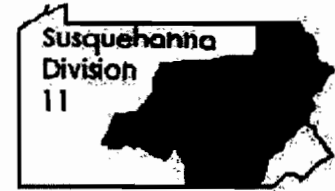

Susquehanna Sidetracks



Serving the Susquehanna Valley, MER, NMRA, Inc.

Official Publication of the Susquehanna Division 11
of the Mid-Eastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association

January 2002
Volume 10, Number 1

I hope you had a great holiday season and a happy new year!

It was great to have a large turnout at the last division meet at Bob Martin's railroad in November. Since then, Bob has taken the plunge into DCC and has purchased a Digitrax system. I guess all the conversations during the meet about DCC pushed him over the edge. I encourage you to open up your railroad for the division to visit. What better way to show off your modeling talent? If you are interested, please contact any of the Division officers. Contact info can be found on page 2.

Division Officer Elections

The following Division Offices are up for election: Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent, and Clerk/Paymaster. The only stipulation is that the Clerk/Paymaster needs to be bonded. Each office will be held for a two year term. If you are interested in running for one of these offices, please contact Brian Brandt with the following

information, what office you are interested in and a short biography about yourself. All candidates biographies will appear in the next issue of the newsletter, along with the ballot. Brian will be appointing the judge of elections.

Division Web Site Update

The Division web site moosevalley.org/nmra/index.htm has seen a lot of new items added to it over the past month. By the time you read this, Mel Agne (webmaster) will have added a new area where you can post messages for the other division members, ask questions about the division or model railroading, and get the latest information on what is going on with the Division.

Another new part of the web site is called "Modeling in the Division". This will feature photos of different division members railroads. Bob Martin's *Central Pennsylvania Railroad* is the first railroad to be featured. More will be added in the coming months.

Division Dues Increase

Just a reminder that Division dues are now \$3 per year. If you haven't renewed, please use the Division application at the end of the newsletter. Look for details in the next newsletter on way to track when your Division membership will expire.

Next Meeting Scheduled

The next Division 11 meet is scheduled for Saturday, February 9, 2002 from 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. For more information and directions, please see page 3.

Down the Road Scheduled

Greenberg's Train Show
York Expo Center
at the Fairgrounds
January 19-20, 2002
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
www.greenbergshows.com

Great Scale Model Train Show
Timonium, MD
January 26-27, 2002
9 AM - 4 PM Saturday
10 AM - 4 PM Sunday
www.gsmts.com

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Susquehanna Division 11,
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National Model Railroad Association

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717-862-3937
agnem@tce.com

Submissions: The Susquehanna Sidetracks welcomes any model railroad or railroad related material. Members are encouraged to send in articles, letters to the editor, reviews, etc.

Super's Corner

Greetings to all, I hope your holidays were good to all. As we start another year, maybe it is time to reflect on the past year.

We had very good attendance at our meets this year; I hope to continue this trend this year. I am hoping to have at least one meet each quarter. Our convention was decently attended, of course we could have always had more people, but with two other events and the mood of the nation, we made out rather well. I know that some did not appreciate some of our activities, and they informed me of it. I have one remark: volunteer, you will find out it is not a party, and you may find your ideas are not all that great also.

During this year, our officers are up for re-election. If you are interested in any of our elected offices, please send me your name and a short description of you for printing in the newsletter at election time. The Offices up for election are: Superintendent, Asst. Superintendent, and clerk/ Paymaster. The only stipulation is that the Clerk/Paymaster needs to be bonded. I have already contacted Paul Tice, and he is accepting the nomination again. All of the offices are for two years. I will have someone to be our judge of elections.

We have sent three different sets of by-laws to the MER for approval, so far two have been sent back. The one printed later in this newsletter was conditionally approved. We welcome your comments and feedback on the by-laws. We will get a committee together to do the final touches on it, based on your feedback and suggestions. Then we will be in compliance with the Region. We will have it printed in the newsletter, twice, and have a self-addressed stamped post card to send back for your vote. I hope to have this done at the same time we hold our elections, so we have one mailing with both items on it.

This year I had the chance to visit the many clubs in the area. I was impressed with the detail that has been done! The advance listings from Walthers alone have many new and different structures. The hobby definitely is not going out. There has been a listing in the Model Railroader, and other magazines about a program called the World's Greatest Hobby. They are asking us to volunteer some of our limited time to help promote the hobby. If you can spare any time it is appreciated.

