

# BUILDER'S PLATE

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May 2026

Volume 9, Issue 5

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

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## Superintendent's Letter

### Changing of the Guard

Congratulations to the following Division 12 members, who were elected to their respective positions by acclamation at our April 2026 meeting.

- Superintendent Dale Desser, [ddesser60@gmail.com](mailto:ddesser60@gmail.com)
- Assistant Superintendent Scott Connors, [Neemc2@hotmail.com](mailto:Neemc2@hotmail.com)
- Clerk Brad White, [valleyln55@gmail.com](mailto:valleyln55@gmail.com)

The new elected leadership of Division 12 will formally take office for a term of two years beginning June 1<sup>st</sup> 2026. Our heartfelt thanks to these guys for stepping up and taking the reins. I remind all our members that the elected leadership cannot do the job alone, and that the division belongs to all of us. I would expect that everyone will offer their continued support to our officers and the division by whatever means you are able.

Accordingly, this is my last "Superintendent's Letter". It has been a privilege to serve as the Division 12 superintendent for the past 4 years. Any successes or good ideas that have kept us moving forward are due solely to the membership and our dedicated leadership team. Any failures of omission or commission are mine alone.

Anyway, "a new broom sweeps clean", and "out with the old and in with the new", as the saying goes. Onward, Division 12!

Mike Hauk  
Superintendent, Division 12, MCR



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

Please visit our website: [www.div12mcr.org](http://www.div12mcr.org)

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

## Meetings

As face-to-face membership meetings return, they typically include announcements and limited business; “Modeling Question” and “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](mailto:Superintendent@div12mcr.org)

## Officers and BOD

**Superintendent:** Mike Hauk — [superintendent@div12mcr.org](mailto:superintendent@div12mcr.org)

**Assistant Superintendent/ Clerk:** Brad White — [asst.superintendent@div12mcr.org](mailto:asst.superintendent@div12mcr.org)

**Clerk:** VACANT — [clerk@div12mcr.org](mailto:clerk@div12mcr.org)

**Treasurer:** Larry Dodge — [treasurer@div12mcr.org](mailto:treasurer@div12mcr.org)

**Board of Directors:** Rob Bennett, Doug Sandmeyer, Chris Mincemoyer, Jim Holtgreffe

## Committee Chairs

**Social:** Lee Farnsworth — [social@div12mcr.org](mailto:social@div12mcr.org)

**T-Trak & Clinic:** Doug Sandmeyer — [ttrak@div12mcr.org](mailto:ttrak@div12mcr.org)

**Web Editor:** Brad White — [asst.superintendent@div12mcr.org](mailto:asst.superintendent@div12mcr.org)

**Operations Coordinator:** Dale Desser — [operations@div12mcr.org](mailto:operations@div12mcr.org)

**Achievement Program:** Mike Hauk — [ap@div12mcr.org](mailto:ap@div12mcr.org)

## Next Division 12 Meeting:

**The next Division 12 meeting will be a live in-person event on Saturday, May 9th, 2026 at 10 AM.** French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society's restored B&LE freight depot, 136 Mead Avenue, Meadville, PA, 16335. **Program:** Vince Skibo, "Hi-Wide Loads, Schnabel Cars, and Special Equipment" (Note change of venue!)

## Division 12 Upcoming Events

May 2026: Saturday, May 9th, 2026. 10 AM. French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society's restored B&LE freight depot, 136 Mead Avenue, Meadville, PA, 16335. **Program:** Vince Skibo, "Hi-Wide Loads, Schnabel Cars, and Special Equipment" (Note change of venue!)

June 2026: Saturday, June 13th, 2026. Annual Division 12 Picnic.

July 2026: Saturday, July 11th, 2026. Lunch and trains at North East Rail Museum. (Tentative)

August 2026: Saturday, August 8th, 2026. 10:30 AM. James Prendergast Free Library, Jamestown, NY. **Program:** Chris Costello, "A Day at Erie's Pavonia Terminal (Jersey City)"

September 2026: Saturday, September 12th, 2026. 10 AM. J.L. Innovative Design Center for Model Railroading Excellence, Limestone, NY. **Program:** Test op session Erie RR Eastern District layout. (Tentative)

October 2026: Saturday, October 10th, 2026. Lincoln Library, 1255 Manchester Road, Fairview PA 16505. Program **TBD**.

