
BUILDER'S PLATE

June 2019

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Newsletter of Division 12, Mid Central Region, NMRA, Inc.

Superintendent's Report

Well what a merry month May was. The first weekend was the MCR Region Convention, and the following weekend was the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Gold Spike with the Union Pacific Big Boy steam locomotive returning to service. The third weekend found the PRRT&HS convention in Harrisburg and the Op's weekend in southeast Michigan, and the final celebration on Memorial Day weekend was my grandson's Thomas the Tank Train themed birthday party. Ok, maybe the last one is a stretch, but it did involve trains, and it was merry.

We had members attending both the PRRT&HS convention and the southeast Michigan Op's. Our members are always working on improving the Division. Rob Bennett made some contacts at the

PRRT&HS convention with vendors and clinicians for the 2021 convention and possibly our Mini Meet.

I attended the Michigan Op's weekend with my friend Fred Lotte. (See Fred's comments on the layouts later in the newsletter.) We were at the first layout less than ten minutes when someone said, "Oh you're from Division 12. I'd like to do a clinic at the 2021 convention." I was a little shocked as there had not been a public announcement that the convention was coming to Erie. I just keep getting amazed at how well known our division is becoming in such a short period of time.

Onto Memorial Day weekend-- it was a fun family weekend in

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Next Membership Event:

A short membership meeting will be held on June 8 at 11:00 AM at the North Gale Street picnic area in Westfield, NY. After the meeting, we will sponsor a picnic with train watching, joining with other railroad groups in our division's area. Food service will be at 12:30 PM. Hamburgers, hot dogs, buns, and condiments will be provided. Please bring a dish to share, table service and drinks for yourself and guests, and outdoor chairs if you have them.

Raleigh, NC, but that's not what I want to bore you with. An NMRA member from the Buffalo area reached out to me while I was in North Carolina. There are still two lost counties in New York State -- Erie and Niagara. They are the last two US counties still in the International Division (which also covers parts of southern Ontario) and are looking for a home region in the US. With the help of the MCR president and myself, we are trying to guide them through the process we went through back in 2014.

On my way home from North Carolina, Harriet and I stopped to see MCR President Bob Weinheimer, and we also got to see his wonderful layout. We discussed how we could help the Buffalo area. He had already reached out to both the NER and NFR presidents. The other thing we discussed was the "Regions" map on the NMRA website. It looks like there will be a fix. The catch is we have to do it. Harriet Beckman has stepped up to do an updated map for the NMRA website.

The members in Erie and Niagara counties will have the choice of ether moving to the MCR or NER. The person I talked with from Buffalo said he was impressed with how active our division is, as compared to the division to their east. I will keep you posted.

Happy Model Railroading
Brad White



Division 12, MCR, NMRA, Inc.
The Alleghany Western Division:
Expanding your model railroading horizons

Please visit our website: www.div12mcr.org



Or [NMRAAlleghanyWesternDivision](https://www.facebook.com/NMRAAlleghanyWesternDivision)

Meetings

Membership meetings typically include announcements and limited business; What's On Your Workbench, during which members share what they have been working on; and educational model-railroad related programs, presentations, or clinics.

NMRA: <https://www.nmra.org/>

Mid Central Region:

<http://www.midcentral-region-nmra.org/>

Division 12 Superintendent:

Superintendent@div12mcr.org



Officers and BOD

Superintendent: Brad White —
superintendent@div12mcr.org

Assistant Superintendent: Mike Hauk

Clerk/Treasurer: Dave Ellis —
clerk@div12mcr.org

Board of Directors: Rob Bennett, Doug
Sandmeyer, Chris Mincemoyer

Division 12 Upcoming Events

June: Between the Rails: Division 12 is hosting a picnic and train watching, joining with other railroad enthusiasts at the North Gale Street picnic area in Westfield, NY on June 8, 2019. Our meeting starts at 11:00 AM

July: Membership Meeting: 10:00 AM July 13, 2019 at the Cambridge Springs Trolley Station. Program: Three different weathering techniques with presentation, demonstrations, and an opportunity to try one out.

