

RPO

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RPO

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On The Cover

photo by Richard Schumacher

CSX 5219 at the Railpark Train Museum in Bowling Green. Article starts on page 20.

In This Issue

Superintendent's Desk	2
Under the Wire	4
Director's Reflections	4
Division Kit Bash Contest.....	6
Powder River Trip	7
Vintage Advertising	11
Be the Engineer	12
MCoR Car Project.....	19
Railpark Train Museum.....	20
Division Operations Night	23
Meeting Minutes.....	24
Timetable of Events	26

Superintendent's Desk

by Jim Ables

Hi all, I'll begin by saying this quarter's column lacks a theme. I've been thinking about what to write and came to the conclusion there are a lot of things I'd like to discuss and pass along, so pardon my rambling.

First off I'd like to thank everyone who responded to the membership survey. Don Ayres is compiling your responses and we'll be analyzing the results over the coming month. We hope to report results to the membership in August and we'll provide a complete summary in the Fall RPO. I'll begin work on the membership directory shortly, but at this point I'm not sure when it'll be ready for publication.

Don Ayres has put together some really interesting clinics, many focusing on the basics of model railroading. Earlier this

year we had a number folks ask some very basic questions about the hobby, in response we decided to focus at least half of this year's clinics on the basics. So far we've discussed soldering, track work and ballasting. The July clinic will feature a discussion on Light Emitting Diodes (LED) and future clinics will address switch wiring for DCC and use of Computer Aided Design software to aid in designing model railroad layouts.

I'd like to thank Chris Oestreich for organizing our April operations night. Jay and Jeremy Janzen's, ATSF Kanas Division; Brian Post's, Sierra Nevada and Indian River, and Brad Joseph's, Union Pacific Wyoming Division layouts were open for operations. We had a full house at each layout and by all reports everyone had a good time. Thanks to Jay and Jeremy, Brian, and Brad for opening their homes and layouts. Chris is working on the next operations night so stay tuned for more.

Rich Velten is working plans for the Fall Meet. We'll be needing volunteers to help out with setup and teardown; registration desk; children's activities area; and model contest judging and room monitoring. There are also planning activities which Rich needs help. If you're interested in helping contact Rich.

Facebook, I know some of you aren't comfortable with social media, but wanted to relay some of my recent discoveries. Facebook groups contain a wealth of information on prototype railroads and model railroading. I've found Facebook groups focused on specific railroads and rail operations in various regions. I've also found groups devoted to model railroading, many of which containing interesting discussions on topics of construction, planning, and modeling techniques. If you're on Facebook search on topics that you are

interested in, you'll likely be surprised at what you find.

The board has pondered establishing a member only Facebook group where members can share information ask questions and engage in conversations on various topics. This private group will differ from our current public group which is meant to inform the public about our organization. Rather the private group is for members only. We'd like to hear your thoughts.

After conferring with the membership at meetings in O'Fallon and Ballwin we decided to forgo the Joint NRHS/Gateway Division Picnic this year. We've noted over the past few years dwindling participation by Division members. Based on lack of member commitment to participate, the board made the decision to skip the event this year and reengage next year.

Annual Holiday Party: As most of you know we've hold a Holiday Party in place of the November meeting at the Church in Ballwin each year. The event is usually well attended and we look to continue it in the future, the question is do we continue to do the pot luck event at the Church or move it to a buffet or restaurant. With the current setup there is always a rush to get the church setup (tables and chairs, decorating the room and putting out the food). Afterwards there is a rush to clean up and put away the tables and chairs. Many of us are questioning how enjoyable the event is when we have to spend more time setting up and tearing down then we do enjoying each other's company. As a result the board has decided to try something different this year. We're working to identify a buffet or restaurant in a convenient location. We're also discussing whether the Division will pay a portion of the costs or subsidize the event in full. Stay tuned more to follow.

Don't forget we've got a couple of big events coming up. The Great Train Show is 23 and 24 July at the Belleville Fairgrounds and the St Louis Railroad Prototype Modelers annual meet is 12 and 13 August at the Gateway Center on Collinsville. Don Ayres is coordinating volunteers to work our table at both events. If you'd like to participate please contact Don.

