

The Potomac Flyer

June-July 2024

The Newsletter of the Potomac Division, MER, NMRA



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|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Nov. 1 for Dec.-Jan. | Jan. 1 for Feb.-Mar. |
| March 1 for April-May | May 1 for June-July |
| July 1 for Aug.-Sept. | Sept. 1 for Oct.-Nov. |



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From the Business Car

by Ernie Little, MMR, Potomac Division Superintendent



I will start by thanking our Nomination Committee for their work on the 2024 Board of Directors elections. The committee was comprised of Chairman **Mark Gionet**, **Paul Hutchins**, **Bill Demas**, and **Brian Sheron**. As a result of their work, the election candidates for the Board of Directors offices of Assistant Superintendent and Paymaster were presented to the membership using electronic and mailed ballots. Congratulations to incumbent Assistant Superintendent **Ken Wilson** and Paymaster **Jerry Stanley** on their re-election to their positions. Next year the elections will be for Superintendent, Senior Assistant Superintendent, and Clerk. If you have an interest in running for one of the offices, please let the Division Clerk know.

On Saturday, May 4th, 19 members of the Division attended a combined Annual Meeting at the Arcola Volunteer Fire Department Annex in Sterling, Virginia. The in-person meeting was focused on a request from the NMRA Mid-Eastern Region (MER) for the Potomac Division to host the 2025 Mid-Eastern Region Convention. MER Vice President **Gary Brown** was present and explained to the membership that the New Jersey Division was unable to find an affordable venue that had the necessary facilities. He participated in the discussion and answered many questions posed by the members present regarding financial, logistical, and other issues.

The discussion resulted in a resolution asking the MER to approach the Tidewater Division to host the 2025 MER convention and, if they would, the Potomac Division would consider hosting the 2026 convention, which Tidewater is currently scheduled to host. The major concern of those present was that the time to adequately plan a convention was too short for hosting the 2025 convention. If the Potomac Division takes on the hosting of a future convention, it needs to be understood that the responsibility for developing the working parts of the convention, such as securing clinicians, scheduling operations sessions and layout tours, and other matters would be on the Division. Furthermore, it takes a committee of between 25-30 members to get the necessary work done.

Welcome New Members

April 2024:

- Stephen Gerhardt - Falls Church, VA
- Veon Coffnam - Gainesville, VA
- John McWilliam - Aldie, VA
- Jeremy Smith - Herndon, VA

As a part of the Annual Meeting, I was honored to present Senior Assistant Superintendent **Alex Belida**, MMR, the 2024 Marshall Abrams award. Quoting from the nomination document, “Alex has volunteered countless hours as the Senior Assistant Superintendent and as the editor of the *Potomac Flyer*, has provided excellent advice and creative planning ideas, and is a relentless researcher always seeking innovative ways to improve service to the members of the Potomac Division. His service on the

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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Board of Directors and as the editor of the *Potomac Flyer* deserve the recognition of receiving the Marshall Abrams Award." Congratulations Alex on your recognition and keep up the excellent work!

Congratulations to **Greg Cassidy** on his receipt of the NMRA Author Achievement Award, presented by **Martin Brechbiel**, Division Achievement Program Manager, at the Annual Meeting. Greg is on his way to becoming a Master Model Railroader!

I want to thank Greg Cassidy and Alex Belida, MMR, for presenting two excellent clinics at the May 4th meet and **Jim Rodgers** and **John Whittaker** for opening their layouts for a layout tour to conclude the day.

A couple of updates on items mentioned in my last newsletter:

The Chesapeake Division Board of Directors has informed us that its event schedule will not accommodate a joint meeting with our Division this year.

The 2024 Mid-Eastern Region Convention is being held in Durham, North Carolina,

at the Marriott at Research Triangle Park October 17-20, 2024. Room rates are \$79.00 a night (yes, that is the room rate!) Registration is now open, and there will be several Potomac Division members presenting clinics at this convention. You can find all the information about the convention on the convention website: <https://piedmontjunction.cpd13.org>.

As I mentioned before, the Division has openings for clinicians for both in-person and virtual clinics. Here is an opportunity for you to give a presentation on a topic you enjoy reading or talking about or a project you are working on, and at the same time earn points toward the Achievement Program Volunteer certificate. If you are interested in presenting a clinic, please contact **Jerry Stanley** or another member of the Board of Directors to get on the schedule.

'Til next time, keep 'em on the rails and stay healthy!

Potomac Division Annual Meeting Report

Article and Photos by Alex Belida, MMR, Senior Assistant Superintendent
with Additional Photos by Ernie Little, MMR

Members gathered on May 4th at the Arcola Volunteer Fire Department Annex in Sterling, Virginia for an in-person annual business meeting. The event featured two clinics, two layout visits, socializing, and the presentation of the annual Marshall Abrams Award.



The business discussion focused on the Mid-Eastern Region’s (MER) recent request that Potomac consider hosting the 2025 MER Convention.

The appeal followed the New Jersey Division’s announcement that it was unable to host as originally planned due to its inability to locate an affordable hotel with the needed facilities.



MER Vice President **Gary Brown** (photo left) participated in the discussion, answering questions on financial and other issues. Superintendent **Ernie Little, MMR**, informed the gathering that the Potomac Board felt it was impossible for the Division to step up for 2025 given the short time available to prepare adequately. (The Carolina Piedmont Division, host of this year’s MER Convention, has been working for three years to make the necessary arrangements.)

Asked for their views, most of the 19 members in attendance shared the Board’s position and approved a resolution that the Board should inform the MER that the Potomac Division is not able to host the 2025 Convention. The resolution recommended that the MER approach the Tidewater Division, scheduled to host the 2026 Convention, and ask if it would consider hosting in

2025, saying that Potomac might then consider hosting in 2026.

The attendees also heard the results of the 2024 Division elections. **Ken Wilson** was elected Assistant Superintendent, and **Jerry Stanley** was re-elected as Paymaster (photo right). They ran unopposed.



Superintendent Little then announced that the recipient of this year's Marshall Abrams Award for outstanding service to the Division is **Alex Belida, MMR** (photo left below). The citation accompanying the plaque cited his *"contributions and dedicated service to the Potomac Division and to model railroading."*



Division Achievement Program Manager **Martin Brechbiel** presented a certificate to **Greg Cassidy** for Model Railroad Author. (Story P 12)

Fittingly, after a short break for coffee and donuts, Greg (photo below left) opened the first clinic of the day on "The Long Road to Achieving a Golden Spike and Other APs." Greg said that when he joined the NMRA, it never occurred to him to look into the NMRA Achievement Program. But years later, he revisited the program and saw that he had met a few of the requirements and had earned his Golden Spike Award, opening new opportunities that excited him. In addition to his Author certificate, Greg is poised to receive his Master Builder-Structures certificate and is working on his Master Builder-Scenery certificate.



