

Division 12 November Meeting from Builder's Plate Vol. 3 Issue 11

The membership of Division 12, MCR, NMRA met virtually on ZOOM at 10:00 AM on Saturday, November 14, 2020. The following members were present: Rob Bennett, Bruce Bloomster, Dick Bradley, Dale Desser, Larry Dodge, David Ellis, Lee Farnsworth, Mike Hauk, Nick Ozorak, Doug Sandmeyer, Bill Schopf, and Brad White. Also joining us were Dave Neff, Larry Smith, and Bob Weinheimer from other divisions of the MCR. A quorum (at least ten members) was established with twelve Division 12 members present.

Announcements

Brad White mentioned several upcoming model railroad events and noted which ones have been canceled and which ones are still on. The status of several that he mentioned has changed since the meeting:

- While Pittsburgh canceled the 2020 and we canceled the 2021 Mid Central Region Conventions, the 2022 Indy Junction, three-region convention and Pittsburgh in 2023 are still on.
- Lakeshore Model Railroad Association is holding several open houses with an open invitation to Division 12. Both have since been canceled due to the spiking of COVID-19 case numbers.
- It appears that the Clarion Model Club is still hosting the Christmas Train Show in the Cranberry Mall. Details are elsewhere in the newsletter.

Guest Presentation:

Bob Weinheimer took us through his presentation on "Getting Started in Operations." If you missed his presentation or want to review it, a videotape of his clinic at the 2017 National Convention and the EduTrain PowerPoint of the presentation with notes are both available on the members' only section of the NMRA website.

During the "questions" section after his presentation, Dick Bradley brought up several questions about the role of paperwork, particularly

overview or job cards, the role of route cards and waybills, and using switch lists. Doug Sandmeyer expressed interest in how Bob assigned positions.

Modeler's Questions:

We had a series of modeler's questions:

- Brad asked about replacing older couplers on N scale rolling stock. Bruce Bloomster suggested that he has found Micro-Trains' couplers to be the best option and that #1133 seemed like the choice for Brad's specific need. Micro-Trains has an extensive conversion chart on their website.
- Nick Ozarak had several questions. The first concerned the difference in light intensity between his two Rapido RDCs. After some discussion, the consensus was to go to the source and ask Rapido what to do.
- His second question was more general; he wanted advice on shopping for older brass locomotives. As he is focusing on Canadian Steam engines, brass often is the only option. Along with the general advice that he is going down a serious rabbit hole were some specific ideas from Mike, Dick, and Doug. Mike suggested that PFM is usually a safe bet, but with all brands some variety of quality occurs from model to model. In general, make sure that the mechanism rolls freely, strip it down to the frame, clean and lubricate everything, check for driver wear, and add extra tender pick-ups.
- Finally, it was mentioned that NorthWest Short Line is back in business so a trustworthy source of parts does exist.

Sharing What I've Been Working On:

1. Brad White shared that the Thursday Night Modelers' Night has been well attended with positive feedback.
2. Brad also shared an engine house he has been working on and has recently painted.

3. Dick Bradley suggested that moving forward with virtual meetings, a more organized form of bring and brag might have more participation from the members. He also pointed out that some other divisions have organized topics and/or contests.

Other ideas for future meetings:

Following up on Dick's idea, Mike wondered about how to best transition to AP judging in the virtual world. We have several folks in the division that would like to be considered for AP scenery. How do we move forward with that? Beyond good photos of their work, what are the hard and fast guidelines? Frank Koch may have the answer.

Nick expressed interest in exploring layout design and operations design philosophy: Why I did it the way I did and what would I change?

Finally, a suggestion was made that we survey the membership for desired topics and include a section on "Why I don't attend the Saturday Morning Meetings?" (virtual or in-person).

Submitted by David Ellis clerk@div12mcr.org