

Pre-Minicon Spring 2019

The

POTOMAC FLYER



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The Potomac Division, Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association 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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Potomac Flyer

Potomac Division's Quarterly Newsletter

Submission Deadlines

Winter Issue December 1
Summer Issue June 1

Spring Issue March 1
Fall Issue September 1

Cover photo: Al Pugliese's Pugsburg Rail Road by Marshall Abrams

Departing Board Members Farewell

This is the special pre-Minicon edition of the *Flyer*. Every year, two or three of the Board positions come up for election, and this year the three incumbents, Brian Sheron, Marshall Abrams, and Bob Sprague have decided not to run for re-election.

Both Brian and Marshall, who have served the Potomac Division for many years, have decided it was time to step down, take a break, and give others a chance to lead the Division. Bob has served one two-year term and needs to devote more time to family and his business.

Superintendent Brian W. Sheron, MMR



Brian Sheron

I actually started on the Board as a volunteer in 2008, some 11 years ago! Marshall Abrams was the Superintendent at that time and asked me if I would like to help out. He didn't waste any time, and soon I was both the Achievement Program (AP) Chair and the Layout Tour Chair. I usually tell people that my response to Marshall, after he asked me to become the Achievement Program Chair, was "Great. What's an Achievement Program?" I quickly did my research and read up on the NMRA's AP program. As I learned more about it, I decided the only real way to learn about it was to participate in it. So I embarked on getting my AP certificates, which culminated in being awarded MMR no. 469 three years later in 2011. In 2011, I was also elected to the Board of Directors, and took the job of Assistant Superintendent.

I had gotten involved with the Board early enough in 2008 that I was able to help out a bit at the 2008 MER convention that the Division sponsored that year and I was able to learn a little bit about convention planning. Then, in 2013, when the Division hosted the 2013 MER convention, I took on the task of setting up the layout tours for the convention, along with a bunch of other miscellaneous tasks.

Following the 2013 convention, Marshall indicated he needed a break from being Superintendent and asked if I would be interested. At that time, I had not given it much thought, but said I would be the Superintendent if the other Board members agreed. At the time I convinced myself that I only planned to be the superintendent for a year or so.

I had some ideas for the Division, and I started an operations initiative, which Bill Mosteller then took over and headed. We also scheduled some standalone clinics, called "White Flag Extras," which Bill Day headed up. Both of these started off being well attended, but interest waned within a year or so, and we ultimately ended them. Around 2014, the MER was looking for hosts for upcoming Regional conventions, and I suggested to the Board that we volunteer to host the 2018 convention. The Board agreed. However, this required a lot of early planning, and by 2016 we were already starting the preliminary planning. Finding a hotel that could accommodate a convention of this size and that was also affordable was the biggest issue.

At this point, I felt that I had to see the convention through to the end, and with the Board's agreement, I decided I would plan to stay on as Superintendent until the convention was over.

However, what I found was that once the 2018 MER convention was behind us, we immediately had to start planning for the Spring, 2019 Minicon. Although we asked in a *Flyer* announcement for volunteers to step up and be the Minicon Co-chair, there were no volunteers. Hence, I and Marshall took on the job as Minicon co-chairs, along with Dave Arday from the Chesapeake Division, and I have been busy with planning for this Minicon since late last year.

At this time, I feel I need to take break from the Board activities and let others, hopefully with enthusiasm and good ideas, pick up the ball and run with it. For those of you that have helped out and supported the Division during my tenure as Superintendent, I want to thank you.

I do not intend to fade into oblivion but plan to continue to contribute to the Division as appropriate.

Brian models the [Port Jefferson Branch of the Long Island Rail Road](#) in HO scale. He earned Master Model Railroader (MMR) certificate number 469 in 2011. He is a member of a weekly operating round-robin group, the Anachronistic Region. In his spare time, when not working on his trains, he enjoys playing bluegrass banjo and plays in a local band. Brian retired from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Senior Assistant Superintendent Marshall Abrams:



Marshall Abrams

I was appointed Computer Clerk to the Potomac Division about 2003, elected Assistant Superintendent in 2005, and elected Superintendent in 2008. I co-chaired the 2013 MER Convention with Kurt Thompson of the Chesapeake Division (now MER President). Co-sponsoring the convention was Potomac's support to the Chesapeake Division, which was recently chartered. 2013 was the largest NMRA Mid-Eastern Region (MER) convention in living memory—certainly in number of attendees (342 versus typically around 200), and probably in number of activities. It attracted people from 18 states and Canada.