Alex Belida presented the day's second clinic, entitled "Motive Power: You Can Do It!" He said that members undoubtedly thought that getting the Master Builder-Motive Power certificate

is too challenging. But Alex (photo right) said that the certificate is well within reach with a little effort. He recounted that his interest in old-time backwoods railroads generated three HO scale motive power models: a freelanced “Critter”; a kitbashed Motor Freight “Boxbug”; and a scratchbuilt Vertical Boiler engine that won the 1st Place Steam award at last year’s MER Convention in Altoona, PA.



Following the clinics and a lunch break, members were able to visit two layouts open for the first time for the Division.

These were **Jim Rogers’** HO B&O Cincinnati to Baltimore model railroad set in the summer in the mid-1960’s and **John Whittaker’s** HO_{N3} scale freelance model railroad depicting the movement of silver in the Durango/Silverton, Colorado area.

(Layout details provided by the hosts next pages with Alex Belida photos.)



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Jim Rogers Layout Visit

1. What is the name of your layout (if any)? No special name.
2. What scale is your layout? HO.
3. Does your layout have a specific era and/or location? Mid 1960's. B&O Cincinnati to Baltimore.
4. What are the overall dimensions of your layout? Two rooms, 5' by 39' and 15' by 18'.
5. How do you control your layout? Digitrax DCC.
6. When did you start making your layout? 2008. Dismantled and move to this location in 2021.

[Jim Rogers in Photo Right]



7. Do you host operating sessions or would you consider doing so? Yes, I do host operating sessions.



8. What type of track (sectional, flex track or hand laid) and switches are on your layout and what is its code? Mainly Atlas flex track and mainly Atlas switches, all code 100.

9. If you were to brag about your layout what would you describe as its outstanding feature(s)? An interesting switching layout, everyone is busy



John Whittaker Layout Visit

1. What is the name of your layout (if any)?

No name yet. It is a fictitious railroad that connects to the D&RGW at Silverton, Colorado. It is a down-on-its-luck railroad and struggles to make ends meet. It therefore leases its locomotives and most of its rolling stock from the D&RGW. The main source of its revenue is shipping silver ore from the mines along its route to the outside world via Silverton.

2. What scale is your layout? HOn3.

3. Does your layout have a specific era and/or location? As noted, it is located in Colorado and connects to the D&RGW at Silverton. The time period is late 1920s to mid 1930s. [John Whittaker in Photo Right]



4. What are the overall dimensions of your layout? The room it is in is 16.5' by 14'. The layout pretty much fills the entire room; it runs around three sides of the room, with a connected middle peninsula.

5. How do you control your layout? Digitrax power station and hand-held throttles.

6. When did you start making your layout? Fall of 2019 (4.5 years ago).

7. Do you host operating sessions or would you consider doing so? I don't currently host operating sessions but might do so in the future.

8. What type of track (sectional, flex track or hand laid) and switches are on your layout and what is its code? ME flex track and ME and PECO turnouts. Almost all of it is code 70, with some portions in the main town in code 55. The turnouts are powered by Walthers system switch machines with fascia controllers.



9. If you were to brag about your layout what would you describe as its outstanding feature(s)? Mountain scenery.



★★★★★

Achievement Program Report

by Martin Brechbiel, MMR, Potomac Division AP Manager



At this year’s Potomac Division Annual Meeting, I expected to present **Greg Cassidy** with his Master Builder-Structures certificate. Notice of it being awarded had been announced in the Mid-East Region newsletter, *The Local*, but it had yet to show up. However, just at the last minute, I received and was able to present Greg with his Model Railroad Author certificate at the May 4th event ([photo below](#)).

At the meeting, Greg presented a clinic about receiving a Golden Spike award, so he’s also on the road to getting his Volunteer certificate. (Presentation of a live clinic at a Division event is credited with one time unit with 60 units required for the certificate.) As I type, I have received an email that another certificate is in the mail for Greg. I suspect that it is his Structures certificate.



I know that there are a handful of Division members who are very close to completing AP categories. Maybe over the summer I’ll be handing out a few more certificates and just maybe we’ll soon have a new Master Model Railroader in the Division.

One more thing—**Mike Byle** has been awarded his Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical certificate. Mike relocated from the Philadelphia Division, where the evaluation was originally done and the certification process started. But since he has moved to Colonial Beach, Virginia, now part of our Division’s expanded area, the Potomac AP Manager was sent the certificate to pass along to Mike.

Promoting Division Membership

by Bill Mosteller



My partner, Sarah, is a genealogist. She was the treasurer of Gen-Fed (www.gen-fed.org), an alumni association for the institute that teaches people to use the National Archives. During her term, I helped persuade lapsed members to rejoin the association. We were successful enough to generate an uptick in membership, which had not been the usual year-to-year experience. From this I learned that if you put your back into the membership erosion problem, you can make a difference.

As you know, I produce model train decals. I have an assortment of flyers for various historical societies corresponding to the railroads whose decals I produce. So, for example, if you buy a Virginian decal, I'll send you an N&WHS flyer. I also distribute flyers for the Potomac Division, O Scale Central, and the Strasburg O-scale show.

Nobody has written to me with news that one of these flyers has changed his or her life. But Potomac Division Paymaster **Jerry Stanley** recently dropped an interesting idea on me. He said it takes five contacts to get someone to investigate something like the Potomac Division. While the flyer I send may not get someone to join all by itself, it may move them up a step so that the next Division contact will do more. Maybe you could be the one to nudge a potential new member forward.

Mind you, not every group gets it. I've recently started selling decals for a new railroad, and have, without success, written that historical society for flyers. The reply: *"That flyer is mail-in, and we've moved to on-line sign-up."*

In another case I ran out of flyers for another society and asked for a new supply. *"May I have copies of your new flyer?"* The response: *"Haven't made one up yet."*

Attracting members to the Potomac Division is an ongoing process. The only way to succeed is to create novel ways to bring in new model railroading enthusiasts. Anyone have a new idea?

Bill Mosteller operates *Great Decals!* Last year he presented a clinic on the installation and use of Kadee Whisker couplers.

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Meet The Member: Chris Jones

Editor's Note: This feature is designed to promote greater knowledge about members of the Potomac Division and their model railroading interests. If you are willing to participate, please send an email to potomac-flyer@potomac-nmra.org. The following text is by Chris Jones, who also provided the photos.

