

The Potomac Flyer

Dec. 2021-Jan. 2022

The Newsletter of the Potomac Division, MER, NMRA



Inside This Issue:

Our Favorite Trackside Structures

Tips on Improving Clinic Presentations

Potomac at Timonium & Hobby Barn 2021

Board Elections, Abrams Award and Much More...

All Inside, So Read On...

Bill of Lading: Page



- 3 From the Business Car**
- 5 Candidates Wanted!**
- 6 Nominees Sought for Abrams Award**
- 7 The Potomac Division at Timonium (and Beyond)
by Mike Powers**
- 9 Mt. Clare Junction Report**
- 12 James River Joint Meet Report**
- 15 Potomac Division Teams: Sign Up!**
- 16 Achievement Program Report**
- 17 Micro Layouts?**
- 18 In Memoriam: Kenneth Van Mechelen**
- 19 How to Improve Your Clinic Presentations: Tips from MMRs**
- 26 The Trackage Structures Challenge Entries**
- 40 A Modeler's Progress by Bill Mosteller**
- 43 Hobby Barn Reports by Ken Wilson and Jerry Stanley**
- 46 Sugar Cane Car by Nicholas Kalis**
- 47 Love Those Clamshell Buckets by John Paganoni**
- 49 Bodie: One Modeler's Inspiration by Alex Belida**
- 52 Huzzah Hobbies: A Review by Nicholas Kalis**
- 54 Paymaster's Report**
- 55 Calendar of Coming Events**

Cover Photo: Potomac Division Represented With New Banners At Timonium Train Show: **Ken Wilson (L)** and **Steve Stroschein (R)** (Ken Wilson Camera)

The Potomac Flyer

Submission Deadlines - Issue

Oct. 30 for Dec.-Jan. Feb.28 for April-May

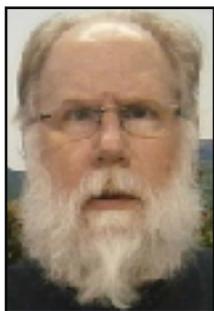
June 30 for Aug.-Sept. Dec. 30 for Feb.-Mar.

April 30 for June-July Aug. 30 for Oct.-Nov.



From the Business Car: Winter Is Coming

by Martin Brechbiel, MMR, Potomac Division Superintendent



I'm late, so very late, for an important date. No, not heading down the rabbit hole. Just late writing this. It's November and it's 35° outside. Some might think that cold weather is model train time. Maybe that's true for some, but it's always model train time around here.

So, October saw the MER convention in Hunt Valley, Maryland ([see story page 9](#)). From what I saw (not all that much actually because of Board meetings and two multi-hour clinic sessions while commuting back and forth from Virginia), everything seemed to be close to normal. Yes, people wore masks....but to quote Westley in the 1987 film "The Princess Bride", *"It's just that masks are terribly comfortable. I think everyone will be wearing them in the future."* There were multiple clinic rooms and even one fully dedicated to hands-on clinics with plastic sheeting down on the floor. (Well, some modelers are less neat and tidy than others!) The contest room was a little sparse but in the layout room there was a nice assortment in multiple scales (something for everyone!) set up and operating. Overall attendance was solid – not the best ever but not the worse ever either. I hope that overall that this convention was not only a success for the attendees, but also a financial success for the host Division and the MER. We might know more about that in the future.

Then, in early November, the Potomac Division reprised the 2019 joint meet with the James River Division out at Battlefield Baptist Church in Warrenton, Virginia. ([Photo right by Rod Vance; story on page 12](#))

I will also note that the Potomac Division was at the Great Scale Train Show at the Timonium Fair Grounds. The Division plans on having a presence at future train shows in our area. You can help out (and maybe score a free pass for admission) by signing up for a block of time to be at the table representing your Division (**we need volunteers to help out!**). For those working on the AP Volunteer certificate, it's a great way to score some time units while also being able to attend a train show. Contact our Paymaster, Jerry Stanley, for more details!



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.

The Division Crew:

Superintendent Martin Brechbiel, MMR, 703-309-3082, Superintendent@potomac-nmra.org

Sr.-Asst.-Super Alex Belida, MMR, 301-424-8164. Sr-Asst-Super@potomac-nmra.org

Asst. Superintendent Ernie Little, MMR, 571-383-7316, Asst-Super@potomac-nmra.org

Paymaster Jerry Stanley, 540-364-1815, Paymaster@potomac-nmra.org

Clerk & Layout Tours Nick Kalis, 703-585-0100, Clerk@potomac-nmra.org

Achievement Program Coordinator Mat Thompson, MMR, 703-743-1895, Achievement-Program@potomac-nmra.org

Webmaster Ernie Little, 571-383-7316, Webmaster@potomac-nmra.org

Potomac Flyer Editor & Publisher Alex Belida, MMR, 301-424-8164, Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org

Flyer Asst. Editors-Proofreaders: Dan Ebert, Bob Sprague

Last, but not least, the 2022 elections aren't so far off. We have two specific positions up for consideration, Assistant Superintendent and Paymaster, due to the changes in our bylaws. We will also be using electronic voting (saves time, money, and it's just too easy not to use), so look for that in your email inbox!

Welcome New Members!

October:

Daniel Travis, Dulles, VA

November:

Charles Hall, Waldorf, MD
Keith Jordan, Germantown, MD
Kipp Martin, Washington, DC
Diego Procacci, Manassas, VA

Once again I have to emphasize the critical importance of having candidates for election to the Board as this directly impacts the very real viability of the Potomac Division. If you fail to step forward and we lack adequate officials on the Board, then the Division fails too. It's simply unrealistic to expect a handful of people to shoulder all of the work for the other 250 members of this Division. Contact me directly or the members of the Nominations/Election committee if you are interested in running for either position.

More information regarding this is

elsewhere in The Flyer. (See page 5) Have I mentioned that we need volunteers to help out yet?

Model train season also seems to coincide with leaf raking and bringing in firewood so getting that outdoor exercise (or in my case *overdoing* that outdoor exercise) is something to pursue while the weather seems to cooperate. So, get outside and enjoy what you can or enjoy the fun of building models and layouts! I've got resin to cast so I'm abandoning the keyboard now. Just remember to take photos, write articles, and send them to the Editor of *The Flyer*, Alex Belida, MMR and share your fun with the rest of the Potomac Division!



Candidates Wanted: 2022 Division Elections

Two positions on the Potomac Division Board of Directors are up for election in April 2022. These two positions are:

Division Assistant Superintendent
Division Paymaster

Members interested in running for office in the 2022 elections are required by the Division bylaws to notify the Nominations Committee by email, **no later than midnight, February 4, 2022**, and supply them with a picture, a short biography not to exceed 200 words, and a statement about why they are running for a position. Candidates should send their information to all Committee members.

The following individuals are the Nominations Committee for the 2022 elections: Mark Gionet (Chair), Bill Demas and Brian Sheron. These members are available to answer any questions concerning the duties and activities associated with service on the Board. The following are email addresses for the committee members:

1. Mark Gionet - mgionet@lsginc.com
2. Bill Demas - wsdemas@verizon.net
3. Brian Sheron - bwsheron@me.com

The election process will take place in April of 2022. Ballots will be sent to Division members for whom the Division lacks email addresses; voting by everyone else will be done electronically. This provides great convenience for all and a significant cost savings for your Division.

Important dates concerning the 2022 election process are as follows:

- **February 4, 2022 (Midnight)** - Deadline for candidates to notify the Nominations Committee of their intent to run for office and provide a current picture, biography, and statement as to why they are running for office.
- **April 1, 2022** - the Potomac Flyer and emails from the Division will provide a list of candidates for office for the membership to consider. Mailed ballots to those members without email addresses on record will be mailed out.
- **April 15, 2022** - eVoting will commence
- **April 22, 2022** - eVoting will conclude; deadline for receipt of mailed ballots by the Nominations Committee.
- **April 25, 2022** - Candidates will be notified of election results.
- **May 17, 2022** - The new Board of Directors will meet.

Potomac Division Board of Directors Seeks Nominations for the Abrams Award

The Board of Directors is seeking nominations for the first annual Marshall Abrams award to recognize a Potomac Division member who has demonstrated outstanding service to the Division.

The following guidelines will be used in determining the recipient:

1. The recipient must be a member in good standing of the Division.
2. The recipient must have shown a level of service above and beyond that expected by other members of the Division.
3. In addition to service to the Division, service to the Mid-Eastern Region and national model train efforts may also be considered.

Nominations should be sent by January 1, 2022 to Martin Brechbiel by email: superintendent@potomac-nmra.org. The email should cite reasons why the nominee should be considered.

The Abrams Award was created by the Potomac Division Board of Directors in the Spring of 2021 in honor of the late Marshall Abrams who served the Division in several positions including Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, *Potomac Flyer* Publisher and Division webmaster. He also served as the Chairman of at least two Regional conventions and several Division mini-conventions.

The selection process will take place in January. A committee appointed by the Division Superintendent will review the nominations and select the individual(s) to receive the award. The committee is authorized to select two individuals if it sees fit. Although the committee will determine the recipient(s) of the award by February 1st, 2022, the announcement of the individual(s) will not be made until the Division's Annual Meeting.

DON'T FORGET: SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATIONS BY JANUARY 1, 2022!

Volunteers Needed:

The Superintendent is looking for 2-3 volunteers to serve on the Committee to select the recipient for the Abrams Award.

If you're willing, contact the Super:
superintendent@potomac-nmra.org

All Aboard: Timonium!

Article and Photo by Mike Powers



Twelve members of the Potomac Division volunteered their time to conduct a membership drive at the Great Scale Model Train Show (GSMTS) at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium, MD. This particular show was held in the Cow Palace on Saturday and Sunday, October 2 and 3.

As someone who was attending the show for the first time in a few years, I can certainly give the layout and operation of the show a thumbs-up! Whether you are familiar with the show or a new attendee, the building layout was spacious and appeared well-attended by vendors and model railroad clubs.

I considered our table location to be really good as it was near the front door, sufficient to catch attendees both arriving and departing. Our table included handout copies of previous issues of the NMRA magazine (which were eagerly snapped up), information on membership levels, and a sign-up sheet for prospective members.

Those who provided their names were informed that our division would be sending our latest monthly issue of the *Potomac Flyer* newsletter.

We used three newly-purchased banners highlighting the benefits of membership. Thanks to Paymaster Jerry Stanley for overseeing their procurement and design.

Our volunteer efforts included talking with show attendees about what the NMRA is, what it does, and how it can help members get more enjoyment from the hobby. This includes hands-on clinics, video clinics, the NMRA and model railroad magazines, fellow members who live in a geographic area, local modeling conventions/meetings, and websites on the local and national level.

My observation was that we were well received by all who talked with us. Our efforts resulted in over 20 sign-ups and potential new members! One visitor told us he was definitely going to join the NMRA and looked forward to participating in our division activities.