MER 2013 had 48 home layouts to visit, 11 operations sessions spread over three days with 105 operating slots available, 38 "How-To" clinics, and operating modular layouts. There was a tour of the Baltimore Light Rail maintenance facility (try cleaning wheels their way!), a special model-railroader-led tour of the B&O Museum, a tour of a premier manufacturer (Custom Model Railroads) in Baltimore.

Planning got underway nearly two years before the convention, something I spurred on as convention co-chair. A major contribution to the large attendance was a publicity plan, creatively designed and let by Potomac Division's Bill Day, and begun a bit more than a year before the convention.

I initiated revisions to the PD Bylaws to authorize Board of Directors meetings by telephone conference call, email, and other electronic communications of the 21st century. The fundamental structure and provisions of the Bylaws were maintained unchanged for continuity.

In 2013 I became Senior Assistant Superintendent and Editor of the *Potomac Flyer*, which has continued to produce high-quality, varied, interesting and useful issues. I have presented clinics on backdrops, dwarf signals, signal and detection, switchlists, operations, and building a waterfall.

In January 2019, I stepped down as editor of the *Potomac Flyer* when Alex Belida accepted the position. Alex is a retired foreign correspondent and news executive who worked for the Voice of America. He brings professional journalism experience to the *Flyer*. I will continue working on the *Flyer* as Publisher. Note that email contributions and correspondence should be addressed to Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org.

Bill Mosteller, Lee Stoermer, and I are working on revitalizing the PD Web Site so that it can be viewed on small screens, such as smart phones and tablets. That work will continue.

I've produced two Special Interest Reports. [Insurance for Your Model Railroad](#) was inspired by Brian's question whether his home owners' insurance would cover his model railroad and collection of banjos. [Estate Planning for Model Railroaders](#) resulted from the need to update or replace an article and service by Clint Hyde that was long outdated. Shortened versions of these reports have appeared in the *Flyer* and are presented as clinics.


[The Abrams Railroad Empire](#), Marshall's free-lance 20' x 22' layout, was designed using Cadrail and was built exactly as designed. The layout is about 70% scenicked. Operations are performed using RailOp computer program. Marshall is a founder of a round-robin group, the Anachronistic Region, that has been operating weekly for about 44 years. His biggest joys in model railroading are all the nice people he has met, who he never would have met in his other activities. Marshall is retired from the MITRE Corporation.

Clerk Bob Sprague:



Bob Sprague

Bob Sprague was elected to the Board in 2017. He models in HO and particularly enjoys track planning, handlaid trackwork, scenery, 3D modeling, and prototypical operations. After building several modern-era layouts he totally changed direction and began the construction of a multi-deck representation of the Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad set in 1924. Bob is known for his track planning skills and has had more than a dozen track planning articles in *Model Railroader* and other publications. His website is bobstrackplans.com.

He first joined the NMRA in the early 1970s and has participated in and supported Potomac Division activities for the past 15 years. As a board member, Bob hoped to give back to the hobby, help the Potomac Division grow with new members, and find new ways to add to the fun of existing members. Bob runs an advertising and marketing agency based in Alexandria. 

[Return to Bill of Lading](#)

Board of Directors Nominees

The nominating committee, John Paganoni and Ernie Little, have received nominations of three qualified members to fill the three vacancies on the Board of Directors.



Martin Brechbiel, MMR

I have numerous qualifications making me a good choice for the Board. I have spent years as an active NMRA member promoting and supporting modeling through active participation of the AP program (just informed that I am MMR #629), volunteering, and writing articles for NMRA publications at all levels.

I served as a Director on the MER Board for 4 years, was the Contest Chair for 10 years, and am now Secretary. I have been the Traction Action columnist for *O Scale Trains* magazine since 2009 and I am now the Editor. Activities while serving on the MER Board included revision of the Executive Handbook, revision of the Region's Bylaws, and migration & control of the MER web site.

