



The Potomac Flyer



October 2005 - January 2006 The Quarterly Newsletter of Division 2 ("Potomac"), Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, Inc. Winter Quarter

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Does the Clerk have your e-mail address? If you are not receiving reminders then probably not. Send it to poto-mac_nmra@comcast.net

NMRA National Convention Cincinnati By Noll Horan

The first week of July this year was the NMRA National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. Mark and Zack Andersen, John Griffith, Bob Minnis, Ed Price and myself ventured out that way in Mark's Dodge Caravan. Somehow, I volunteered to do a write-up for "the Flyer". And Editor, John Griffith, remembered! So the following is my brief recap of the "**Cincinnati Limited 2005**".

"Greetings from Ohio. Wish you were here."

Seriously folks, the National Convention is very similar to our Mid-Eastern Region Conventions, only on a larger scale. Plus, there is the National Train Show at the end of the week. The convention opened up Sunday for registration. Monday thru Thursday there were plenty of clinics and layout tours. The clinics I attended were informative and well presented. Most clinics/seminars were scheduled more than once during the week.

Layout tour scheduling was very much thought out. Just about all of the many open houses were available at least two, usually three times during the convention. And at different times. This allowed you the flexibility of when and which layout you wanted to see. This scheduling really helps when planning your weekly activities of clinics and tours.

The Contest Room had some good modeling on display. But the quantity seemed somewhat sparse to me. (There seems to be more entries at a MER Convention than I saw in Cincinnati.) The Potomac Division fared pretty well in the judging. John Griffith won First Place-Off Line Structures for his Steam Powered Saw Mill in HO scale. Doug Kirkpatrick received a Merit Award for his O Scale Gas Station. (And, yours truly picked up a couple of plaques too.) Contest winning entries can be seen on the NMRA website.

The National Train Show was held Friday thru Sunday, with a 'sneak preview' for conventioners only on Thursday. This is a huge affair with most of the "Who's Who" in the model railroading industry displaying their wares and what new stuff is on the way.

In summary, I enjoyed myself. This was my first National Convention. Though a tad more pricey than our Regional ones, I look forward to others. Next year the National is in Philadelphia and Detroit will be the host in 2007. I am making plans now for being there. If you get the chance, I strongly recommend attending at least one NMRA National Convention. It's a memorable experience. My time is up. I thank you for yours.



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.

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The Potomac Flyer

Potomac Division's quarterly newsletter © 2000

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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 complete USPO COA form to: Clerk, Potomac Division PO Box 1653, Annandale, VA 22003-1653	

For more local information, see the Potomac Division web site at:
http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac_NMRA/

From the Business Car

by John Drye
Division Superintendent
jdrye52@aol.com

Now that summer is over and the days are getting short, we often find ourselves with time to revisit some of the model railroading projects that have lain dormant since spring. Personally, I'm looking at organizing the boxes of stuff scattered around my basement. If they are out of the way, it might be easier to make progress on my layout. Good luck with your own fall projects.

The Division Board of Directors has been working on a few projects of our own. First is the Spring Mini-Convention, to be held on March 11 2006. Since our last several mini-cons have been held in Virginia, the board spent some time looking for a site on the Maryland side of the Potomac. We found a church in Laurel, MD, about the same size as the one in Annandale, for the same cost. We'll move all the events from our previous minis: clinics, contests and AP judging, modular layouts, our annual business meeting, and lunch, all to Laurel. If there are members in the Laurel area who would like to help, especially with a clinic, please contact any member of the board. Also, if you would like to nominate a candidate for the Board of Directors elections to be held at the meeting, please contact a member of the board.

The board also reviewed our layout tour program. Nick Kalis continues to put together a terrific slate of layouts. These are a great way to meet other members of the division, share modeling ideas and enjoy our area's layouts. We've noticed that the vast majority of attendees show up right at the outset, so in order to make life easier on the hosts and helpers, beginning with the November tour, hours will be from 1-4 pm.

Finally, rising costs have caught up with our newsletter. Paper, postage and printing now cost more than we charge to mail it out. Cost for a subscription is now \$5. Current subscriptions will be honored at the old rate of \$4 and the new cost applied to renewals. Electronic copies are still free.

Enjoy the fall modeling season.