--

Michael Powers is a retired Federal Employee originally from R.I. His interests are HO scale across various locations with a bit of a focus on the New Haven Railroad. He enjoys periodic train travel in the states and increasingly overseas.

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The Potomac Division plans to set up a stand at the Greenberg train show at the Dulles Expo Center in December and again at Timonium in February 2022. Want to help? Volunteers should contact Clerk Nicholas Kalis or Paymaster Jerry Stanley.

Layout Tour Signs Needed!

Do you have any of the Division's Layout Tour signs? If so, we need them back.

Please contact the Superintendent to arrange for a pick-up.

Email to: superintendent@potomac-nmra.org



Mt. Clare Junction

Text and Photos by Alex Belida, *Flyer* Editor



More than 150 Mid-Eastern Region (MER) members and friends gathered in Hunt Valley, Maryland for the organization's 75th anniversary convention. MER President Kurt Thompson was pleased with the turnout, which followed the cancellation of last year's convention due to the COVID pandemic.

But there were signs that normality has not returned completely. Several clinics were cancelled, there were few vendors, and participation in the various contests was unusually low. (Judging, photo right)

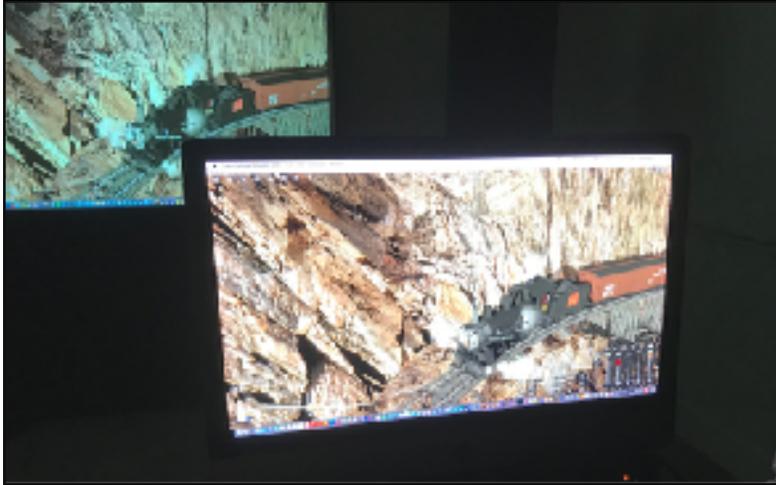


The prize winners included a fine model of a steam engine servicing area by Jerry Lauchle, MMR. It received the Best in Show award. [\(Photo below\)](#)



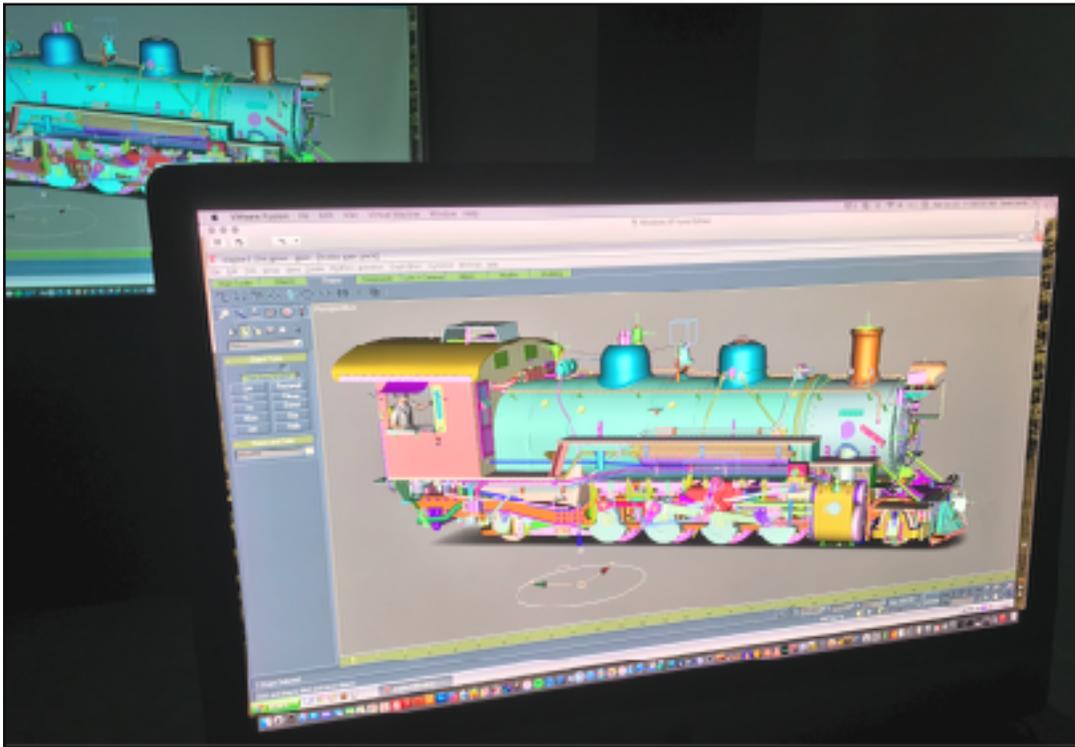
Among the clinics that were held, Potomac Division Superintendent and MER Secretary Martin Brechbiel conducted a two-session, hands-on tutorial on resin-casting. [\(Photos below, L & R\)](#)





One fascinating display at the convention was that of the Trainz Simulator. It was operated by computer graphics expert and designer Steve Lerro who showed attendees how to create layouts and design engines on a computer – the perfect solution for a modeler who has no space for an actual layout.

(Photos left and below)



Among Potomac Division members who hosted layout tours were Nicholas Kalis and Brian Sheron as well as Al Pugliese. Al reported 45 visitors over two days. Clinics were also conducted by Nick, Brian Sheron, MMR, and Bob Sprague. Bob says he had just two participants in his hand-carved rock clinic. But he says “they seemed to enjoy it” – an overall sentiment shared by those who attended the convention.

James River and Potomac Division Joint Meet 2021

Article by Potomac's Jerry Stanley, Photos by Rod Vance of James River

In the midst of COVID in 2020, we started looking to the future and hopefully better times. The very first email sent out to start planning the James River & Potomac Division Joint meet, or MiniCon as some called it, went out on the 23rd of February. With a positive vision, countless hours of hard work and planning, and a whole bunch of volunteers, the James River and the Potomac Divisions held our



Jerry Stanley Speaks to Attendees at Meet

second annual joint meet on November 6th at Battlefield Baptist Church in Warrenton, Va. We had four clinics, two layout tours, an open house at a historically renovated N&W Caboose, with door prizes from NMRA "Partners" and items donated by the James River crew. We also added White Elephant tables. Considering this is our Division's first major event since the start of COVID, the attendance was rather good. We had around fifty members attend the event. Given current climate and health concerns, we counted this as a victory.



The four clinics given this year were by: Ken Wilson on the "N&W Caboose Acquisition and Restoration" project which covered the restoration of the N&W caboose donated by Norfolk Southern in 1995; Marty McGuirk (photo left) on "Modeling an October Scene" which discussed techniques to model a fall scene using color, blending static grass, trees and other scenic materials; John Vogler on "What are Railroad Signals" which reviewed the various methods of signal used by different railroads, signalling history and prototypical practices; and Ed Fischer whose clinic was titled "A Railroad that Never Was and One that Ain't No Mo" which discussed how two railroads ended up in his basement and their history.

Door Prizes

At the conclusion of the clinics, the door prizes were awarded. As each member signed in they were given two tickets with the same number. One ticket went into a can and the other was kept by the attendee. Potomac's Martin Brechbiel, MMR, (not having a ticket in the can) drew the tickets ([photo below](#)) with James River's Jerry Ritter reading the number. Everyone who stayed to the end was able to receive a door prize provided by the James River and our NMRA member partners.

We are so thankful to the NMRA "Partners" who sponsored this event! They are:

Broadway Limited
Scale Trains
Show case miniatures
TSG Multimedia
Bowser
Logic Rail
Team track Models
Don freight Studios
Rix Products
Micro Trains
Lionel
Min Prints
Digikeijs
RR Cirkits Inc
TSG Media
Woodland Scenics



At the conclusion of the joint meet, we passed around a sign-up sheet for volunteers for upcoming events in the two divisions. We had 10 people sign up for Zoom clinics, Hobby Barn clinics, layout tours, help with our websites, and writing articles for the Division newsletters. After the arm twisting for volunteers was concluded, Jerry Ritter (stepping in for James River Superintendent Phil Taylor who was recovering from surgery) and Martin Brechbiel spoke before sending attendees off to lunch (on their own) or to visit layouts.

Layout tours

This year we had two layout tours; one by Cam Green and his "Maine central Railroad"; the other layout tour was hosted by John Swanson and his "Cresson Branch RR." ([Photos next page](#))

Please join us at the next event. These have been FREE events with no entry fee. We have taken up donations for the church providing the space and this year members donated train items toward the churches Awana program. This has been a win, win for all parties with the children getting trains and the Division introducing kids to model railroading.



Cam Green Layout

The James River and the Potomac Divisions are already looking to the 2022 Joint meet and have started planning for that event. In addition to our yearly event activities we are looking to add two more clinics, model judging for AP certificates and popular vote model judging. We would also like to invite our surrounding divisions to join in

the fun. Once we have the location nailed down we will start advertising the date on our websites, newsletters and in the NMRA magazine in the club car section.



John Swanson Layout

Hope to see you there at the next meet in 2022!

For more photos, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/vn6ay44r>

Did You Know? The Potomac Division Has Teams!

No, not softball or anything like that. These are teams in the sense that Potomac Division members can link up with fellow members in the same geographic area who share their interests. These could include operating sessions, layout construction and workshops as well as ride sharing to open houses, model train shows and similar events. Many members have complained our Division is lacking in opportunities for socializing. COVID has interrupted these. But with vaccinations and other precautions in place, we can look ahead. It's completely voluntary and free.

The list of local team coordinators is below. If you opt in, you'll get the contact information for others on your team. Sign up by calling or e-mailing your team leader.

Virginia:

Arlington County: Brad Stanford, 703-559-1166, stanford@smart.net

Fauquier: Jerry Stanley, 703-595-8081, paymaster@potomac-nmra.org

Loudoun: Lee Stoermer, 928-580-3209, leetrains@yahoo.com

Prince William: John Paganoni, 703-791-5055, john.paganoni@comcast.net

Fairfax: Bill Mosteller, 703-272-8190, wsm@greatdecals.com

Maryland:

Charles County: Dale Latham, 301-645-3055, dale.latham@verizon.net

Montgomery: VACANT (Please volunteer, contact our Clerk, Nick Kalis, 703-585-0100, Clerk@potomac-nmra.org)

Achievement Program Report

by Mat Thompson, MMR, Division AP Coordinator

No new certificates to report this issue but I am aware of several people working on models.

