

BUILDER'S PLATE

September 2020

Volume 3, Issue 8

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

Superintendent's Report

Here we are at the beginning of September and thoughts turn to the coming of fall and basement season, though this whole year has kind of turned out to be one long basement season. I know not all model railroads are in basements, but you get the idea – spending more time working on modeling projects than spending time outdoors.

I was able to have a work/planning session with my project engineer for the Chautauqua Branch 2.0 layout recently. Like most engineers he has come up with some grandiose plans. He has managed to design a plan that not only includes the Chautauqua Branch, but the Salamanca Branch, the Philadelphia and Erie line, the PRR Buffalo line from Olean to Buffalo, The Erie RR from

Meadville to Jamestown, and the joint NKP/PRR track from Brocton to Buffalo. And for good measure we can squeeze in some of the NYC Buffalo – Erie mainline. All I had asked for in the new layout was the addition of the NKP/PRR joint track to complete the entire Chautauqua Branch, and the new layout is to be a narrow shelf design of multiple levels.

So with plans in hand we started taking some measurements. With the max height for the top level of about sixty-four inches, the Buffalo staging yard would be twelve inches off the floor. I said that's not going to work. My vision was a double deck layout. What my engineer came up with has four levels and would take more years than I have left and more money than I have to spend on a layout.

Next Membership Events:

Our next membership meeting will be held on **Saturday, September 12, 2020 from 10:00 until 1:00 at the Venango General Store** at their "meadow" space. If you have a comfortable outdoor chair, please bring it. At the "meadow" we will have the opportunity to order food from the Venango General Store, and they will bring it out to our meeting space around noon. **Following the Pennsylvania guidelines and out of concern for our members, social distancing and mask wearing will be expected.**

This meeting will primarily be a social gathering and check in. We are trying to figure out how to best serve the membership. Please come prepared with a topic or idea that you would like us to discuss.

I'm trying to find the balance between modeling and recreating a part of the PRR and what can reasonably be built. I think we still have some negotiating to do.

Happy Model Railroading!

Bradley White

Division 12, MCR

Superintendent



Division 12, MCR, NMRA, Inc.

The Alleghany Western Division:
Expanding your model railroading horizons

Please visit our website: www.div12mcr.org

Or  **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 Hawk –
ap@div12mcr.org

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

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

Division 12 Upcoming Events

September: **Membership Meeting:** September 12 from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM at the "meadow" at the Venango General Store. Social distancing and mask wearing are required.

Upcoming Model Railroad Events

Links to additional upcoming model railroad events as they develop can be found on the Division 12 Website: <http://www.div12mcr.org>
At this point in time, few if any public events are happening in the tri-state area.

- 2020 Great Berea Train Show October 3-4, 2020
Has been **CANCELLED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS**

Mid Central Region Election Notice

The nominating committee for the MCR 2021 elections is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for the 2021 MCR elections:

President	Dave Neff
Vice President	Jerry Doyle
Secretary	Fred Soward
Treasurer	John Shields

Per current MCR regulations, the nominating committee's slate of candidates is being communicated to the MCR members.

Additional nominations for Mid Central Region offices may be made by a petition to the Region Nominating Committee Manager, signed by fifteen (15) members of the Mid Central Region, within thirty (30) days of this publication of the Nominating Committee's candidate slate.

Nomination petitions should be sent to:

Bob Shreve
827 Quailwood Ct.
Mason, OH. 45040

Petitions must be received by September 17th, 2020 to be considered for the 2021 elections.

Respectfully,

MCR 2021 Elections Nominating
Committee

Division 12 August Meeting

The membership of Division 12, MCR, NMRA met online in a Zoom meeting on August 8, 2020. The following members were virtually present: Rob Bennett, Larry Dodge, Dale Desser, David Ellis, Lee Farnsworth, Mike Hauk, Jerry Longo, Nick Ozorak, Al Reibel, Doug Sandmeyer, Brad White, as was Dave Neff, regional V.P.

A quorum (at least ten members) was established with eleven Division 12 members present.

Announcements

- Brad mentioned that the Mid Central Region board of directors would be meeting on Zoom on October 23, 2020. If any members have questions, please submit them to Brad ahead of time, so that he can add them to the agenda.
- He also mentioned that the NMRA national board of directors would be meeting on Zoom on August 22. He thinks that the issues around including video production as part of the Author's AP will be on the agenda.
- Mike mentioned that the NMRA has been experimenting with virtual AP judging. At this point, items with glue still need face-to-face inspection. The scenery AP judging apparently can be done virtually.
- Discussion of train shows included that the Greenberg show did not

happen, all World's Greatest Hobby shows are cancelled through 2021, the upcoming Buffalo Terminal show is cancelled, and no official word has been announced yet on the fall Erie Train Show.