Achievement News

By Bill Roman

As noted elsewhere in this edition of the Potomac Flyer, our mini-convention will be held on March 11, 2006. As usual, we will have a contest area for models to be judged for AP awards, as well as the Popular Vote contest. Since winter is probably the most active time for model railroading, you have nearly six months to build, rebuild, modify, finish, etc. projects for entry at the mini. Ed Price and I will have contest entry forms available the morning of the mini, but if you would like to get anything in advance, just let us know. The AP forms are also available either from us or from the NMRA website. These certainly should be completed prior to arriving at the church, since a good, concise, well-written forms package is difficult to do on the spur of the moment.

Anyone who would like to serve as a judge for the contest should contact one of us prior to the mini so that we can discuss the judging methodology.

Thanks for your continued support for the contests and the AP process – we look forward to the usual high quality of models that always are entered at these Potomac Division events.

Correction:

Last month we reported that Robert Thomas' 2 Dome Tank car won 3rd place AP Freight Cars and 1st place popular vote in the Minicon Model Contest. This was in error the car was built by Doug Kirkpatrick. Sorry for the confusion.



Doug's 2 Dome Tank Car

Bus Trip? Yes another one is in the works!

By Mark Andersen

If you were part of our Altoona trip, you know what to expect. We're planning another Potomac Division bus trip in the fall of 2006, we're going to Strasburg, Pennsylvania. When you're instructed that no region conventions may occur during the year when your region sponsors a national NMRA event, Philly '06, well as John Belushi in Animal House said, "Road Trip!!"

What can we see? Well there's the Strasburg railroad www.strasburgrailroad.com with a behind the scenes shop tour and steam ride too? While there, how about lunch aboard the Dining Car <http://www.thediningcar.net>? Then, maybe the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania www.rrmuseumpa.org across the street. Drool over those engines both inside and out. How about the TCA? The Toy Train Collector's Association has its museum www.traincollectors.org/toytrain.html nearby, only a short drive down the road. Shopping?? The Choo Choo Barn www.choochoobarn.com is just down the road too! Plenty of shopping can be had at the various museums as well.

So when the information comes out respond quickly. Our last attempt for a trip, to East Broad Top, ended as a "No Go" because of interest shown too late. Remember, our organization does not pay for our trip, we do. So when the forms, prices, dates and ancillary information present themselves, respond promptly. Hope to see you there?

Board of Directors Nominations

The Potomac Division Board of Directors will have at least one opening next year. The election will be held at the 2006 Minicon, on 11 March 2006. The nominating committee is accepting names from those willing to serve. If you are interested or know someone who might be please contact Marc Sisk, (703) 280-5290 (NPMRFAN@aol.com)

Northern Virginia NTRAK News

By Marc Sisk

At a recent *Potomac Division* Board of Directors meeting, we discussed these regular articles and came to the conclusion that we really are primarily reporting on past events. We decided that you need to know not only what are respective groups have done, but also what major events lie ahead. So with that, I want to let you know that NVNTRAK will be participating in the *World's Greatest Hobby Show* next February at the *Chantilly Expo Center*. There will be layouts in all scales along with vendors. We have been offered 10,000 square feet for an NTRAK layout. We will be inviting our NTRAK friends from other clubs to join us for a weekend of running trains. We will also have NVNTRAK's *Nn3* and *T-TRAK* Divisions setup and running. So, mark your calendars for February 11th and 12th, come out and visit, run some trains and spend some money on those items that you can't live without.

Our two new trailers have been busy logging miles to and from layouts this summer. One such occasion was to participate in the *2005 Railfest* at Martinsburg, West Virginia on July 16th. According to Cotton Bowen, "the layout was setup in the old **B&O** Roundhouse in the former Martinsburg Rail Yard. The roundhouse is one of two surviving **B&O** structures of this type. A magnificent structure that is well on the way to total renovation. The work that has been done was impressive. Even the turntable works. The problem, though, was the heat and lack of lighting! Brutal heat and dim lighting were the operative terms." Sounds like our folks experienced the true flavor of workin' on the railroad there! The next day, we did our monthly setup at the **Fairfax Station Railroad Museum**. We also took this opportunity to christen one of the new trailers with a very expensive (\$4.99) bottle of Champaign. My wife Carol, did the honors. We rounded out the month of July with a small layout for a special cause. **Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children** sponsored *Movies Under the Moon* at **George Mason University** campus during the week of 17 July. We provided a layout under a tent on the 22nd and 23rd.

