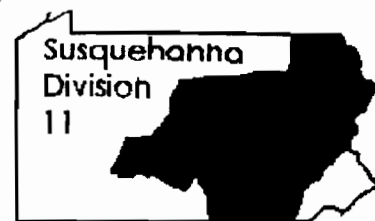


Susquehanna Sidetracks



Serving the Susquehanna Valley, MER, NMRA, Inc.

[HTTP://member.aol.com/mvmra/mvmra/nmra11.htm](http://member.aol.com/mvmra/mvmra/nmra11.htm)

NMRA/MER

Susquehanna Division 11

Special Edition

What is the NMRA?

The National Model Railroad Association, Inc. is an international association consisting of model railroaders whether they are very prolific in the hobby or the "arm-chair modeler" or the writers or publishers. The organization includes the manufacturers and dealers and anybody with an interest in the hobby.

The NMRA, Inc. was started back in 1934 by a group of model railroaders in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The purpose was to have an organization to promote the hobby through conventions and public awareness and to set standards. Did you know that when this was taking place, almost every manufacturer of trains had their own idea of what was the best coupler to put on their equipment? Some worked well and some were down right frustrating. Some companies used two or three different couplers that did not mate up. You could not buy a kit off the shelf and have it run with your other equipment much less with somebody else unless you all agreed on the type of coupler to use. One of the biggest steps the NMRA took was to help get the manufacturers to standardize a coupler to use. Thus was born the "X2F" coupler for HO scale. This is the one that is now supplied in kits and ready-to-run cars and engines. It is sometimes misnamed the NMRA coupler. You will also hear it called a "horn-hook" coupler. We take for granted that when ever you buy a kit, it will work on your layout or your friends' layout. Thank you NMRA for your help.

They have set many standards and if a layout is built to the NMRA Standards, it will run and you can operate all the equipment that it is built for. The latest achievement in the standards is for the DCC Command Control. When it meets the

NMRA Standard it will have an NMRA product warrant on the box. This means that brand X, Y, and Z can all work together. It sets the standard for the digital waves and what controls what. It even sets up the type of plug used in the engine to be sure that any manufacturer's decoder will plug right in and work.

What is the NMRA? It is a group of hard working volunteers trying to make the hobby of model railroading more enjoyable and affordable to everyone. It has the ability to offer you insurance on your trains at very reasonable rates and with very few conditions. It has events on the national, regional and division levels.

The NMRA is divided into many regions and each region is then divided into many localized divisions. This is the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA, Inc. Each level has some sort of convention or major event each year. The NMRA will hold a week-long national convention in different cities each year in the United States and one has been in Great Britain. The Region holds two weekend conventions each year in different cities within its boundaries. Here in the Susquehanna Division 11, we hold two one-day mini-meets per year and numerous half day clinics at different locations within the Division. These are usually at a club or similar place. Affordable? Yes! One day, three days, six days, how much railroading can you do at one time? All these events include how-to clinics on everything from benchwork and room setup to finished scenery and details. The larger the event, the more you have to choose from. A big part of all these is the model contest. Models from many categories are judged for how they are built and finished and plaques, awards, and certificates attest to the

The Mid-Eastern Region

The NMRA, Inc. is divided into 17 regions, including one each in Australia and Great Britain. The Mid-Eastern Region includes the states or parts of the states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The Region is over 50 years old and currently has over 800 members. The Region's bimonthly publication is "The Local". It includes information on upcoming regional conventions, happenings within all the divisions, modeling and prototype articles and many other model railroad items.

The MER holds two, three-day conventions each year. One in the fall and one in the spring. Here 300 to 500 model railroaders get together for socializing, information, contests, and to tour prototype facilities. Do you want to see what other modelers are doing? The conventions include tours of home layouts in the area. The contest room is a great stop for seeing what is

What Is the NMRA? *Cont'd from Page 1*

modelers achievement. The conventions also include prototype tours. These tours can take you into places that you would not ordinarily get into, such as freight yards, towers, car shops, engine shops, etc. Then there is the social aspect. Where else can you go and have 30 or 300 or 3000 modelers there to help you find answers for your layout or to just get ideas?