- Brad announced that he had been left in charge of a large estate of model train equipment and that he plans to open an estate sale to members first in October. He is donating ten percent of all sales to the division.
- Dale mentioned that he is planning on ordering a group of Pennsy calendars at a reduced rate; please contact him if you want to order one at \$15.00.

Four short presentations: Mistakes and Oopsies

1. Dave Ellis shared "macro" and "micro" mistakes. The macro focused on issues from locating his railroad in the attic and in transitioning from "fun for one" to operations focus with more people present in the train attic. Lessons learned included making the space comfortable, practical, and safe before starting the railroad as well as considering what Mike Hauk has called "infrastructure" issues early on, rather than as an afterthought. Making "micro" mistakes appears critical to learning what works for an individual modeler and what doesn't. Often the result of a mistake is good enough for the application. His PowerPoint is

posted on the div12mcr.org website "Presentations" page.

2. Mike Hauk shared several "oopsies" that he has experienced. He shared how a vertical curve developed a kink coming off a permanently epoxied-in-place bridge. As it does not lead to derailments, he has left it in place. He also shared two examples of outgassing creating problems. The unsealed foam in a riverbed led to bubbles forming in the water over time, and the glue he used attaching the lead sheet weight to scratch built flatcars warped the cars. He then shared photographs of the Newberry Yard Throat scene on his railroad. These photos documented the third attempt, which created bulletproof track work. A major take away is that if a mistake violates self-imposed standards such as "bulletproof track work" then it *must* be corrected. On the other hand, if it is minor or just a visual irritation it can be deemed good enough or disguised rather than redone. A final take away is that given a do-over or clean slate, he would have provided more space for a dedicated workshop. His PowerPoint is posted on the div12mcr.org website "Presentations" page.
3. Rob Bennett focused on two sets of mistakes and solutions to the mistakes. One was mounting his photo backdrops "too high." After investing a lot of time, energy,

and money in mounting his photo backdrops, he focused on creating solutions or at least mitigating the mistake. The second was the need for changing the location of or adding additional crossovers. His PowerPoint is posted on the div12mcr.org website "Presentations" page. Rob's presentation led to a discussion of several issues. First of all, railroads that start with one focus and transition to a different focus, rail fanning to formal operations for example, will naturally create mistake-like issues. Another discussion was around whether a "mistake" is critical or inconsequential depends on the railroad's (or its owner's) operational or scenic focus. A third discussion was around the need for additional light in the layout room, with Rob pointing out that the human eye adjusts and compensates. If photography is going to be considered, even more light is required.

4. Brad shared photos of work on the benchwork for a small N-scale layout he is building as the construction of his railroad in the new house is on hold because of COVID-19. The photos documented some miscalculations of curve radius with the lesson to be learned: measure twice, cut once. More discussion of train room lighting followed with Brad noting that he has been adding additional 6000 K LED lights to the train room.

Modeling Question:

Actually, this month it was a PowerPoint question: Dave asked where to start with annotations and arrows. "Insert shape or insert textbox" was the consensus.

General Discussion:

Dale noted that despite the COVID-19 restrictions, he had a few people over for a first ops-session of the rebuilt railroad. The ops uncovered an issue that was later resolved. The discussion segued into a more general discussion of the impact of the pandemic to model railroading and the geopolitical impact of so much of the hobby materials (and U. S. consumer goods in general) being sourced in China. This led to a discussion of the approaches or statements of manufacturers that Nick has had on *The Roundhouse* recently. A link to Nick's podcast, *The Roundhouse*, is now posted to the "Layouts and Links" page on div12mcr.org.

Thank you,

Dave Ellis
clerk@div12mcr.org

Request for Clinicians



The planning committee for the 2021 Mid Central Region Convention, *The Northern Express*, is

looking for clinicians. We are looking for a variety of topics from prototype modeling, modeling methods, empire building, electronics, and well, you name it. Submitted clinics will be selected based on subject needs, timeliness, and the number of clinic slots.

The convention is being held at the Ambassador Center in Erie, Pennsylvania from May 20 through 23, 2021. The center will feature three well-lit clinic rooms with tables for clinicians and participants alike. The Ambassador was the site of our successful Mini-Meet last September, giving participants a chance to get a peek at our future convention center.

Contact Doug Sandmeyer at dsandme@stny.rr.com for more information and the submission form. Visit the *Northern Express* website at <https://www.div12mcr.org/northern-express/>.