As such, I have had a very productive relationship with the operations and governance of the MER and offer to bring that experience to the Potomac Division. I try to bring new ideas forward to improve the attractiveness of our regional conventions and in doing so hope to increase attendance. I also look for ways to improve fundamental communications. I believe that I bring a unique perspective that adds value to serve the needs of the MER.

Andrew Dodge, MMR

I am seeking to be elected to the board of directors of the Potomac Division. I would like to promote the fraternity of modelers by proposing monthly or bi-monthly meetings of the membership. The objective of this type of scheduling will be to encourage the exchange of modeling information and techniques, direct involvement of the membership in the operations of the division, and



fellowship. I would also like to see the Bylaws updated so they more closely conform to those used by the MER and in other divisions, which would include term limits, voting to fill specific offices, and voting by mail or email so everyone's voice can be heard. As a Director, I will do my best to build upon what is working, and offer fresh leadership in the division. This is our hobby, let us make it enjoyable, informative, and socially rewarding.

My father introduced me to model railroading, and it has remained a centerpiece of my hobby world ever since. I received my first train set in 1956, snap-track, and built my first layout a year later. My initial creative venture into modeling came in 1963 when I built a Colorado-themed narrow gauge layout using HO equipment. Later, I built layouts in HOn3 and HO standard gauge, and while living in Germany in the mid-1980s, I built an N scale free-lanced German layout. Since the late 1980s, I have modeled Colorado 19th century prototype railroads in On3 and O Proto 48. I also have held operating sessions on my layouts since the late 1990s based on prototype operating rules and procedures. Beginning in 2001, I even fulfilled my lifelong dream of having a live steam outdoor railroad. My next modeling project will be creating an O scale freelanced coastal railroad in Maine incorporating passenger and freight ship traffic.

Since joining the NMRA in 1995, I have provided clinics at the division, regional, and national levels on topics ranging from history, layout design, modeling to prototype standards, prototype operations, and constructing a brass locomotive from scratch. I have received NMRA Achievement Program certificates in 10 different categories and served as an AP judge on numerous occasions. During the past 20 plus years, I have offered support to other modelers through published articles in *Model Railroader*, *Great Model Railroads*, *Model Railroad Planning*, and *Railroad Model Craftsman*. As part of my outreach efforts, I also have conducted open houses for the divisional and regional conventions, and local organizations. On the administrative level, I have served and supported Minicons for the Potomac and South Mountain Divisions, served as modular layout planner and manager for the 2013 MER convention, and developed a seminar clinic program. In 2017-2018 I worked with the National O Scale Convention group to publish articles and advertise the convention.

So, please come out to vote at the Potomac Division's Minicon on March 16. I look forward to working with the membership in promoting and enjoying model railroading.




Nicholas Kalis

I want a vibrant layout tour and team project for our Potomac Division. I think I can bring out the best in our members and encourage them to cheerfully lend a hand to a dynamic division.

Residing in Northern Virginia, I have served on and off for many years as the layout tour coordinator for the Potomac Division. My LIRR Lower Montauk Branch took the front cover of the September 2007 *Railroad Model Craftsman*. My love of railroading probably took its start in 1958 when I appeared in *New York's Daily News* as a model to accompany a photograph of the last trolley to operate in Manhattan. A Lionel set under the Christmas tree followed when I was nine years old. My byline has appeared several times in the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society's *Keystone*. My Fn3 Oahu Sugar Company, set in Waipahu, appeared on the cover of *Narrow Gauge Downunder*. I have opened three of my layouts for the Potomac Division layout tour (my first open house was of my Sunnyside Yard layout). I have attended two NMRA national conventions and one Narrow Gauge National Convention (Denver). My second and third NMRA AP awards should be presented shortly. I have written for *NMRA Magazine*, the *MER Local*, and the *Potomac Flyer*. I delivered a clinic about my layout at a Potomac Division mini convention and have a new clinic I hope to present at NMRA events.

I have some five decades experience in commercial real estate. I graduated from **George Mason School of Law**. I also earned a *Master of International Affairs* from Columbia University.

I am a Paul Harris Fellow (Rotary). I am an AHEPAN and member of the American Hellenic Institute who has served on the Council of both Saint George's Greek Orthodox Church and Saint Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church. I am a father of three and stepdad to one. 

