconvention — *Bill Roman, AP co-coordinator*

Although time is getting short, I hope many of you have been spending these last few months busy building models for the March miniconvention contest. The turnout of models was very low last time, and it would be to get the number back up to what we've had at some past meetings. While there will be the usual popular vote aspect of the contest, I urge you to complete the required paperwork for formal Achievement Program judging. With the caliber of model building we've seen historically here in the Potomac Division, completion of the forms describing what you've done and how you did it shouldn't be a major hang-up. They really don't have to be excruciatingly detailed, lengthy, nor literary masterpieces—they just need to clearly describe materials and techniques which you used in constructing the model. Although they can even be completed at the time of contest entry, you probably short-change yourself in a last minute scramble to complete them. Please, take some time to prepare them neatly and clearly (typed or hand written) in advance so that you don't omit pertinent information.

Also, for those who have received AP certificates in categories such as scenery and model building and who are interested in serving as a judge, please contact Ed Price, Clint Hyde, or me before the miniconvention. We've got several folks within the Division with such capabilities, and would like to have a corps of judges available for our events and program. Even with two dozen or more models, the actual judging shouldn't take a lengthy period of time out of your other convention activities.

Are you a scratch-builder? Interested in participating in a group purchase of some materials—scale sizes of stripwood? We are contemplating making a bulk purchase of wood from Kappler USA (<http://www.kapplerusa.com/k-p-dlr.htm>), a dealer pak of KP090N (\$117) or KP090HO (\$150), or KP090O (\$175). If we do this, we need a list of who's interested and how much they want to figure the per-person cost, whether that's acceptable to those interested, and then have money up front (the Division does not have the money to pay for it). These are dealer packs, with a fair amount of stuff in them, at a 40% discount. The material is all basswood. Let Clint Hyde know, at either 703-803-3068, or chyde@bbn.com

Only three members have responded on this so far...I know there are more scratch-builders out there. **We'll be going ahead soon.**

The Search for Pliobond

by Nick Kalis

Another in series of articles appearing in the Potomac Flyer and detailing local sources for modelers

I decided that I did not want to nail the Micro Engineering turnouts I purchased to install on my Montauk Branch layout. Rather I would somehow glue the HO scale turnouts I plan to install on my basement layout depicting the Long Island Railroad as it appeared in 1963. The package containing Micro Engineering turnouts contains an instruction sheet. This sheet reads as follows: "The turnout ties...are made of an acetal plastic and require a rubber based cement such as Pliobond (#49-101 or #49-102) or a cyanoacrylate (CA) cement." After searching around unsuccessfully at many local merchants, I checked with McLean Hardware on Old Dominion Drive, McLean, Virginia. There I found several 3 ounce bottles each with a handy brush top applicator. These glass bottles are shrink wrapped on a red, white, and blue card and retail for \$4.99/each. If you have trouble finding this item, you can always check with McLean Hardware at 703 356-5496. If they run out, they are happy to order an item for you.

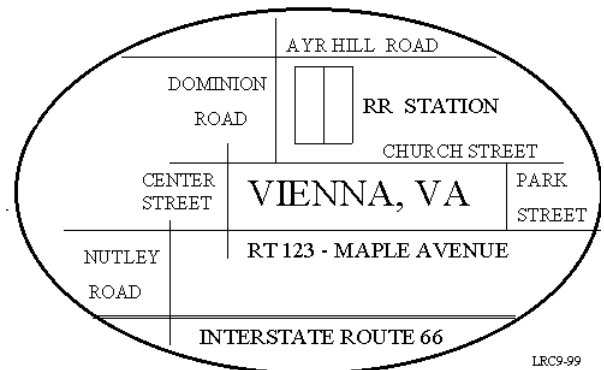
Reading the bottle, always a good, if neglected step, I learned that this item is an industrial contact cement. The warning label cautions that it is flammable and harmful if inhaled or swallowed. In addition, "This product contains a chemical(s) known to the state of California to cause cancer."

Northern Virginia Model Railroaders, Open House

Northern Virginia Model Railroaders, Inc.
Open House dates: January 13, February 17, March 17—1-5PM; April 21, June 16, May 27 —12-4 PM
Washington & Old Dominion RR Station,
231 Dominion Road (at Ayr Hill Road),
Vienna, Virginia 22180

for more info, 703-938-5157

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/6120>



Getting Started on Your Benchwork

by Nick Kalis

The third in an occasional series of articles providing obscure yet vital resources for modelers in the Potomac Division. Previous articles detailed inexpensive sources for styrene and ballast.

Recently, I needed to purchase some additional legs for my layout's sectional benchwork. Surveying existing benchwork for my under-construction Long Island Railroad, I realized how dissatisfied I was with the warping that had affected my benchwork legs. Acting on this dissatisfaction, I vowed never to buy any more lumber from the usual suspects—the chain's name will go unmentioned here for the sake of caution. Instead, I visited Jiri Otmar's shop in Springfield, Virginia. There, while I waited, Jiri's staff cut my wood to the correct length and size for me. Colonial's staff even sanded my benchwork legs for a nice finish.

Jiri runs Colonial Hardwoods, Inc. On-site, at Cameron Brown Court, the employees will cut for you legs of poplar, or other species, that are nearly knot-free, sanded smooth, and just a joy to behold and work with. Run, don't walk to this shop before embarking on your next benchwork project. Sure, their wood is more expensive than the junk stuff. But think of how little waste you will have and of how much faster your work will go. You will enjoy this wood for years. If you are building a sectional layout, the wood should last even into future layouts.