As you can see I've covered a lot of ground already, but there's one more topic I'd like to talk about. Our organization functions on volunteerism. Without volunteers to run the organization, put on clinics, and organize activities we would cease to exist. For the past few years a small group of people have done the bulk of the work. We can't continue to rely on this small group, people burn out and drop out. The recently completed membership survey bears this out. Many past active members now sit on the sidelines because their burnt out. If everyone contributes a little we'll grow and flourish as an organization, if we continue on the path were on the organization will die out due to atrophy. Just some food for thought.

Have a great summer.

*Jim Ables
Superintendent, Gateways Division
NMRA*

Under the Wire

by John Carty, Editor

Happy summer! If the heat does not get you, the humidity will. Despite yard work, laying carpet, and other projects, I am managing to get in a little modeling. Having a child under a year old has deprived me of what used to be my most productive times slots: 10 pm until midnight. Oh, well, she is worth it.

This issue looks like a bit of a travelogue, with articles covering places

to visit. For those with less travel opportunities, a modeling article, a project car, and a division contest round out the manifest.

Please keep the material coming. I appreciate the efforts of the members of the division in making my job easier.

John

Director's Reflections

by Jon Mars, Division Director

This time I wish to address an issue of major importance to all organizations: Membership. It may be an obvious statement, but no organization can exist without members. A sad fact of life is that we all age and new members are needed to take the place of those who have gone to that Big Layout in the sky. I want to suggest some ideas that may be useful in recruiting new members.

First of all, being active in the hobby, we know how much fun it can be. Remember when Model Railroader promoted the hobby with the simple statement: Model railroading is fun. We have a personal enthusiasm for the hobby. We can build on this and develop a set of talking points to promote the hobby and, in the process, recruit a new member or two.

We can begin by asking ourselves (go directly to the most available expert) why are we model railroaders? My influence was my father. He was not an active modeler, but enough to influence me. And I enjoyed assembling kits. He was a hobby shop owner, as well.

When I was finishing my academic days at Purdue, I decided to get involved in the Purdue Railroad Club. There I was introduced to not only modeling, but also the glorious activity of rail fanning. Several members were NMRA members and we participated in model railroad events in Indianapolis. As an aside: one member realized that as a graduate

student I was considered faculty and could sign out university automobiles. He was kind enough to sign one out in my name so we could transport the club's portable layouts to a show in Indianapolis.

When I emigrated to St. Louis, I got involved in a local club, and through some of those members in Region activities.

My father was a Life Member of NMRA, so when I started model railroading at Purdue, I joined NMRA. When I became a little more flush with cash, I became a Life Member.

That brings up the second source of Talking Points: Why did I join NMRA? If a prospective member enjoys attending our Division meetings, he or she will have to become a member to continue after three visits. That is a regulation from the NMRA.

Armed with these Talking Points we can discuss with non-modelers who show a mild interest, or those starting in the hobby why it is so fascinating. Caution! At the other extreme, we could dominate a conversation until our listeners' eyes glaze over, and we lose them. If someone is starting with a train set we can help them imagine the possibilities "beyond the train set."

Making new or prospective members feel welcome is an important first step in the process. If they don't feel welcome they will not wish to become associated. Remember: we only get one opportunity to make a first impression. If we help a visitor feel welcome at our Division meeting, that may be the first step in his or her wanting to come back.

In no other hobby can one practice so many skills: Carpentry, electrical, artistic, and the list goes on. Then there are the intangible skills: problem solving and project management skills, useful in

other area of our lives. Being part of some sort of an organization give us access to people who may complement our own skills for something we may feel uncomfortable with. And that opens the way to an exchange of skills adding to the fellowship of model railroading.

Then, for me, the ultimate good feeling I get as a modeler: The sense of satisfaction I get with my accomplishments. Then, if you enter a model in a contest and place, that good feeling will be reinforced. For strong positive reinforcement, embark on earning Merit Awards toward your MMR. This is where you are rewarded without the competition of a contest.

The NMRA has performed a great many services for the hobby, that even long-time members may take for granted. Do modelers enjoy the fact that they can purchase models from different manufacturers and be able to run them together, on compatible track? Or even that track from different manufacturers is compatible? That is a result of Standards developed by the NMRA in co-operation with the manufacturers. The same occurred with DCC. The NMRA was instrumental in setting uniform standards. This is important to the hobby, but how do we explain that to a prospective member or someone starting out?