I hope modeling and the work you do supporting the hobby is fun. But sadly, when you are ready to get credit for that work and earn Achievement Program certificates there is some paperwork.

All the forms are at [Forms | National Model Railroad Association \(nmra.org\)](https://www.nmra.org/forms). Most can be downloaded either in a PDF or DOC format: DOC - Microsoft Word (download to your computer, save, complete, and you have a form that can be updated as you make progress.) PDF - Adobe PDF* (read/print only)

AREA	CATEGORY	RECORD & VALIDATION	EVALUATION FORM	STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS (SOQ)*	Remarks
Model Railroad Equipment	Motive Power		2019	2019	3 Evaluation Forms required – one for each Merit Award model
	Cars		2019	2019	4 Evaluation Forms required – one for each Merit Award model
Settings	Structures		2019	2019	6 Evaluation Forms required – one for each Merit Award model
	Scenery		2019	2019	1 Evaluation Form showing Scenery Merit Award
	Prototype Model		2019	2019	1 Evaluation Form showing Prototype Model Merit Award
Engineering and Operations	Civil		2019	2019	Narrative description of the modeling work
	Electrical			2019	Narrative description of the modeling work
	Dispatcher			2020	
Service to the Hobby	Official			2019	
	Volunteer	2019		2019	

Often requirements change. Those changes are captured on the most current Evaluation Forms. All the changes I have seen simplify requirements so current forms can save a lot of time and work.

*For the categories that require model or models earn Merit Awards or require descriptions of the work, the (SOQ) needs the following information attached for each model:

- Attachment giving detailed descriptions of the model.
- Identification of the scratchbuilt features for each of the model.
- List of all the commercial components appearing on each model.
- List the materials used in building each of the models.

A Tip: Remember judges will see your work. The SOQ information is only supporting documentation. You aren't writing an article for the model press. Bullet lists and pictures are good.

Use more expansive narration only if you are explaining modeling techniques and model details that highlight your craftsmanship and/or explain processes judges might not know such as making computer drawings for 3D printing.

Material lists can be simple, i.e., "Evergreen styrene strips", rather than a list of each size strip and its catalog number.

--

Mat Thompson, MMR is the Potomac Division's Achievement Program Coordinator

Micro Layouts?

Not everyone has the inclination, space or time for a monster layout. But did you know there is a whole subculture of model railroading dedicated to micro layouts?

Potomac Division Clerk **Nicholas Kalis** recently pointed me to a digital publication called the Micro Model Railway Dispatch. The focus is on layouts no larger than two or three square feet with some operational capability. Some even fit in a small box.

You can check out the Dispatch and other micro information at: <http://mmrrc.blogspot.com>. The website even has a subsection containing micro layout track plans. There are also links to other interesting micro layout sites.

Alex Belida, Flyer Editor

In Memoriam: Kenneth Van Mechelen

The Potomac Division has learned of the death of Kenneth Van Mechelen on September 28, 2021. His memorial service at River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Bethesda will be on January 8, 2022. He is survived by his wife, Robin, who says Ken's love of trains began when he saw the B&O running on a cliff behind his grandparents' home in West Falls, NY. Ken was born in 1935 to the late Julius Van Mechelen and Esther Thursack in Buffalo, New York. He obtained a B.S. in mathematics from the University of Buffalo and an M.S. in computer science from George Washington University. He worked for IBM for 35 years, retiring as a Senior Systems Engineer in IBM's Federal Systems Division. Kenneth became a Life Member of the NMRA in 1949. Fellow Potomac Division member Bill Mosteller recalls that in 2001, Ken suggested he produce decals to re-number Athearn Baltimore & Ohio 4-bay hoppers. The idea turned into Bill's set number 79, B&O Athearn Hopper Renumber, which enjoyed a 12-year career with Great Decals!

Estate Sale

An estate sale will be held on January 22, 2022 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3700 Old Lee Highway from 1100 a.m. -2:00 p.m. The vast majority of the items are 15mm historical wargaming figures. However, there are around 10-12 HO scale German buildings kits from Faller, Kibri and Vollmer. These are unassembled. For further info contact Tim Tilson at hmslydia@msn.com or 703-273-9436.

Improving Clinic Presentations

*[Editor's Note: The Potomac Division is always looking for clinicians. But there's no guidebook on how to prepare. The Flyer asked several of our **Master Model Railroaders** for tips on presenting a successful clinic, whether virtual or in-person. Their suggestions follow. The screen shots below are taken from the contributors' recent clinics, all of which are available on the Potomac Division YouTube Channel: <https://tinyurl.com/r7ctdhxe>]*



Bernard Kempinski: Some guidelines I follow are:

1. Use minimal text. I like to show an image or a video clip on my slides and talk about it without a lot of text.
2. Don't read the slide to the audience.
3. Don't put long lists of info on a slide.
4. Avoid gimmicks in slide animation as they rarely add value.

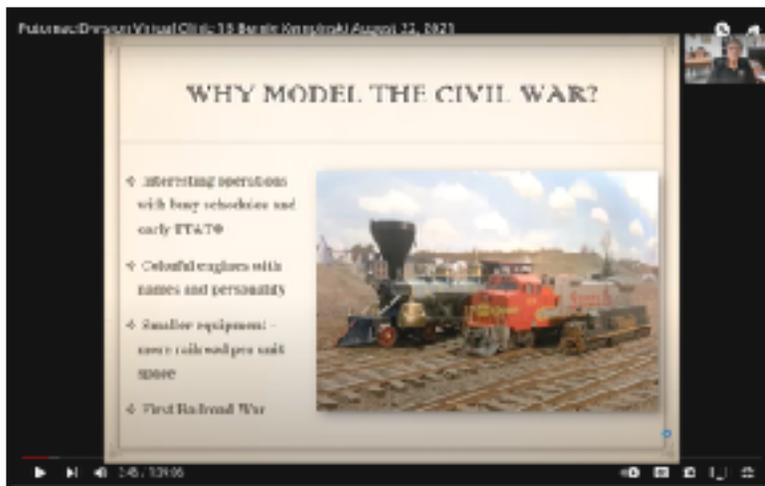
In photo essays a cross dissolve is usually ok.

5. In structuring your talk, I like the approach the US Army taught me. Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you told them. In other words, have an intro where you discuss your overall outline of your talk. Then do your talk. And then you have a summary of your talk. The intro and the summary highlight the important points.

6. Include an acknowledgment at the end for any people you wish to thank. Most model railroaders have had help and it's good to acknowledge those helpers, even if it's just your wife or parents.

7. Avoid detailed background on your personal life unless it's germane to the talk.

8. Practice your talk so it flows smoothly. Giving a model railroad presentation is essentially public speaking. So you have to practice. One distracting thing most people do is to use verbal tics, such as "like," "umm", "you know" and "so." The only way to avoid using these is to become conscious of them. Watch yourself on video or



listen to yourself on audio. I know I was shocked the first time I did that. I still let a few of these verbal tics sneak in, but I am much more conscious of it when I do a presentation.

9. Create good graphics.

10. Insert short video clips if they support or demonstrate what you are saying.

11. In structuring your slides, have the title of each slide convey where in the outline the slide fits. This is hard to describe but easy to show with an actual example. So if you had three categories in your presentation, say background execution and lessons learned. Each slide in each category of the outline would have that category on the top. In my example background, execution or lessons learned. That way people know where they are in your presentation because you would have already told them your outline at the beginning. And then when you're done you show them the outline and summarize again.

12. Hands on clinics are great If you're doing a "how to." In the US Army we always try to teach our soldiers by doing and not by telling. But hands on clinics are hard to set up. They can require a lot of resources. And they usually have limited size audiences.



Andrew Dodge: To me, giving a good clinic requires both a good topic and a good presentation style. Any subject is going to be of interest to some but not to others. The best topic is one that has universal applications. One could give a clinic on the Cresco water tank just east of Chama, New Mexico, on the Denver, Rio Grande Western RR, which would have limited interest. But if the clinic uses that as the base for a general examination of water tanks, then it would have a wider appeal (e.g., how are tanks of this type built, what are the methods of getting water into the tank, what about freezing, how to model one

etc.) Anyone giving a clinic is going to talk about what they know, hopefully, but one needs to make the information useful to a wide range of modelers.

Concerning presentation, one needs some speaking and/or demonstration skills. Engage your audience. Make eye contact. Speak in a clear voice, but not in a monotone. Don't talk too fast and



slur words together. (More and more of your audience will likely have hearing problems.) Adding something funny or things of a side interest that the audience will understand would help. If you are doing a PowerPoint program, remember that you will be doing it in the dark, which is conducive to going to sleep. Display some animation and enthusiasm for your subject.

One other thing: Don't overdue it. About 40 minutes is nearing the limit that people will want to listen to a PowerPoint program. Leave them wanting more, which is why there is a Q&A period. An hour or more, unless it is a "make and take" session, gets to be too much.



Ernie Little: I look at the following:

1. The topic. I enjoy clinics that speak to how to do something, such as how to build a car or how to hook up switches. I also enjoy those that talk about how to conduct operations-related tasks on the model railroad. Hands on clinics are great but require time and space to make them work well, not to mention planning and cleanup activities.

2. The presentation is important. The leader needs to know his or her topic and keep it at the audience's comprehension level. Avoid fancy jargon and demonstrate that you are well

versed in your subject. PowerPoint can be a dangerous thing, as it is easy to cause "death by PowerPoint" (too many slides) as opposed to the number of slides it takes to speak to the subject.

3. It is good to provide information and then back it up with a slide to show how to apply it.

Knowledge, in my mind, is useless without knowing how to apply it.





Brian Sheron: People attend a clinic because they want to learn about the topic you will be discussing. Success is measured by how well your audience feels they learned something when the clinic ends. In order for the audience to learn something from your clinic, it must have a clear purpose, be informative, be presented in a logical manner, be interesting to the audience, and end on time. Below are the three areas clinicians need to address when preparing and presenting a clinic and some suggestions on what to consider

in each area.

A. Preparation

1. Decide on what your message is. In other words, at the end of the clinic, what do you want your audience to learn from your clinic.
2. Do your homework. As appropriate and necessary, research the subject you will be discussing so you are knowledgeable about what else has been done on the subject. Depending on the subject of your clinic, you can provide background information at the beginning of the clinic, or you can include it in various subsections of your clinic.
3. Prepare an outline of your clinic. A clinic should provide the information you want the audience to hear in a clear and logical sequence. Start with an introduction. Then provide some background. If your subject can be logically broken up into subsections, identify the subsections you will be discussing. For each subsection, identify what information you want to tell the audience. Your clinic should have a conclusion. Identify what the main points are you want the audience to leave with.