July: Jefferson Train Show: July 20, 2019 in Jefferson, Ohio. We will have our T-TRAK layout and information at this train show.

August: Membership Meeting: 10:00 AM August 10, 2019 at the Cambridge Springs Trolley Station. Program: Modeling electrical equipment as large loads, and using DCC lighting decoders.

September: Alleghany Western Mini-Meet 2019: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM September 14, 2019 at the Ambassador Center, 7794 Peach Street, Erie, PA. See the "save the date" notice in this issue.

October: Membership Meeting: 10:00 AM October 12, 2019 at the Cambridge Springs Trolley Station. Program: Mini-Meet after action

reflection and ongoing planning for 2021 regional convention.

November: Erie Train Show: November 3, 2019 at Rainbow Gardens. Division 12 will have its T-TRAK layout, consignment sales, and information table as well as clinic presentations.

November: Model Railroad Tours: November 11, 2019. Division 12 will showcase some of its members' layouts. We are hoping for better weather this year!

December: Christmas Party: December 14, 2019 from 1:00 – 4:00 PM at Hoss's Steak and Sea House in Erie again this year.



The *Builder's Plate* is a publication of Division 12, Mid Central Region, NMRA. All opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of Division 12, the MCR, or the NMRA.

Editor: David Ellis
Copyeditor/Proofreader: Renee Reilly

Upcoming Model Railroad Events

Diesel Days on the Oil City and Titusville Railroad: June 22 and 23, 2019: Featuring several diesel locomotives from different railroads to highlight the history of diesel locomotives and the Pennsylvania oil country. See their website at https://www.octr.org/diesel_days for details.

Greenberg Train Show: July 20 and 21, 2019: Pittsburgh area public train show located at 209 Mall Blvd, Monroeville, PA 15146 from 10 AM – 4 PM.

Jefferson Train Show: July 20, 2019: This train show, swap, and sale is located at 11 East Jefferson Street, Jefferson, Ohio from 10 AM – 3 PM.

NMRA National Convention, Salt Lake City, Utah from July 7 until July 13, 2019

Links to these and additional upcoming model railroad events can be found on the Division 12 Website: <http://www.div12mcr.org>

Use the search button on the “Welcome” page or use the “News/Events” page, either by scrolling or clicking on the “Train Shows and Conventions” category link.

If you are aware of upcoming railroad events, please let the *Builder’s Plate* editor and the webmaster know, so that we can list them.
Editor: clerk@div12mcr.org
Webmaster: webeditor@div12mcr.org



**Save the date:
September 14, 2019**

Alleghany Western Mini-Meet

**One-day model railroad event at
the Ambassador Center*
I-90 Exit 24 – 7794 Peach Street
Erie, Pennsylvania
(*Home of the Northern Express, 2021
MCR Regional Convention)**

Model railroading information, activities, and fun:

- **Clinics throughout the day on modeling, operations, and prototype railroading**
- **T-TRAK layout on display**
- **Raffle and white elephant tables**

- Continental breakfast and end-of-day hors d'oeuvres included with registration
- Opportunities to have models judged toward merit awards



Friday evening before the Mini-Meet and Saturday after the Mini-Meet:

- Tour local model railroads in several scales and meet with the modelers
- Operate on local model railroads

Watch for registration information, clinic lists, white elephant forms, judging information, railroad tours and ops-sessions, vendors and donors, raffle prizes, and other information on our website:

www.div12mcr.org/mini-meet/

Social Committee Report

We enjoyed a good breakfast and good conversation before our May meeting in Cambridge Springs. Another breakfast is planned for July 13 at the Venango General Store at 8 AM before our July meeting. RSVP social@div12mcr.org if you plan to attend.