When we propose to someone to consider joining, usually the first question is essentially: "What's in it for me?" That is probably the biggest question in trying to sell the idea of membership. We should be ready to answer it without being asked. The NMRA Rail Pass program is a good way for new members to be introduced to the organization at a reduced rate. At the National level the conversion rate to full membership is 81%. That is a good reason for the program.

Membership may best be sold gradually. Someone starts with a train set or a circle of track under a Christmas tree. The logical question now is: "Where do you go from here?" Here we can help them evolve their thinking. Next step could be a simple layout on a board with simple switching of a siding or two. If they get a good demonstration or our home layouts, they can see how much fun we are having, they may soon be ready with the next step. We can help.



Jon

Gateway Division Kit Bash Contest

Once again our division offers an opportunity for members to display their modeling skills.

Rules for this year's kit bash contest:

1. You must start with a boxcar kit or kits.
2. Entry must include parts from the kit other than just the couplers, trucks, and wheels.
3. You may add any additional components, details, parts, etc.
4. You may enter a diorama which includes your kit bashed model, but the base may not exceed 1 square foot in area.
5. Entries will be presented as a "bring and brag" at the December 19, 2016, meeting. Members in attendance will vote for their favorite entries in each category. Merit judging will be available.
6. Two (2) prizes (MTH \$10 gift cards) will be awarded: one for a single entry, and one for the entry incorporated into a diorama.
7. Each member is limited to one (1) entry.

Some considerations:

- a) The entry could be a boxcar, stock car, grain car, passenger car, etc.
- b) The entry may be for revenue service, maintenance of way, caboose, etc.
- c) The entry need not be rolling stock, but could be a shed, barn, station, platform, diner, etc.
- d) Even if the entry is rolling stock, an inoperable derelict car remains an acceptable entry.
- e) Go nuts with details. The contents of the kit provide the starting point. Please feel free to add commercial, scratch-built, or modified components. Figures are also allowed.
- f) The entry is not limited to a single car. Sets of cars, like a boom and tender, are acceptable.
- g) Think out of the box.
- h) Work in any media you desire. Feel free to mix and match wood, metal, plastic, plaster, etc.
- i) If you model a particular prototype, please bring photos to display with the entry.
- j) Have fun!

See you with your entries in December!

Powder River Trip

by Bill Linson

Once, over 60 million years ago, it was the bottom of a shallow sea, a swampland with layers of plants forming peat beds to be compressed into bituminous coal strata.



(Above) Denver's iconic Union Station, showing off its recently-completed \$54 million renovation that includes an upscale hotel, boutiques, and a food court.

(Below) Rio Grande Southern's Galloping Goose #7 greets visitors as they enter the Colorado Railroad Museum at Golden, CO.

It's not uncommon to drive along State Route 59 near Bill, WY, and see an enormous surface coal mine on your right, and a large saddleback oil



Colorado Railroad Museum at Golden, CO.



pumping station just across the road. Some 78,000 barrels of oil are pumped out of the ground daily; the coal bed field is the nation's third largest source of natural gas

producing at the rate of nearly 250 billion cubic feet annually, and the region's sandstone contains major deposits of uranium.