Thanks. Hope to see you in February.

Brian Brandt

We have two layout's open for you to visit. The first one is Jim Clay's Pennsylvania Railroad's Cumberland Valley Branch in HO. His railroad will be open from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The second one is Ray Fisher's Mechanicsburg and York Railroad (MandY) in N. His railroad will be open from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM. Both layouts are a work in progress. This will give you a chance to see how others build their bench work, lay their track, and wire it up. As an added bonus, both layouts are controlled by Digitrax DCC. If you are thinking converting to DCC, this will give you a hands on chance to run some trains and ask questions. There is be a short division meeting to discuss the upcoming Division officer elections and the proposed changes to our by-laws. We hope you can join us!

Description of Jim's Pennsylvania Railroad's Cumberland Valley Branch:

The railroad represents the CV Branch circa 1951 from Harrisburg to Winchester. The modeled towns include: Carlisle's extensive industrial area; Newville (nice structures including the station, station masters house and knitting mill & local switching); Shippensburg, including the Reading interchange; Chambersburg (the heart of the original CVRR with erecting shops and a number of industries); Greencastle; and Hagerstown (interchanges with N&W and WM in hidden staging). The Hagerstown helper operations will also be modeled and pushers included during Op sessions. The layout design is walk around with two large staging areas at the North(East) and South(West) end representing Harrisburg and Winchester.

The RR room is about 48' X 35' with the layout built along the perimeter walls and peninsula walls added to maximize use of floor space. Minimum aisle width is 2 feet at choke points. The majority of aisles are 3 to 4 feet. Benchwork is open grid construction using 3/4 plywood. The layout uses Digitrax DCC, radio throttles, Soundtraxx equipped engines and code 83 rail. Minimum radius is 32". Total mainline run is approx. 300'.

Mainline trackwork is complete across the entire layout and trains will be running. Scenery has not been started with plans to begin late spring 2002. Visitors will have the opportunity to run trains if they like.

Description of Ray's Mechanicsburg and York Railroad:

The Mechanicsburg and York Railroad (MandY), a wholly owned subsidiary of Lothlorien Lines, operates as a branch line connecting road between Norfolk Southern (NS), CSX, and Canadian Pacific (CP). The company base is at the small Norfolk Southern Shiremanstown Yard (called "THE SHIRE") at the Hampden Industrial Center and adjoining the Keystone Railway Equipment Company (KREX) facility at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. MandY operates the yard under contract with Norfolk Southern. MandY serves the connections with NS primarily at the Norfolk Southern Enola Yard, although in some exceptional cases, at the York Yard. The connection with CSX is via interchange at a setout siding near Chambersburg that is serviced by CSX from the Hagerstown Yard. But some cars routed through MandY to the CP are dropped by CSX northbound freights ("Blue Dog") directly in THE SHIRE. CP interchange is via a setout siding adjoining the automobile unloading facility in the York Yard.

The railroad room is an L shaped area with the larger part a 20x28 feet open area adjoining a 7x14 feet. The layout consists of 24 NTRAK module frames - sixteen 2x4 modules, one 2x6 workbench module and seven 4x4 corner modules. The corner modules start out as 4x4 squares, but get two opposite corners cut off, so they wind up looking like six sided boats. These modules fill the room in a stylized E shape. Three of the corner modules and seven of the 2x4 modules have the track work completed. So far, only one module has scenery. The railroad is operated by Digitrax with radio control throttles.

DIRECTIONS TO JIM CLAY'S RAILROAD:

From Route 581 West (Harrisburg Capitol Beltway)

- 581W to exit #2 - Creekview Road
- Turn right at the top of the exit ramp onto Creekview Road
- Stay on Creekview through the traffic light
- 4/10 mile passed the light, turn right onto Grandon Way (look for Outlook Point Sign)
- #935 is 4/10 mile on right

From Route 581 East (Harrisburg Capitol Beltway)

- 581E to exit #2 - Creekview Rd
- Turn left at the top of the exit ramp onto Creekview Rd
- Stay on Creekview through the traffic light
- 4/10 mile passed the light, turn right onto Grandon Way (look for Outlook Point Sign)
- #935 is 4/10 mile on right

Please do not park in the driveway as it is shared with my neighbor.