The NMRA Achievement Program is a great tool for increasing your skills at model building. You can earn awards in the categories of Motive Power, Rolling Stock, Structures, Civil Engineering, Electrical, Chief Dispatcher, Author, Volunteer, Association Official, Prototype Modeler, and Scenery. All these can add up to the grand award of Master Model Railroader.

There are also Special Interest Groups or SIGs within the NMRA. Do you have a certain prototype you like or a certain phase of the hobby you enjoy very much? Then there is probably a SIG that is right for you.

being done in all scales. You will see models of locomotives, rolling stock and structures competing in different categories for top honors and merit awards. There are clinics going on all weekend. There how-to sessions cover all the phases of the hobby. You are sure to find something you want to see. Some conventions even include a swap meet and a live auction of model railroad items. Regional conventions make a great weekend vacation.

As a member of the Mid-Eastern Region you will receive the bi-monthly publication "The Local". In there is all the information for upcoming conventions and national events, wrap-ups of previous regional conventions, articles on models and layouts, what's going on in the various divisions and a "Callboard" of coming events on club and group activities within the region. So join the Mid-Eastern Region and find out what you are missing.

The National Headquarters is in Chattanooga, Tennessee. There a hard working staff is always ready to help you. There the NMRA houses the A. C. Kalmbach Memorial Library. It is a vast climate controlled reference library of anything pertaining to railroads you want. Any member can request information from the library's large collection of magazines, books, tapes, slides, photos, maps, etc. Also located there is the Howell Day Memorial Museum.

The NMRA is people. People like you with a common interest, trains. No matter what the scale is. No matter what the gauge is. People sharing a common bond whether you want to sit back and read the Bulletin, the monthly magazine, and just relax at that or become involved in the management at any level or somewhere in between is what the NMRA is all about.

The National Model Railroad Association, the Mid-Eastern Region and the Susquehanna Division 11 is you. Won't you join us?

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Susquehanna Sidetracks is the official publication of the Susquehanna Division 11 of the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. Dues are \$2.00 per year payable to "Susquehanna Division 11". Remit dues to the Chief Clerk. Dues include subscription to the Division newsletter. Deadlines for submissions to the newsletter are the first day of each quarter: January 1 for Jan-Mar; April 1 for Apr-Jun; July 1 for Jul-Sep; and October 1 for Oct-Dec.

When remitting dues for the national and/or region, please provide photocopies of your current MER and NMRA membership cards, along with your Divisional membership renewal form. Also include the appropriate postage, 32 or 64 cents, with your check. This will help defray the cost of these additional mailings. We must mail the national and regional dues separately. Be sure that all information is correct and complete so dues can be properly credited to you.

The members and staff of the Susquehanna Division 11, of the NMRA/MER, welcome you aboard. Join us in the fun of model railroading.

Comments from Our Membership Chairman

I am sure you are asking yourself, "Why should I pay those dues to join the NMRA and the local region/division?" I've been a model railroader a long time and I read the usual monthly magazines and went alone in the hobby many years. I thought everything was OK that way. In many ways it was. Several years ago I was invited to participate in a local NMRA activity and I discovered a whole new side to my hobby. I met other modelers with interests and desires similar to my own. That event led to an active involvement in the NMRA, on the local level, in the Mid-Eastern Region and the Susquehanna Division. I've met many interesting modelers, and through conversations, we've exchanged numerous ideas that have expanded my modeling horizon and made it more interesting for me.

Through the local division we meet fairly often at various clubs and home layouts and get to see and discuss their modeling techniques. This can be very useful on your layout.

The regional conventions, 2 per year, are especially interesting and active. Here you get to meet and mingle with modelers from a large area and even some of the "NAMES" in our hobby. The conventions include many clinics that you can attend on a broad range of model and prototype subjects. There is always a model railroad show/market and prototype trips to area railroad facilities. There are also model contests where

you see truly quality model work first hand (and can display your own work) and generally a ton of good company. Attend a convention and mingle - you will enjoy it.

On the national level there is the Achievement Award Program. This allows you to earn certificates for achieving various levels on your modeling efforts. It feels good to display a certificate or two in your layout room that you've earned, stating you have achieved a special level of modeling.

Do you have any special interests such as narrow gauge or the steel industry or railroad car ferry operations? Well, we have dozens of Special Interest Groups or SIGs. Join the ones of your choice and get all kinds of interesting information. The NMRA also has a vast library of railroad and modeling information available for your special project and all you have to do is ask for it.