Those of you who have been reading this column for some time now recall that NVNTRAK hosted last year's N Scale convention, the *Capitol Limited*.

We decided to have a one-year anniversary party to celebrate the success and good times, so we planned and conducted a BBQ in conjunction with our August monthly setup at Fairfax Station. However, instead of our normal Sunday afternoon foray, we made it a weekend starting with layout setup Saturday morning, the BBQ Saturday evening and train running all night through to 4pm on Sunday. Many of our members participated in the BBQ and some hearty souls camped out in the museum to run trains through the night. The public, who came through during the regular Sunday afternoon hours, were treated to a larger and different shaped layout than they usually see, an added bonus!

The month of September provided the opportunity for no less than five NVNTRAK setups. We started the month off running the caboose layout at Fairfax Station's *Model Train Show* over the Labor Day weekend. This is one of three special train weekends that the station hosts each year. September 10th and 11th had a small contingent of the club up at Bedford, Pennsylvania to participate in the *N Scale Weekend*. This event had many clubs participating in several layouts along with N Scale vendors. September 17th found the club at the **Arlington Fire Station** for the *Annual Burn Camp* setup. This is an excellent opportunity for kids recovering from burns to get away from the medical grind and recover with the help of a throttle and some fast moving trains. Prototypical speeds and operations are not the norm for this bunch. Our monthly setup at Fairfax Station is scheduled for September 18th and followed by a two-day show at the *Altoona Railfest*. This event will be located in the **Altoona Station Mall** on September 24th and 25th.

That closes out another quarter's worth of N Scale action. I hope that these columns are interesting and informing. I also hope that if you are inclined to join us, that you do so. You can check us out on the web at www.nvntrak.org. The site has been recently revised and is better suited to provide you with information about the club, what we do, and most importantly, give you contact information and places where we will be set up in the future. Our upcoming events are also located on the last page of this *Flyer* for your convenience. Model railroading as a hobby is what you make of it. Do what makes you happy and enjoy it. Till next time, be safe and run some trains.

Clinics Needed

Clinicians are needed for Minicon 2006, 11 March 2006. If you have a clinic contact Marshall Abrams, (301) 588-1005 (potomac_nmra@comcast.net)

Hint for Painting Cast Detail Parts

by Martin Brechbiel Photo by author

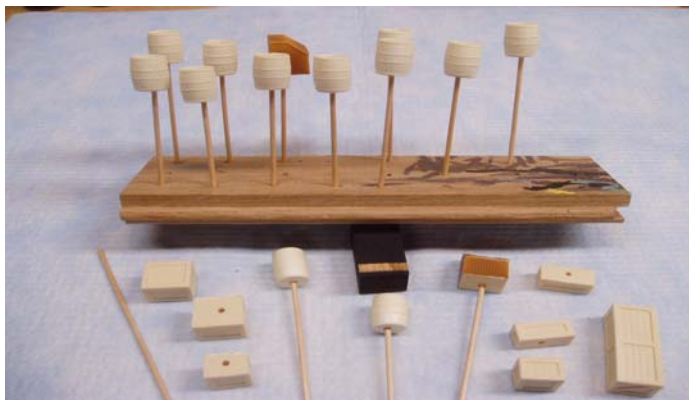
I recently had a need to paint a large number of cast detail parts; mainly barrels for a pickle plant, but a number of other items. Now, painting and finishing cast detail parts can get very tedious very quickly and barrels were no exception. The other aspect that contributes to the tedium is that the need to handle the part while painting gets in the way of your completing the process. After going through that stage with a dozen or so barrels with the associated hand cramps, I wondered why I was holding these parts at all and whether a better method could speed this process and end the awkwardness of handling the barrels.

I hit upon an obvious solution, at least to me. The bottom of the part will not be seen so attaching a spruce there would give me a handle permitting me to paint the entire barrel. I had a bundle of small wood dowels (~1/16"), applicator sticks from scientific suppliers. I just flipped all of the barrels over, resin cast and the wooden turned ones as well, and every other resin casting that was going into my pickle plant, drilled a hole in each, and then Goo'd a length of dowel into the hole. I had some scrap white oak flooring handy and drill a 20-30 holes in an 8" length, and "planted" my castings on their dowels. After the Goo had set, I could paint the entire barrels, inside and out, add weathering and stains, and replace it to its respective hole in the oak board. This worked just super for every casting and turning that I needed painted in record time.