935 Grandon Way
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
(717) 761-1596

DIRECTIONS TO RAY FISHER'S RAILROAD FROM JIM CLAY'S RAILROAD:

- Follow Grandon Way to Creekview Road.
- Turn right on Creekview Road
- Proceed up the hill a few hundred yards to the first stop sign at Orrs Bridge Road. And turn left on Orrs Bridge Road.
- After about 600 feet, you will see the tan brick entranceway monuments for Kingswood on your right. Turn right into Kingswood, keeping on the right side of the road divider. There is a stop sign at a T intersection just 130 feet from the monuments.
- From this stop sign, Pamay Drive goes to the left and Kings Circle goes the right. After one long block, these two roads rejoin, and where they do, MandY corporate headquarters is at that intersection.
- Turn right onto Kings Circle. 1228 is the last house on the right with a stop sign in the front yard.

Park on the street in front of the house without blocking the mailbox. Or, turn right at the stop sign and park along the side of the lot beyond the driveway.

1228 Kings Circle
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
(717) 732-4748

Comments from Your Assistant Superintendent

We are now in a new year. I can only hope, that in some ways, 2002 is much better than 2001. The slow economy truly hurt my occupation, and especially as a former firefighter, the events of September 11th have affected my feelings on a number of things. I look forward to a hopefully better 2002.

All of us know the reasons for supporting your local hobby shop but when I travel, I like to visit other hobby shops too. I visited my son in Boston before new years day. I might say I don't find the area very attractive, but I took time to visit Charles Ro hooby shop in nearby Malden. You've seen their ads in Model Railroader. It's quite a nice shop. They have a large building and parking for fifty cars at least. The shop has a large selection of Lionel and G stuff and also a very respectable HO selection with multiple helpful clerks. It was a busy place at noon on a Friday. It's definitely a top quality shop. Fortunately we are blessed with at least three top quality shops here in central Pennsylvania.

The last few months a number of very nice new items have become available. Bachmann's new Russian 2-10-0 is beautifully done. Unfortunately it is rather light and lacks power on grades as a result. Athearn's USRA 2-8-2 has the same problem. Western Maryland fans will have to get one of these Russians. Life-Like's new Budd RDC-3 is as nice as their previous RDC-2. It's a real heavy weight and runs very nicely with one truck powered. Now all we need is all coach RDC-1. The new gem available is Walther's-Rivarossi C&O 2-6-6-6. First of all it has all that beautiful plumbing and front mounted air pumps. It is well engineered and takes my 26 inch radii with no problems. It should take even tighter radii. It's a strong puller too. I did have two problems, that were easily corrected. First one of the two traction tires needed to be glued on to keep it in place and second the tender coupler was mounted to high.

As your AP Chairman I hope you are working towards earning at least one AP. Please call me if you have any questions about the program or if you want to be judged. I can't say it to often. Don't read to much into the requirements. They are simply stated. The last few months have been busy ones for me. I still have to complete the volunteer credits for those that worked the convention. Bare with me, I will get to it soon. I have been told that MER AP chairman should have some certificates to us soon.

Okay, the holidays are over and we are into cold winter. It's time to get to our model railroads. See you later, I going to my shop and finish building that caboose I started many months ago.

See you in February in Mechanicsburg. If you have any model railroad friends that aren't members, encourage them to join. We want them.

Jim Atkinson

By-Laws Update

The following pages contain the proposed update of the Division By-laws for you to review. These changes were made to bring our by-laws in line with what is required by the MER and NMRA. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Brian Brandt or Jim Atkinson. The next issue of *Sidetracks* will contain the final version of the by-laws and a postage paid ballot for you to cast your vote and mail back.

BY-LAWS of the SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION, DIVISION 11
of the
MID-EASTERN REGION of the NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I - Preamble

THE SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION of the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association, serves to promote the hobby of model railroading through social, educational, and historical activities in accordance with the policies and actions of the MER, NMRA.

The Susquehanna Division shall include the area of Pennsylvania bounded to the east by the Philadelphia Division, to the south by the South Mountain Division, to the west by Mid-Central Region, and to the north by the Northeast Region, as specifically determined by the MER and NMRA.

ARTICLE 2 - Membership and Dues

REGULAR membership in the Susquehanna Division shall be given upon receipt of an application and dues to anyone with an interest in model railroading, without discrimination (i.e.; age, sex, religion, race, address, etc.). Regular members must be members of the MER and NMRA. Regular members shall have full voting rights and the right to hold any division office.