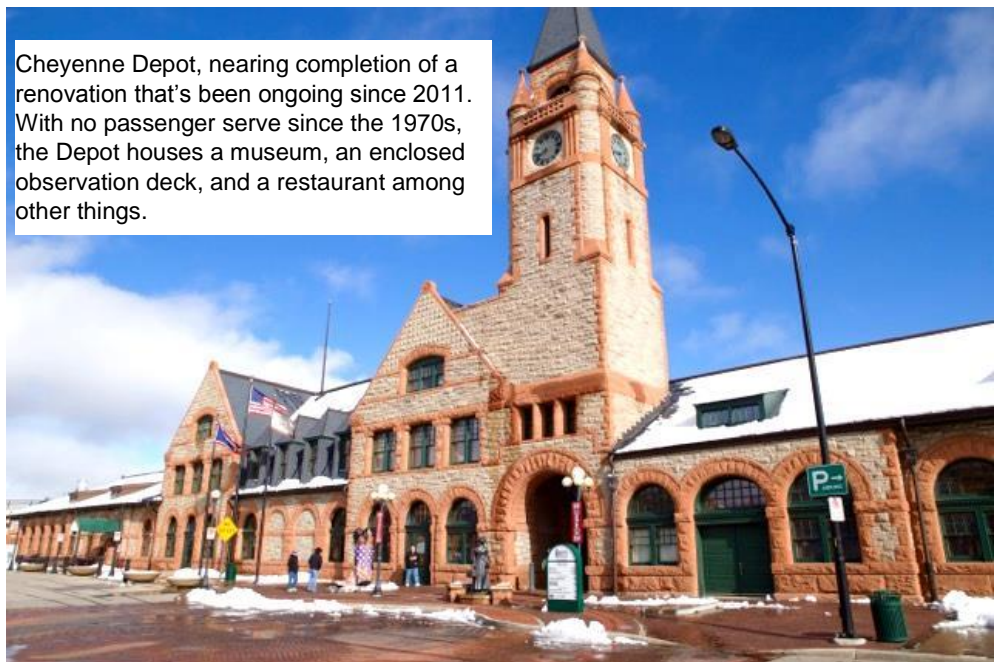
Such is the landscape of the Powder River Basin and its legendary coal fields. The 15-16 mines of the Powder River provide nearly 40% of the fuel for the nation's coal-fired electricity generating stations. No other coal seam on earth is so big, so close to the surface, and so cheap to mine.

It's a destination for thousands of rail fans who annually trek to the sparsely populated region to see the loading and departure of 100-

plus car trains daily, each car loaded with more than 100 tons of highly desired low sulfur and ash content coal.



Train watching on the UP, three miles east of the crew change point at Cheyenne Depot.



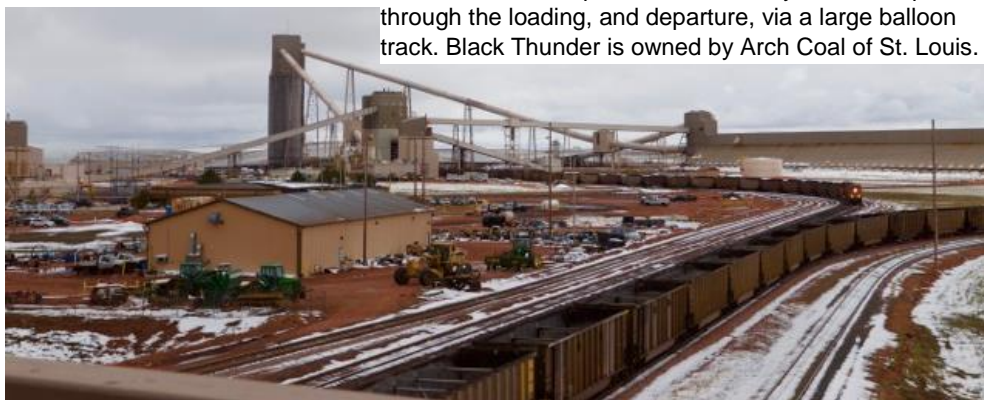
Cheyenne Depot, nearing completion of a renovation that's been ongoing since 2011. With no passenger serve since the 1970s, the Depot houses a museum, an enclosed observation deck, and a restaurant among other things.

Twelve of us, from Missouri, Ohio, Kentucky, and even one gentleman from Canada, ventured to Denver and northward to the Powder River in late April. Joining up at Chicago's Union Station, (we took the Lincoln Service from St. Louis, the others brought the Capitol Limited from Cleveland), we overnighted to Denver on Amtrak's California Zephyr.

Arriving at Denver's iconic Union Station (c. 1881) ahead of schedule early Tuesday morning, we took rental cars for the remainder of the western portion of the trip.

First stop was the popular Colorado Railroad Museum at nearby Golden, CO, where

Black Thunder mine, near Bill, WY: This is the world's largest coal mine, and loading is a never ending process, as trains do not stop from the time they enter the queue, through the loading, and departure, via a large balloon track. Black Thunder is owned by Arch Coal of St. Louis.



some 15 acres are filled with an outstanding collection of steam engines and rolling stock, much of it historic Colorado narrow gauge vintage. Next was a trek north, looking for train action.