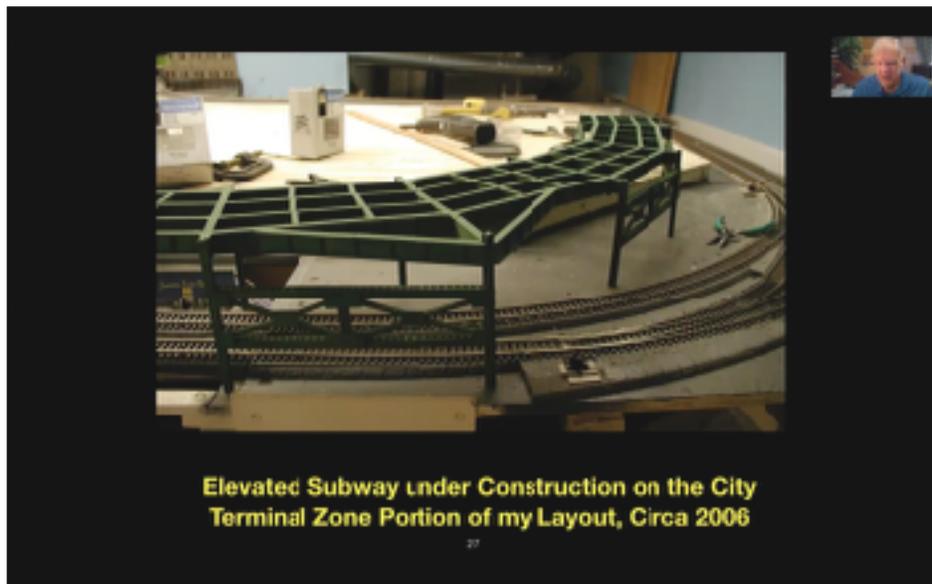
B. Preparing the clinic slides

1. Find out how much time you are allotted to present your clinic (most clinics are allowed one hour). Assume that there will be questions at the end. Ten minutes is a good estimate of time to allow for questions. Therefore, plan on presenting your clinic in approximately 50 minutes.
2. Plan your clinic to fill the available time. Audiences are expecting to hear an approximately 50 minute clinic, not a 20-30 minute one.
3. Include photos, diagrams, etc. in your presentation. Model railroading is a very visual hobby. Clinic audiences like to see photos, diagrams, etc. related to the subject you are discussing.
4. Try not to put too much information on a single slide. Three to five bullets per slide should be the norm. Use a font that is easy on the eyes. Don't write your bullets in prose, like you were writing an article on the subject. Bullets should be terse. You can expand on the bullets during your narrative (See item C.4 below).

5. Practice, practice, practice!!!! Practice presenting your clinic and make sure you can do it in the time allotted. Often, you will initially find that you cannot get through all of your slides in the allotted time. If so, see which ones can be eliminated, or perhaps combined. However, keep practicing and editing your presentation until you are confident that you can present it in the time allotted. The last thing you want is for your audience to start getting up and leaving to get to the next clinic, or a convention official to interrupt and tell you to stop. Moreover, running over impacts the next clinician who has to set up their clinic presentation.

C. Presenting the Clinic

No matter how good your presentation slides are, the presentation of a clinic can be the difference between the clinic being a success and a failure.



1. It helps to introduce yourself, and maybe give a little bit of background about yourself (what division are you in, what railroad do you model, what scale do you model and perhaps what made you to want to present this clinic).
2. When speaking, look at the audience, do not look at the screen behind you. When you put up a slide, glance at it so you know what is on it, then turn and face the audience when you discuss what is on the slide.
3. Speak up and speak clearly. You want people in the back of the room to hear and understand you.
4. Don't read the slides!!!!!! People in the audience know how to read. They don't need you to read the slides for them. You should discuss the information on the slide in your own words (see B.4 above).
5. Be sure to stay on topic. Don't let your narration stray off-topic or start to dwell on a specific point.

6. Use a pointer if you want the audience to focus on a specific detail on a slide.
7. When finished, thank the audience for their attention. If your slides will be made available on the internet, either provide that information on your closing slide or tell the audience what the website is. Ask the audience if they have any questions.
8. Do not dwell on any one question too long. Try to answer as many as you can in your remaining time. If you cannot answer all of the questions during the time allotted, offer to answer them after the clinic time is over and during the break between clinics.

Mat Thompson:



My experience with model railroad clinics, both in person and via Zoom, is that the presenters know their subjects but many don't speak well.

Here are a few tips -

- Practice your pitch so you sound like you are talking with friends in your train room. You don't need to sound like a newscaster; you don't need to read a script; you just need to sound like one of the guys.
- **DON'T FILL SLIDES WITH TEXT** - model railroading is a visual hobby, show pictures, lots of pictures.
- **EVEN WORSE, DON'T FILL SLIDES WITH TEXT AND THEN READ EACH SLIDE OUT LOUD** - it's boring and sleep inducing.
- If you are using slides, change them often, at least every 60 seconds or so. If you are talking about a boxcar and show the same slide for five minutes, viewers get bored. If in the same five minutes you say the same thing but show five different views of the boxcar, you keep the viewer's interest.
- Talk with your chin up so the sound goes out to the audience, not down to the floor. If you are giving a live clinic, look at your audience or out over their heads. Don't talk with your back to the audience.



- On Zoom, keep your chin up by placing your computer on a stack of books so it is at eye level, or better yet, high enough so you can stand while you talk.

We all want to hear what you have to say. Otherwise, we wouldn't be watching you. And if we are at your clinic, we have already decided you are the expert on your subject. So relax, smile, and enjoy yourself.

Reminder: Layout Tour Signs Needed!

Do you have any of the Division's Layout Tour signs? If so, we need them back.

Please contact the Superintendent to arrange for a pick-up.

Email to: superintendent@potomac-nmra.org



The Latest Potomac Flyer Modeling Challenge...And the Next...And the Winners of the Last...

Here they are -- the submissions for the Potomac Division's "Trackside Structures" challenge. Enjoy the 13 entries on the following pages. Then vote for your favorite by sending an email to Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org.



So whose "Rolling Stock" challenge submission in our last issue received the most votes? Of the 15 entries, Martin Brechbiel's Pickle Car, Bernie Kempinski's Conductor Car and Ernie Little's Tobacco Car shared top honors with three votes each.



Now to help you get ready for next challenge, it will be: **"Motive Power."** Maybe it's just your most dependable runner or some quirky looking engine you like. Maybe you painted or weathered it. Perhaps you did some superdetailing or even scratchbuilt a loco. Or, it could be an engine straight out of the manufacturer's box, but one you really like. This is your showcase. Share, please.

Send us photos and a brief description, including gauge, of your favorite locomotive — steam, diesel, electric, gas-turbine, whatever. We'll publish these entries in our February-March issue!

Remember: We want to hear from as many of our members as possible. The deadline for submissions is January 10! You've got plenty of time! Send your Motive Power submissions to: Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org.

We'd also like to hear your opinions on whether we should continue voting for favorites. We don't want anyone put off by what one of our veteran modelers calls *"the pressure of a contest."* Hey, there are no prizes. We just want to see your personal favorites and share them.

Thank you, Alex Belida, MMR, *Flyer* Editor

The entries appear in the order in which they were received. The texts and photos are by the modelers who submitted entries unless otherwise noted.

1. Ken Nesper's Trackside Houses



I consider this pair of O scale houses to be a single trackside structure. The houses are part of a kit produced by Keystone Locomotive Works (#K-1009) in the 1980s, at least that's when I think that I bought it. The kit has been on the shelf for a long time waiting for the right location. They finally found a home on my On30 layout. The houses are based on company houses that still exist at the Cass Scenic Railroad State Park in Cass WV (I've spent the weekend in one of these.) The 5.5" x 8" houses are made of cast metal, wood, and card stock; the kit provided material for three houses. This past winter, I challenged a fellow modeler to use his Christmas gift of a laser cutter to scribe the doors and windows, then I completed the cutout, painting, and assembly. The houses are finished in opposite colors: white with gray trim and gray with white trim. Notice that even the two-hole outhouse is finished in opposite colors. I chose different materials for the roofs. If you look carefully, you'll see that the houses have different window patterns. I didn't finish the interiors.

Ken Nesper



2. Brian Sheron's Trackside Marina



While growing up on Long Island during the 1950s, my father owned a small marina on Huntington Harbor on the north shore of Long Island. I have many fond memories of spending my summers there, ferrying customers out to their boats moored in the harbor, and, as the water rat said in “Wind in the Willows,” “...simply messing about in boats.” Although the Long Island Rail Road did not run close to Huntington Harbor, I wanted to recreate a model of my dad’s marina on my HO layout. The entire structure was built from scratch and from memory. Other than making the walkway out to the dock shorter due to space limitations, the rest of the structure is fairly accurate. The photo (right) shows the back side of the building. My father actually launched customer’s boats using a sling hoist powered from a winch on the front of a truck! **Brian Sheron, MMR**



3. Robert Reid's Trackside Produce Company



This is an FSM kit. It consists of three structures including the produce loading shed by the track. It is HO scale and as built occupies a 15" by 8" space. One unique aspect of the kit is the stucco walls on the main building. I had trepidation about them before installing them but the instructions were incredibly complete and this phase turned out to be no problem at all. **Bob Reid, MMR**



4. John Paganoni's Montville Station



Here is a photo of my favorite structure. It's my favorite because as a kid I spent a lot of time in and around this station watching beautiful Central Vermont steam engines working the "Montville Job" at the large Robert Gair paper plant along the Thames River. The mainline ran right in front of this station, so the action was great.

The structure is a scale 34' long and 16' 3" high from ground level to the roof peak. These prototype measurements were given to me by the Central Vermont Historian.

The model is HO scale and scratch built mainly from styrene. Windows are Grandt Line, the foundation is bass wood. Shingles are Campbell. The interior is fully detailed and illuminated. **John Paganoni, MMR**

5. Alex Belida's Steam Log Derrick



Since I have a sawmill and a log dump, I needed a way to offload incoming logs and move them to the mill. I used a modified version of the so-called stiffleg or “Scotch” derrick to scratchbuild my HO scale model. It is made of stripwood, with Sculptamold pedestals and metal brackets cut from a soda can. The rivets securing the metal pieces to the wood beams are Tichy. There are two scale 29’ legs joined to a 22’ high vertical swivel post with a 36’ lift bar. I used plastic sprue scraps to create the support brackets for the lift bar. The pulley wheels were made by slicing thin sections from a small styrene tube. I used alcohol and brown shoe polish stain with a later brushing of India ink wash on the wood. I painted the brackets acrylic “Rust” and the pulley wheels and the hook assembly acrylic “Gun Metal”.

My next project was to scratchbuild a steam donkey hoist to run the cables and the liftbar. I took stripwood and made a frame to support the machine. I then took some old watch gears and glued them to a dowel. Once they sat in the frame, I added floorboards to support the boiler and drive mechanism. I wrapped thread around the dowels and used ink to stain the thread black.

I used a Woodland Scenics boiler and motor-pulley drive to provide power for the cable system. I used scrap plastic bits from an old, discarded Atlas switch mechanism to create the drive system linking the wheel on the boiler-driven motor to the cable drums similar to the piston system used on some prototype steam hoists.