Here we are having breakfast before the May meeting.

A combined picnic with the Independent Railroaders and the Conewango Switch Tenders at Gale St., Westfield NY will take place on 6/8/19. The Division will hold its June meeting starting at 11:00 AM and the picnic will follow with food service starting at 12:30 PM.

Hopefully you sent your reservation, as hamburgers, hot dogs, buns and condiments will be provided. Remember to bring a dish to share, table service and drinks for yourself and guests, and outdoor chairs.

Lee Farnsworth

social@div12mcr.org

Shorty Parker's Coal Dumper Lives On

As the Maritime Museum of Sandusky starts its summer hours, Shorty Parker's working model of the rail yard and coal dumper at Sandusky Coal Docks is the centerpiece of a new exhibit: "The Giant With Gentle Hands: The Coal Industry in Sandusky Bay."



Shorty was honored at the ribbon cutting this past April as his model was incorporated into the new exhibit. The museum's executive director, John May, was quoted in the *Sandusky Register* as saying of the new exhibit, "The primary feature is the scale model of the coal dumper on Pier 3. It's just an incredible replica, a mechanical marvel."

Shorty's work can be seen at the [Maritime Museum of Sandusky](http://www.maritimemuseumofsandusky.com).

Brick and Mortar Hobby Stores in Division 12

We have a dearth of train stores here in the division. A newer one has started up in Jamestown, NY. If you visit them, let them know you are a member of the NMRA and you learned about them from the Division 12 newsletter.

Terry's Train Shop

Terry's Train Shop is a train and hobby store located at:

1739 Foote Ave Ext.
Jamestown, NY 14701

716-397-5545

Mentoring in Division 12

At a membership meeting last fall, we discussed several approaches to offering mentoring in the division. Ultimately, we decided the best approach was to keep it simple, or at least, informal. We came up with starting a list of members who felt comfortable mentoring on specific topics. To contact the mentors, either email the clerk (clerk@div12mcr.org), who will forward your email, or contact them directly.

- Brad White: DCC, Signaling
- Dave Ellis: Backdrops
- Ed Blenner: Scenery
- Doug Sandmeyer: Benchwork, Wiring, Soldering

Southeast Michigan Op's Weekend

Fred Lotte and Brad White

On Thursday, May 16 through Sunday, May 19 Fred Lotte and I attended the South East Michigan Op's weekend put on by the OPSIG group. It was a well-run weekend with over twenty layouts participating.

They are using web-based software for participants to register for each of the layouts. I plan on reaching out to them for coordinating the op-sessions for the 2021 convention. You can check out upcoming events at the following website:
<https://www.operatingsessions.com/Home/Index>

After each op-session was over we received an email requesting feedback on the op-session. You could give it a simple thumbs-up or down. They also provided space to write in comments.

On the Monday after the event they also sent a follow up survey. The comments below are based on what Fred wrote up. I asked him if I could share it with the division and he gave me permission. I've included some photos of each of the layouts.

They were all outstanding. The only layout they did not request feedback on was the Operations Road Show's Wabash layout.

Nashville Road



The Nashville Road is somewhat intimidating until you get the lay of the land. Wish we could have finished the last switching job just to see if our plan would have worked.

This railroad is a great work in progress.

Western Maryland



The Western Maryland was cozy but not crowded with good operation. The only problem was that the yard switcher was underweight for assigned tasks. Good but not contrived switching puzzle at Ocean.

Central Vermont / Boston & Maine



This railroad was a "Plywood Central" getting ready for scenery. It had good distances between stations and interesting, realistic trains with real work.

Dispatcher needs more experience. When we started asking for clearance to a particular station rather than just "awaiting orders" we moved along at a better pace.

Michigan Shoreline Railroad



The Michigan Shoreline Railroad is a huge and growing railroad. It includes some beautiful scenery in the “not under construction” areas. It also has a great switching puzzle at Atwood industrial.