Thwarted in our efforts to visit Sherman Hill, on the Union Pacific line between Cheyenne and Laramie, because of heavy snow and fog conditions, we backtracked

Coal is hauled from the pit to the loaders in these 40-foot long and 20-foot tall behemoths, carrying 200 tons at a time.



down the mountains to take I-25 to Cheyenne where we were to spend the next two nights.

Train watching occupied us the rest of the late afternoon and early evening. Wednesday, bright and early, we were off to the primary reason for the trip, the Powder River Basin, some 140 miles north of Cheyenne.

Along the way, we stopped at Guernsey, WY, and Guernsey State Park. There was some railroad action in both, but we hastened north to reach the coal fields. We got to Bill, WY (a post office) and Penny's Diner where we had lunch. One of our group (a retired funeral director) stated his cheeseburger was "cremated" and that he would never eat there again. We responded that since it appeared to be the only eatery with 30-40 miles he might want to rethink that lest he be on a forced diet.

Just a few short miles away found our first look at a mining operation, and what a look it was. We had seen some coal trains along the road from Guernsey, but the Black Thunder Mine dominated the horizon. Black Thunder, owned and operated by Arch

Coal of St. Louis, is the largest surface mine in the world. Nearby is the North Antelope Rochelle Mine, second largest mine in the world, and owned by Peabody Coal, another St. Louis company. Alas, it's currently shut down.



Loading 110-ton coal hoppers never stops, as the 100-125 car trains enter the queue on a balloon track, and never stop moving through the entering, flood loading, and departure process. Not that many years ago -- fewer than five -- the area's 16 mines loaded more than 100 trains daily, a number that has been reduced by two-thirds due to decreased demand for coal. Blame cheap natural gas, environmental issues, and decreased foreign markets for the decline.

Even with the severely depressed demand, there was still a significant amount of rail traffic for the rail fans to photograph.

Gray skies and threatening weather greeted us Thursday, thus a good day to visit the Cheyenne Depot. Built in 1886, extensive renovations started in 2011 continue and include a restored waiting room, an extensive museum, a large model railroad depicting Wyoming railroading of yesteryear, and an enclosed second floor observation area from which one can watch Union Pacific yard operations. By the time you read this, there is

A Big Boy on display in a Cheyenne park. Built in 1941, this is the world's largest steam engine, and one of 25 built exclusively for the Union Pacific railroad. There is also a Big Boy displayed at the Museum of Transportation in St. Louis.

also a new restaurant open. Passenger service has not called at Cheyenne since the



1970s, but this is a large yard and a crew change point.

Returning to Denver in the afternoon for the overnight California Zephyr trip back to Chicago, we had plenty of time to explore the Union Station and its recently completed \$54 million renovation that includes an upscale hotel, boutiques, and food venues.

Back into Chicago Friday afternoon – again ahead of schedule – we completed a five-day rail adventure to the Powder River and a checkmark on the bucket list for many of us.

Modeling Spectacular Vintage Advertising – Vess Neon Soda Bottle Sign

by Richard Schumacher

In 1953 Vess Bottling Company of St. Louis commissioned a giant revolving neon-lit soda bottle which was erected at the corner of Hampton and Gravois in south St. Louis. The steel bottle was fabricated by the W. E. Caldwell Tank Company (who also made the 70 foot tall Brooks Catsup bottle water tower in Collinsville and the giant 120 foot Louisville Baseball bat) and lit with 600 feet of neon tubing created by the Treesh Neon Sign Company of East St. Louis. The 2,000 pound, 12-foot tall replica of a Lemon-Lime Vess soda bottle sat atop a 13-foot pole and revolved at three revolutions per minute. As an (old) south county boy, I remember seeing the sign many times as a child.

The sign was placed in storage and then relocated in 1989 to it's new location in north downtown at 520 O'Fallon Street where it has been designated city landmark #120. The neon is now broken, and it doesn't rotate on the new pole, but it is still an impressive advertising statement.

There are two approaches you can take if you want to model a giant soda

bottle sign on your layout. One would be to download my photo of the Vess bottle (the photo is provided here for your personal use only, clicking on the image loads the full-resolution version), print it in the size appropriate to your scale, cut out the bottle, and glue it to your backdrop on top of a painted pole.