[Return to Bill of Lading](#)

Calling All Dreamers, Just-Starters And In-Progress Small Layout Builders

If you're overwhelmed by many of the layouts you read about or visit — you know, the ones that are 30 feet by 50 feet, then the *Flyer* wants to help you out.

That's because we suspect there are probably many folks in the Potomac Division who have more modest aspirations...and lots of questions.

What we're looking for is input from those who might have started but not finished a small layout or those who for various reasons have limited space and are unsure about how to proceed. You might even be just dreaming about having a railroad.

Let the *Flyer* know what your biggest interests and concerns are, the kinds of things that might help you move along in fulfilling your ambition of being a model railroader. We'd like to tailor articles to meet your specific needs.

And if you're just starting to build a layout, how about considering writing articles for the *Flyer* in which you document your progress? We'd love to launch a series on just that topic.

Send your suggestions ASAP to: Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org

THE NEW
NMRA MODEL
RAILROAD DIRECTORY
IS NOW **ONLINE** and
READY TO USE!

Now whether you're at home or traveling, you can contact other NMRA members for a layout tour, to talk trains, or even to join in an op session! There are maps, descriptions, photos, videos, and more. And it's only available to NMRA members.

Visit www.nmra.org, click on "Member Home," then "Directory" to see layouts in your area or to list your own layout (as long as it's an operating home or garden railroad). Join in the fun!



We make it more fun!

2019 Joint Potomac & Chesapeake Divisions Miniconvention

by Brian Sheron, MMR, Potomac Division Superintendent

Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 16th, 2019. That is the date of the Potomac Division/Chesapeake Division Joint Miniconvention (Minicon).

The Minicon will be held at the Emmanuel United Methodist Church, 10755 Scaggsville Road, Laurel, Maryland 20723, which is north of the Capital Beltway, just off of Rt. 29 and I-95 (North Laurel). [Note the announcement in the Winter 2019 issue of *The Flyer* said it was in Scaggsville, MD, but the post office and Google agree that the church is located in Laurel, MD.]

Admission will be \$10 for NMRA members, and \$15 for non-NMRA members. Spouses and children under 16 are free.

We are planning a full day of activities. There will be two tracks of clinics, with a total of four in the morning and four in the afternoon.

2019 Joint PD/CD Minicon

Clinics

- Mat Thompson—Having Fun with Operations/Track 1/9:00 am - 10:00 am

Operations is a fun way to increase your enjoyment of model

railroading, but in the beginning it can seem intimidating. This clinic focuses on helping you understand what happens during an operating session to help you get over the new-guy confusion. Mat starts with easy things you can do beforehand, and then discusses the operating jobs you can expect and how to do them. He'll cover the few rules you actually need to know, and suggest a few things you might want to bring. He'll even talk about the no-no's—things not to do if you ever want to be invited back! Mat will also introduce the "Potomac Operations Saturday" scheduled for June 29. He'll talk a bit about the layouts that will be hosting operating sessions and tell you how to sign up—including right there in the clinic if you like.

- Marshall Abrams—Estate Planning/Track 2/9:00 am - 10:00 am

This clinic presents advice on the disposal of a model railroad for model railroaders who are uninterested or unable to continue and want to dispose of their model railroad assets. This should be part of estate planning. The clinic addresses tangible assets accumulated during

Time	Track 1	Track 2
8:00 AM	Registration	
9:00 AM	Mat Thompson— Having Fun with Operations	Marshall Abrams— Estate Planning
10:30 AM	Brian Sheron— Urban Modeling	Norm Reid & Jeff Fleisher—Focus Stacking
11:30 AM	Lunch Guest Speaker Bryan Kidd: <i>The Chesapeake & Ohio at Alleghany, Virginia: a Book and a Model Railroad</i> Potomac Division Business Meeting & Election	
1:15 PM	Dave Arday— Railfanning	Alex Belida— Fantasy Meets Reality
2:45 PM	Ramon Rhodes— My Half-Century Love Affair with Trains	Nigel Phillips— Building a Turntable
3:45 PM	Closing	

enjoyment of the hobby. Topics include: priorities, inventory & value, high value items, written instructions, planning for layout disposition, selling, scenarios, fees, professional services, and using eBay.