I had no questions because Calvin explained everything perfectly. The method he outlined was logical & well suited for the task.

Only problem was that switcher assigned was just a little too slow

to accelerate, which made it hard to complete the tasks in the three hours scheduled for this session.

A perfect session spoiled by being too short.

Durango & Silverton





This railroad had beautiful, better than museum quality scenery. Good period equipment. As with all of the railroads this weekend, I would jump at the chance to operate this RR at practically any time.

The timetable needs a track chart to get new operators oriented quickly.

We (conductor & engineer of X487) were not warned that we should violate rule 89 at Rockwood when meeting #264. A TO should have been issued directing X478 to hold the main when meeting #264 at Rockwood. Train 264 would take the siding per rule 88 since they would also be meeting #216, which was following X478. Our only responsibility with #216 was to stay sufficiently far ahead of him.

No 111 at the Silverton mine needs much better power pickup.

The tender of 486 is about 56,000 lbs. lighter than the engine of #478 (which is allowed past the mine throat head block). Also, the difference between the tenders of 478 & 486 is 1000 lbs. & they have identical water capacity (5000 gals.). The engine and tender of 478 are apparently allowed anywhere in the mine yard. Since the restriction was given as weight & not clearance, only the driving axles of 486 are restricted as the axle loading of the pilot or trailing axle (of 486) is less than the max axle loading of #478. (Note, if you haven't guessed we got into a little hot water over this apparent violation).

Committee Chairs and Volunteer Positions:

Achievement Program: Mike Hauk
ap@div12mcr.org

Newsletter: Dave Ellis
clerk@div12mcr.org

Operations Coordinator: Dale Dresser
operations@div12mcr.org

Social Committee: Lee Farnsworth
social@div12mcr.org

T-Trak: Doug Sandmeyer
ttrak@div12mcr.org

Webmaster: Chris Mincemoyer
webeditor@div12mcr.org

A Regular Column: The Modeler's Workbench

This month by: Dave Ellis

This will be the second in a regular series that features three tools or products that Division 12 members find indispensable on their workbench — things that their modeling efforts would be crippled without. The following three: a brand of glue, a brand of weathering powders, and a homebuilt tool caddy are my choices. Think about three of your favorite tools or products and submit them to the newsletter. We would all like to read about them.



#1 Aleene's Original Tacky Glue . . . Aleene's Tacky Glue is a nontoxic, versatile, all purpose adhesive. Its "thick tacky formula grabs items on contact" making it a go-to glue for wood and paper products as used in modeling. It dries clear, is non-yellowing, and holds up over time.



I mainly use it in scratch-built, kit-bashed, or kit projects with wood or cardstock components. I squeeze some out on a scrap paper or paper plate and then apply the tacky glue to one component with a toothpick. The two parts to be glued are then positioned and pressed together. While they can be repositioned, the parts stay in place without sliding around or the need for clamping. The set-up time seems to work well for me; adjustments can be made, but I don't spend time waiting for things to dry before moving on. Another feature is that if some of the glue squeezes out from between the parts, I can cleanly remove the excess glue with a toothpick once it has skimmed over but not fully dried. While tacky glue would not be an appropriate glue for plastic kits, I have used it, instead of canopy glue, to apply the clear styrene "glazing" to the back of window frames by applying a drop to each corner.

[Aleene's Tacky Glue](#) is easy to find in arts or craft stores or hardware stores. It is one of the few modeling supplies I don't have to go to Erie, Pittsburgh, train shows, or the Internet to find.

#2 Bragdon's Weathering Powders . . . I first found the Bragdon Enterprises weathering powders at a train show in the Seattle area early in my model railroading experiences. I still have the two compact boxes containing four colors each. One set has three shades of rust and a soot color. The other has two shades of brown, a "grimy gray," and an ash color.



These powders are not chalk. They are made up of very finely ground rust or other weathering agents mixed with a pressure sensitive dry adhesive. They are nonmagnetic and nontoxic. With the addition of the adhesive in the powders, they stick to most surfaces.