Mentoring in Division 12

After discussing several approaches to offering mentoring in the division, 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

Committee Chairs and Volunteer Positions:

Achievement Program: Mike Hauk
ap@div12mcr.org

Newsletter: Dave Ellis
clerk@div12mcr.org

Operations Coordinator: Dale Desser
operations@div12mcr.org

Social Committee: Lee Farnsworth
social@div12mcr.org

T-Trak: Doug Sandmeyer
ttrak@div12mcr.org

Webmaster: Chris Mincemoyer
webeditor@div12mcr.org

Using CAD for your modeling

I have always enjoyed sketching, drawing, or doodling whether it was something I wanted to build or sometimes trying to figure out how something worked. In high school and then in college, drafting classes were paper, pencil and a bag of eraser dust. It wasn't until some years later that I was introduced to a CAD or computer aided design computer program. The initial experience was disappointing, as I had thought it would be much faster to draw that way. The real power I soon realized was in replicating common features and editing. Making design elements to reuse later was another tool that sped up drawing once things were underway.

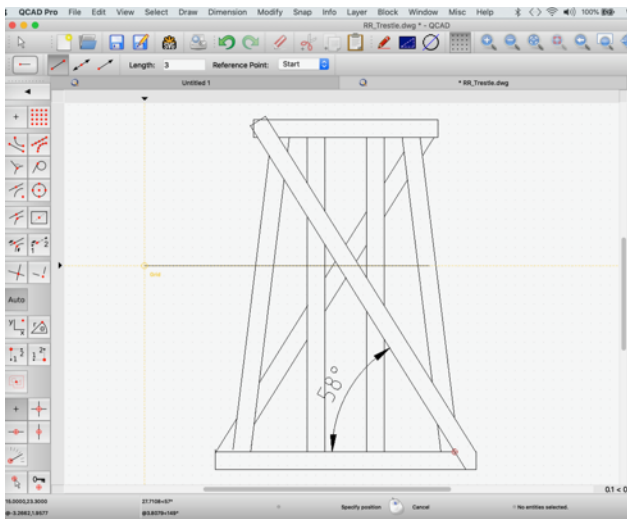
Finding a CAD program for my Apple IIe with 128K of RAM was a problem so with all my contacts using the IBM platform I reluctantly made the switch and was able to find a very reasonably priced program called Easy CAD; luckily, it was very easy to learn. Time moved on and a job change resulted in a workstation on my desk running Auto CAD. Fortunately, I didn't have to pay for that but it meant I was learning a program I couldn't afford for my home computer. I was able to use it at lunchtime however to design railroad structures and other projects. The next platform change occurred when my daughter decided to attend a college that was basically an Apple computer campus. Dazzled by the Apple aura I made the switch back to Apple and started searching for a new affordable CAD program I could wrap my head around.

My current program for drawing is called QCAD, an open source CAD program that sells for \$38.00. An e-book is available for it and a lot of information is available on line. Recently a video tutorial series designed for the beginner has become available for free. QCAD is also available for the Microsoft folks, yippee.

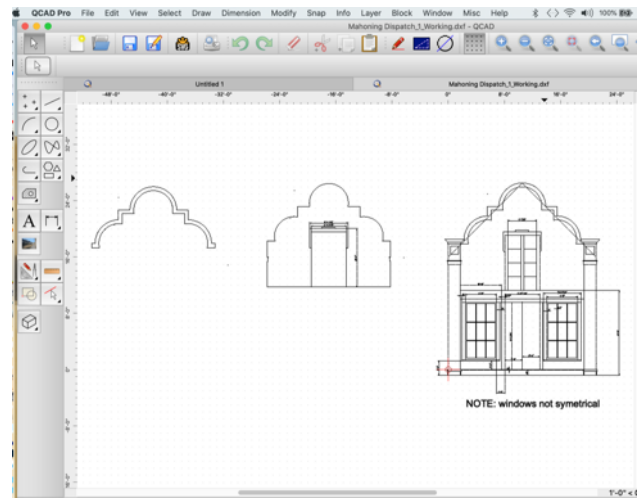
“What's so great about using CAD for me?” you say.

CAD programs give users the tools to accurately draw everything from benchwork to structures and rolling stock. I have found that drawing in full scale (1:1) works best for me. If it's benchwork or a track plan it makes sense to draw it to full scale, then it's easy to tell if it will fit your space. The drawing workspace can be moved around on the monitor or zoomed in and out to see what you are working on up close. Drawings can then be printed in a scale to fit a paper print-out or divided up to print over multiple pages if necessary. It's the reverse of what a lot of us would usually do when hand drawing to a scaled down plan.

