

BUILDER'S PLATE

February 2021

Volume 4, Issue 1

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

Superintendent's Report

This February will mark the start of our fourth year as an NMRA division and the last full year that your current slate of officers can hold their office. Please consider how, as a division member, you can help keep Division 12 moving forward. I believe in the fall we will need to form a nominating committee to come up with a slate of officers for the 2022 ballot. I know this is a ways off, but I would like to remind everyone about what needs to be done.

It was announced in January that the NMRA National Convention in California for this July has been canceled. This only reinforced our belief that our convention committee made the correct decision in canceling our regional convention in May. There are plans in the works to have a virtual National Convention this July spanning the same days.

The Division 12 Thursday Modeling

Nights have become immensely popular. Several modelers from outside our division have joined in, working on models and sharing ideas. Do not be bashful – stop by on a Thursday evening from 7:30 to 9:30. You will need a link to the meeting; Dave Ellis sends that out on Tuesday or Wednesday of each week. You may also email me directly at Superintendent@div12mcr.org for the Zoom link and invitation.

I have received word that the Erie Train show for March of this year has been canceled. The good news is the next one is on schedule for November 7. Let us hope for the best this November.

Happy Model Railroading
Bradley White
Division 12 MCR
Superintendent

Next Membership Events:

Our next membership meeting will be held on **Saturday, February 13, 2021 at 10:00 AM on Zoom**. We will send out the invitation and agenda, as we get closer to the date.

One of the popular segments of our in-person meetings is the "What's On My Workbench" segment. Please consider joining in with this even as we meet virtually. If you have a few photographs on your desktop or a short PowerPoint, you can screen share in Zoom. Please contact any of the board members for help or advice with this process.



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

When face-to-face membership meetings return, they 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



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clerk@div12mcr.org

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

Division 12 Upcoming Events

February: **Membership Meeting:**

February 13, 2021 at 10:00 AM. This will be a virtual meeting on Zoom.

March: **Membership Meeting:** March

13, 2021 at 10:00 AM. This will be a virtual meeting on Zoom.

April: **Membership Meeting:** April 10,

2021 at 10:00 AM. This will be a virtual meeting on Zoom.

Upcoming Meeting Programs

As seen above, at least the next three meetings will be virtual ones. As we get into better weather and possibly better COVID-19 situations we hope to move to outdoor meetings as we move into spring and summer. In the meantime Doug Sandmeyer has been working to organize guest speakers from outside the division while we are Zooming. Tentatively, here is what is coming up:

February Membership Meeting: Steve Zapytowski – “Myths and Legends of the Tillamook and Astoria” and Larry Smith – “Introduction to Operations with JMRI”

March Membership Meeting: CMR – “A Hands-on-at-home Clinic on Weathering with Decals” and Russ Weis – “Kitbashing a European Kit into an American Structure”

April Membership Meeting: Nick Kalis – “Enhance Your Layout’s Storytelling: Practical Steps” and our own Mike Hauk – “Weathering with Artist’s Oils and Turpenoid”

May Membership Meeting: Dave Meyers – “Introduction to Gatorboard for Modelers”

Division 12 January Meeting

The membership of Division 12, MCR, NMRA met virtually on ZOOM at 10:00 AM on Saturday, January 9, 2021. The following members were present: Rob Bennett, Dick Bradley, Larry Dodge, David Ellis, Lee Farnsworth, Kevin Garben, Todd Harmon, Mike Hauk, Jerry Longo, Al Reible, Doug Sandmeyer, Bill Schopf, and Brad White. Also joining us were Neal Schorr, our program presenter, from Division 2, Bob Bolt and Larry Smith from Division 10, as well as Fred Soward and Russ Weis from Division 8. A quorum (at least ten members) was established with thirteen Division 12 members present.

Introductions: Brad led us in all stating our names, our divisions, and what we model.

Announcements

- Brad White mentioned that all nearby, in-person upcoming events have been postponed or canceled.
- He also mentioned that, according to the *Keystone Flyer*, Scenic Express is planning a move to Colorado. They will be taking orders through May 22.
- Doug Sandmeyer mentioned that he hopes to have a hands-on/virtual program scheduled for February or March. CMR would demonstrate using decals with the materials available to order ahead of time.

Main Presentation

Doug Sandmeyer introduced Neal Schorr and pointed out that his photo of the four-track stone arch bridge on his layout is featured as the February image in the NMRA calendar.

Neal’s presentation was on an often-unrepresented trackside feature: **Line Poles and Pole Lines:** “Line poles, more commonly referred to as telegraph or telephone poles were found along almost all mainline railroads through at least the 1980’s. A few are still in use today. The collective assemblage of line poles, wires, and right of way upon which they were built is known as the pole line. This clinic looks at how prototype line poles were built and how they were installed on the pole line. The clinic will then turn its attention to how to accurately model them on your layout using commercially available kits in several scales.”