It still has to be fully integrated into the layout and the cables still have to be completely hooked up. **Alex Belida, MMR**

6. Martin Brechbiel's Coaling Platform, Water Tank and Railcart Shed



The coaling platform is a FOS kit that was built by Noll Horan that I was lucky to score a few years back just before I decided to finish the scenery on my layout. The square water tank was an Evergreen Hill kit built by my father-in-law that is wired into the lighting circuit on the layout and one of the early structures installed on it. The pump railcart shed is a scratchbuilt structure with a framed interior and a Berkshire Valley car on the rails with a team of workers attending. At the far end of the scene is a ball signal that was a Riverleaf Models kit that I assembled.

Martin Brechbiel, MMR

Did you know? The submissions for the layout challenge in our August issue and our rolling stock challenge in the October issue are featured in photo carousels on our website. Check them out and all the other features we have on the web by going to:

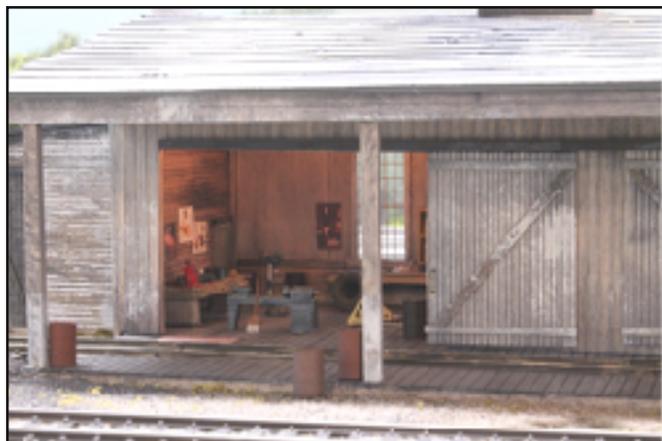
<http://potomac-nmra.org/PDnewsite/Main/Home.php>

7. Dale Latham's Engine House



The engine house is totally scratch-built and of my own design. It is built of wood, cardboard and paper with assorted Tichy windows. The inside is lit and detailed. The structure is HO scale and is 14" long and 6-1/2" wide with an attached 3" x 6" shed on the rear. The highest point on the building is 3-5/8".

The rolled roofing is black cardstock, cut into strips and then sprayed with gray primer. After it's dry, I sand and scrape each piece to bring some of the underlying black to the surface. It is then further weathered using pastel chalks. I picked up the technique from one of Jason Jensen's videos. [<https://www.youtube.com/c/JasonJensenTrains>] The sides are wood clapboard, stained and then followed with multiple weathering techniques such as dry brushing, sponge painting and the use of chalks.
Dale Latham



8. Mat Thompson's Christopher Paper Mill



This is the Christopher Paper Mill on my HO scale Oregon Coast Railroad. The plant is a combination of scratchbuilt and kitbashed buildings combined into a large industry worthy of rail traffic. Construction was easy since everything is plastic or styrene. I think different roof lines, different simulated building materials, different building colors and weathering, and many details combine to make the factory believable.

Operationally, the plant can handle 20 to 30 inbound and outbound cars in an ops session. Traffic includes boxcars, tank cars, woodchip cars, and covered hoppers. The scene is on a 2'x10' peninsula but could easily be a stand-alone shelf layout.

Mat Thompson, MMR

Next Challenge: Send us photos and a brief description of your favorite Motive Power. We'll publish the entries in our February-March issue!

(Deadline: Jan. 10)

9. Bob Rodriguez's Dubois, PA. Station



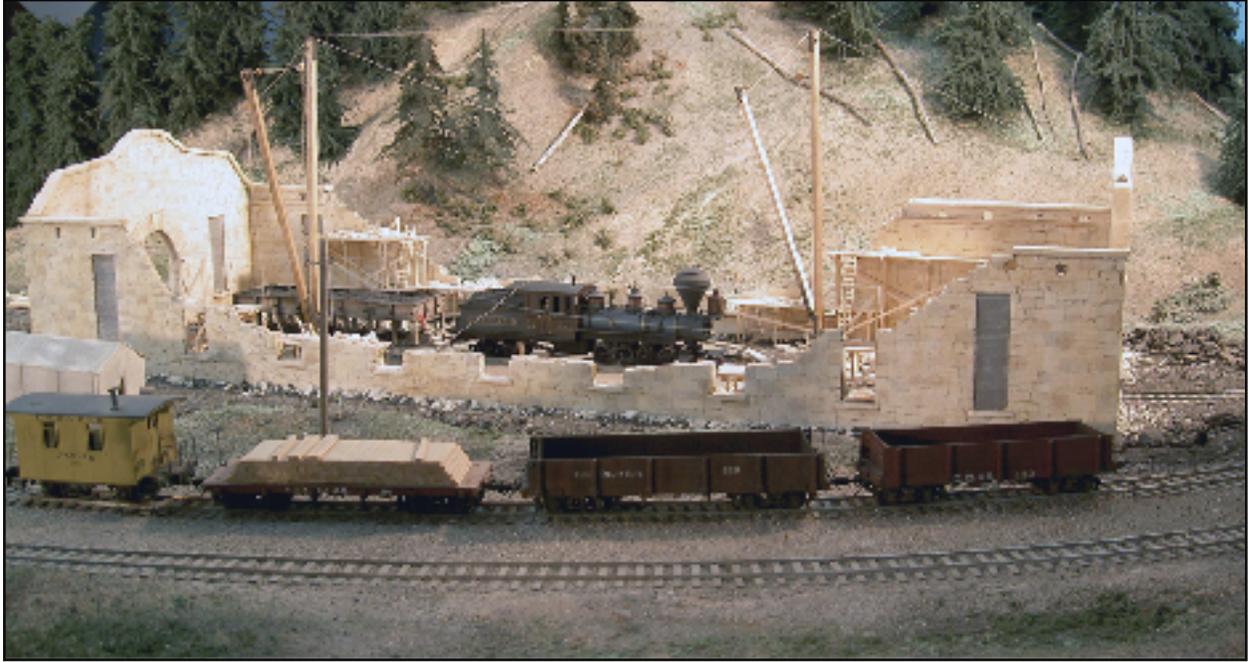
Dubois Train Station, Dubois, Pa.
Measurements: 13" long, 5" wide, 5.5" tall. Scale: HO

I wanted a train in my modeled town of Dubois, Pa. on my HO Scale Nickel City Line layout. Doing some research, I discovered there actually is a train station in Dubois, Pennsylvania. It is now commercial office space. I used Google Maps to get approximate dimensions and photos. From there I created a mock up using 3rd Planet software, scaling the model down to the size I had available. I used a Cricut Maker machine to cut the card stock. I used 110 lb and 60 lb weight cardstock in white and various colors. I printed brick, stone and shingle patterns on the white cardstock and cut out the templates in the Cricut Maker. I mounted everything onto foam core board. No commercial parts were used.



The mock up stands in well for now. Eventually a more detailed model using styrene will replace the mock up. **Bob Rodriguez**

10. Andrew Dodge's Engine House on Boreas Pass



In 1882, the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad was in the process of building a stone engine facility on Boreas Pass on their new mainline between Como and Leadville, Colorado. Due to the need to serve helpers and the harsh winter conditions, the building featured a coal dock, a water tank, and a covered turntable all under one roof.

The On3 model is constructed of individual plaster blocks mounted on a Plexiglas base. Since the building was not completed until 1883, the model depicts the structure in the fall of 1882 but with all the interior amenities in place and functional. During operations, crews would uncouple the helpers from their train and run the locomotive onto the turntable so it could be turned for the trip back to Como.
Andrew Dodge, MMR



11. Ernie Little's Girder Bridge



One of my favorite scratch built trackside structures is the dual track girder bridge over Hot Springs on my Norfolk Southern Connector Railroad. The bridge area is a lift out panel that permits access to a pellet stove that is under it. It consists of a wooden 1" x 6" that provides the sub roadbed for the rails, a water area created with Woodland Scenics Realistic Water on a 1/4" plywood panel, a piece of 2" foam insulation molded to the desired shape, and the girders from two Atlas Girder bridges. The track area was removed from the bridges and only the remaining girders were glued to the side of the wooden 1" x 6" board. The abutments for the bridge are purchased resin pieces that were cut to size and then painted as concrete. In addition, Woodland Scenics water effects were used to simulate ripples in the water.
Ernie Little, MMR

12. Brad Stanford's Coaling Station



This is a scale model of the 1940s coaling station at Cowan, Tenn., on my N-scale layout. I built it in 2020 using historical photographs. The coaling station is 7" high by 3.5" wide by 3.5" deep, including the black coal-lifting shack near the ground. The coal tower was located at the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway yard. It shows NC&StL Mountain 4-8-2 Class J1 taking on coal, water and sand.

The walls are scratchbuilt of plastic-coated cardboard, painted with acrylics and weathered with charcoal pencil. The coal chutes, sand wands and ladders came from commercial kits. The roofing is extra fine sandpaper. The black cable to the working pulleys that lower the coal chutes to the engine is thread from my wife's sewing kit. The sand wand from the coaling station to the sandbox on the right side is made from brass wire. The sandhouse is made of brass from a commercial kit. The water tower in the right background is a Walther's kitbash. **Brad Stanford**

13. Mark Gionet's Proctor Station



This Sheepsfoot Scale Products North Hampton Station might be the first wood craftsman kit I built. I acquired it at a Timonium Train Show many years ago. At that time, I was modeling the 1980s, so I build it as a mini diorama, and it sat on a shelf for decades until my interests and modeling period changed. The Eastern Railroad built the prototype station in the mid to late 1860s. The Boston & Maine Railroad later absorbed it into its Eastern Division. My modeling inspiration is the B&M's Western Route, so I located the station on an imagined branch line that heads north from Dover New Hampshire.

Getting the kit into its new resting place required the elimination of a bit of the old ¼" plywood base and scale carpentry on the wood platform. This created some patches and different aged boards that might represent changes in sidings and the fronting trackage over time. I know a bit more about B&M paint colors and standards now, so the station sign should be white on black and with a different font (fictitious station name notwithstanding.) The overall paint colors and their application might not be exactly correct, but overall, the station is a nice reminder of how long I've been at this. **Mark Gionet**

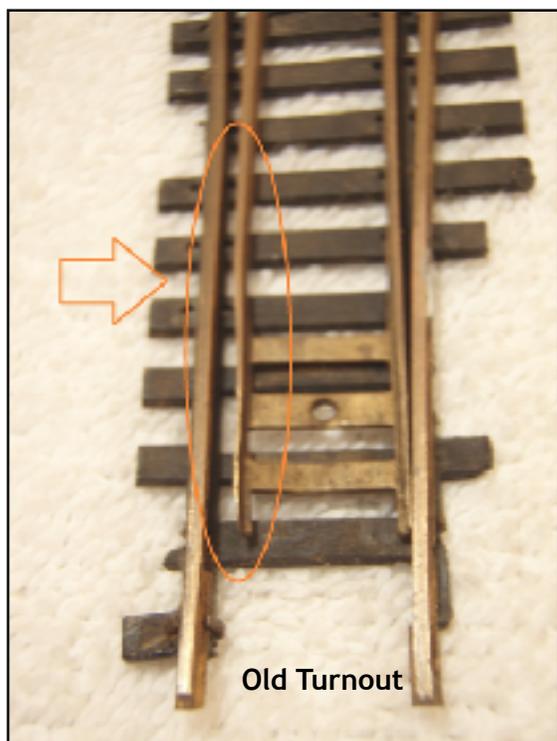


A Modeler's Progress

Article and Photos by Bill Mosteller

At the turn of the century, I was in the basement of my townhouse asking myself why I hadn't built the model railroad of my dreams. Self quickly answered, "You don't want to; it's too much work."