How did you get started in the hobby? How long have you been an NMRA member? How long with Potomac Division?

When I was growing up in Maryland in the 1970s, my house was located about two blocks from the main northeast corridor railroad tracks, so trains were a part of my life. My friends and I would lay pennies on the track and watch them get smashed by the passing trains! My grandfather also worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and I actually have the 40 year service pin that he was given. Many of my friends and I had model railroads, starting at about 5th grade.



I joined the NMRA when I moved to Virginia in about 2010. That's when I decided to start my current layout. I've been a member of the Potomac Division for roughly the same amount of time.

What do you model now: layout, scale? Do you still have your first engine/train set? What was it?

My current layout is in my basement. I converted a



former storage room which is about 13' x 16'. It's HO scale but I don't model a particular era. I generally have locomotives, rolling stock, buildings, and scenery from the early 1970s until the present time. I use locomotives and rolling stock representing the railroads that operated in the northeast in the 1970s and 80s until now, including Baltimore & Ohio, Chesapeake & Ohio, Western Maryland, Penn Central, Chessie System, Conrail, and Norfolk Southern. My layout is also inspired by the small town in which I grew up, but I don't model any specific geographic area or feature.

What's your favorite part of the hobby? How about your least favorite? What projects have you been working on recently?

Given my engineering background, one of the favorite aspects of this hobby is the design and planning of the track and the scenery. I also enjoy putting together buildings and other kits. I think that's because I'm also plastic model builder, focusing mostly on airplanes, tanks, and other military equipment.

My least favorite part of the hobby is maintenance, such as keeping the tracks clean, keeping the locomotives running, and overall repair. I also don't look forward to

climbing underneath the layout to install or repair wiring. I'm not as limber as I used to be!

Lately, I've been adding a lot of details. Given the growth of 3D printing, It's easy to get a lot of very unique detail parts for the rail cars, vehicles and scenery.

Describe your model railroad philosophy? What to you is the value of the AP program? Is shooting for MMR worthwhile?

My model railroading philosophy is to do things that I like, and that are fun for me. I don't worry too much whether certain engines, rail cars, structures or people fit into a certain era or time or are realistic or prototypical. For me they're all still toys! I designed my layout to maximize the amount of trackage that would support three, 20+ car trains, running simultaneously. I look forward to enjoying a beverage and watching the trains run around through the scenery. I don't have a rail yard or staging tracks, and the layout really isn't designed for operations, which are not that important to me.



Tell us a bit about your life, where you grew up, what jobs you held?

I grew up in Havre de Grace, Maryland, a small town between Baltimore and Philadelphia. I'm an engineer by training and have four engineering degrees, three of which are in aerospace engineering. I served for 24 years in the United States Air Force and retired in 2012 as a maintenance officer with the Connecticut Air National Guard.



I started my civilian career designing helicopters and retired a few years ago from Northrop Grumman Corporation, which is a large aerospace and defense company. I currently serve on several boards, including the Board of Directors for Norfolk Southern Corporation. I live in northern Virginia with my wife, and I have two sons.

Editor's Note: The Flyer asked Chris some additional questions about his HO layout.

1. What is the name of your layout?

My layout doesn't really have a specific name. I have two sons, Maxwell and Anderson. I named one of the towns on the layout "Andersonville," and I named the other town "Maxtown." Otherwise, there aren't any other names for the layout nor for any features on it.

2. How do you control your layout?

I use the NCE Power Pro DCC system to control my locomotives. But in general, I usually just have one or two trains running constantly around the layout and I don't do very much switching. For lighting, I use both Woodland Scenics lighting system and Dwarvin fiber optic system.



3. When did you start making your layout?

I started the layout in 2011. But the original room was an unfinished storage area. so I first had to install walls, flooring, ceiling lights, and power. Then I spent about a year using XTrackCad free software to design and plan the track configuration (I was working 60+ hrs/week then, so not much time to play with trains!)

4. What type of track (sectional, flex track or hand laid) and switches are on your layout and what is its code?

I use Code 83 track. About 80% of the track is sectional track and the other 20% is flex track. I picked sectional track because it was easier, and somewhat nostalgic for me. I use Walthers/Shinohara switches and Caboose ground throws. I only use remote switch machines (Rapido RailCrew) for the handful of switches that are too far to reach.

The Real Railway Photos Challenge

For our June-July Challenge, *The Flyer* was looking once again for real railway photos –anything railroad-related. We hoped for an assortment of engines, freight and passenger cars, MoW cars, stations, bridges, signals, turntables, etc. We were lucky enough to get some of these from our railfanning members.

For our August-September issue, we’re asking for photos and brief descriptions of something you **kitbashed**. The NMRA says “*kitbashing ranges from rearranging sub-assemblies of a kit-built structure, cutting off the front of a building to use as a “flat” in the background, cutting up and recombining walls, to mashing together two or more kits.*” Kitbashed rolling stock and engine submissions are also OK. **The deadline for submissions is July 5th.** But please send before then if you can. Thankfully I’ve already received some!

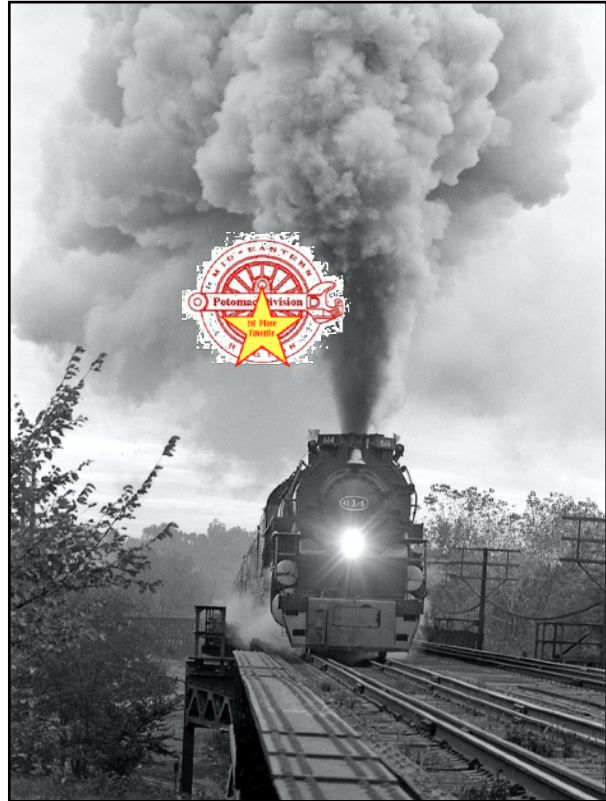
In our last issue we featured photos of real train engines. The undisputed winner of the *Flyer’s* “Most Favored” Star was **Bob Gifford’s** C&O Greenbrier 4-8-4. Congratulations, Bob.

