

SUSQUEHANNA SIDETRACKS

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Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA
Vol 26 No. 6



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Photos from Dale Latham's layout on the MER Convention Tour.
Taken by Howard Oakes.



From the Superintendent's Desk – Tim Himmelberger

As I sit writing my column it is already half way through October. I made a trip to the MER convention in Rockville, MD earlier this month. I mainly wanted to attend the resin mold making and casting clinic. It was very informative. Like so many skills that one acquires in this hobby once you try it you realize that it is not as scary as you initially thought. So, I encourage you to try a new skill. Or consider putting on a clinic at one of the Division meetings. Or make Tedd Pounds very happy and write an article and submit it for publication in our Sidetracks Newsletter. For those of you who attended and for those who did not make it the article with lots of pictures starts on page 5.

With November fast approaching, and in preparation for the Division wide open house tour I have been busy working on my layout. My goal is to complete the second helix in time. I still have a couple of weeks to complete the project. The information on the open house tour is on page 13. For the record Josh and I will be hosting our open house on November 3rd from 10 AM until 4 PM. We look forward to seeing you.



Photo from Dale Latham's layout on the MER Convention Tour.

Taken by Howard Oakes.

Model Showcase

John Wissinger

We have had a very wet Summer, as you know, which more or less postponed or canceled outside activities. Perhaps you used that time when you could not be outside as an excuse to go down in the basement, or other modeling locations, to work on the layout or build model railroad items that you have been putting off, or the latest kit that you recently bought. How about bringing that to the meeting to show everyone? The Model Showcase is a great way to showcase your talent and abilities as a model railroader. Note, this is not just for the best modelers in the group, this is for everybody. Other division meets I have attended where there is a model display, there are many people that display. We are trying to encourage you to bring a model and are discussing ways to encourage more models to be shown. Some ideas are to offer a prize, either money or a model kit, have a popular vote, have the Superintendent or other officer choose the model or to “feed the kitty” by those who do not bring a model. Perhaps we could have a category for each month; a freight car, passenger car, a structure etc. Categories would be based on the NMRA model contest. Incidentally only those people who bring models will be able to participate in the discussion!

See you at the meeting.

John Wissinger

Have you visited the NMRA website? As a member you have access to a world of information on our hobby! I have included just one item that is available to each of us with our membership.



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Susquehanna Sidetracks

Official Newsletter of the Susquehanna Division
Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
1168 Caspian Drive, York, PA 17404

Contributing to Susquehanna Sidetracks

Sidetracks welcomes contributions from the Division membership. Letters, articles, photos and other items may be sent to the Editor at the e-mail address listed below or the street address above. Deadline for submission for the next issue is December 22, 2018, formatted in Times New Roman font 12.

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Second Section – Tedd Pounds

Hello everyone!

I encourage all members to consider submitting an article or some photos of your layout or modeling projects to our newsletter. Do you have something that you have discovered that may be of interest to others? Put something on paper, include a few pictures and we will make it work. Thanks!

Tedd



No new members this issue

Recap of the Crossroads of the MER Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA 2018 Convention October 4 - 7, 2018

I attended the MER convention held in Rockville, Maryland from Thursday night through Saturday afternoon. What follows is a recap of the events and activities I attended along with layout photos.

The convention at the Hilton had 5 rooms; 3 for clinics, 1 for the white elephant/door prize items and 1 contest room. There was also a large banquet room filled with HO modules which ran throughout the convention. I did not participate in any of the 6 operation call boards which allow you to operate on someone's railroad for a few hours. Nor did I have time for the two prototype tours offered. As you can gather there is a lot to do at a convention and no one can do it all. You must pick your interests and go from there.

The convention hosted 50 clinics with generally 3 clinics being presented at the same time. I was able to attend 5 one-hour clinics. I'll give a summary in case these clinics are presented at a future convention you might attend.

Vinegar, Pickles and Railroads – Rod Vance, MMR

Modeling the pickle and vinegar industries from the 1880's to the 1970's. Structures and facilities used in processing these products and the special railcars used for transportation.

Small Layouts and Space Saving Ideas – Mat Chibbaro

Mat has written two books on 'Model Railroading in Small Spaces'. Ideas covered include sectional, modular, bookcase, fold-up, roll-away, dual use, interchangeable inserts and layouts in furniture.

Prototypes for the Athearn 40' Boxcar & Athearn Boxcar Enhancements – Ben Hom

The first clinic covered the prototypes used for the Athearn car. The second clinic covered how to improve the detail on the boxcar. He estimated there were over 1 million blue box cars manufactured so there are plenty out there for experimentation at a low price.

One Modeler's Approach to Building a Layout – Andrew Dodge

This clinic explored concepts, design considerations, prototype or freelance, planning, materials, environmental issues and operations.



I spent Thursday night and most of Friday driving to 9 layouts in northern Virginia, D.C. and Maryland. I spent a lot of time in D.C. traffic, but it was worth it as all layouts were well done and scenery was complete. There were 33 layouts open for viewing during the convention. The nine visited were:

D&D and the Allisonville Short Line (HO) – Bill Day has several dozen fine scale animation scenes including working coal elevators, bascule bridges, water plugs, ore lifts, cranes and warehouse doors all accompanied by the appropriate sounds!

Oahu Sugar Company (Fn3) – Nick Kalis models Hawaii in 1944 in this 1/20 scale railroad. A few scenes are military related and the rest are sugar cane growing and production.

Shepard Branch, Potomac & Patuxent Railroad, and Ohio River & Western Railroad (O) – Ken Nesper has 3 O scale railroads in one; O scale, Lionel and On3 with most scenes resembling Baltimore and D.C.

Piedmont Southern Railroad (HO) – Dale Latham model railroad is breath taking as you enter the room. His layout was featured in Great Model Railroads in 2009.

P & D Railroad (HO) – Paul Hutchins models the current era mixing CSX, Conrail and Norfolk Southern. He has a large container yard and the layout is illuminated for night operations.

Westmoreland Railroad (HO) – Bill Demas' bridge railroad is operated point to point. The setting is eastern Pennsylvania with appropriate names and plenty of coal.

Eureka and South Pass Railroad (HO) – Alex Belida models Nevada in the early 1900's. This highly detailed layout has several buildings with complete interiors and lighting.

Baltimore & Ohio Monongah Division (HO) – Dean Ripple has set his railroad in West Virginia in the mid-1950's. He models the Buckhannon area with an interchange with the Western Maryland.

Clinch Valley Lines (HO) – Roger Sekera models western Virginia with a mix of the L&N, Norfolk & Western, Clinchfield and Southern. He uses a fast clock during operations with car cards and waybills to route the cars.

I visited the white elephant room twice and managed to pick up a few building and accessories for a small price. I also spent time checking out the large HO modular set up. A thoroughly enjoyable weekend.



Photo from Bill Day's layout

Photos from Nick Kalis' layout

By Howard Oakes



Photo from Roger Sekera's layout

By Howard Oakes





Mark your calendar now for the National Model Railroad Month layout tours coming up this November. This will be for the first three weekends in November.

There will be more details in the September and November Sidetracks where we'll also have all the schedules, locations, and directions on a variety of websites, including our own division site at;

<http://www.susquehannanmra.org/>

and the comprehensive NJ, MD, DE, and Philly area site

<http://modelrailroadopenhouse.com/>

We hope you will be able to visit several layouts this year. If you would like to participate this year and have not hosted a November Open House tour previously, please let us know!

The open house schedule will be posted October 1st.



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