When model railroaders die, their layouts are disposed of. The basement-sized pike, with what David Vaughn calls anti-modular design, typically winds up in a dumpster. The house's new owners usually don't want a model railroad. Smaller railroads, often 4' by 6', are more portable and are given to friends of the deceased. So it was that I adopted the Crooked Creek & Cimarron by Captain James Osmer, USN. His friend, Bob Rosenberg, brought it over to my house in his minivan.



The railroad includes design decisions I've never gotten to work: brass track, fiber ties, and power routing through turnout points. And it's old—it predates solder. (Not really, the Romans invented soldering, but none of the electrical connections were soldered, with predictable reliability). I only know how to do a couple of things in model railroading: couplers and—fortunately—soldering (and maybe decals?) So I've spent many happy hours soldering draped electrical connections, with much improved performance. We moved about seven years ago, and the Crooked Creek was damaged in the process and no longer operational.

Recently, I was thinking about resin kits of Boston subway cars I had bought and stashed. I contacted the vendor and asked them to recommend a custom builder. The vendor did, and I sent off my kits. As I did this, I

thought, "Now you've done it. You've become a collector and will never do any more building." The first car, an MBTA 600 series Blue Line unit, arrived complete with working pantograph. That inspired me to repair the overhead on my 6' by 3' track test bed, which is unremarkable in all aspects save for one working overhead wire — on my fourth attempt and first success. I humbly believe I know everything one can do wrong when stringing overhead, as I must surely have done it.

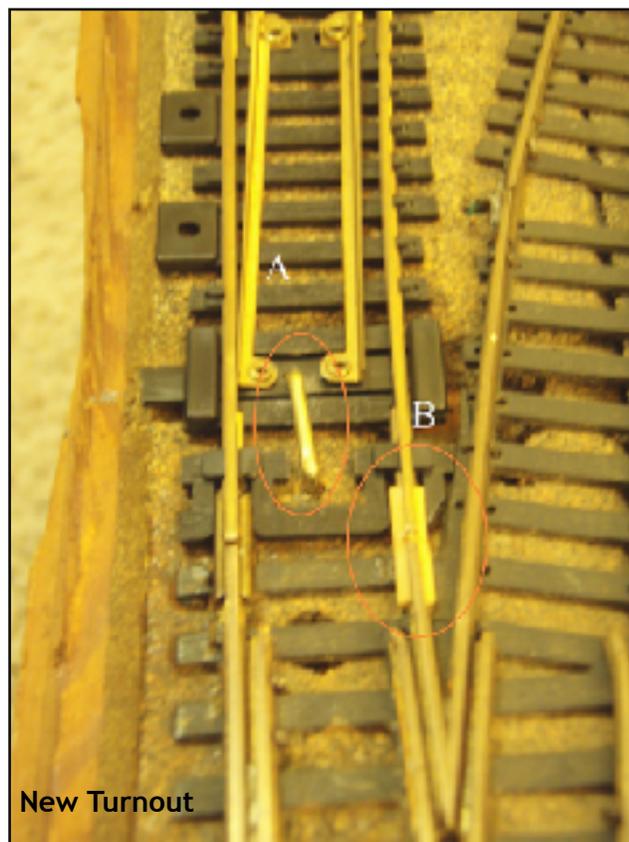
That energy carried over, and I began working on the 4' by 6'. The first order of business was cleaning the track, and Dale Latham put me onto a new strategy:

Stop Cleaning Your Track on Your Model Railroad - YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBYxjcTWCBO&t=19s>

I got my mineral spirits from Home Depot and ordered the No-Ox-Id on Amazon. This approach works.

The 4' by 6' is equipped with ancient twin-coil switch machines. Conveniently, they include mechanisms that can be used to power the frog of a power routing turnout they control. I had done this on some turnouts years before. Once the track was clean, I found two more switches with dead frogs, and continued taking advantage of the machines' capabilities.

Unfortunately, once the dead frog was eliminated, one of these switches exhibited a short. Power-routing turnouts can be at risk of this, because when both points are powered by the rail they're in contact with, the back of the wheel on the other rail is near the inactive point. Examining the turnout, I noticed a bend on that point. I'm not good at correcting such things. Studying the switch, I concluded it was a #4, and retrieved a replacement Atlas brass turnout from my brass track box. Of a newer design, it's not power-routed and thus has no risk of points shorting to wheel backs. The original was also an earlier Atlas so the fit was good, requiring only a short track extension and no rail cutting to fit in. I used a sprue cutter to edit the ties slightly for a proper fit. One time on NPR's *Car Talk*, one of the brothers claimed that the purpose of working on cars is not to fix them but to build a great collection of tools. Maybe this is also true of model railroading?



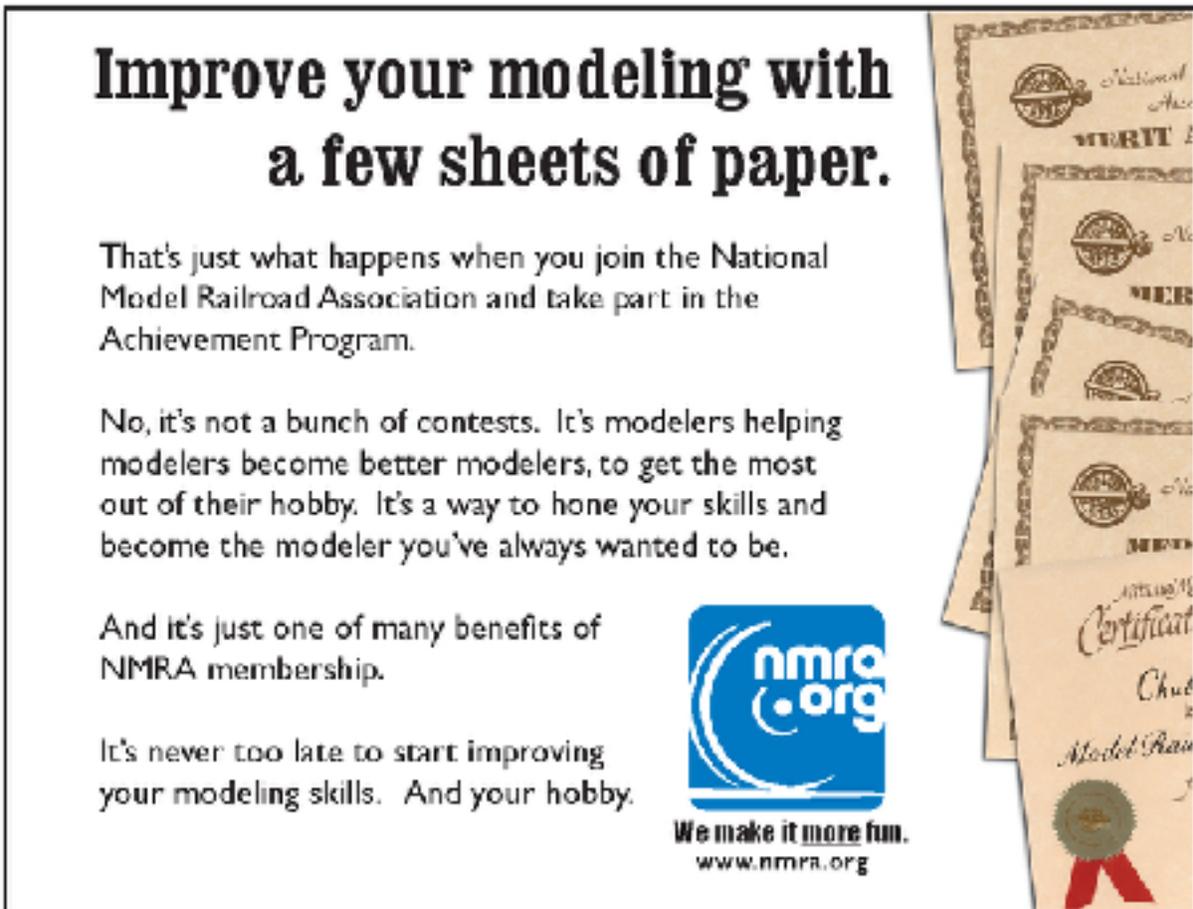
However, in the course of installation, I attempted to loosen the bell crank from the switch machine to let the new switch in, but instead I broke it. Careful metallurgical analysis (I had to cut it out with my Dremel, thus exposing fresh material) revealed a reddish color. Betting on brass rather than gold, I consulted Google and discovered that Twins Ace Hardware-Fairfax on Main Street in nearby Fairfax, Virginia had the K & S Engineering 1/16" brass tubes I needed. I was pleased, as I tend to think of our local hobby shop as being in Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania. Making a new bell crank required accurate bending of the brass tube to fit the switch, so I kept a suitable

eraser (my Dremel with a cutting disk!) nearby. On the third try, I got the fit right, and the under-table installation was surprisingly easy.

That being said, there is an easier way to prepare bell cranks for twin-coil switch machines. Years ago, I moved a switch machine from on the table to under it. I lucked out and found a GH Products HO Turnout Link (long out of production) at a train show, and used it. While finding one might be a challenge, I've spotted them on eBay. Their bell crank has two important features: (1) the upper end of the tube is pre-bent to 90 degrees and has a small piece of what I'm guessing is piano wire attached. Bending the piano wire exactly is much easier than bending the thicker tube material. (2) The under-table arm of the crank is a flat piece of metal one solders to the bell crank -- no bending here, and much easier to adjust without destroying it.

Best of all, the short circuit is history!

Bill Mosteller is the owner of Great Decals, a former webmaster for the Potomac Division, and a regular contributor to *The Flyer*.



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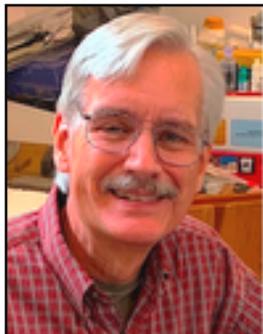
And it's just one of many benefits of NMRA membership.