One other very tedious finishing portion of barrel painting is trying to get the barrel bands painted without ruining the rest of your paint job. I found a simple solution to this challenge to unsteady hands – transfer painting. I was using a mixture of Polly s Oily Black and Steam Power Black and put a coat of these on another scrap of oak flooring. I found that by carefully rolling the barrel while on the dowel

across the wet painted surface I could cleanly transfer the paint onto the raised barrel bands on the castings or turning. By this method I was able to turn out 20-30 finished barrels in a single session.

Finally, despite being Goo'd, most of the dowels pulled out with minimal persuasion. Those dowels that resisted were just nipped off, cut flush with the casting base with a scalpel, and were then ready to glue down.



Getting Started With Your Backdrop

By Nick Kalis

If you are dead set against paying someone to paint a backdrop for your model railroad, read no further. If you possess the skills to do it yourself, have at it. There are stencils and videos and countless articles written about painting backdrops yourself. Problem is few of the articles written cover painting urban backdrops such as I required. However, if you are like me and possess no painting skills whatsoever and no spouse with those skills read on. I rationalize paying an artist to produce my backdrop as follow: many of the layouts featured in *Model Railroader* have been expertly done by the spouses or best friends of each layout owner. As I have a great wife and great friends who do not possess this skill, I face a choice: divorce, either my wife and/or friends in search of a wife or friend possessing these skills or simply bite the bullet and hire a pro to get the work done.

Continued on page 10

Around the Division

Glenn Paulson's Conrail—Allegheny Division by John Griffith Photo by author

On 24 July the Potomac Division was invited to Waldorf, Maryland for a layout tour hosted by Glen Paulsen and his family. It was a great day and approximately 30 members participated. Glen has been working on the layout for the past three years. In that time he has accomplished much. The bench work is finished, the double track main is laid, the Digitrax DCC wiring is complete, and scenery and backdrops are in the making.

The trains ran without a hitch, much to Glenn's and the gathered admirer's pleasure. He had been out of town till the night before the layout tour. A testament to how well the layout was built. The diesels moved the long freights around the layout smoothly. Each is equipped with sound that really sets the atmosphere. The track work attests to Glenn's attention to detail. His structures and scenery are great and provide a wonderful stage for the running of trains. While there, Bill Roman was able to determine that all requirements for a Golden Spike had been met. Now Glen will be working on Achievement Program awards.

After enjoying the layout, members discussed various topics and were treated to refreshments. All in all it was an enjoyable afternoon. This will be the only time we get to see this version of the layout. Glen and his family are moving to their new home approximately 5 miles down the road. The layout will move as well and expansion planning is already in high gear. He said come back in another three years.



Nickel City Lines, a layout tour

by Mark Andersen Photo by author

Courtesy of the Nickel City Line railroad president, Bob Rodriguez, the Nickel City Line Railroad held an open house on Sunday, August 21, 2005. Although there was a good turnout for Bob's Allegheny Valley railroad, his efforts were well developed creating this railroad historical story.

As a member of the Prince William County Railway Club (<http://www.pwmrc.org>), Bob has used his railroad creating experience in designing and building a multilevel railroad. Relying on the camaraderie of friends, Nickel City was born. This empire occupies a finished basement room approximately 12 by 22 feet allowing for the broad expanse of the scenery covered Allegheny Valley in central Pennsylvania. Interchanging with several other rail lines, these include the PRR, Chessie (B&O), Conrail, and Amtrak.

Extending from southern Shippensburg in the south, the Nickel City winds its way through other towns and cities including Harrisburg and ultimately ending in north central Ridgway. Using the large rear area of the room, but on a lower level are serious yard and engine servicing facilities. This is the only area that is in the processes of finishing. Including the large roundhouse and 135' turntable to the diesel servicing tracks and assorted related buildings and passenger station buildings, Nickel City is alive and prosperous. Sitting in slide in racks, two of Bob's traveling club modules live their respective lives.

If a functioning railway weren't enough, computer control is in the offing as well as operating sessions using Shipit. Members of his operating group also receive certificates of credit relating to time served in various capacities. Bob's efforts ultimately lead to that member earning their Dispatcher certificate. And finally what could be better said, that Digitrax makes operations run smoothly.

An ever evolving rail line, The Nickel City Line demonstrates what an idea, great determination, planning, hard work and sincere effort creates when his trains run....Thank you Bob!!!