I use the Bragdon powders to give a final application of weathering to rolling stock and structures. While I often use them along with other techniques, they can be used just by themselves. I apply them with a brush. As their instructions suggest, a little goes a long way. One can always add a bit more if needed. They leave a dusty or rusty natural looking surface that adds to other weathering techniques by blending it all together. The rust colors, being rust, look totally natural and realistic.

Unlike Aleene's glues, Bragdon powders are a bit difficult to find. As I mentioned, I picked mine up at a train show in Washington State over ten years ago. Doing a quick Google search recently, eBay and [Bragdon Enterprises](#) were the only two sources I came up with. I have not used their online catalog or ordering system, so I can't say how well it works. I do use the powders on a regular basis and, either by themselves or as a final step, they are a go-to weathering standby worth searching out.

#3 Homebuilt tool caddy . . . I am a "spreader," and when I get going on a project my workbench is full! Tools, different stages of construction, and



different subassemblies all spread out and cover every square inch of the work bench. I desperately needed a way to corral all my small hand tools in one place.

In an article in the July 1998 *Model Railroader*, Lionel Strang described building a tool caddy in a convenient size with scrap wood he had on hand. He built it in tiers with a 2 X10 base and additional sizes stacked on top. He built

his with holes all the way through, a removable hardboard base, and painted it white for a professional look.

I followed his basic concept with what I had on hand, but with two additions. I wanted a place for my scale rule to live to be included. Also, I had a Styrofoam block that I could use to store sharps such as hobby knives.



Seen from the end, the construction can be easily understood. I started with a piece of one half inch plywood that fit on my workbench conveniently. I glued and nailed a thin strip of plywood as a stop on the back and glued a 2 X 4 flat on the plywood, forming a tight sleeve for the Styrofoam to press fit into (allowing it to be rotated as the blade slots wear it out). In front of the 2 X 4, I glued a 1 X 2 forming another shelf and back of the mini-shelf/slot for my scale rule. Then I glued and nailed a strip of trim along the front forming the other side of the scale rule "slot."

After the glue dried, starting with the 2 X 4, I drilled holes of the appropriate size into the surface of the wood to hold the pliers, tweezers, small screwdrivers, files, and nail set that were in use, cluttering

up my workbench, without a specific place to live. Larger tools had homes on the pegboard and some specific tools had homes in mini-kits in drawers. But these small, frequently used tools now had a home.

I am still a spreader, but with a place for everything, everything now had a place (other than where I last set it down). While my caddy doesn't have the professional look of a final paint job, I have room to add more holes for any other tools that start collecting around my work surface.

To publish the *Builder's Plate* we need submissions!

Modeler's tips, modeler's projects, the new "Modeler's Workbench" column, or any other railroad or modeling related stories make excellent submissions. Any member can submit a short article.

To make our membership meetings less business-focused and include more model railroading fun, we also need reports from the officers and committee chairs submitted to the *Builder's Plate*.

Write it up and submit it as a minimally formatted Word document attached to an email to clerk@div12mcr.org. Photos are best formatted as JPEGs.



NMRA Partnership Program

The NMRA Partnership Program is a member benefit that truly has a tangible payback. The NMRA has partnered with model railroad manufacturers of all sizes, giving them exposure on the NMRA website in return for receiving generous discounts for NMRA members all year long. Some provide members with special codes, others prefer a phone or email order, but all appreciate the additional business from our members.

For complete descriptions of the partners, the discount they offer, and instructions on applying the discount on your order visit the NMRA Partnership website (<https://www.nmra.org/partnerships>). If you are not signed in as a member, you will only see a list of the partners offering the discounts. To see the instructions on how to apply the discounts you need to register or log in as a registered member. If you have not registered, here is an [FAQ](#) with instructions for how to register at the NMRA website.