Now, let’s look at these fresh railway-related submissions. If you see one you favor, drop us an email to: potomac-flyer@potomac-nmra.org

That’s the same address you should use for sending your kitbash photos and descriptions.

Thanks to all,
Alex Belida, MMR, Flyer Editor and Publisher

(The following items appear in the order in which they were received. The texts and photos were submitted by the modelers. Some texts may have been edited for length and/or clarity.)



1. Bryan Kidd's Railroad Engineer



This photo was taken in Cumberland, Maryland in November 2022. It shows the engineer of Western Maryland Scenic Railroad Engine 1309 (originally Chesapeake & Ohio, built in 1949). *Bryan Kidd*

The Potomac Division Website

The Potomac Division website is loaded with useful information. Members should check it often for the latest news as well as updates on events like our clinics, workshops and layout open houses. There's also a whole archive of past clinics, a list of modeling resources and a library of previous issues of *The Potomac Flyer*. Bookmark this link if you haven't done so already: <http://potomac-nmra.org/PDnewsite/Main/Home.php>

2. Alex Belida's Turntables



The photo above shows the turntable in the yard of the East Broad Top Railroad in Rockhill Furnace, Pennsylvania. I took the picture while on an excursion during the 2023 MER *“Round the Curve to Altoona”* Convention. The photo left, taken on another excursion at the same convention, is the turntable at the end of the line on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad.
Alex Belida, MMR

3. Mark Gionet's D&RGW No. 5771



Our return from a brief visit to family outside of Denver, Colorado was delayed this past Christmas, giving us an extra day. We planned a return visit to the excellent Denver Art Museum, but an open afternoon provided a great opportunity to walk the grounds of the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden. I'm a fan of F-units, and immediately gravitated to No. 5771.

As described at the museum and in an informative article in White River Production's *Model Railroad News*, this 1955 built F9A unit lasted in Rio Grande Zephyr passenger service into the 1980s and on other duties through the period of D&RGW's absorption by Union Pacific. The unit was given to the museum 1996, was cosmetically restored and now occupies a prime spot in its extensive full-sized collection. It was a treat to see this locomotive, although excellent models of No. 5771 and accompanying D&RGW streamlined power and passenger cars can also be seen stopping at Pueblo Union Depot on Potomac Division member Charles Bassing's layout. **Mark Gionet**

4. Deane Mellander's Steam Doubleheader



I took this picture in the summer of 1985 when the Strasburg Railroad operated a couple of excursion trips from Strasburg to Harrisburg. The motive power was PRR 4-4-2 7002 and 4-4-0 1223. They are shown rolling west into Lancaster, crossing the stone viaduct over Conestoga Creek. It is a "coulda-been" shot since both locos were likely still in regular service when the PRR's electrification reached Harrisburg in January 1938. *Deane Mellander, MMR*

Did You Know?

The Potomac Division has its own Groups.IO site where members can discuss all aspects of model railroading and exchange information on techniques, products, prototypes, and much more. If you haven't joined, please do so. Go to <https://groups.io/g/PD2MERNMRA> and follow the link to sign up.

5. Jerry Stanley's Switcher and Steamer



I took these photos on a November 2023 visit to the Strasburg Railroad. The diesel switcher ([photo above](#)) is an EMD SW-8, a former Conrail units built in 1953 for the New York Central.

#475 ([photo left](#)) is a 4-8-0 that ran on the Norfolk & Western until 1962. It's known as a Mastodon and is Strasburg's oldest and second largest steam engine.

Jerry Stanley

6. Lee Stoermer's Engines, Balloon & Deer



Southern Pacific Railroad loco #1996 in the Heritage scheme of the Union Pacific Railroad, seen at Yuma AZ in December 2019. [\(Photo above\)](#)



Northern Central Railway, an excursion line running in York County PA, steam locomotive #17 seen at Hanover Junction PA in 2021. [\(Photo left\)](#)

Deer caught crossing the Norfolk Southern tracks near Sean Hoyden's home in Virginia. [\(Photo next page\)](#)
Lee Stoermer



7. Rick Wright's Engines



109-car Canadian Pacific coal train eastbound on Stoney Creek bridge (British Columbia), May 1983. [\(Photo left\)](#)

Louisville & Nashville GP35 #1120 leads Louisville-bound tonnage across Independence Creek on L&N's famed "Short Line" connecting Cincinnati with Louisville, the toughest piece of railroading in the Bluegrass State, August 1972. [\(Photo above right\)](#)



With strong winds kicking up desert sand, Santa Fe SD45 #5590 brings a hot westbound train across 1947-built bridge at Arizona's Canyon Diablo, October 1975. Old pilings of original 1881 bridge across canyon are visible on right. [\(Photo left\)](#)

Rick Wright

8. Nicholas Kalis' Old Station Stop



This photo shows an old station stop on the Washington and Old Dominion Railway's Great Falls Division. A large mansion now sits on the site. *Nicholas Kalis*

Would You Let People See Your Layout?

The Potomac Division sponsors layout tours quarterly and is on the lookout for willing hosts. Layouts don't have to be complete, as layouts in various stages of construction are often just as interesting and informative to members. If you would like to host an open house on a Saturday afternoon and let other members of the Division see your layout and enjoy your handiwork and modeling talents, please contact our Layout Tour Coordinators, Ken Wilson (Asst-Super@potomac-nmra.org) or Paul Hutchins (ff3hutch@aol.com)

9. Bernard Kempinski's Railfanning



Golden Spike reenactment, Promontory Point, 2010. [\(Photo above\)](#)

Utah Railway MK5000C engines at the base of Mt Timpanogos near Provo, Utah. [\(Photo below\)](#)





Alaska RR at Riley Creek Bridge at Denali National Park, 2002. [\(Photo above\)](#)
Bernard Kempinski, MMR



10. John Sethian's Southern Crescent and XK-140



When I was six years old, my dad used to take me to see the Southern Crescent on the Long Bridge over the Potomac in Washington DC. Many years later, towards the end of its life, I either watched it from our high rise apartment building across the Capital Beltway, or I drove to see it speed through Burke VA. Here are a photo of it with my vintage Jaguar XK 140. *John Sethian*