An actual three-dimensional model bottle may also be mounted on a pole (a small low-rpm motor could even be used to make it a revolving model). Appropriate size bottles are available as dollhouse miniatures and holiday ornaments. Do an Amazon search for "miniature coke bottle" to find a bottle that will work for you. One of the 1:12 dollhouse bottles would look correct for HO. The 12 foot tall Vess bottle would be 1.65 inches in HO scale.



Being the Engineer

by David C. Lowell

In December of 2013 I hit the big 5 – 0 and I wanted to do something special to commemorate that half century milestone. So, I figured it was time to start knocking some items off my bucket list. Trouble was I didn't have a bucket list, so I started one. Needless to say, operating a steam engine seemed like a good place to start.

I researched several opportunities and settled on the Nevada Northern Railway (NNR) <http://www.nnry.com/index.php> in Ely Nevada to fulfill my wish. Now, beautiful downtown Ely Nevada is in the east central Nevada desert and its 5 hours from everywhere (literally); Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, or Reno. Compounding the issue is the fact that the Be the Engineer experience is about 4 hours at best. "It seems a long way to go for just that", my wife's words not mine.

We got busy on the internet to try and find something else to do in the area or on the way. Casino; can do that here, Dune Buggy races; not our thing, Great Basin National Park; we've seen deserts before. Being married to a financial analyst meant this wasn't looking good from an investment v return ratio. We circled back around to the National Park idea to fill out a full trip. I'll do the same in this article regarding the Park. But for now, let's cover the marquee event first.

Not too long after we made all the arrangements my Be the Engineer packet arrived in the mail. It contained confirmation, study materials, safety rules, some shiny trinkets and the obligatory offer of membership in their organization for a hefty honorarium. I needed to study the basic operations and safety rules from the packet prior

to arriving at the NNR which I don't think I need to tell you I did quite diligently. I would have been in hot water with management (my wife) had we got there and I couldn't even pass the pre-operation test especially after all my "justifying" of the trip.

After several months of anticipation and faithful regular study we were on the way; a flight to Salt Lake City and then south on I-15 toward Las Vegas. We jumped off on US 50 (same US 50 that runs through Missouri) and then on to Baker Nevada and Great Basin National Park. After a couple days in Baker soaking up the sight (singular on purpose) we were then on to Ely with an easy half day drive through some very scenic country.

In Ely we stayed at a small B&B a half block up the street from the Nevada Northern Railway station, museum and yard. Needless to say, it being Ely Nevada in June and 200 yards from an operating freight yard, amazingly there were rooms available. As it turned out it was a great place with a restaurant on the lower level that had great food. The owner was quite the pastry & pie chef, so if you do this trip I would recommend a stay at the All Aboard Café and Inn www.allaboardcafeandinn.com

I was scheduled to report at 11:30 AM for my 12:30 PM Ruth Mine Turn. After a very delicious breakfast and an early lunch I suited up in my coveralls, boots, long sleeve cotton shirt, engineer's cap, bandana in pocket, gloves, sunglasses and a liberal slathering of sunscreen on my ears. Not sure the sunglasses and sunscreen were prototypical but they seemed like a good idea, especially for a guy who is so white he is almost clear. I sauntered down the street to the station with all the control I could muster trying to not skip with excitement and anticipation. I reported

in with my safety and operating rules books tucked prominently in the front of my bibs. The receptionist sent me through the station to the platform and said the crew would be with me shortly. After just a couple of minutes the engineer showed up and asked if I was ready to go. I assumed this was just a rhetorical question and never responded audibly. I figured he could see me vibrating and took that as a yes. He introduced me to the fireman and then asked if I had my briefing. This I did respond to with a "no". He paused for a minute and then asked if I had studied the rules. I answered in the affirmative, he paused again, studied me a little more and then said he had reviewed the morning's briefing and since he was officially the engineer and

responsible regardless it was time to go. So the engineer, fireman, my wife and I climbed up into the cab of a majestic 10 wheeler, NNR 4-6-0 #40. It was a Baldwin Locomotive acquired new by the NNR in 1910 and assigned to regular passenger service from its arrival on the road through the end of passenger operations in 1941 (for a full history see <http://nnry.com/pages/40Rebuild.php>).