## Upcoming Meeting Programs

*To ensure that the membership meetings are of value, please let the leadership know what you would like to see in upcoming meetings by communicating directly with officers or board members.*

# Upcoming Model Railroad Events

Monthly: 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, 7PM-10PM. **Open Crew Call-Ohio Northern Railroad**, Hambden, OH. For more information and address please contact Brad White at [valleyln55@gmail.com](mailto:valleyln55@gmail.com) or phone 814-490-7798.

June 2026: **Whistle Stop Dayton**, 2026 MCR Convention, June 4-7, 2026. Hosted by MCR Division 3. Marriott at University of Dayton, 1414 South Patterson Boulevard, Dayton, OH 45409. <https://whistlestop2026.regfox.com/whistle-stop-dayton-nmra-mcr-2026-convention>

July 2026: **Scenic City Express** - 2026 NMRA National Convention – Chattanooga, TN. July 27 - August 2, 2026. Registration: <https://www.nmra2026.org/registration/>

June 2027: **The Cincinnati**, 2027 MCR Convention, June 3-6, 2027. Hosted by MCR Division 7. <https://cincy-div7.org/2027-convention>

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## 2026 MCR Convention Note

Per 2026 MCR Convention Co-chairman Eric Zimmerman, registration is lagging behind expectations. We therefore encourage interested Division 12 members to register online as soon as possible via the above link.

A current listing of clinics for the convention is attached to this newsletter to hopefully whet folks' interest.

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## A New Structure for a Mature Layout

*Text and photos by Roger Schulenberg*

Some time ago, I was invited to participate in an operating session on Dick Bradley's great PA & MA RR. While once again admiring his scratch-built structures, I lamented that, while I greatly enjoyed building structures myself, I had run out of room on my layout. To add any more would cut into the "negative space" on my layout and result in an overcrowded look. Dick promptly said - start over, rip out something and start again! After mulling over his advice for a while, I looked over my layout and landed on the Southern Tier Canning Company in my town of Alderbottom.




While I had been happy with this industry for decades, most modelers would recognize it as a simple kitbash of Walthers Golden Valley Canning Company kit. It was time for some urban renewal. I recalled Rob Bennett's impressive Westinghouse Transformer Factory built from ITLA components and checked out their website ([www.itlascalemodels.com](http://www.itlascalemodels.com)) for inspiration. After reviewing their available laser kits and creating a cardboard mockup of my ideas, I ordered their Allstate Factory kit (HO4150) plus several add on components as a basis for my custom design.

**ITLA Scale Models Inc.** **HO4150 Allstate Factory - "3 in 1" Building Kit**  
 Precision Laser Cut Wood Kit – Builds into 1 of 3 Variations shown  
 You choose the build version, ALL parts are included for either version

**Version #1** (office to the left)  
...OR  
**Version #2** (office to the right)  
L-shaped 10.5" L x 4.5" / 1.5" W x 5.5" H  
("blank" rear wall)





...OR **Version #3** – Full length wall section  
19.5" L x 1.5" W x 5.5" H  
("blank" side & rear walls)

- Etched & detailed brick surfaces, window & door mullions / lintel work
- Background structure, highly detailed with many accessory parts
- Painting Instructions Included!

imaginethatlaserart@gmail.com • 1-404-IMAGINE (462-4463) • [www.itlascalemodels.com](http://www.itlascalemodels.com)

These kits are well engineered and fit together precisely. Their instructions were clear and complete. I also purchased an Evan Designs NHPO-4 LED kit to provide easy interior and exterior lighting for the building. Because there are many good YouTube videos online for assembling and painting ITLA kits, I will not cover the construction of my new canning company here. The building of this new industry happily filled the prime-time modeling season of January and February. I now have a unique industry on my layout to replace a common commercial structure.