11. Greg Cassidy's Bridge



This is one of my favorite bridges (that I could get close enough to photograph without trespassing). It's on the old Western Maryland line west of Thurmont right by Rt 550. Currently, the Maryland Midland uses it. *Greg Cassidy*



Randall's Ratchets

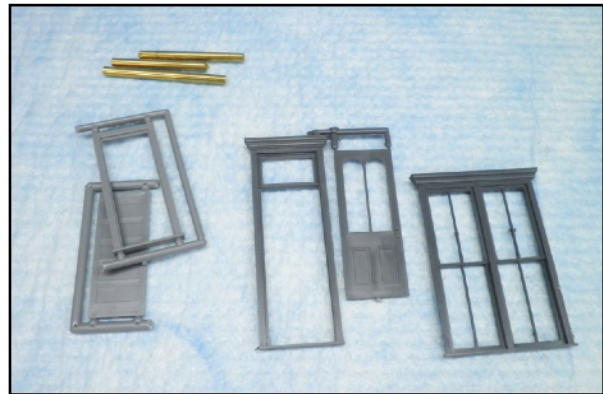
Article and Photos by Martin Brechbiel, MMR

I've been wading through my stack of structure projects for quite some time, focusing on somewhat smaller buildings and then working my way up to a larger project which is on the horizon. This article will cover another moderately sized structure for this building project, at a reasonable level of complexity to continue demonstrating basic building techniques (while also consuming more leftovers from my shop.) Using up leftovers seemed to be the best means of clearing them out of the parts bins. This will be another commercial business building and while it is still perhaps something of a simple rectangle, I'll stretch things a bit on doors and windows, and some other bits, I hope. So let's get started!

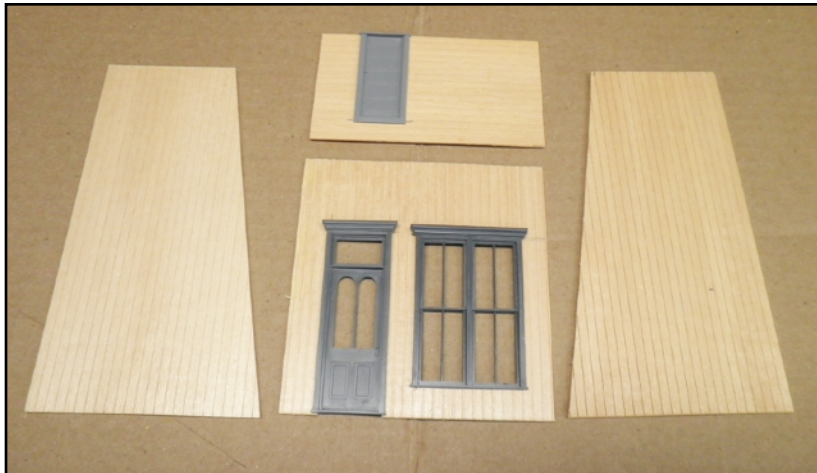
The doors and windows will again set the proportions and dimensions of the building. Did anyone notice that I don't provide the dimensions of the buildings? That's because the exact dimensions really don't matter when we're building representative structures. As long as the structures look proportionally correct in regard to the doors and windows, all other details are totally free and open.

Yet another five-panel door and frame (Tichy No. 2040) was dragged out of the parts bin to start. (There just can't be that many more in there!) Then, out of the specialty entrance door parts drawer, I pulled out a Victorian Storefront Door and Window Set (Grandt Line No. 3513). Then just to continue to embrace the spirit of using leftovers, I pulled a few pieces of brass tubing from a plastic box of similar items. If this tubing does not get used, it's just going to sit there in the box getting older. I've had it for too many decades.

[\(Photo right\)](#)

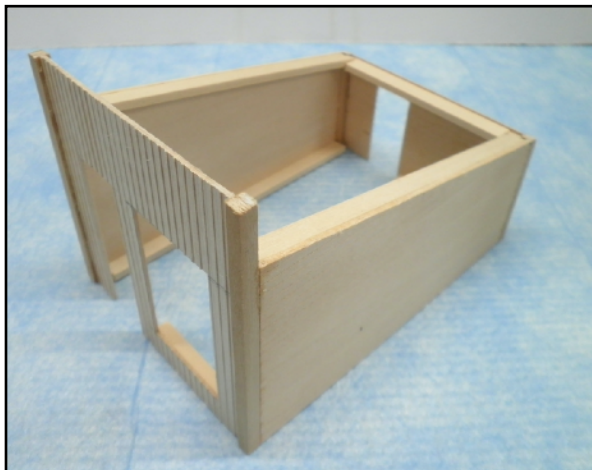


Board & batten, scribed siding, and clapboard will each be employed for the exterior walls of this building. The front wall will be made up from board & batten, the two sides will be erected with plain scribed siding, and the back wall will be clapboard. What I had on hand was what this building was covered with once upon a time. That's the story here and I'm sticking with it. The front wall had to be high enough to accommodate the components of the Victorian Storefront Door and Window Set. I made it a good bit taller to be able to make a false front wall with some ornamentation to be added later. But this also meant that the real interior roof elevation was not as high as the front wall, and that the side wall at the front of the building would be shorter than the front. The height of the back wall was just enough to work with the five-panel door and frame. This made the side walls trapezoidal, but



the dimensions are still defined in part by the doors and window. I also made this store narrow to capture something of a quaint nature and style. **(Photo left)** I cut out openings for the doors and window. Then I removed sections of the battens on the front wall to get the storefront door and window castings to fit down snug onto the boards of this wall.

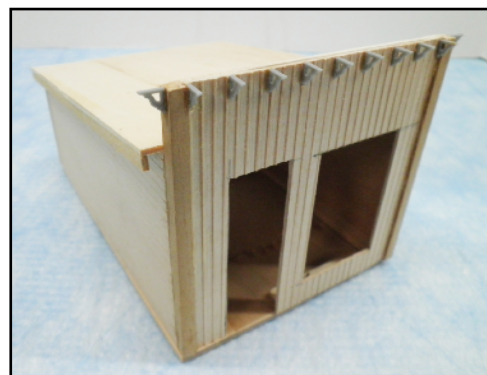
I capped off the ends of the front and back walls using Goo and CA to attach 3/16" x 3/16" basswood to form the corners. This step makes the corner board trim and provides gluing surfaces for adding the sides to the walls with more Goo and CA. Now we can assemble the four walls **(photo below)**. I added bracing or surface boards (O scale 6" x 14") to reinforce the floor mounting and for adding the roof sheathing (carpenter's glue).