GUEST privileges will be granted to model railroaders, without discrimination, in the Susquehanna Division to encourage their participation in the Division's, Region's, and NMRA's activities. A time limit of the span of two MER Region Conventions or a maximum of six months shall exist for guest privileges. At that time, the Division will encourage the Guest to become a full Regular member. Guests will have no voting rights with Division 11, nor will they be allowed to hold any offices or any committee chair positions.

MEMBERSHIP privileges may be terminated upon resignation, non-payment of dues, by two-thirds vote of the entire membership, or failure to maintain proper membership requirements as determined by the Executive Committee.

DUES shall be three (\$3) dollars per year, enough to cover our basic organizational costs, primarily the Division news letter, SIDETRACKS. The dues apply to Regular members.

ARTICLE 3 - Officers

OFFICERS of the Susquehanna Division shall consist of: the Superintendent (with duties as president), Assistant Superintendent (with duties as vice-president), and Chief Clerk (with duties as secretary and treasurer). They shall be elected for a two year term in Spring of even-numbered years, actually holding office from July 1 of the first year to June 31 of the second year. There will be three (3) Directors (with duties as assigned by the Superintendent). They shall be elected one every year for a three year term in the Spring, actually holding office from July 1 of the first year to June 31 of the third year. All Officers and Board members have full voting rights at all meetings. All officers and board members must be members of the Susquehanna Division #11, the MER, and the NMRA. The Chief Clerk shall keep an account of all funds received and dispersed, render a proper accounting for these funds at the annual business meeting, make books available for an annual audit by a properly qualified member of the Susquehanna Division #11 as appointed by the Superintendent and prior to each time any Chief Clerk leaves office. The Chief Clerk shall be Bonded in regards to their activities as the Division Treasurer. The bond shall cover any and/or properties and monies held by the Treasurer. The Superintendent shall appoint to fill out the unexpired term of any elected position subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS shall consist of the elected Officers and Directors and be chaired by the Superintendent. The Board of Directors shall hold legal title of all Susquehanna Division #11 property and monies in trust for it's members.

COMMITTEES: The Superintendent shall create Committees as needed and shall appoint Committee Chairpersons as required. The Superintendent shall also disband committees and dismiss members as necessary and require reports from committee chairs as necessary..

ARTICLE 4 - Conduct and Practices

GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING: There shall be one general business meeting each year in the spring. Business shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, by Division 11 By-Laws, by MER By-Laws, and any subsequent changes required. Each year by August, the Superintendent will submit an Annual Report to the MER Board and the NMRA on the State-of-the-Division per MER/ NMRA requirements. This report will also be made available to the division membership.

MEETINGS: Susquehanna Division #11 will hold a minimum of a meeting every quarter.

The officers and any committees shall do their utmost to arrange and present to the members and the general public programs and activities that promote the hobby of model railroading. They shall work cooperatively with other divisions of the MER, with the MER itself, and with division area Model Railroad Clubs in the planning of model railroading activities.

FISCAL YEAR: The Susquehanna Division #11, shall operate on a fiscal year be 9 July I and ending June 30 of the following year.

ARTICLE 5 - Nominations:

NOMINATIONS for an elected office position may be made by (1) a written submission from any member in good standing to the Nominating Committee or (2) by the Nominating Committee of members in good standing. Nominations are to be published in the division newsletter at least sixty (60) days prior to the election to include a bio-sketch, not to exceed 250 words.

ARTICLE 6 - Elections

VOTING/ELECTIONS: Voting shall be by secret ballot of the regular members of Susquehanna Division #11, by mail ballot. Elected positions will be filled by a simple majority of votes.

ARTICLE 7 - By-Laws Changes:

BY-LAWS: These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the membership by mail ballot. Proposed changes must be published in the division newsletter not less than sixty (60) days prior to any vote. The amendment(s) to take place after approval by the MER Board of Directors.

ARTICLE 8 - Publications:

NEWSLETTER: The Susquehanna Division #11 shall maintain a publication, **SUSQUEHANNA SIDETRACKS**, to be mailed to all members and guests to keep them informed of division activities. Copies will also be mailed to Editor of the MER LOCAL, other MER division Superintendents or newsletter editors, to the NMRA Library, and the NMRA President.