NNR regulations require that the crew back the locomotive out of the yard and onto the main before handing it over. The engineer and fireman took their positions, gained clearance (I know radios are not prototypical to steam either, but sometimes you just have to take a little license when it comes to safety) and proceeded to move us out of the yard and onto the main. Now, please understand that the cab of a 1910 ten wheeler is not roomy like today's modern safety cabs. There is barely enough room for the crew, let alone two extra bodies, (both over 6

feet tall). Therefore, my wife and I ended up surfing the cab plate while holding on tightly to the cab grabs as we worked our way out of the yard. I had to give my wife a quick lesson on the best place to stand after the plate



nipped her shoe.

Once we were just beyond the yard limit the engineer brought #40 to a stop. He began to go over the controls. I have studied steam locomotives fairly diligently for years and have a pretty good understanding of how they work, but I kept my mouth shut and listened to his instructions. I have to admit I learned some things; the most valuable amongst them being that I was only to touch the throttle, the brake, the whistle cord and the cylinder cock control. Then after he was comfortable that I was as prepared as I could be and I had sworn to him a blood oath on EXACTLY what I could touch he cleared me to mount the engineer's seat; a true rite of passage.

The engineer's seat wasn't really even a seat. We'll call it a *bench* for purposes of this story. It was approximately 12"square with a worn out, sweat soaked former cushion and a somewhat-there leather cover still

hanging on by a shred. To accommodate my big butt my back was against the cab back and side walls and the backhead of the boiler was no more than about two feet in front of me. It was warm, but the day was actually a little cool so it was not unbearable. However, on a warm or hot day, I would hazard to guess it would not be enjoyable.

I checked with the fireman, we had 175 lbs of steam, the sight glass was within limits and he had the fire just right so we were ready to go. I used my right foot and flipped the cylinder cock bar on the floor in front of me forward and opened the cylinder cocks, letting the accumulated water out of the cylinders with a hissing gurgle. I then moved the floor mounted Johnson Bar forward from its vertical neutral position. Next I let off the engine's independent brake, followed by two pulls on the whistle line and then opened the throttle about two notches to see how it would respond. It was amazing how responsive that 90 ton behemoth was. It immediately increased its chuff and eased forward almost effortlessly. Because I'm cheap I did not sign up to pay the extra charge to haul a train so I was running light which I am sure accentuated the



nimble feeling of the locomotive. Now, moving forward I closed the cylinder cocks and affixed my gaze watchfully forward while at the same time trying desperately not to giggle like a little girl (and almost succeeding).

Just a few hundred yards ahead was the crossing of a four lane highway at grade. I eased the throttle open a touch more, the drivers quickened and we increased speed. The crossing bucks began to flash and then dropped as I hung on the whistle cord for the requisite two longs, a short and then holding through the crossing. A little sloppy but it worked. It was so cool! The roadbed began to rise in front of me and I could feel the engine begin to labor and then slow as we started up the grade which was 2.5% most of the way up. A little more throttle and we were maintaining about 10MPH which seemed like 100. And no I was not timing mile markers because the cab was affixed with GPS tracking speedometer (that safety thing again). After about 5 minutes the game slowed down and I began to feel comfortable. Also I think knowing I had help right next to me if I needed it accelerated my increased confidence. As we approached the first curve I found myself reaching up to grab and turn the steering wheel to the left to ease into the curve. Doah! I laughed under my breath and hoped the crew hadn't notice. They didn't laugh at me, at least not so much as I could hear it over the cacophony of sound the locomotive was producing, so I am going to rationalize that they didn't see my rookie reaction. As we worked our way up the hill we approached and crossed several unprotected rural road crossing. The fireman called clear for each one and I watched my side and signaled with the whistle, working on my riff. As we crested small rises the engine would quickly gain speed then

slow again as soon as we started up the next rise. It made me think about what an extra challenge it would be handling the ever shifting forces of a drag behind you. Soon enough we were parallel to US 50. It didn't take long for cars to start pulling over after which the cell phones, I-pads and cameras started to appear. "Give 'em some whistle" shouted the engineer and I was only too happy to oblige; once again almost succeeding in not giggling with glee.