Tools for drawing include, but are not limited to, a wide variety of straight and curved lines, circles, arcs, rectangles, and fills. A fill can be used to represent various building materials. Some of the drawing tools can be seen in the screenshot below.



One very useful tool set is the dimension one. I have found it useful when winging it while in the model design phase. It works like this: using measurements from the part of a prototype building, car, or whatever that you can physically reach, start drawing what you know for sure. When you need to draw the parts you can't actually measure, it's time to play. Using the drawing tools, experiment with roof lines, etc. until you have something that lines up and makes sense. Now using the dimension tools you can find the angles (roof), heights, and widths that you have created and need to finish the drawing and build. You can see this in the screenshot of the building front with the arcs on the front wall. I couldn't measure their radii on the prototype but by knowing some of the other dimensions I was able to make some educated guesses and arrive at a reasonable shape for the façade.



Drawing tools in the modify category make it easy to trim or extend lines, rotate lines, copy and move. These are just a few of the commands available. Creating objects like windows from a collection of lines and other drawing elements can take some time. This can be sped up with groups or blocks. After drawing the first window, the elements making it up can be selected and combined into a group. This group can then be saved, given a name and used over and over without having to redraw the window. Commands like copy and move can be applied to any number of drawing elements to speed things up. How about the mirror command? Draw half your building or car then mirror it about a center saving some valuable time.

The drawing is usually done in layers allowing you to use a different layer for things like construction lines, hidden lines, dimensions, and parts that you may not want to see or print at various times. One example could be the design of a swinging gate where several positions of the gate could each be drawn on its own layer. That would allow you to look for possible pinch points. The gate's swing arc is drawn by

selecting the gate elements and using the rotate command with a pivot point. Then you could display the gate in whatever position you wanted by turning on and off the different gate layers. Some CAD programs are capable of automating this to show movement.



This last photo shows a drawing I did of an enclosure for a mine headframe. The layer selected was for the building's stud walls, it was printed in O scale to be used for building the wall on. The photo shows it folded up and colored to use for a place holder and to check clearances.

Doug Sandmeyer (With apologies to professional draftsmen and women)

Brick and Mortar Hobby Stores in Division 12

As the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, the local shops could use your support. When the time comes to 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

1739 Foote Ave Ext.
Jamestown, NY 14701
716-397-5545

East Dyke Depot

332 E. Dyke Street
Wellsville, NY 14895
585-593-0005

Bova's Music and Train Shoppe

31 McClurg Street
Westfield, NY 14787
716-326-6891

Brick and Mortar Hobby Stores Near Division 12

Hobby Express

www.hobbyexpressinc.com

1713 Route 228
Cranberry Twp., PA 16066

Mercer Junction

<https://mercerjunction.com>

151 North Diamand Street
Mercer, PA 16137

If you are using this time to work on your railroad, and you find that you do need essential supplies to finish a project, check out the NMRA Partnership Program for online supplier possibilities.

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.

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

Items For Sale From Division 12 Members

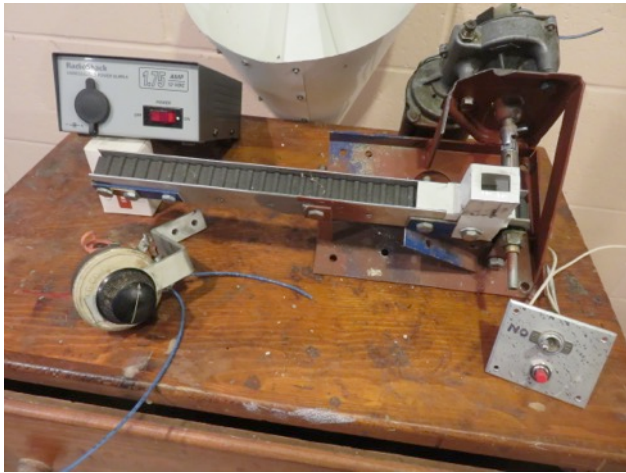
From Shorty Parker

1. I have Model Railroad magazines back into the 90s. There is a lot of good information in them. They are free. You can have as many as you want. If I have any left by the end of September they will be recycled. If interested, call me at 814-476-1030. Please leave a message if I don't answer.

2. Cabin Creek Mine by B.T.S. is the last model left after disassembling my layout. Everything in the pictures goes.



Included are the mine, the powerhouse, and the details. Also included are the conveyor and animation including the motor, the 110V AC to 12V DC inverter, the variable resistor and the switches seen in the photo on the next page.



Any reasonable offer accepted. Call me at 814-476-1030. If I don't answer, please leave a message.

From Dick Bradley:

For Western Maryland Rwy. Fans: Free For Removal!