The Potomac Module Crew

by Mark Andersen

The sounds of the beach have disappeared, those suitcases are put away, most children are back in school and college, as we progress from summer to fall and into winter. There's talk of the upcoming holiday season as well, but there's always talk about trains!

August 20 and 21, brought us to Olde Town Alexandria and our biannual Lyceum show. The Olde Town Alexandria Museum benefits greatly from the increased foot traffic entering their historical building. Also assisting in their efforts are the spots on 1500WTOP, articles with photography covered in the Alexandria Gazette and the Washington Post Weekend section. Layouts of the past have included the simple four corners and 20 straights to the benign double wye modules of Bill Brandon and circuitous track plan. We kept it simple, but oh does the operating get lively!

Our other scheduled time is mid February. We also have an upcoming "layout tour" while we are set up at the Lyceum. Come on down, include your wife, family or friends. See a great historical interpretation of facts about Alexandria, see the running of the trains, and enjoy the dining present in a three block radius from the museum. You won't be sorry!

Labor Day weekend, September 4 and 5, the Friends of Fairfax Station provided the venue, NVN-Trak located in the newly professionally painted caboose, Monty with his Lego Train Empire and the module crew sharing the freight room. Funds are raised by the museum through door receipts and gift shop sales for maintaining the structure and railroad interpretation to the community at large. This weekend, Sunday and Monday provided almost a \$1000 in raised funds. As always, we're glad to help promoting organizations and their respective causes.

Our efforts continue raising the hopes of attracting new members, spreading the word

about model railroading, and helping organizations raise funds. We're a great group of people both young and old. October 1 and 2, we will join the Piedmont Model Railroaders in the Culpepper railroad station for Culpepper Celebration days. November 12 and 13, The Rockville Lions club invites all the scales to the Rockville Senior center for the Lions Club annual holiday weekend show. The following weekend before Thanksgiving, we'll setup in the lobby of the Dulles Expo Center's fall Greenburg show. Then our last show of 2005 is the Fairfax Station Holiday show the first weekend of December. So bring the kids, grandkids, those nieces and nephews, friends and promote our hobby! If you're reading this, your interest is here, come and support your interest no matter what scale you model.

As always, our group is looking for a few good members. We charge no dues, but encourage you to join the MER and NMRA. Come and join in the fun of modular railroading. You may visit us through our website, <http://homepage.mac.com/cjweiner/pmchorr01/Default.html>, thanks to Colin Weiner Please feel free to visit us at our public shows, contact me at (703) 425-8997 or email mvandersen@cox.net Remember, WE can only grow, if WE bring someone NEW into OUR hobby. Thanks for listening, until next time.

Sweeperman By Phil Irwin

Clay

Among the many plasters, polymers, caulks, mache's, fillers and such available today, I have discovered one of my early playthings .. old-time clay. It sticks but is not sticky, reusable, never hardens and TSG sells it like butter in ¼ pound sticks. Let's list some of its uses:

- Extra on-board weight in dead spaces
- A neat filler or additive for terrain irregularities
- An insulator for electrical separation
- A temporary holder for small parts
- A weight or support for soldering or gluing
- A barrier to light
- A dump truck load
- Tree planting medium

No workbench should be without a pound of clay.

Around the Division

The PennSouthern Railroad-PSRR

by Mark Andersen Photo by author

Ralph Douglas has designed, built and created a beautiful basement layout. Remarkably cool, thanks to a dry basement, our tour guide designed a 12' by 29' layout interchanging with the PRR, Nickel Plate, New York Central and the Bessemer and Southern. Ralph generates this interest from the many organizations in which he actively participates. These include the Norfolk Southern Caboose preservation in Warrenton, the Piedmont Model Railroaders and the Walkersville Southern Tourist railroad. Ralph has volunteered here for years and is now an "engineer."

The PennSouthern is a multilevel layout including three separate mainlines each in the almost two scale HO miles. The hi-line starts and finishes at the Cleveland Engine terminal looping through tunnels and over bridges, quite a few I might add, only to curve around through Cave-town, the Portage and Allegheny tunnels to travel back towards the terminal.

The lower lines start in Potomac yard, passing through numerous industries and towns providing for a serious opportunity for operating session. Something Ralph has a desire to start. The layout scenery is almost 100% complete, the backdrops and ascending mountains are beautifully done as is the entire layout.