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The advertisement features a stack of several achievement certificates on the right side. The top certificate is titled 'National Achievement' and includes the text 'WERT'. Below it, another certificate is partially visible with the text 'National Model Railroad Association'. The bottom certificate is titled 'Certificate' and includes the name 'Chud' and the text 'Model Railroad Association'. Each certificate has a circular seal at the top and a red ribbon at the bottom.

Hobby Barn Clinic: “Design Secrets”



Article and Photo by Ken Wilson

On September 18, Nick Kalis returned to Jerry Stanley’s Hobby Barn with his second clinic of the inaugural season of the Potomac Division Hobby Barn Clinics. Previously, Nick had conducted a clinic on how to make trees from manila rope, which is a great skill to have if you need to produce a forest economically. This final clinic for the year was very different: no knives, no glue, no paint, no mess.

Nick’s clinic was a lecture heavy with photos that addressed the *mechanics of creating art*, which sounds like paradox but made perfect sense as Nick walked us through the mechanics. Nick has not only studied art, but he has read numerous books on the creation of dioramas. The authors are masters at telling stories through *static* dioramas. As model railroaders, our focus is usually on *movement* of trains depicting prototypical operations (or at least mere movement) of trains. There’s more than a few “Plywood Centrals” that provide endless hours of satisfaction, even though they lack much in the way of scenery. Nick’s focus with this clinic was to delve into the concept that model railroads are examples of representational art that should tell a coherent story and provide a solid visual foundation of time and purpose for our trains.

Nick started with his own “Four Steps in Design”: 1) pick your story, 2) design your scenes, 3) select your scale, and 4) design as you build. He went into specific detail to elaborate each step which I do not have the space here to recap, but readers may have a question about number 3: *select your scale*. Most of us have a scale already selected along with boxes of rolling stock and structures waiting for a railroad to be built. Nick explained that he is an



Nick Kalis at the Hobby Barn

advocate of mixing scales to enhance the illusion of depth and distance. I have seen wonderful examples of this technique during layout tours throughout the Potomac Division where a smaller scale is used in the background. However, Nick's rendition of the Oahu Sugar Company's plantation railroad in Fn3 goes a step further, as he uses models from O and even HO scales to give his audience a sense of greater depth to the scenes that defies the actual distance between the front edge of his layout and the back wall.

Next was a discussion supported by excellent photos of "Design Basics" including geometry, topography, space, and color. Following that, he explained the "Seven Principles of Design": 1) balance, 2) unity, 3) contrast, 4) emphasis, 5) movement, 6) repetition, and 7) rhythm. If all of this sounds like an overdose of academic nonsense, I can assure you that Nick provided excellent visual examples of each term that demystified them, thus providing us with a way of analyzing our own model scenes. When you become comfortable with the language, it makes communicating art much easier, which results in our railroads become kinetic works of art.

Ken Wilson, a school safety specialist and former theater technical director, has enjoyed model railroading since his youth. He does not have a model railroad, but is planning on a fictitious line located in California during World War II.

Hobby Barn 2021 Wrap Up

by Jerry Stanley



What is next for the Hobby Barn? The intent was to provide a low-cost space for educating modelers in the NMRA without having to pay building rental fees. I reasoned if I built the building, holding the cost down, I could provide the space at no cost to the Division while I absorbed the cost of the construction.

This building project should have cost around \$120,000. We only had \$40,000 to build it which I used for siding, roof, exterior trim windows and doors with bare studs on the inside. The rest was to be added as I scrounged leftover materials or could pay for supplies and subcontractors as we developed funds.

Much of the labor was provided for free by friends, family and some of my fellow church members. In March of 2018 we had our final inspection after which I added cabinets, built the bookcase, added the TV and surround sound system and installed flooring made from reclaimed lumber.

To date we have spent around \$50,000 on the building with plans to do more as funds become available or we receive donations. On my list of projects for the future: I would like to put in

a walkway with landscaping in front of the building. On the inside I would like to install doors on the custom built-ins, paint all of the cabinets one color and add more floor outlets.

We have had 10 clinics at the Hobby Barn so far, covering such diverse topics as scratchbuilding rolling stock, air brush painting and weathering, backdrop painting, landscaping, building structures, and designs.

We have already scheduled January, February and March clinics in 2022. Please check out our Potomac Division website for the upcoming clinics: <http://potomac-nmra.org/PDnewsite/Calendar/Calendar.php>.

I would like to hear from you regarding clinics you would like to attend and or clinics you would be interested in providing. Please send me an email at paymaster@potomac-nmra.org.



Installing the Flooring (Stanley photo)

Jerry Stanley is the Potomac Division Paymaster and Owner-Operator of the Hobby Barn

Nicholas Kalis' Sugar Cane Car

[Editor's Note: Nick's submission came in after we published the entries in our rolling stock challenge in the October-November issue. But it's never too late. If any member wants to send us a rolling stock photo, please do so. Don't forget to describe your model, including the scale.]



Kalis Photo

Railroad: Oahu Sugar Company #268

Scale: Fn3 (1:20.3 Scale)

Plans Published: *Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette*

Model Load: Broom straw and glue

Manufactured Type: 3D printed by Shapeways

Wheel sets: Gary Raymond (Thousand Oaks, California)

Assembled, Painted and Weathered by: Nicholas Kalis

History:

- First sugar cane harvest of Oahu Sugar Company took place in 1899.
- New cane cars added in the 1920s to keep up with increasing sugar production.
- By 1931, 984 cars total are owned by the plantation (vast majority are sugar cane cars)

Nicholas Kalis, Potomac Division Clerk

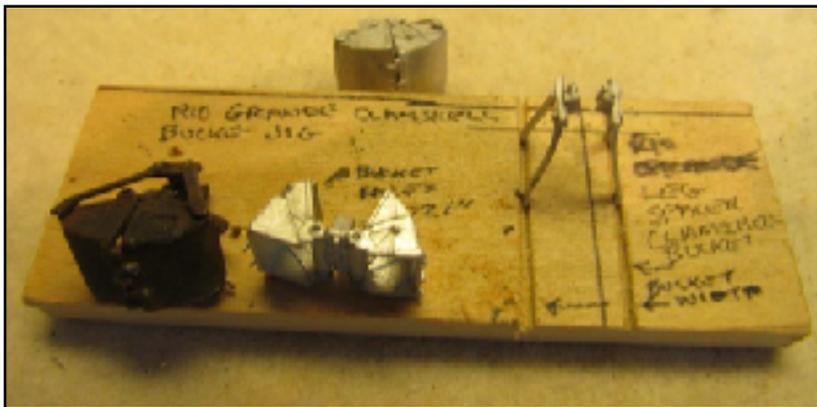
Love Those Clamshell Buckets

Article and Photos by John Paganoni, MMR

Clamshell buckets always fascinated me as a youngster. I could watch a crane with a clamshell bucket operate for hours. My layout focuses on the 1940-1950's when clamshell bucket use was very common. As a result, I have several on my layout.



I have focused on the Rio Grande Models (RGM) #3532 HO scale buckets because they are smaller than others I have seen and they fit my modeling era better. The RGM bucket kits are very well done, but they are quite delicate and require some patience in assembly. Also, RGM does not provide construction instructions, so studying a prototype is recommended.



The most difficult part for me was aligning the two top sheave/arm assemblies. As seen in the photo (left), I made an assembly fixture from a piece of flat wood.

Use of the fixture:
 1. Mark the width of the bucket side and draw parallel lines on the

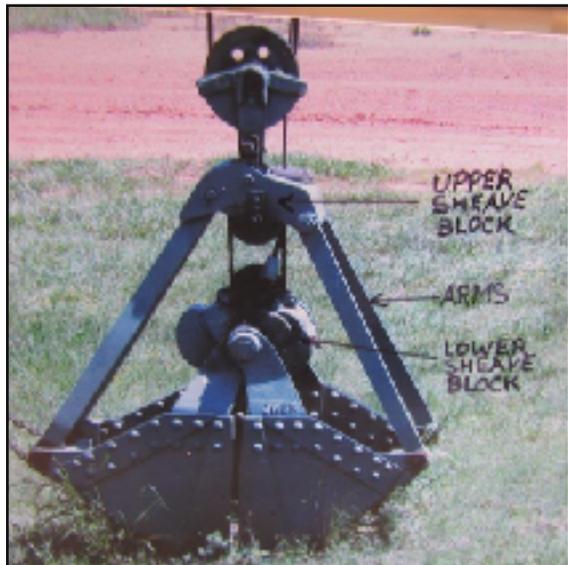
flat piece of wood.

2. Carefully saw uniform depths on the parallel lines. I used a .030" Zona saw to cut these.

3. Once the arms are bent carefully and fit/aligned into the

fixture, glue the top sheave pieces together with ACC -- DON'T GET YOUR FINGERS STUCK USING THIS CEMENT!

The bucket halves use the lower sheave part. CAREFULLY clean the flashing from the four pins on the side of the sheaves. Drill holes in the bucket halves where these pins will go. I used a .028" drill for this. Then carefully spread the sides of the bucket halves to receive these pins. Press the bucket sides to hold the sheave. At this point arrange the assembled bucket parts with the bucket opened, closed, or any other position desired. Double stick Scotch tape may be helpful in holding the parts during final assembly and gluing. Installing bucket internal cables varies on different clamshell buckets, so if you want to do this detail, I suggest studying prototype buckets.



Looking at the photo with the three model buckets ([previous page](#)), the one in the middle is my attempt to follow the prototype arrangement as close as possible for use on a Bucyrus-Erie steam crane I am modeling.

Other sources of clamshell bucket models I have seen are: Custom Finishing #7282 and Model Tech Studios. Stewart Models made an operational bucket at one time.

NMRA Partnership Program

Just a reminder about using the NMRA Partnership program! This program is available for you to use when you buy products from the participating vendors. Discounts from 5% to 25% are available to you! Goes without saying that the more you participate, the more you can save. The participating companies give discounts to NMRA members when orders are placed using a special discount code. You can find descriptions of these companies and their products, links to their websites, and the discount codes on the NMRA Partnership Page at nmra.org/partnerships. You need to be logged in as an NMRA member to see the codes!

Bodie: One Modeler's Inspiration

Article and Photos by Alex Belida, MMR, Flyer Editor

When I decided to build my Eureka and South Pass Railroad set in Nevada in the late 1890s, I began searching for information about Old West mining towns. I wanted to find photos, plans and other visual imagery to help with my modeling.

That's how I stumbled upon the ghost mining town of Bodie, California, just over the border from Nevada and northeast of Yosemite National Park. On a trip west in 2019, I drove a winding road up to an elevation of over 8,000 feet to enter Bodie State Historic Park where many of Bodie's original buildings have been preserved in what is termed a "state of arrested decay."

Readers of *Narrow Gauge* and *Shortline Gazette* will be quite



familiar with Bodie. Most recent issues have contained plans for modelers to use in building structures in the once-thriving gold mining community.