1. Western Maryland Historical Society Publications
"Blue Mountain Express" October 1981 through Fall-Winter 2003
2. Calendars: 1982 through 2003
3. Photograph Prints: twenty seven assorted steam locomotives

Dick Bradley dbradley@atlanticbb.net
Be the first to come and get them!

From Doug Sandmeyer:

1. Heavy duty power supplies with 12V DC and 24V DC outputs from 15 to 50 amps
2. Electrolytic capacitors good for power supplies or solenoid type switch machines
3. Full size toggle switches, most are DPDT on-off-on
4. Terminals, blocks and strips: AB screw clamp and Wago spring clamp

5. Variac variable output AC transformer
6. Code 83 HO scale flex track, like new, 300+feet
7. Lots of HO scale car kits: Intermountain, CV, and others

Call Doug with your questions or wants and leave a message please. 716-665-8579

Beginning the Knisely Insulator Co.

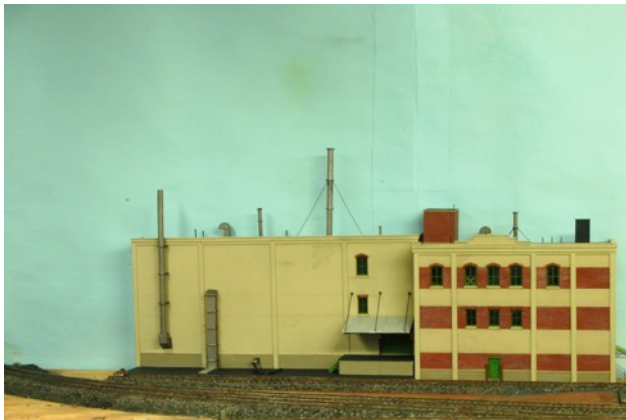
Dick Bradley, MMR©

At the workbench this past month I've been assembling an ITLA kit to become part of the Knisely Insulator complex. The ITLA kit is titled "York Industry." It is a laser cut kit with 1/8" MDF sides and 1/32" aircraft plywood details. The parts fit perfectly. Many detail parts, both laser cut and cast, are included, with a few extra parts just in case you goof. Doors and windows, lintels, and sill are separate parts. There is enough styrene "glass" to cover three times the window area. Even the guy wire for the stacks is supplied.

The ITLA kit has eight wall panels, which can be arranged in several ways. The instructions suggest twelve possible arrangements. To suit my space I use a thirteenth arrangement. Six wall panels with brick window bands are the right building and two concrete wall panels are the left portion. Wait – there are four wall panels on the left. Yes, I added two panels from styrene sheet

cut and scribed to match the kit walls. For my arrangement of walls I need extra styrene for the roofs. The kit provides ample interior bracing.

For the MDF and plywood parts I use Elmer's yellow carpenters glue. My styrene parts use Testors liquid cement. Where wood meets styrene Walther's Goo holds things in place. There are reinforcing panels on the back. Testors canopy glue holds the window glass.



As designed the kit has a continuous flat roof line. I think this is boring. To try to break the line I put the capital over the main brick wall, added the sloped roof entry, and made a brick elevator shaft. Then I built a new sub-base to raise the concrete walls 0.310" higher. The foundation stonework laser cut into the MDF looked too flat to me. I overlaid it with Plastruct stone sheet capped with styrene 0.020 x 0.020 strip. I added the loading dock of styrene with the Plastruct overlay and its Campbell corrugated roofing. All of the vents, stacks, and ducts are from the kit.

With its many parts the kit allows easy separation for multiple color paints. Double face tape on scrap cardboard holds the small parts in place for painting. I use craft acrylic

paints from several different brands. New to me is the "Nickel" color from the Folk Art brand. It's on the several stacks and ducts, and I like it. The thick MDF walls and small plywood parts take the water-based paint with no warping.

Still to come are the building wing to the left, which follows the curve of the track, and the boiler house across the track. Then there are signs and weathering and many more details. These parts of the Knisely Insulator Co. will sit for a while as I begin to plan further construction. Meanwhile I'll work on the rural scene in front of the backdrop installed last month.

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

Modeler's tips, modeler's projects, the "Modeler's Workbench" column, or any other railroad or modeling related stories make excellent submissions. Any member can submit a short article. Share what you have been working on!

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*.

Builder's Plate encourages Division 12 members to share their favorite YouTube videos or DVDs. The more you share, the more the rest of us can learn from the modeling masters that are out there. Give it a shot in the coming months and tell us what you've been watching "At the Movies."

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. It is very helpful to the editor to include the JPEGs as a separate attachment rather than imbedding them into the document.