Electronics, including Digitrax DCC, are beautifully cabled in, but what a wiring wizard is our host. Buried neatly in mountain which divides one view of the PSRR, are the electronics for numerous blocks, yards and loconet cabling. Included in his network is wiring for a signaling system. Sure would like to come back and see this in operation.

Why not step up to the plate and become a host? Nick Kalis, our layout coordinator would love to discuss your options. You may find his contact information on page two. Layouts small

and large can be enjoyed by all, so volunteer to host or visit a layout tour site. Bring your wife as well, we always see Mary and Tim Barr visiting on a Sunday afternoon.

Our Potomac Division would like thank the Douglas family for opening their home. We are blessed with many giving layout tour hosts that provide us the opportunity to see model railroading in action. Why not step up to the plate and become a host?? A visitor??? Hope to see you next time????



Ralph and the PSRR

Smithsonian educational programs coordinator Sara E. Ohlidal announces Dining by Rail: A Soot-to-Souffle Journey
Wed., Nov. 2, 6:30 p.m.
Atrium Cafe, National Museum of Natural History

Evoking images of luxury, fine dining, and romantic destinations, train travel has a mystique all its own. But the tradition didn't begin so elegantly! Travel the rails with James D. Porterfield, popular author and railroad historian, as he gives a lively presentation on America's rail-cuisine evolution, from its rustic beginnings in the 1830s to today. Afterwards, dine upon authentic rail fare prepared by special guest chef Warren C. McLeod, who re-creates recipes featured in Porterfield's books, *Dining by Rail* and *From the Dining Car*. McLeod is an award-winning chef recognized for his work in New York with world-renowned chefs Alain Ducasse and Mario Batali, in Italy at Locanda Solarola, and as former executive chef aboard the luxurious private American Orient Express. Coordinator Sara E. Ohlidal arranges Smithsonian educational programs throughout the country. The evening ends with a book signing. Admission \$95pp. For tickets and information call 202.357.3030 or visit www.residentassociates.org.

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 PO Box 1653, Annandale, VA 22003-1653



Web page:
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The Potomac Division provides various activities for all interested model railroaders, such as home layout tours, prototype tours, and Mini-Conventions. 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 more than 10 NMRA Master Model Railroaders in our area, as well as hundreds of other outstanding modelers.

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. All members of the NMRA who reside in one of these areas are automatically members of the Potomac Division. Guests are always welcome at Division events.

Personal Information

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Email		

Interest Survey

Primary Scale	Secondary Scale	Favorite Railroad(s) & Prototype(s) Modeled:	
Do you have in primary or secondary scale		Please list the NMRA Special Interest Group(s), model railroad clubs, and railroad historical societies to which you belong:	
<input type="radio"/>	A layout		<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	Narrow Gauge interest?		<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	Module interest		<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	Traction interest?		<input type="radio"/>
Would you be willing to host a Home Layout Tour of your Layout? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No			

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To receive the *Flyer* in hard copy delivered via the Postal Service at the above address, please check here and enclosed \$5.00 for a one year subscription. Please make your check payable to Potomac Division and mail with this form to the address at the top of the page.

National Model Railroad Association membership is \$45 per year for full membership, or \$23 per year for an associate membership. Full Members receive the monthly *Scale Rails*, associate members do not. You may send your dues directly to the National Model Railroad Association, Inc., Headquarters Office, 4121 Cromwell Rd., Chattanooga, TN 37421.

<http://www.rhistorical.com/NMRA/>

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Getting Started With Your Backdrop

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What made professional help even more imperative in my case is that my modeling is done in an urban setting. Painting skylines and urban scenes is much tougher than mountain scenery. Adding perspective to painted urban building is even more of a challenge ~ one that I don't wish to tackle. I got into this hobby for relaxation — not to kick my cat and spew out cuss words when the backdrop comes out wrong. The challenges of bench work, wiring, painting the layout room, and collecting data for my modeling are enough for me.

Recently, I had the pleasure of having a backdrop painted for my HO scale layout. For this I must thank Arlington's Sarah Poly and her able assistant Carol Hopper. The cost should be no more than the cost of a few brass locomotives. Sarah asks a great many questions, and more importantly, listens to what you have in mind for your layout. Sarah will even make suggestions for improvements that you did not even consider. Of course, you are free to veto her suggestions ~ but I would caution you that disregarding her suggestions would be at your backdrop's peril. What may be more important, she has done it before ~ both as a landscape artist and as the artist behind my backdrop.