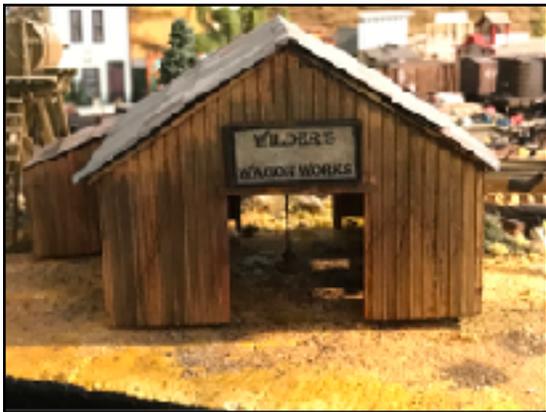
The Swazey Hotel (photo above) was the inspiration for a derelict building I scratchbuilt using popsicle sticks and used coffee filter paper. I placed it on my layout as an abandoned bar I called the "Devil's Den Cafe." (photo left.)



Devil's Den Cafe

The County Barn in Bodie (photo right), where wagons were stored, was my prototype for a scratchbuilt model I called “Wilder’s Wagon Works.” (photo below left)

Bodie was home to one of California’s richest gold strikes in the 1870s but by 1886 it fell into decline, and by the 1940s became a ghost town. For more information about Bodie State Historic Park, go to: <https://www.bodie.com>



County Barn

Wilder’s Wagon Works

The Standard Mill, which processed ore from Bodie’s Standard Mine.



The Potomac Flyer Has Needs...Can You Help?

Potomac Division members are always encouraged to submit ideas, articles and photos. But the long-term need is for someone to step up with an interest in helping edit and publish *The Flyer* and eventually take over as Editor and Publisher of the newsletter.

Ideally that someone would have a background in writing, editing or producing documents, newsletters or anything like that -- not necessarily model railroading specific.

Right now I seek input from the Board, canvass members for articles and edit them. I then send the texts to two proofreader-assistant editors who review every item that goes into the newsletter. I then mesh all the suggested changes into a single final document. With everything in hand, as a Mac user, I produce *The Flyer* using Apple's "Pages" word processing and layout program.

But if you're familiar with another program for desktop publishing, that's OK. The late Marshall Abrams, our distinguished former Publisher, used a different system when he took me under his wing to help produce the newsletter.

So please, if you're interested, let me know by emailing: Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org. Think of the Achievement Program credits you could receive for your Volunteer certificate.
Alex Belida, MMR, Editor



"Bodie Mine Wagon" (Belida Model Photo)



Standard Mill, Bodie (Belida Photo)



Methodist Church,
Bodie (Belida Photo)

Modeling Supplies: Huzzah Hobbies

Article and Photos by Nicholas Kalis

Gary Eames and I visited Huzzah Hobbies for the first time in November. While it calls itself “Loudoun County’s Tabletop Gaming Headquarters”, it carries many supplies that model railroaders need.

The shop was quite large, well lit, and clean. Staff was in abundance and helpful and friendly. We even met the owner, Chris.

With so many model railroad and other hobby shops shuttered over the past few decades, the Potomac Division needs to find workarounds to get the supplies members can use. Brands that a model railroader will recognize at Huzzah include AK Interactive; JTT Trees & Shrubs; MIG Products; Tamiya; Testors; Vallejo; Woodland Scenics and Windsor & Newton Brushes. Huzzah also has an Evergreen styrene rack that is well stocked and many hobby tools. Need to weather your rolling stock, locomotives, or structures? There is an incredible array of weathering fluids by AV Vallejo. I will cut Huzzah some slack on the empty slots and will ascribe it to supply chain problems afflicting the entire economy.



With the demise of Floquil brand of paint that model railroaders relied on for decades, many replacement brands have appeared in recent years in articles carried in *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman*. Many of these brands can be found at Huzzah.

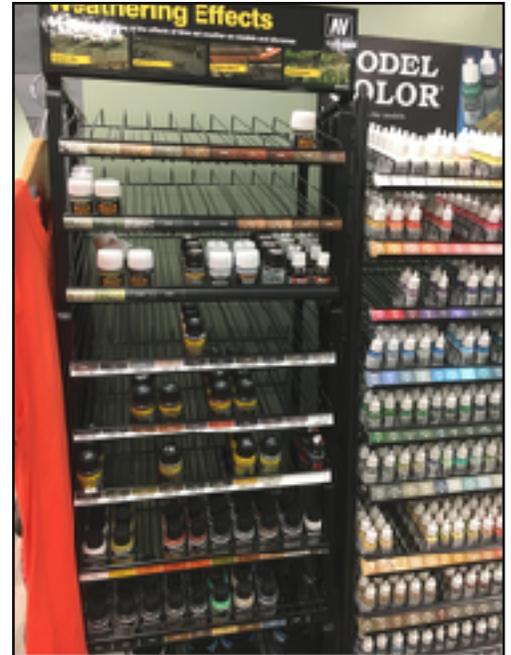
While a model railroader is unlikely to spend that much time at Huzzah, they do have an in-house snack bar for those spending perhaps too much time at the game tables. Unless you are a dyed-in-the-wool skinflint, you are unlikely to leave this shop empty handed. Just to give you an idea, between the two of us, Gary and I dropped about \$100 on weathering and scenery

products. I purchased an assortment of MIG washes to weather the corrugated roof of an engine house I intend to submit for judging.

With weekday store hours closing at 10PM, this is the place to visit when you are working on a scratchbuilding or kit-bashing project and run out of Evergreen styrene. You should find what you need to continue your project uninterrupted. Ordering on the internet can delay your project and break your momentum. Try Huzzah Hobbies instead. The loss of Competition Minis is a warning that shops such as these should be supported lest they fall by the wayside.

Details:

Huzzah Hobbies
44927 George Washington Boulevard
Suite 165
Ashburn Virginia 20147
www.huzzahhobbies.com
703 466-0460
Monday - Friday 12 - 10PM
Saturday 12 - 8PM
Sunday 12 - 6PM



Advertise in the Flyer?
 If you are interested in advertising in *The Flyer*, please contact the editor at: Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org

Advertising rates for one year are as follows, and must include camera ready art (text, doc/docx, jpeg, pdf, bmp, tiff formats):

- Callboard ads (30-50 words, Division and Clubs Only)...Free
- Business Card size Free for Local Hobby Shops
- Quarter Page ad.....\$65
- Half Page ad\$115

Paymaster's Report:

by Jerry Stanley, Paymaster

1. Checking account (beginning balance)	\$5139.95
2. Cash on Hand (Martin drop bank 11/10 \$115+ \$25 coffee)	\$140.00
3. Total assets as of 10/31/2021 (end balance)	<u>\$5539.95</u>
4. Deposits by date	
a) 10/04/21 \$400.00	
5. Total Deposits	<u>\$400.00</u>
6. Individual Deposits	
a) 10/04/21 \$400.00	
7. Total Deposits	<u>\$400.00</u>
8. Total payouts	
No payouts	
9. Total Payouts	<u>\$0.00</u>
10. Checking account balance as of 10/31/2021 (Lines [1+5]-9) =	\$5539.95
11. Total Cash on hand 9/30/2021	\$140.00
12. Total Assets (lines 10+11)	\$5679.95

If anyone is interested in **making a donation** to support the activities of the Potomac Division, you can always send a check made out to "Potomac Division NMRA" and mail it to our paymaster, Jerry Stanley, 11552 Hereford Court, Hume Va 22639

Potomac Division Calendar of Events

Dec. 18-19 Greenberg Train & Toy Show
Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA

Sunday Dec 19th, 2021 Virtual clinic 3pm
Virtual - Alex Belida - Prototype Models

Sunday, Jan. 16, 2022 Virtual clinic 3pm
Virtual - Patrick Bentz - Nortlandz

Saturday Jan 22nd, 2022 Make and Take clinic 10am
In Person - Jeffrey Fleisher, Norm Reid, Model Railroad Photography
Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn, Hume, VA

Feb. 5-6, 2022 Great Scale Model Train Show
Timonium, MD

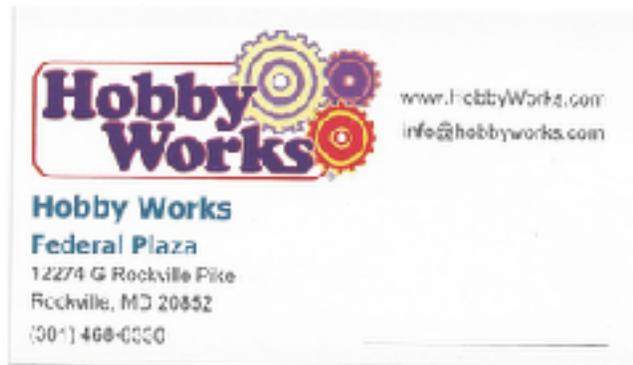
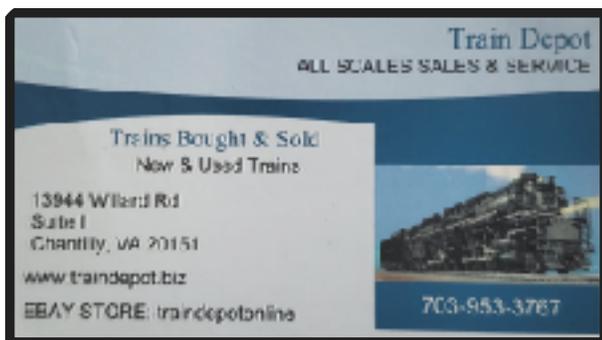
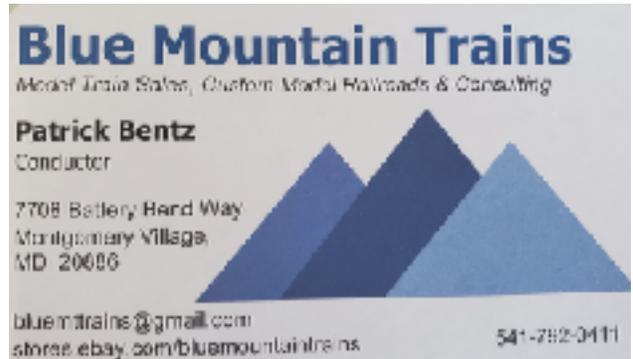
Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022 Hobby Barn clinic 10am
In Person - Ken Montero, Tips on Improving Car Construction
Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn, Hume, VA

Sunday Feb 20th , 2022 Virtual clinic 3pm
Virtual - Robert Conley - Tank Cars

Saturday March 12th , 2022 Make and Take clinic 10am
In Person - Cam Green - Landscape scenery techniques
Jerry Stanley's Hobby Barn, Hume, VA

Sunday, March 20th, 2022 Virtual Clinic 3pm
Virtual - Brian Sheron - Building an operational crossing

Hobby Shop Business Cards:



END OF THE LINE