You say you don't have room for a home layout? Join the Susquehanna Division and get in the modular group. You get a 2" by 4" module base and you build it up. Several times a year we will assemble all the modules together and operate those long trains.

I'm enjoying my activity in the NMRA locally. Join us. You will enjoy it too. *Jim Atkinson, Susquehanna Division 11 Membership Chairman*

Susquehanna Division 11

The Susquehanna Division 11 is one of 9 active divisions within the Mid-Eastern Region. The Division includes 32 counties in Pennsylvania. The "Susquehanna Sidetracks" is the quarterly publication and contains information on future events within Division 11 along with national and regional events. The Division holds two, one-day mini-meets each year at different locations within

the Division. We also have monthly activities including open houses at clubs and members home layouts. Other activities include an All Scale Modular Program. Modules are being built and developed in all scales to NMRA specifications. Currently the HO scale modules are available to current regular Division 11 members.

Carolina Junction '98

Mideastern Region Spring Convention

Charlotte, North Carolina

April 23rd-26th, 1998

The Carolina Southern Division, Division Twelve, of the M.E.R., N.M.R.A., Inc., invites you to an exciting '98 Spring Convention with unusual tours, both rail and non-rail, clinics, layout tours by bus, a large exciting train show, a social, a banquet, an award breakfast, a silent auction, and a live auction.

- Ride the "Pine Tree State", a 6 bedroom, buffet, lounge streamlined private car of the Piedmont Carolina Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, from New York City to Charlotte on the 23rd of April. This tour is limited to the first 30 who buy tickets.
- Ride Amtrak to Historic Salisbury Station and visit Spencer Yards of The North Carolina Transportation Museum. Enjoy a B-B-Q meal.
- Visit the South Carolina Railway Museum. Ride their train and enjoy lunch in their diner on the rails.
- Watch a rotary dumper while visiting Duke Power coal fired power plant.
- Visit Reed Gold Mine, go underground in the mine, tour the grounds, and visit their operating stamp mill. **Pan for gold!!!**
- Enjoy a non-rail lunch at a famous local restaurant.
- Visit Cannon Mills Village and enjoy the afternoon shopping.
- Visit many clinics with local, regional, and famous national modelers and authors. Meet them at the social.
- Many other model and prototypical tours, clinics, and non-rail activities.
- Ride Amtrak to and from Charlotte for the Convention and save 15% off the regular fare. This special fare is good only on The Carolinian and good only from April 22nd to April 27th, 1998. Ask for Special Fares Order **X 44P/948**.

"Sheraton Airport Plaza Hotel"

Convention Headquarters

Centrally located on I-85, near I-77, adjacent to the airport, and close to the Amtrak station. Airport and Amtrak pickup will be provided by the Sheraton. Register early for the convention. There are only 222 rooms in the hotel. A special low rate is available for the convention. For information and registration contact Registrar Dave Chance or Treasurer Michele Chance at:

Carolina Junction '98

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Susquehanna Division 11 Membership Application

Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

The Susquehanna Division is located in the central portion of Pennsylvania. Counties covered are: Adams, Berks, Blair, Cambria, Carbon, Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mifflin, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Snyder, Union, Wayne, Wyoming, and York. Anyone interested in the hobby may join Division 11 regardless of their place of residence. A **Regular Member** must be a member in good standing of both the MER and the NMRA and must provide copies of your current MER and NMRA membership cards and add 64 cents postage for forwarding costs if paying by one check. All others may become a **Subscriber** to the Division 11 newsletter only. Annual dues for the Susquehanna Division are **\$2.00** which includes the quarterly newsletter. Among the activities of the Division are 2 mini-meets, held in the spring and fall, and several half-day clinics. A quarterly newsletter, the *Susquehanna Sidetracks*, is published with the Division 11 schedule of events and other model railroad news.

Type of application: New _____ Renewal _____ Division Membership Number _____ Change of address _____

Primary Scale: _____ Layout? _____ Interests: Modules: _____ Narrow Gauge _____ Traction _____ SIG _____

Name: _____ NMRA# _____ MER# _____

Address: _____

Phone: H (____) _____ W (____) _____ Email: _____

Return completed application, with a check payable to: Susquehanna Division 11, 1709 West Market Street, York, PA 17404