I created the floor from scrap 1/16" thick basswood flat stock from the scrap box. I assembled the roof sheathing similarly from more scrap 1/16" thick basswood flat stock. I glued both the floor and roof into place with carpenter's glue, then glued a fascia board to the overhang on both sides. To add some additional ornamentation to the top, I added some brackets (Grandt Line No. 3546) across the top of the board and batten and at the sides of the end posts. I added some fine scribed siding

(1/32" thick) to the back of the board and batten above the roof. I capped the top of the false front with O scale 3" x 20". **(Photo right)**

Everything from here on is finishing work. But first I had to find some use for those bits of brass tubing. I made a stove pipe from them and just had to cut the ends to 45 degrees to



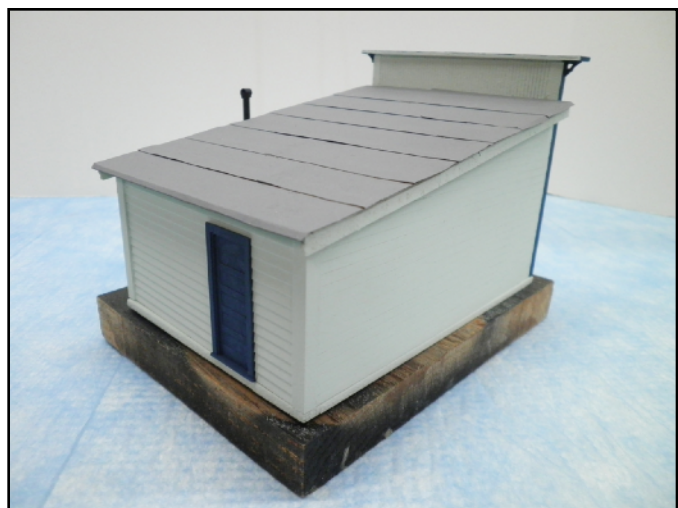
solder them together. I soldered a small brass washer into place to make a mounting flange. I soldered a little scrap of shim brass to the top of the pipe to cap it off. I painted the walls a light blue with the trim, window, and doors painted a darker blue. The label on both bottles read as Blue (Polly Scale No. 35622 and No. 410058). After the paint dried, I glazed the window and front door with some more of the leftover acetate from the mysterious unmarked envelope in the miscellaneous parts bin. Then I installed all of the castings into their places and secured them with a trace of Goo. I added the stove pipe to the one wall after drilling a hole matching the diameter of the tubing and sliding it into place secured by more Goo. I added the roof using tar paper (Builders in Scale No. 264) cut to 4' strips. I applied the strips with carpenter's glue working from the bottom of the roof up to the back of the front wall.



The final step of this project was to add a business sign. I created the sign in PowerPoint using another interesting font and tried to get the color close to the dark blue trim color. A test print (or three) got this sized to fit on the front wall in the allotted space. After I printed and cut the sign out, I glued it to some 1/32" flat basswood from the scrap box. I framed it with some pre-painted wood angle and glued it into place with a dab of Goo. [Photos left](#) and [below right](#) show the final structure.

This brings this little build to its conclusion. Again, all sorts of possible details could be added surrounding this building to blend it into the surrounding scenery. Just changing the sign to a different business could change all of those visible details. There are a lot of options available, limited only by your imagination.

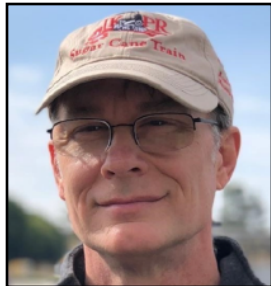
—
Martin Brechbiel MMR is an O scale modeler and Potomac's AP Manager.



Layout Visit Reports

1. Sean Hoyden's Dominion Southern Railroad

Article by Lee Stoermer, Photos by Ken Wilson and Lew Renninger



Located in a purpose built, 40' by 40' building, this multi-level, modern era (2000-2024) layout is a Tidewater Virginia-themed railroad, with a CSX flavor, designed and built for heavy mainline traffic.

Sean Hoyden has enlisted help from friends in the construction of

his layout, which is progressing through the benchwork phase and some initial scenery. This is his first foray into building a railroad layout and he has gone all-in on it. The three eight-track lower staging yards are constructed and operational. They can hold nearly 1500 pieces of rolling stock. The



middle main deck that will highlight heavy industrial switching, yards and mainline traffic is approaching the halfway point. The upper deck will be the Dominion Southern shortline railroad which will interchange with the Class 1 CSX railroad on the middle deck and serve a more rural Appalachian coal industry, with a Norfolk Southern

connection on the upper deck. The three decks are interconnected by two helixes using broad radius curves.



The layout is operated with TCS DCC, with LCC (layout command control) being used for turnout and signal operations in the fully integrated CTC (centralized traffic control) system that is being installed. JMRI is used for track



monitoring, and once the railroad is functional and operations sessions begin, it will be used for dispatching. The layout includes numerous industrial areas, including an oil refinery, an intermodal port, a large grain and port rail car transloading facility, auto racks/auto parts, plus additional yards and staging on the lower decks.

Sean Hoyden next to bridge

Track is code 83 on cork or Homasote roadbed using plywood or 2" foam as a sub-roadbed. L-girder benchwork is typical and used throughout.

Several scenic highlights are planned, one being a nearly 14'-long bridge that will span a river. It is currently being worked into the layout and its presence isn't truly comprehended until you actually view it in person.

Progress is steady and you'll need to watch for this layout as it continues to grow and come to life.

Layout Reports

2. Cam Green's Maine Central

Article and Photos by Lee Stoermer, with additional photos by Ken Wilson and Lew Renninger

Some model railroaders take years to get through their design plans, then several more years before they are able to run the first train. **Cam Green** went from raw layout room in March 2017 to hosting an operations-themed railroad with significant amounts of scenery in less than two years.

The basic framework and track were in place by November 2018. By November 2019, Cam had made the track and electronics run well, was progressing into structures and



scenery, and was hosting the first operating sessions. Now, five years later, the layout has matured into a railroad with a full complement of structures and trackage that runs well. Cam is now into details and “refinements” of some areas. He attributes this success to having a firm concept in mind and having planned

his layout before actually having the space and having decided on a firm concept. Dedicating time towards the layout, even in half hour increments, has been instrumental in his steady progress.

The area modeled is summer 1980 (1976-1984 is his range) centered around Yarmouth and Augusta, Maine, where he grew up. He has fond memories of being trackside in the area. Historical records, photos, and books have been used to get that recognizable look with most trackage close to its original placement and utilization.