- **Brian Sheron—Urban Modeling/Track 1/10:30 am - 11:30 am**
Brian's HO scale Long Island Rail Road primarily models many urban and suburban scenes found on Long Island, including Brooklyn, Queens, and Penn Station in Manhattan, and the town of Huntington further out in Suffolk County. His clinic focuses on how to plan an urban scene for your layout, identifying the key elements that make up urban scenes, and then explaining what the key modeling components are for each element and how they all can be combined to produce realistic scale model urban scenes. Brian discusses how to create realistic backdrops for urban scenes. He also discusses using techniques such as "cutaways" to model underground stations, and also modeling overhead railways, or "Els". His clinic presentation contains many photos that illustrate the techniques described.
- **Norm Reid & Jeff Fleisher—Focus Stacking/Track 2/ 10:30 am - 11:30 am**
Every model railroad photographer faces the same problem: how to get the locomotive and caboose both in sharp focus. While traditional film techniques can help, one of the best methods now possible with digital technology is focus stacking. Focus stacking involves making a sequence of photos at varying focal points, then "stacking" them to create combined images that are sharp throughout. The clinic will present two methods for creating stacks and demonstrate the hardware and software needed to produce stacked images. Examples will be presented and a live demo conducted.
- **Dave Arday—Railfanning/Track 1/1:15 pm - 2:15 pm**
This clinic will have two parts. The didactic first part will cover 1) the relationship between model railroading and railfanning, 2) safety issues, 3) types of railfanning, and 4) railfanning information sources. The remainder and majority of the clinic will consist of slide shows from several railfanning trips, including the Cumbres & Toltec, Western Maryland Scenic, the Tehachapi Loop, White Pass & Yukon Route, and the Canton RR, with a little bit of background information on each.
- **Alex Belida—Fantasy Meets Reality/Track 2/1:15 pm - 2:15 pm**
In this clinic Alex explains how he enhanced the experience of building his fictional Eureka and South Pass RR by writing his own history for the railroad and by creating articles portraying events in its turn-of-the-century Nevada locale. Then he discusses how he discovered there is a real life prototype for his operation and how that is shaping his future plans.
- **Ramon Rhodes—My Half-Century Love Affair with Trains/Track 1/2:45 pm - 3:45 pm**
In this fast-paced presentation that features hundreds of photographs, diagrams, and maps, Ramon chronicles his life growing up on the East Coast as an Army kid who loved trains. He talks about the trains that he saw and the trains that he had during those years as his family moved from place to place. It's a fun and nostalgic look back at the railroads and model trains of the 1960s and 1970s.
- **Nigel Phillips—Building a Turntable/Track 2/2:45 pm - 3:45 pm**
Lazy Susan, M12, and the Gear-head. No, not a pulp fiction novel, but how to build a small turntable using readily available components at a fraction of the cost of a proprietary kit or a

RTR one. The first build Nigel describes is an On30 "gallows" DCC turntable, 7.5" in diameter, built using a 2" square Lazy Susan bearing, an M12 (12mm diameter) bolt, and a gear-head 12v DC motor that is rated at 2 rpm at 12v, and able to rotate even slower if desired. Electrical wiring is probably the most challenging part, as 2 separate circuits are usually required, one for the motor (DC), and one for the track (DCC). Some extra items such as a pulse-width speed controller and a track polarity reverser, will also be covered (the bells and whistles). The second build Nigel will describe is a wood platform turntable using a 6" diameter Lazy Susan bearing, again in On30. He uses the same approach, but the process is different in detail. Some of the issues in polarity reversal, track power wiring, and indexing will be reviewed. The basic components come to about \$25; adding the bells and whistles is about another \$50.

White Elephant Sale, Modular Club Layouts, Model and Contest Room, BSME and the Timesaver Layout Challenge!

Of course, there will be a White Elephant Sale, so bring all that unwanted model railroading stuff you've been accumulating and sell it at the Convention, or find that special item you need for your layout!

The Baltimore Area N-Trak modular club will be set up and running trains during the convention, and we will have a contest and model display room. Thanks to John Paganoni's contribution of time and material, we now have four display tables for the model room. These 2x4 tables are 12 inches tall and sit on top of normal room tables so models can be viewed at a comfortable height of 40 inches.

We have four judges prepared to conduct Merit Award evaluations. Please bring your models to keep them busy.