In the questions after the presentation one of our members, Jerry Longo, asked about ending the pole line. Later in the day, Neal responded with the following photograph

showing the "H" pole and relay boxes at the end of a pole line on his layout.



Photograph: Copyright Neal Schorr

Short Presentation

Brad White gave a short presentation on one of the features of the "Member's Only" section of the NMRA website, with the intention of starting a series on "What's Behind the Wall." This first presentation was on the extensive range of data sheets. A PDF of his presentation is posted on our website at

<https://www.div12mcr.org/presentations>

What's on Your Workbench?

Several of our board members screen shared photos of what they have been working on. Either a couple of photographs in a folder or in a simple PowerPoint can be easily shared during a Zoom presentation. Hopefully, as we continue to need to have virtual meetings more of our members will try this easy technique!

- Doug Sandmeyer shared a completely scratch built coaling station built into a hillside with several well-weathered coal buckets.
- Brad shared an enginehouse that he has been building, including during the Thursday night Zoom modeling sessions.

- Mike Hauk shared photos of both the Jordan kit he has scratch built into a railcar and the progress he has been making with adding a farm scene painted into his backdrop with his son's help. He declined to share the new vocabulary (aka profanity) he has developed working on the Jordan kit.

For the Good of the Order/Further Discussion:

- Russ Weis from Division 8 suggested that prototype research such as standard plans books would be the way to establish appropriate distances between line poles. This observer noted a slight smile and head nod from our member, Dick Bradley, at this comment.
- Bill Schopf asked for clarification or help, as he has not received his *Dispatcher's Office* from the OPSIG GROUP since renewing months ago. After discussion, he was advised to contact Eric Smith directly.
- Brad mentioned the details of the ongoing white elephant/estate sale of HO scale equipment that he continues to conduct by appointment only
- Doug mentioned that he is looking for folks willing to conduct virtual clinics and that he has a list of Division 12 folks with clinics willing to help fill out the programs of other divisions.

Submitted by David Ellis

clerk@div12mcr.org

Brick and Mortar Hobby Stores in Division 12

We have a dearth of train stores here in the division or even near the division. Several that exist are in New York State. If you visit any of 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

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
- 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

Remembrances — Shorty Parker

Division 12 lost one of its founding members during January with the passing of Shorty Parker.

<https://www.burtonfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/obituary/allen-parker>



Shorty with his coal dumper before he donated it to the Maritime museum. Photo by Lee Farnsworth.

It was about five years later I heard about this great PRR layout and that there was to be a layout tour. When my friends and I arrived at the PRR layout I had no idea who Shorty Parker was until we went downstairs to see the layout and it was the gentleman who bought all those items back in 1994. My old engine was there pulling a train and he had built the Circus train. A worthy new home for them indeed.

I will never forget Shorty's generosity and his willingness to share. He is a person who changed my life for the better.

From Brad White:

I first met Shorty Parker back in 1994. I was in a position where I had to sell off my model railroad collection. I did have a couple of big-ticket items, and I was not sure if I could find someone to pay what they were worth. One item was an Oriental Power Series PRR 2-8-8-2 and the other was the complete Walther's Circus Train set with all the accessories.

I had run an ad in the Erie newspaper (that's what you did back then) advertising HO model trains for sale. I received several calls inquiring what I had for sale. One person bought that PRR 2-8-8-2, the complete Circus train, and several other PRR diesels. I did not remember getting the person's name who bought all these items.

From Rob Bennett:

Shorty was a true gentleman, always eager to show off his layout and pass on his vast amount of knowledge. I first met Shorty when I arranged to do a layout tour video. He was extremely accommodating, and I wound up doing three videos – the tour video, a “Cab-Ride” video, and a stand-alone video covering his magnificent coal dumper. To this day his Tour and Cab-Ride videos are the most viewed videos on my YouTube Channel.

When Shorty made the decision to dismantle his layout I was fortunate to obtain several items. When I did this I advised Shorty I would only take items that I was actually going to incorporate into my layout, and this has been the case. I am extremely proud to have incorporated Shorty's machine shop, PRR tower (now Fairview), DJ Tower (now at Eugene East, still called DJ),

several smaller railroad sheds and outbuildings, and his scratch built Erie Sand and Gravel complex. I also am honored to be running his PRR C1 0-8-0 switcher and a PRR M1a Mountain and several pieces of rolling stock. Through the YouTube videos Shorty's skill and mastery of the hobby has been shared with thousands of people. His impact on his fellow model railroaders will continue for years to come, and his legacy will live on through several Division 12 member's layouts.