While the track layout may not be completely exact, he goes for the “close enough” feel, so that those familiar can easily tell where it is.

Cam’s HO Scale layout is 28’ by 48’ in an L shape. It is located in his finished basement. Benchwork is typical box girder sections of 1x3 and 1x4 lumber, with shelving L brackets used for the upper





level supports. The lowest level is at 36", and the upper level tops out at 52". These heights were selected for personal comfort based on visits to other layouts. A helix is used to travel between the two operating levels and a lower level staging yard. Lighting, providing nice illumination, is by 4k LED light strips that are mounted around the room and under the upper deck.

Roadbed is a combination of several different materials. In

some yard areas, leftover interlocking floor matting was used as sub-roadbed with cork roadbed on top of it. This gives a definite improvement in sound deadening while not letting good product go to waste.

Track is a mix of code 83 Atlas, Micro Engineering, and Peco brands, secured with DAP clear adhesive. Cam has selected Micro Engineering Code 83 turnouts for their over center spring action without powering any frogs, preferring to keep electrical issues to a minimum. There is only one powered turnout, located at a remote spot where reaching in is troublesome and could cause damage to scenery or rolling stock.

Operations are conducted using car cards with eight single-person crews and a dispatcher. The Command Control system of choice is the DCC system by Digitrax. Many locomotives have sound installed. Rolling stock and locomotives are properly serviced before being placed into operation. Weight, wheels, and coupler operation are checked. Kadee #5 couplers have been



added, as they are less finicky than the semi-scale versions, a definite plus for an operations-themed layout. All plastic coupler clones have been replaced, as they do not tend to hold up as well in operations or with Cam's average train lengths of 20-plus cars.

Rolling stock is a mix of Atlas, Walthers, and others with Accurail cars being among his favorite for their detail level and ability to stand up to ops sessions.



Most locomotives are Atlas RS11, GP 38, and GP7, as found on MEC rosters and paint schemes. These have a better level of pulling power and consistent gearing. Another item is weathering. About 50% of what is already in use is weathered, and Cam is trying to increase that percentage. Any new additions are weathered before being added onto the layout.



Scenery is about 90% finished, with details and structures being added as these things get into those final areas. Scenery is a typical mix of hydrocol, plaster gauze, foam, and static grass. Water has been done with gloss Mod Podge in several layers. Cam painted his own backgrounds with tree lines made by dabbing brushes or sponges in varying shades, thereby giving an impression without any details. Photo backdrops have been added and used as flat structures in areas as desired.

Lee Stoermer is the Potomac Division Clerk.



Square Foot and T-Trak Module Contest Update

Article and Photos by Alex Belida, MMR, Senior Assistant Superintendent

If you're thinking about making a model for this November's Square Foot and T-Trak Module popular vote contest (and we hope you are), you might want to acquaint yourself with some tips for small projects.

But first, a reminder of the rules that were announced in our April-May issue:

1. You must build something railroad-themed, in any scale, on a one-square-foot platform of your choosing or on a T-Trak module with dimensions of 12-1/2" x 14-1/2".
2. There's only one requirement—submissions must include a piece of track. There is no limit on the height of your submission.
3. For those doing square foot projects, it doesn't have to be an actual 12"x12" square. It just can't exceed 144 square inches, enabling you to consider a longer but narrower display – 8"x18", 10"x14", 6"x24".

For your reference, the *Potomac Flyer* has had three previous articles related to dioramas.



1. "Stuck on Space? Make a Diorama" by Alex Belida on page 38 of the December 2019-January 2020 *Flyer*

2. Book Review: "The Art of the Diorama" by Ray Anderson, reviewed by Nicholas Kalis, on page 14 of the Spring 2018 *Flyer*

3. Book Review: "Diorama Design" by Ivan Kangur, reviewed by Nicholas Kalis, on page 20 of the Winter 2019 *Flyer*

I've already begun work on my own 12" x 12" platform that includes the required piece of track. While you can use a simple thin foam sheet like the one shown in the [photo left](#) (Woodland Scenics), you might

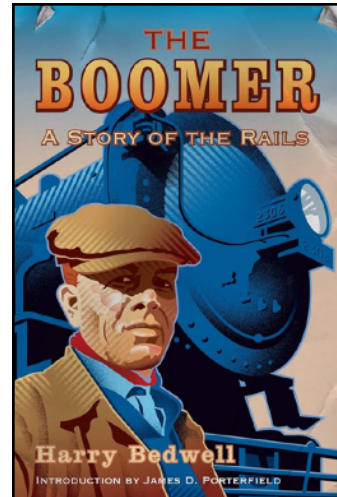
also consider plywood or thicker foam insulation. Heavy duty cardboard might also work.

Exercise some creativity! Maybe you can make something you can use on an existing layout.

The winner of this contest, popular among other NMRA Divisions, will receive a handsome certificate along with a prize. The prize will be a copy of *“The Boomer—a Story of the Rails”* by Harry Bedwell. The edition includes a terrific glossary of railroad slang. Originally published in 1942, *The Boomer* is often described as the best railroad novel ever written.

Second and third place finishers in this popular vote contest will also receive certificates.

So get going. I know some of our members are already working on their dioramas. We’d love to see a full table or two of your entries when we have our Joint Meet with James River Division in November.



Have Something to Sell?

The Potomac Flyer will publish brief “for sale” ads from members of the Potomac Division selling items from their personal model railroad layouts or collections at no charge. These will be limited to three lines only, no photographs will be allowed and those using the service must provide an email (or phone number) for prospective buyers to contact sellers for full details.

The Flyer and the Potomac Division will accept no responsibility for the contents of these ads or any transactions. If you want to post an ad, please send your text to Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org (Please note that any ad texts that exceed the line limit will be subject to editing.)

Remember: This is only for members of the Potomac Division and is not to be used for any commercial ventures, only for model materials from personal layouts that are for sale.

“Most Favored” Challenge Photos of the Past Year

Editor’s Note: It seemed like a good time to review some of our “most favored” photos from the past year’s *Flyer* challenges. Great modeling! Inspiring!