You are also encouraged to bring models to display. There are no rules and no judging for this, just bring engines, cars, a favorite train, structures, or any other model railroad item you would like to show everyone. Kits, scratch-built items, and modeling projects in progress are all welcome. The only paperwork needed is a 3x5 card with your name and the name of the item. If you have prototype photos, plans, a magazine article that inspired your work, or any other documents you think will help others appreciate what you are showing, bring them along.

The Baltimore Society of Model Engineers (BSME) plans to have John Allen's "Timesaver" switching layout (in O scale!) set up, so you can test your switching skills!


Lunchtime Plans and the Guest Speaker

We plan on offering coffee and donuts in the morning, and we will be selling food and drink at lunchtime. The Potomac Division will also hold its annual Business Meeting during the lunch break, and elect three Board members.

Right after the lunch break, we have a great guest speaker, Bryan Kidd. The title of his talk is **The Chesapeake & Ohio at Alleghany, Virginia: a Book and a Model Railroad.**

"Big things in small packages" is an apt description for Alleghany, Virginia. Located at the summit of the Eastern Continental Divide on the Chesapeake & Ohio's busy Alleghany Subdivision between Clifton Forge, VA and Hinton, WV, Alleghany had an importance far exceeding its diminutive size and out-of-the-way location. With as many as 30-40 trains passing through or stopping each day, and pusher engines cutting off and turning on the turntable for their return moves, Alleghany was an unsurpassed beehive of activity.

Bryan Kidd's presentation is based on his recently released book (C&O Historical Society, 2018) and will cover the evolution of this operationally fascinating place and how it is being modeled as part of his Alleghany Subdivision.

The Minicon is a great way to spend a Saturday, meeting other area model railroaders and enjoying the great hobby of model railroading. I hope to see you there. If you have any questions, please visit the Minicon web site on the Potomac Division web page (potomac-nmra.org) for up-to-date information or contact me at superintendent@potomac-nmra.org. 

[Return to Bill of Lading](#)

Potomac Operations Saturday—June 29, 2019

by Mat Thompson, MMR

Celebrate a day of trains with old and new friends! Join us for the Potomac Operations Saturday on Saturday, June 29, 2019.

You are welcome if you have never operated, have a little experience, or are an old hand. You are also encouraged to sign up a friend or family member to come with you regardless of their ops experience, and they don't need to be Potomac Division members.



We will offer two layouts in Maryland and two in Virginia, and will have two operating periods that day: one from 9 to 12 and one from 2 to 5. You can sign up for any one session or one morning and one afternoon session. If you sign up for two sessions, you are guaranteed one session and you will get the second session if space is available.

Here are the layouts:

9 to 12: Pete LaGuardia, Haymarket, VA

Pete's a New Yorker attracted to colorful western trains so his large HO scale New York Central Western Illinois Division is a mix of New York Central and Union Pacific trains. While that's a stretch (because the NYC and UP never directly interchanged traffic) Pete makes the connection, and the "WID" concept emerged. It's been a success, with plenty of long freights, beautiful passenger trains, and local runs. He uses NCE DCC, and TT&TO operations.



9 to 12: Frank Benenati, Damascus, MD



The Maryland Junction is a 20x12 foot HO railroad featuring first generation diesels working interchanges with N&W, PRR, B&O, and WM. Frank uses Digitrax DCC, and most turnouts operate manually using FastTracks "bullfrogs." Car cards, a timetable, and a fast clock are used to simulate operations. A variety of kits from Campbell, Bar Mills, Fos, and others, and scratch-built structures, combine

with realistic scenery to provide interest to his Western Maryland-themed railroad.

**2 to 5: Bryan Kidd, Nokesville,
VA**

Bryan models Allegheny on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad. The Allegheny Subdivision is set in the early 1950's, so steam and first-generation diesels operate side by side. The main part of the layout is in two rooms. The larger room houses Allegheny, White Sulphur Springs and Roncevert, and the smaller room contains Hinton yard and staging. The point-to-point track plan has a double track mainline of about 140 feet. Bryan controls his layout, including mainline turnouts powered by Tortoise switch machines, using Digitrax DCC. Benchwork and track are complete, foam blocks are in place that will form the base for future hills, and some structures are in place—both completed buildings, and cardboard mockups.