Colonial also carries the clamps, glues, tools, and more you will require to put together your benchwork. Colonial Hardwoods, Inc., founded in 1974, is at 7953 Cameron Brown Court, Springfield, Virginia, 703 451-9217. There is ample free parking. Colonial even has Saturday hours. Colonial take major credit cards. Jiri's staff will be glad to give you directions to their shop just outside the Beltway.

Additional AP note:

We have been unable to locate all of Ken Berthoud's information about the Potomac Division AP program participants. If you had been participating in this in any way, please contact either Bill Roman or Ed Price and tell them what you had done—we don't want to lose anything in this transition.

POTOMAC DIVISION

Division 2, Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND INTEREST SURVEY

The **Potomac Division** provides various activities for all interested model railroaders, such as home layout tours, prototype tours, and a Mini-Convention every March. We publish a quarterly newsletter, the Potomac Flyer, detailing Division activities. We proudly boast one of the greatest concentrations of model railroading talent in the country with over 10 NMRAMaster Model Railroaders in our area, as well as hundreds of other outstanding modelers.

The **Potomac Division** encompasses the District of Columbia; Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, and Rappahannock Counties in Virginia, as well as all area independent cities. Local residence and MER or NMR membership are not required for Division membership. Anyone interested in learning more about model railroading, improving their modeling skills, and enjoying the company of fellow model railroaders is invited to join the **Potomac Division**.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name

Street Address or PO Box

Additional Address

City

State

ZIP + 4

email

Home phone

Work phone

NMRA #

Exp. date

MER #

Birthdate

Would you be interested in receiving the newsletter via email?

INTEREST SURVEY

Primary Scale

Secondary Scale

Do you have

A layout or module?

Narrow Gauge interest?

Module interest?

Traction interest?

Would you be willing to host a Home Layout Tour of your Layout?

Favorite Railroad(s) & Prototype(s) modeled:

Please list the NMRA Special Interest Group(s), model railroad clubs, and railroad historical societies to which you belong:

New and renewing members: please include a short paragraph or two describing yourself and your railroading interests for possible inclusion in upcoming Call Board columns.

DUES CALCULATION

Please fill out this section completely, including whether you are new or renewing. Renewing NMRA and MER members, please supply your birthdate, membership numbers, and expiration dates in the Personal Information section above. *Incomplete information may delay your renewal.*

Potomac Division: Membership is **\$4 per year**. Members receive the quarterly *Potomac Flyer*.

New Renewal

Mid-Eastern Region: Membership is **\$8 per year**. Members receive the bimonthly *MER Local*. You may also write MER directly at: The Mid-Eastern Region * Office Manager * 9 Roosevelt Ave. * Wilmington, DE 19804-3044. **NOTE: You must be a member of the NMRA to be a member of the MER.**

National Model Railroad Association: Membership is **\$34 per year for full membership**, or **\$16 per year for an Associate Membership**. Members receive the monthly *NMRA Bulletin*. You may also write the NMRA directly at: National Model Railroad Association, Inc. * Headquarters Office * 4121 Cromwell Rd. * Chattanooga, TN 37421. **NOTE: Associate members DONOT receive the NMRA Bulletin.**

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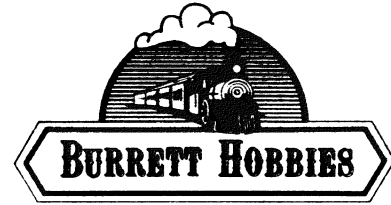
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I Built it Myself—Nick Kalis

These six words, "I built it all by myself" may be the greatest roadblock ever set up to defeat a modeler whose goal is a reasonably attractive and functioning layout. If your goal is a layout, and that may not be for everyone, then you must be ready to ask for and accept help. Building a layout requires a diverse set of skills that are hard to find in any one individual. Some individuals are talented enough to build a layout on their own. I am not one of them. If you are like me, you probably will need some help to bring to fruition your dream of an operating layout. Don't be ashamed -- lots, if not most, of the fine layouts we see in *Model Railroader* were to some extent or another the product of a team effort.

No reasonable person, and certainly no seasoned modeler, will think less of you because you received assistance in getting your layout built. In fact mutual assistance is a bedrock principle underlying the entire concept of the National Model Railroad Association. Even the Master Model Railroader (MMR) program has as a goal the recognition of a body of modelers whose expertise qualifies them to assist others in the hobby.

While the satisfaction of going it alone has its joys, knowing that you could assemble a team of friends to help you along is also very satisfying. I take great joy in showing visitors models that were built for me by others. The contributors are also justly proud of their modeling efforts. Not everyone will build a layout for themselves, helping you with yours could be very satisfying for these folks. Ordering a pizza or showing your gratitude in some other way doesn't hurt either.

Stop putting off building that model railroad you have always dreamed of. Be nice, be generous, be sincere -- ask for the help you need. If someone does help you, try to find ways to repay their generosity. You won't regret it.

Potomac Division Calendar

Mark events now which you don't want to miss.

February

17 Northern Virginia Model Railroader's Club
Open House. see page 7.

25 Layout Tour. Bill Pauling's "P" Company

March

10 POTOMAC DIVISION MINICON !

17 Northern Virginia Model Railroader's Club
Open House. see page 7.

April

7 Great Scale Model Train Show, Timonium,
MD. <http://www.gsmts.com/>

22 Layout Tour, Lance Mindheim. See page 8.

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