From Larry Dodge:

It all started at a meeting of Division 12 when I was a new member and he asked me if I had ever seen a picture of his coal loader module. He invited my wife and me to visit and watch him operate it. The visit was fascinating; not only how the loader operated, but how he took the time to explain how it all came about. The next day a crew came to dismantle the module and take it to the Maritime Museum. I was awestruck because to see it one also had the opportunity to see his wonderful railroad.

Once we started talking, I discovered he was going to dismantle his railroad and that started a year-and-a-half-long purchase-as-you-go relationship with Shorty. I visited Shorty almost every month during this long disassembly.

Even though I have not purchased more than a quarter of it, my initial conversations with him lead me to know this man as a warm, talented model railroader who was very willing to share anything I needed to know about railroading.

I will miss our friendship and his expertise and advice.



Shorty (with Dave and Mike) reviewing his contributions to the White Elephant sales at our initial Allegheny Western Mini-Meet.

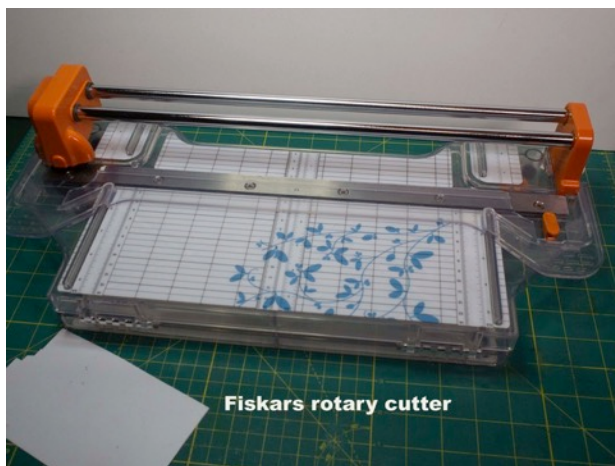
The Division 12 board of directors is proud to announce that we are creating a regional award in Structure Scratch Building in Shorty's name to honor his legacy.

Experiments from the Workbench: The Window Machine Doug Sandmeyer

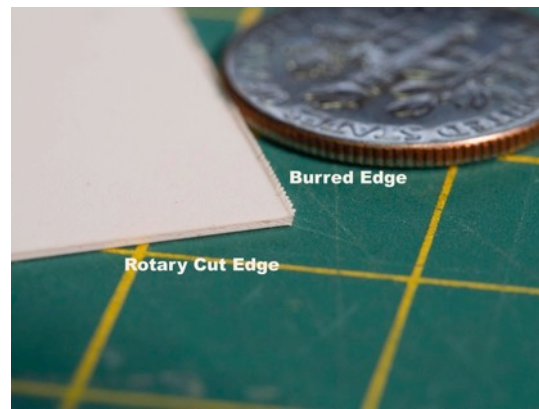
I have been working on a pair of matching cabooses for a while now and had put off glazing the windows for as long as possible. The thought of holding the styrene glazing material under a square while dragging the Exacto knife over it didn't excite me at all. It seems the plastic squirms unless you can apply a death grip on it and the square at

the same time. The tiny windows don't give you much to hang on to and the squirming results in scratches.

While pondering this I happened to see the Fiskars paper cutter I had been given for Christmas one year and thought, "I wonder if that would work." Testing proved the concept and the cutting disc would work on up to .030" styrene.



The difficulty became measuring for repeat cuts since they would be shorter than the graduations on the off cut guide. I was actually using it backwards so that the largest part of the sheet could be held against the longest guide edge. One big advantage to using the Fiskars cutter was the absence of a burr on the edge of the cut, which can be seen in the photo.



I had been scraping this off with the edge of a knife blade.

To measure the cuts I made a tool from a couple of tongue depressors, which allowed me to gauge the cuts for width and height. The photo shows the one depressor with the ends squared off and glued at the appropriate stop positions.



To use it the appropriate gauge edge is placed against the shear edge of the cutter and a strip is cut off, say for the height of the windows you are making. You can repeat cutting strips until you have enough. Once you have a

strip for the height cut, the strip is rotated 90 degrees and put back in the cutter. The individual windows are then cut off using the gauge set for width, as seen in the photo above.



This method works best when you have a structure requiring a quantity of windows the same size to reduce waste. You will end up with some material left over that is too small to work with so plan ahead when deciding to start with width or height.

Please note that to show up well the photos were taken using white styrene instead of clear.

I have found lots of other uses for the cutter besides run-of-the-mill paper work. I've used it for cardstock building construction, cutting out RR passes, and in the future I can see using it for cutting individual clapboard siding boards in cardstock or styrene.