2 to 5: Fritz Dahlin, Columbia, MD



The Broken Timber Subdivision is a 22' x 20' double deck layout representing a fictional Chessie System line in central Maryland. Set in 1981, the two decks are connected by a central peninsula. Main line run is just under 200', and includes two small yards, a short branch line, an interchange, and seven-track staging yards at each end. Control is NCE DCC, and at least one loco in each consist has sound. The run is single track with four passing sidings, and features dispatcher-controlled signals. An operating session is 2 1/2-3 hours long with 8-10 main line trains, local

switching jobs, several interchange jobs, several passenger trains, and a helper job. Car cards and simplified train orders are used. The entire layout has basic scenery.

Sorry, all the layouts are in basements and are not handicapped accessible.

To sign up, e-mail ocrr@comcast.net with your name, the name of your guest if applicable, and your layout choice or choices. We will acknowledge your sign up immediately and confirm your layout(s) assignment in early June so layout hosts have time to provide read-ahead material.

One more thing—would you feel more comfortable operating if you just knew a bit more before you show up at a layout? We have you covered! Come to Mat Thompson's Clinic, "Having Fun with Operations" at the Potomac Minicon on March 16th. ☒

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Make Plans to Attend Railroad Prototype Modeler-East!

It is time to make your RPM-East plans and rekindle your modeling efforts after a long, cold winter! Two months remain until this prototype modeler gathering in suburban Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. There will be plenty of action March 22 & 23.

- two days of prototype and model presentations
- a large display room to share your modeling efforts and learn new techniques
- a variety of vendors selling goods for prototype modeling
- Thursday evening operating sessions on local model railroads
- an informal Saturday buffet
- Sunday model railroad layouts to visit

Early bird registration is only \$35 (until March 1), with an additional banquet cost of \$29.

There is a special hotel room rate of \$95 per night.

Registration forms, hotel information and more can be found at the RPM-East website:

http://www.hansmanns.org/rpm_east/index.htm

RPM-East is sponsored by Division 2, MCR-NMRA.

The following modelers and historians are committed for our meet: John Albert, Keith Albright, David Bott, Brian Carlson, Ted Culotta, Larry DeYoung, Jim Elster, John Greene, Bill Hanley, Eric Hansmann, Ron Hoess, Bernard Kempinski, Dennis Lippert, Rick Mahaney, Bob Meier, Bill Neale, David Owens, Jim Panza, Dave Ramos, Ramon Rhodes, Greg Smith, Robert Sprague, Steve Stewart, Mont Switzer, John Teichmoeller, David Wilson, and Kaylee Zheng.

Presentation titles are posted on the RPM-East website. A tentative presentation schedule will be posted to the website.

Set your schedule and register now for RPM-East! ☒

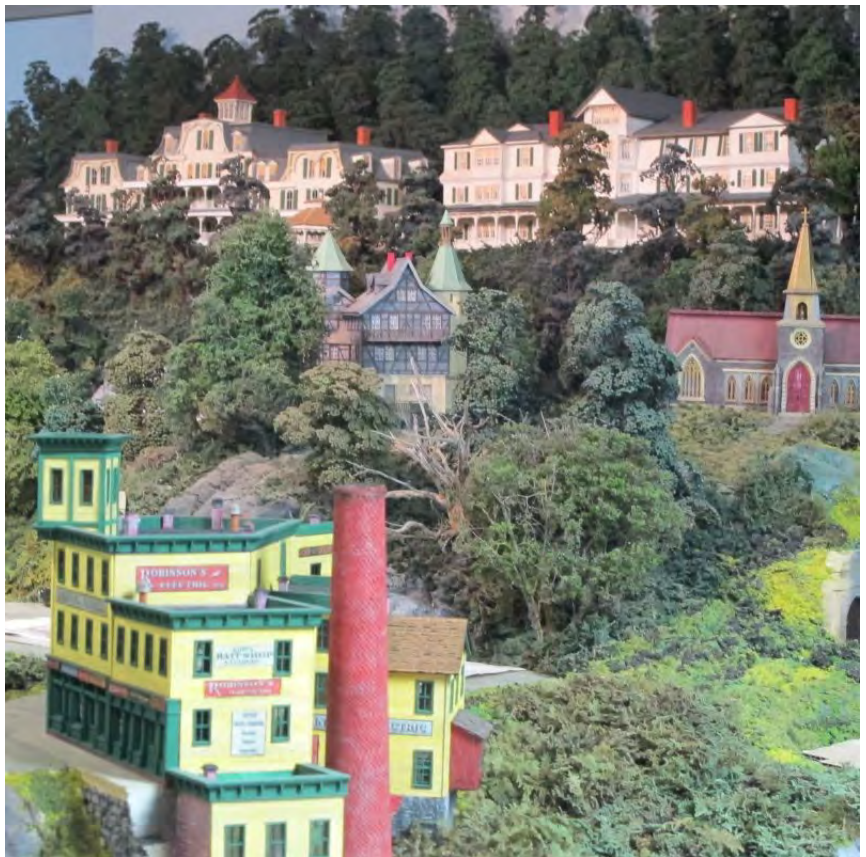
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Layout Tour Report: Pugsburg Rail Road