Stations: Bryan Kidd’s 1892 Depot



Motive Power: John Paganoni’s Yard Switcher



Passenger, Combine or RPO: John Paganoni's "Comboose"



Billboards: Mark Gionet's Lucky Strike Sign



Cranes, Loading Docks, Engine Facilities: Mat Thompson's Traveling Crane



Bridges: Stan Knotts' Trestle



Mini-Scenes: Greg Cassidy's Depot Coffee

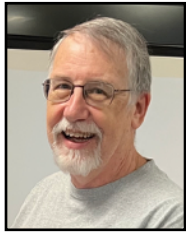


Model or Layout Feature: Bernard Kempinski's Pig Pen



Model Railroad Scholarships

Article and Photos by Greg Cassidy



I'd like to let you in on a secret: there are groups giving away thousands of dollars and most people don't want the money! At least that's the impression I get from having worked tables at different train shows in the Mid-Atlantic area. However, I think that anytime you have a new idea, it takes a while for the public (in this case the model railroading community) to catch on.

If you are a model railroader graduating model railroader, you may be wondering what your future holds. You may be considering attending college, but the cost can be daunting. Thankfully, there are organizations that recognize the hard work and dedication it takes to be a model railroader and a student at the same time, and they offer scholarships to help ease the financial burden.

Applications

The Rockville Model Railroad Society (RMRS) is one such organization. It is a 501c3 non-profit that has offered scholarships for the last two years. For the 2024-2025 school year, it is offering a scholarship opportunity for all Maryland high school graduating seniors who are active in model railroading and plan to pursue a degree in one of the STEAM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math). The scholarship grant is \$2,500. To qualify, a student must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and be accepted to an accredited college, university, or vocational school in the STEAM field. You must also submit an essay describing your involvement with model railroading and its impact on your life.

Another 501c3 non-profit organization that offers scholarships to model railroaders is New Tracks Modeling. It is currently awarding three \$2,000 scholarships to graduating seniors who plan to pursue a degree in the STEAM field. To qualify, a student must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and be accepted to an accredited college or university. The applicant must also submit a portfolio showcasing their work in the field of model railroading.

Walthers, the well-known manufacturer and distributor of model railroad supplies and tools, is yet another organization that offers scholarships to model railroaders. Walthers will award \$2,500 scholarships to two deserving students to pursue a STEAM program at a two-year or four-year technical college or university.





These scholarships are a great way to help pay for college and pursue a passion for model railroading at the same time. They also demonstrate that model railroading is a respected and valued avocation that offers many opportunities for those who are dedicated and passionate about the hobby.

In addition to these scholarships, there are many other resources available to model railroaders who are pursuing higher education. For example, many colleges and universities offer programs in railroad engineering, transportation, and logistics. These programs can help prepare students for a career in the railroad industry by giving them the skills and knowledge needed to succeed.

There are also some professional organizations and associations that cater to model railroaders. These organizations offer networking opportunities, educational resources, and other benefits to help model railroaders or railfans with college tuition. For example, there is the AMTRAK Academic Scholarship Program. Academic scholarships are offered in such categories as engineering, information technology, and business. Amtrak is investing in future railroad professionals by supporting their educational endeavors through this program.

Donations

If you're not a graduating senior (maybe you remember those days) you can still help. Both New Tracks Modeling and RMRS are set up to accept donations through a non-profit donation site called Zeffy. Zeffy is the only fundraising platform for nonprofits that is 100% free. With Zeffy, the organization receives every dollar the donor pledges. And, of course, there is always the old-fashioned way of sending a check. Remember, any donation to a non-profit organization is tax-deductible depending on your circumstances. The Walthers' scholarship is fully funded by Walthers for the coming year.

In conclusion, if you are a graduating model railroader, there are many opportunities available to help you pursue your passion and further your education. Scholarships from organizations like the Rockville Model Railroad Society, New Tracks Modeling, and Walthers can help ease the financial burden of college expenses, while programs and resources offered by colleges, universities, and professional organizations can help prepare you for a successful career in the railroad industry. With hard work, dedication, and a love for model railroading, the sky is the limit!

Rockville Model Railroad Society: <https://rmrrs.wordpress.com/scholarship/>

New Tracks Modeling: <https://newtracksmodeling.com/scholarship/>

Walthers: <https://trains.walthers.com/2024-walthers-scholarship-application-lp>

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[New Partners in RED*] May 2024

Partnership Program

To receive your member discount codes, log into the NMRA website and click on the **Partnership Program** link on the top line (or the **Benefits** link lower down). You'll see a complete list of participating firms and learn the special discount codes to use in your purchases.

Remember: You must have an NMRA member login to get the discount codes!



Why join the NMRA?

The NMRA has many benefits of membership.

- [NMRA Member Benefits](#) - summary of benefits of NMRA Membership
- [Kalmbach Memorial Library](#) - perhaps one of the finest resources available to anyone interested in railroads or model railroads... members get special discounts and first crack at special releases of books and surplus books. We are now partnered with the California State Railroad Museum and they will provide services to our members at their published rates.
- Fellowship of other modelers
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- The [Achievement Program](#) - there's no better way to improve your modeling
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- Access to Master Model Railroaders - they come from all over the world to the National convention. MMRs attend most Regional and Divisional functions, too! (MMR list by [Number](#), by [Region](#).)
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- [Pike Registry](#) -- Register your model railroad name
- [100% NMRA Club](#) - The extra benefits of having all of your rail club members also members in the NMRA



Paymaster's Report

by Jerry Stanley, Potomac Division Paymaster

1. Checking account (beginning balance)	\$ 5619.15
2. Cash on Hand (Hobby Barn)	\$0.00
3. <u>Total assets as of 03/29/2024 (end balance)</u>	<u>\$5619.15</u>
4. Deposits by date	
a) \$293.71 3/27/24	
5. <u>Total Deposits</u>	<u>\$293.71</u>
6. Individual Deposits	
a) \$293.71	
7. <u>Total Deposits</u>	<u>\$293.71</u>
8. Total payouts	
a) \$0.00	
9. <u>Total Payouts</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
10. Checking account balance as of 3/29/2024 (Lines [1+5]-9) =	\$6200.44
11. Total Cash on hand 3/29/2024	\$0.00
12. Total Assets (lines 10+11)	\$6200.44





Calendar of Coming Events

Saturday, June 8, 10AM **Hobby Barn Technical Clinic** “TBD”

Sunday, June 16, 3PM **Virtual Clinic** “Building a Brass Locomotive Part I: Tools and Materials” Andrew Dodge, MMR

Saturday, July 13, 10AM **In-Person Meet & Layout Visits**, Leisure World

Sunday, July 21, 3PM **Virtual Clinic** “Building a Brass Locomotive Part II - Constructing the Locomotive and Tender” Andrew Dodge, MMR



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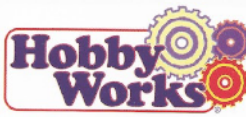
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