Playing with trains in TT&TO Part 2 (This is the continuation of an article started in the November issue)

Richard E. Bradley MMR©



With no classification signals in place locomotive #20 leads the through cars from train #31 across High Rock Road on its way from Knisely to Spry staging.

The form SC in Order 7 created extra #22 and gave it rights over train #31 from Spry staging to Pine Run. Order 7 has been fulfilled and is no longer in effect. Train #31 has not been annulled and its clearance form A is still in effect. The locomotives and cars are within yard limits and may move under the direction of the yardmaster without additional paperwork.

I believe that rearranging the cars of train #31 has no effect on the rights of train #31. After assembling the cars into two parts, the through cars in the first part with locomotive #20 displaying no classification signals and a red

marker on the caboose can proceed to Spry as the continuation of train #31 with no additional paperwork. Both the lack of classification signals and the presence of a red marker show the Spry operator that this is all of train #31.

Locomotive #22 can complete the switching work in the yard, but needs a form G to proceed beyond yard limits. The dispatcher must not issue this form G until train #31 has reported by Knisley, the intermediate station between the yard and Spry. When the extra train with locomotive #22 leaves the yard it will carry white flags and a red rear marker.



Locomotive #22 completes switching chores with placing cars from train #31 on the interchange track at Knisely. The remainder of Extra 22 waits on the main with its red marker in place on the flat car, ready for #22 with white classification signals to connect and proceed to Spry staging.

I make the classification signals out of clear tape – Scotch Tape. I put a piece of tape on a shiny surface, usually a piece of scrap styrene. Then I paint green, white and red stripes across the tape.

When the paint is dry I cut 3/16" squares of each color. The squares are lifted from the carrier and stuck on the locomotives and cars as needed. It is tweezer work. This second use of the tape has reduced tackiness and so the squares do not harm the finishes and are easy to remove.

Larry Dodge's Tool Report

While working on benchwork for his railroad, one of our members, Larry Dodge, faced the issue of cutting Homasote, as he glues it to plywood as the top layer of his benchwork. Knowing Homasote's reputation as a creator of a huge amount of dust, he explored an alternate way of cutting it. Here is what he found:

I found several jigsaw blades available on Amazon that resemble serrated steak knives; both are advertised as used for soft materials including poly foam. The blades that I ordered are the Bosch T313AW3 and the Festool 493656 S 155/W.



Festool on left, Bosch on right



Length of the blades; Festool at the bottom

The Festool blade appears to work well in this application. It leaves no dust. The speed of the jigsaw doesn't affect "curl" with the Festool blade. Curl is what I am calling the rough raised edge at the top of the cut.



Cut using Festool showing minimal "curl"

Extra "curl" is seen with cutting with the Bosch blade. The Bosch blade does leave dust but not as much as a standard jigsaw blade. The edge curl can be sanded off easily, but that process also creates dust.



Cut with Bosch blade showing edge "curl"

If you find yourself needing to cut Homasote, either of these blades create less dust mess than other techniques, with the Festool blade doing a cleaner job with the cut and the level of dust.

Just For "Fun"

Doug suggests this cab ride:

Search on YouTube for:

"Amazing Greek Mountain Train, Peloponnesus, Complet in FHD" or follow this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrFHSkafuIA>

Dave suggests viewing a Layout Design SIG meeting on Zoom recorded on YouTube. The Zoom meeting is not that exciting, but I got a lot out of the clinic. Follow the link from Bryon Henderson's blog post on December 31, 2020:

<http://mrsvc.blogspot.com/>

or the YouTube link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0auDuFGAnSs&feature=youtu.be>

Accessing the Members Only Content on the NMRA Website

As Brad is continuing to share features "Behind the Wall" at the NMRA Website, I thought it would be prudent to share how to get behind the wall. First of all, if you receive the *NMRA Magazine*, they have been publishing instructions. A box on page 39 in the February edition has clear instructions with some screen grabs.

For those of you not getting the magazine and who have never signed up, here are some instructions. A first caveat, if you have an older password to the NMRA store, it will not work. Please save yourself the frustration by not trying it.

When you open the NMRA website at <https://www.nmra.org>, you should see a red bar at the top of the page. Click on the words "Member Log-in/Registration" on the right side of the red bar. It will open a new page. Click on the blue bar that says, "Need a username? Register Now." That should take you to a page called "User Account." Enter a username and your email address, then click on the blue bar that says "Create New Account." You should see a message that says an email confirmation has been sent to your inbox. Follow the instructions in the email to set your new password.

A second caveat, if your email address is not correct or even listed at NMRA headquarters, this may all fall apart. But, there is a fix for that! Have HQ update your address at <http://www.nmra.org/cusomer-service-request>

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.

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.

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.