If the idea of a painted backdrop sounds tempting, but

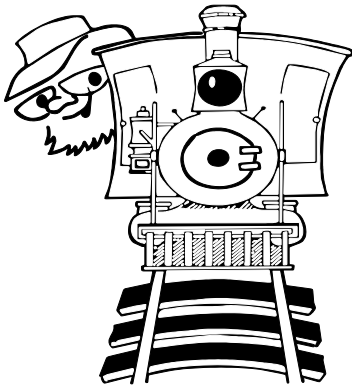
you hesitate because your layout is still far from finished, hesitate no longer. It is at exactly at this early stage that your backdrop should go in. It is a basic rule of model railroading, that your backdrop should go in early. If you wait too long, your artist, be it yourself or a pro, will be unable to get to your backdrop because of delicate scenery being in place. Get that backdrop in now!

Though Sarah Poly is an accomplished landscape artist, she cannot accomplish miracles. Your bench work should be in and your walls should be dry walled and primed. There should be plenty of light in the layout room. You should also give a great deal of thought to what you want in a backdrop. Peruse back issues of *Model Railroader* if you are in need of ideas. You should also have photographs of the area you are modeling to guide Sarah along.

If you lack such photos get moving on collecting them. You could save some money if you have painted the walls a light blue. This will save Sarah some work and time.

I cannot thank Sarah and Carol enough for their patience and skills in seeing my dreams for a backdrop through to fruition. Give them a call ~ you will not regret it. Once the backdrop is in place, you might just experience a rush of energy that gets you back in the layout room preparing for an open house.

Artist Sarah Linda Poly can be contacted at 5260 North 25th Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207 703 532-6502. She exhibits her non-railroad work at the Art League at Alexandria's Torpedo Factory.



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Bulletin Board

Have information of general interest? Send it in we will post it here.

New Potomac Division Web Site

Check out the "New" web site more info, more fun even some how to: http://home.comcast.net/~Potomac_NMRA/

Layout needs a Home

After 60 years in the hobby (the last ten inactive) I'm afraid that I must, by some means, dispose of The Old Southport Terminal Railroad, a 13 by 17 ft HO layout. In 1982 I had ten busloads (about 400 fans) come to see it from the D.C. NMRA convention. The whole thing unbolts easily into 2 foot wide sections. It has over 40 turnouts, about 40 structures and 18 bridges including a 7 foot long 3 track cantilever. No rolling stock is left. It's various pieces traveled all over the country with me as I was transferred from hither to yon and had it under construction for 15 years before the last piece was put in place and the first train ran. I can be contacted at 301-292-3741 or kgwiman@erols.com. Ken Wiman, Fort Washington, MD

Help Wanted

I am looking for help in starting my signaling system on my ho layout and really need some expertise in the field as I have no clue as to where to start, hands on would work better for me I live in the Waldorf, Maryland area, hope you can help me out thanks Paul. Contact Paul at ff3hutch@aol.com.

Round Robin Group Forming

Paul Hutchins is interested in starting a model railroad club in the Waldorf, Maryland surrounding area, if interested contact Paul at ff3hutch@aol.com. I would like to start out with a round robin group to work on and run members layouts.

Articles Needed

As you see we have a new format this quarter. The BOD approved moving the layout tour info to an insert. One of the reasons was that several articles submitted by members had to be forwarded to the "Local" because there was no room in the "Flyer." Now we got room so send in the articles.

Potomac Division Calendar

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

NOVEMBER

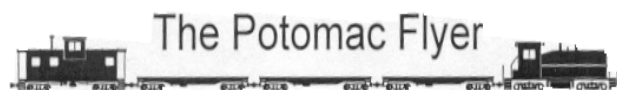
- 5 NVNTrak at Damascus Railroad Day, Damascus MD
 - 6 Layout tour at Nick Kalis', McLean, VA
 - 12-13 NVNTrak and PD Module Crew at Rockville Lion' Club Train Show, Rockville, MD
 - 19-20 NVNTrak and PD Module Crew at Greenberg Train Show Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA
 - 20 NVNTrak at Fairfax Station Museum, VA
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DECEMBER

- 3-4 NVNTrak and PD Module Crew at Fairfax Station Museum, VA
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JANUARY

- 15 Layout tour at Cliff Wolff, Woodbridge, VA



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