ARTICLE 9 - Recall:

ELECTED OFFICER; Should an elected officer be guilty of misuse, misconduct, detrimental performance, or malfeasance in office, they can be removed by (1) a petition signed by two-thirds of the Board of Directors and a hearing with the Board of Directors within thirty (30) days. If the Board of Directors feels the charges are true, a two-thirds majority vote in favor of the motion shall effect the action immediately. If the motion does not pass the officer will be re-instated. If they are removed, the Superintendent shall appoint a successor to that office to fill out the term. If the officer is the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent shall assume the office and make other necessary appointments.

ARTICLE 10 - Dissolution:

DISSOLUTION of SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION #11: Upon dissolution of Susquehanna Division #11, all assets must be distributed per the Constitution of the NMRA (Article i, Section 2). If the purpose of the NMRA should change, then the Board of Directors, Susquehanna Division #11, may designate any other model railroad organization(s) that subscribe to the same purposes as fostered by Susquehanna Division #11 to receive the divisions assets.

Proposed Revision 1/2/2002

LOCOMOTIVE POWER PICK-UPS by Jim Atkinson

My locomotive roster dates back to 1955, including about 30 brass units from the sixties. They are nice locomotives. Until recently, I didn't have a layout that I could really operate my equipment on, so the older locomotives had seen very little use. Now that I could operate them, I found out many of them ran poorly compared to modern models. I purchased the engines because I wanted to run them, not just have some dust collectors on a shelf. After studying the situation, I determined power pick-up was the primary problem. New locomotives pick up power with a majority of their wheels while the older designs use half of their wheels for pick-up.

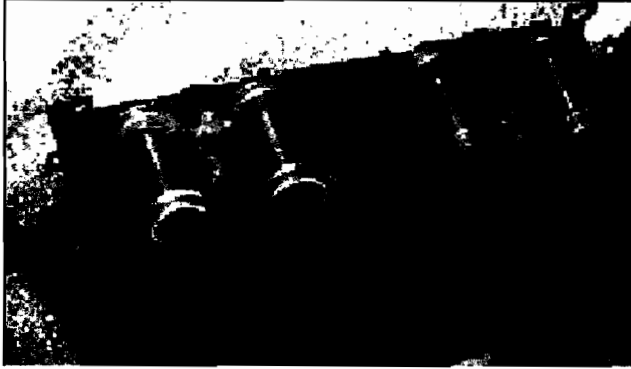
I decided to add some form of additional power pick-ups to these engines. My first attempts were made from .003" brass shim stock and copied from some commercial units that mount under the locomotives and rub on the rails. I really didn't find them

satisfactory. They are impossible to to mount under some engines (diesel trucks), they are hard to adjust, and they tangle at turnouts and bend out of shape rendering the locomotive inoperable.

My second attempt was successful. I simply made the pick-ups rub on the wheel treads. I prefer them to rub on two wheels if possible , but settled on one wheel on some steam locomotives out of necessity. The additional pick-up circuits nicely enhanced every locomotive I've done with smoother more dependable operation.

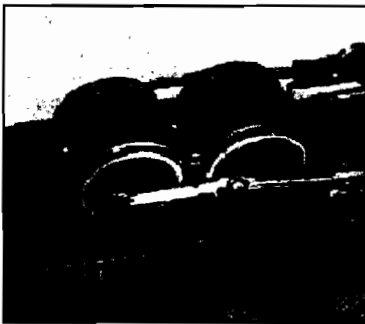
The basic pick-up shoe consists of a .003" piece of brass shim stock cut in a 1/16" wide strip for the contact, or a short piece of .015" brass wire, a small block of plastic for the insulated mount, and a length of motor lead wire. Nothing expensive or hard to work with.

Let's start with a simple pick-up added to a tender truck. Cut the .003 brass shim stock 1/16" wide and a little longer than the trucks wheel base. Make a small plastic block about 1/8" x 1/8" x 1/8". Razor saw a slot in one side about 1/16" deep. Straighten the