by Al Pugliese photos by
Marshall Abrams

The Pugsburg Rail Road is a freelance HO 24 x 32 foot layout, with sections of floor-to-ceiling scenery. Control is Northcoast DCC. Pennsy, C&O and some B&O steam is present, with some early diesels. There is a two track mainline with an additional point to point logging line. Construction started in 1997 and continues to this day.

The purpose of the railroad is for the logging line to feed the hungry Mill at Cass and to deliver freight and passengers to Pugsburg and to the mountain resort yet to be built. I have two rules for the railroad. Number



one: there are no rules and number two: no nit picking! Anything that can detract from the fun or joy of the hobby is not welcome. Aisles are narrow so it is not handicap accessible; however the entrance is thru the garage with NO steps so folks with moderate disability can still get in.

The layout is about 75% done with hundreds of hand made Hydrangea trees. Real materials such as moss and lichens are heavily utilized, along with real dirt and coal. The layout was designed more to be a railfan running layout vs a layout built for operations. Although limited operations can be done, the layout's primary design is to showcase running long double-headed freights and passenger trains. I believe the hobby is to be shared and I am now at the point where I would like to share the layout as much as possible since much of it looks finished enough to show.

My mentors are the late Harry Clark (featured in Alan Keller's *Great Model Railroads Vol. 8*) and my friend Howard Zane, who is famous in the hobby community. Harry taught me the techniques of using wild Hydrangea to make trees and how to use as many natural materials as possible. Howard, whose work also inspires me, also comes by so I can solicit his advice. I am also heavily influenced by George Sellios, owner of Fine Scale Miniatures, and am building a city, Pugsburg, which is heavily influenced by the big city on his Franklin and South Manchester. I also have 19 of his FSM kits and also enjoy scratchbuilding and kit bashing many of the structures.

The city, although fictional, has many historic Baltimore icons, some yet to be built such as the Bromo Seltzer tower and American Brewery. Many of Custom Model Railroads' skyscraper kits are also featured.





The large sawmill, 4 x 10 ft, was built by Harry Clark, and I have added an eight-foot lumber yard to it. The town of Cass, West Virginia sits across from it on a 20 x 7 ft wide hill.

The open house was very successful with a total of 27 visitors. All in attendance were very polite and appeared to enjoy the layout. Due to my limited aisle space it was quite crowded. Perhaps next time I may have time slots or a waiting area so smaller groups can more easily see the complete layout. My model railroad mentor, Howard Zane, who was in attendance, always said what I too firmly believe: model railroading is an art form, and art is useless if it is not shared. I hope to be asked to have additional open houses in the future. My wife Silvia and I thank all who came. ☒

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Layout Tour: Jim Zarnick's Butler & Western New York

When: Saturday, March 30, 2019, 1:00 to 4:00 PM

Where: *

Handicapped access: The layout is not handicap accessible.

The Butler & Western New York is a freelance HO scale railroad that incorporates various scenes from my childhood home of Butler, PA and my first adult home of Rochester, NY. The double-deck railroad is built in a 11 x 41 foot room, and offers continuous running on a double track mainline that is 3.7 scale miles (225 feet) long. This DCC layout is controlled by an NCE system connected to a computer running JMRI. The mainline is fully signaled with the signals being controlled by CTI Electronics hardware and software.

This is our first visit to this railroad. ☒



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