So, if you have a mature layout like mine and are looking for a new challenge, do as Dick advised - TEAR SOMETHING OUT AND START AGAIN. I'm glad I did!

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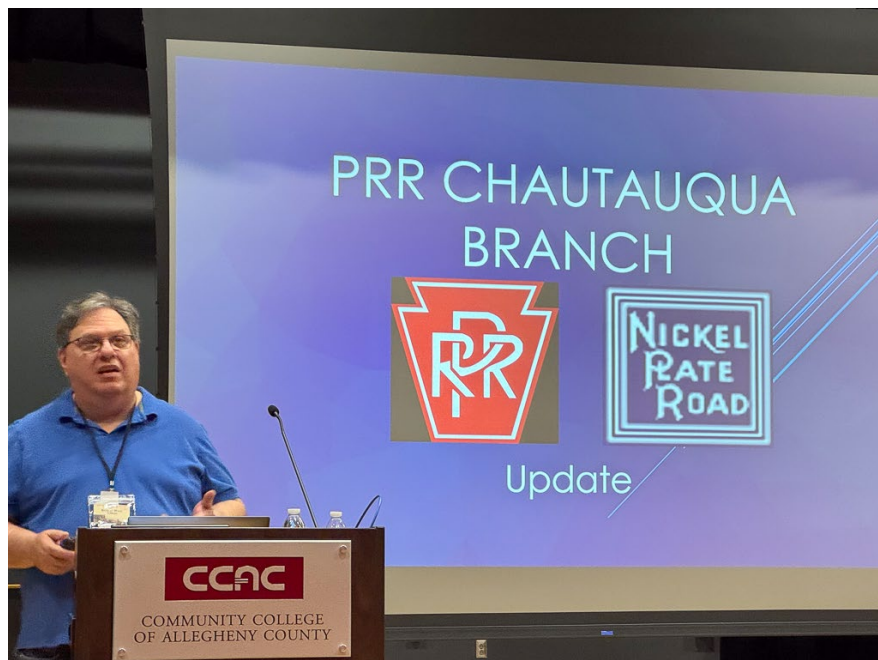
## In Other News...

Division 12 members Brad W., Rob B., Ray B., and Mike H. recently attended the Division 2 Model Railroad Jamboree on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Ray presented a clinic on building the B&LE bridge over the Allegheny River:



Brad presented an update on his PRR Chautauqua Branch layout:



Rob was awarded first place in the “Rolling Stock” portion of the model display for his depressed-center flat car and transformer load:



Division 12 also did very well in the Jamboree raffle:



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“Until next time, keep ‘em polished!”

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Current editor: Mike Hauk.

Direct all comments, suggestions, and corrections to: [buildersplate@div12mcr.org](mailto:buildersplate@div12mcr.org)

# Whistle Stop Dayton MID-CENTRAL REGION CONVENTION

June 4 - 7, 2026  
DAYTON, OHIO



**Layout Tours and Op Sessions  
Model Contest,/Celebration, Displays,  
Clinics, Self-Guided Tours, Consignment Sales & Banquet**

**Clinics  
Held in  
Three  
Rooms**

**Clinics Morning, Afternoon and Evening**  
Topics include: Prototype and Models that Followed,  
Growing Up with the V & O plus Dayton & Troy Electric Railroad

**Model Contests/Celebration:**  
Models Judged by AP

**Company Store:** Will be offering Convention Cars

**Self-Guided Local Attractions:**

Rail Tours, Non-rail Activities, including area Museums and Historical sites

**Layout Tours & OP Sessions:** Self Guided Friday, Saturday & Sunday

**Evening Displays:** T-Trak

**Consignment Sales:** Sell your excess items

**Banquet Speake:** Otto M. Vondrak

Clinic Topic

The Impact of Allen McClelland's  
Virginia & Ohio

Banquet Topic:

90 Years of the RMC History



For More Information and Reservations

Scan  
QR  
Code



Host Hotel - Marriott University of Dayton