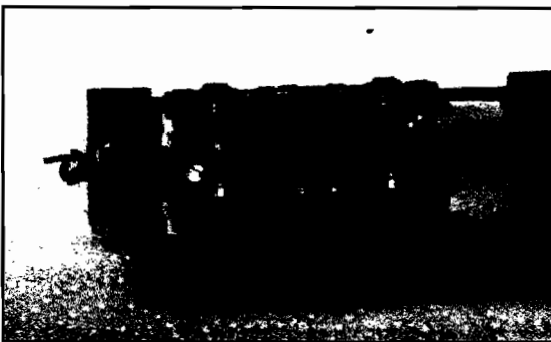
brass contact strip and then center it in the slot in the insulator and glue in place. Locate the assembled contact on the bottom of the tender truck bolster on the side with the insulated wheels and carefully push the contact strip ends over the top of each wheel. The spring in the strip should hold it in place. If the location looks okay; that is, the strip ends are located evenly on the wheel treads and there is enough spring for good contact between the contact strip and the wheels, super glue the block to the truck bolster. When the glue sets, check the wheels and truck for freedom of movement and good contact to the contact strip. Also make sure there are no shorts between the new pick-up and the truck body. A multi-meter is handy for this check. Now solder the lead wire to the contact strip. Use a hot soldering pencil and do it fast so that you

don't melt the insulating block. Thread the wire up to the front of the tender (inside or underneath) and on to the steam locomotive. I choose to clean a spot to bare brass on the rear of the engine under the cab and solder the lead there. You could connect it to the proper side of the motor itself or use some small plug arrangement. Allow some slack in the wire irregardless of how you connect it to the locomotive. You now have a steam locomotive with two tender wheels adding to the electrical pick-up. This will help the engine to obtain electricity, especially short wheel base engines at turnouts. If any of your addition shows, merely paint it engine black. I doubt anybody will notice it after that.



Adding pick-ups to the insulated side of the steam locomotives greatly enhances their operation even if it's only on one or two of the leading wheels, since the drivers stay cleaner than the undriven tender wheels and the engines tend to be heavier yielding better track contact. The contact arrangement is similar to the "tender" unit, but may require some special designing such as a different size or shape of insulating block. The contact strip can rub on the wheel tread at any location, it doesn't have to be on top. You'll probably have to mount the insulating block to the side of the locomotive frame. Again make sure you maintain electrical separation of the pick-up from the

locomotive. Solder your lead from the contact strip to the proper motor brush or even the insulated tender pivot pin. As a test, your locomotive should now operate without it's tender. With the two added pick-ups you should be pleased with the improved performance of your steamer.



The brass diesel pick-ups are essentially the same as the tender units, but may necessitate smaller blocks for truck frame clearance. If the location is really tight, you can substitute .015" brass wire for the .003" shim stock. You will probably have to glue the insulating block to the side of the truck body. Run your motor leads to the proper side of the motor. Again check for electrical separation. Your older diesel now has the same 8 wheel pick-up as your newest ones. You should notice a marked improvement in it's performance.

Susquehanna Division #11 Membership Application
Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

Send application to: Paul Tice, 1709 West Market Street, York, PA 17404

_____ New \$3.00 per Year _____ Renewal \$3.00 per year _____ Change of Address

NMRA # _____ MER # _____ Division # _____

The Susquehanna Division is located in the central portion of Pennsylvania. The Counties served are: Adams; Berks; Blair; Cambria; Centre; Clinton; 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. Any member in good standing of the NMRA and the MER may join the Susquehanna Division. Please send photo copies of your current membership cards. Annual dues are \$3.00 which includes the quarterly newsletter "Susquehanna Sidetracks". Among the division's events are 2 one day mini meets and several half day clinics and/or open home layouts.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State & Zip Code _____ Telephone _____

Scale & Gauge _____ Layout YES/NO Modules YES/NO

SIG _____ Email Address _____



Mid-Eastern Region
National Model Railroad Association, Inc.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/DUES RENEWAL NOTICE

The Mid-Eastern Region Inc., NMRA
An IRS Tax Exempt Organization
 Business Manager
 9 Roosevelt Ave.
 Wilmington, DE 19804-3044

Remittance Enclosed for:

Region Dues: New Renewal _____

1 year: \$8.00 2 years: \$16.00 \$ _____

Life membership cost is based on your age. Send your Birth Date to the MER for a quotation. Only NMRA Life Members qualify for MER Life Membership.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

NMRA # _____ Expire Date _____

MER # _____ Expire Date _____

Scale _____ Birth date _____ Tel # _____

MER Lapel Pin/Tie Tack @ \$6 each _____ \$ _____

MER Cloth Patch @ \$3 each _____ \$ _____

Donation _____ \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region