

Potomac at the 2025 MER “Philly Express” Convention

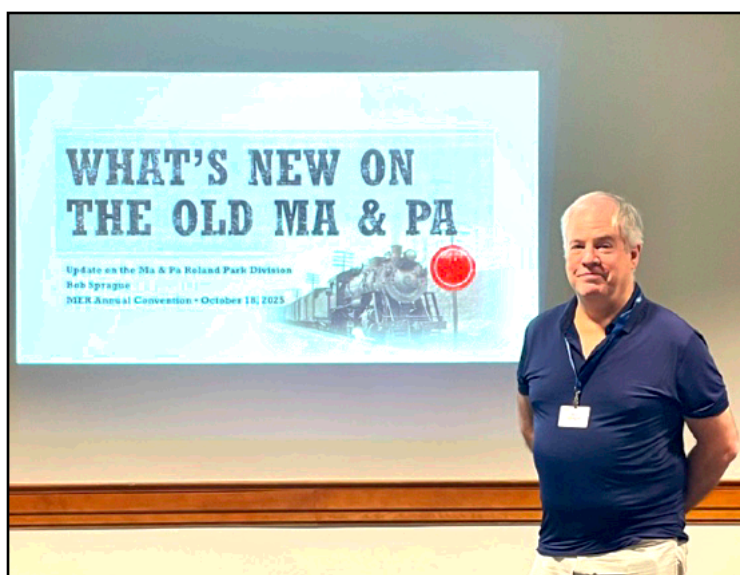
Photos by Alex Belida, Greg Cassidy, Bernard Kempinski, Ernie Little, and Ken Wilson

Fifteen members of the Potomac Division were among the 182 modelers registered for the Philly Express Mid-Eastern Region annual convention in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania held from October 16-19. Their presence was magnified by their achievements in the contest room and their presentations of clinics!

Bernard Kempinski, MMR (photo left) took the “Best of Show” prize for his model of the U.S. Military Railroad Engine House and Tool Shop at Aquia Landing, Virginia in 1863. The model also won 1st place for On-Line Structures and the Chuck Hladik Memorial Award, sponsored by the James River Division for a model that best exemplifies a prototype from south of the Mason-Dixon Line.



Potomac Superintendent **Ernie Little, MMR**, **Mike Byle**, **Nick Kalis**, **Todd Hermann** and **Bob Sprague** (photo below right) and **Alex Belida, MMR** all presented clinics at the gathering. Ernie (photo below left) also led a hands-on workshop on making mortar.





Mike Byle (above left), Todd Hermann (left), Alex Belida (above), Nick Kalis Clinic Title Page (below)

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FIRST DELIVERED AT RPM-EAST, GREENSBURG, PA MARCH 23, 2019
ALSO DELIVERED AT MID EAST REGION/NMRA LIBERTY BELL SPECIAL OCTOBER 13, 2019
MCR/NMRA ALLEGHANY WESTERN DIVISION APRIL 10, 2021 (ZOOM)
POTOMAC DIVISION HOBBY BARN SEPTEMBER 2021
MID EAST REGION NMRA MOUNT CLARE JUNCTION OCTOBER 21, 2021 RPM VALLEY FORGE MARCH 2022
MER PIEDMONT JUNCTION OCTOBER 2024



Greg Cassidy took this photo of Potomac members at the closing convention banquet. Left to right: Cassidy, Alex Belida and his wife Pat, Joyce Little and Ernie, Ken Wilson and Mike Byle.



There was a luncheon excursion on the Colebrookdale Railroad. Potomac's **Ken Wilson** is shown **(left)** seated in a dining car that had been converted from a former sleeping car. The pulldown bunks are still in place above the seats in this renovated car **(below)**.



The two hour ride went from Boyertown to Pottstown, largely through wooded countryside with a stream down an embankment on one side much of the way.



The railroad's station and ticket office in Boyertown was small but striking **(left)**.

The water tower along the route **(right)**.



Attendees could also visit and operate on an array of layouts during the convention.

The [photo below](#) is of Greg Shindledecker's HO scale Western Maryland, Thomas Sub layout in Coatesville, Pennsylvania.



These [photos below](#) are from Bill Kachel's PRR Cosmopolitan Division layout in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. It is 2000 square feet in size and jammed with all kinds of models.