There was a lot to keep track of in the hot seat, literally. Speed was restricted to 15MPH but the Casey Jones in me pushed it to 25 a couple times after we



crested the small rises and started back down. I made brake applications sparingly to slow us down in these instances while trying to get the feel of the brake control and avoiding dumping too much air. I also watched for crossings and trespassers and gave the couple of trespassers we did see some angry whistle. I also kept an eye on my wife who was surfing the cab plate like a champ while clinging to the semi-rotted rolled up cab canvas. She was also skillfully trying to stay out of the fireman's way as he accessed the tender for coal all the while accomplishing her duties as cinematographer of my escapade.

Around a curve and up a short rise a tunnel came into view. Believing I was thinking ahead I didn't want to open the throttle too much and be chuffing hard when we hit the tunnel whereby we would be asphyxiated. Turns out I only got it about half right. I stayed easy on the throttle maintaining speed but misjudged the increase in the grade right before the tunnel. As we eased through the tunnel we began to really slow. I became concerned about the heat and soot's effect on the crew so I reached for the throttle and the engineer smacked my hand. I looked over to him and he said, "It will only be worse if you kick 'er right now." I waited until the smoke stack cleared the tunnel portal and punched it to get us into some fresh air. I looked over at my wife and she was bug eyed and gulping in the fresh air. The engineer and fireman were oblivious to the conditions.

A steam locomotive is a mechanical beast ruled by the laws of physics as categorized by Sir Isaac Newton. By this time I felt I was tuning in on what the locomotive was telling me by way of its opposite and equal reactions to what I was asking of it. Thus, after clearing the tunnel, it was pretty much



smooth sailing to the summit and the wye at Ruth Mine. In fact the Engineer disappeared, as best you can in 10 square feet, around the back of the cab enclosure to the top of the ladder and sat on the cab plate and had his lunch. I looked at the fireman who smiled and let me know they felt I had the hang of it. At Ruth Mine the NNR regulations again require the crew to work through



the part where you could really screw something up, that being turning on the wye. While they did their work I stepped back onto the cab plate to talk with my wife. She laughed with me as she told me she knew I was having the time of my life judging by the Cheshire grin on my face all the way up the hill and then laughed at me because I was oblivious to the soot on my face and the bits of cinder stuck in my teeth.



With #40 turned and ready to head back down the hill I was back at the controls and back to basic physics which tells us whatever goes up must come back down. As I exercised the cylinder cocks again, pushed the Johnson bar forward and let off the engine brake we started rolling downgrade immediately even before I applied any throttle. Being as the next hour was going to be predominately downgrade I needed to make sure I had mastered this whole airbrake thing so I wouldn't be bouncing myself off the back head all the way down the hill. After about a mile I finally had it pretty well worked out gaining the "feel" with each application. The down grade drift was much less active with respect to keeping track of things. Besides I was an old hand by now. Keeping the throttle a little less than momentum the old girl softly chuffed down the hill with little adjustment other than to mind the speed and brake occasionally. This allowed me to soak in the other activities in the cab.

All the way up the hill the fireman had been a perpetual motion machine out of the corner of my eye; not exerting great effort, but always up to something. Now I could peek over more often to see what he was doing. This was a hand fired engine so at regular intervals he busily scooped coal from the tender's bunker, stepped on the foot lever to open the butterfly doors to the fire box and stoked the fire. He occasionally used the shovel to shield his face from the extreme heat as he peered in at his charge. If it was not to his liking it took just a few twists on some valves to shift the coals with a jet of steam and all was right with the world. Each time he opened the fire box doors or turned the coals (a few seconds later) you could see a subtle difference in the exhaust and then it would clear. When not tending the fire

he was working the water valve to add more water to the boiler, checking the steam gauge, watching the water glass and all this was done while he kept an eye on the tracks ahead to call out "clear" for the ungated crossings. As we worked down to near the bottom of the hill I was really minding the speed because I could see the valley floor and I knew this fantastic journey was nearing its end. Back across several more crossings and then the 4 lane highway was coming up. I judged my speed and began my whistle sequence. This time I felt like I did it sharp having honed my riff on my way up and back down the hill. An easy, even cadence and then holding across the crossing just like a veteran engineer. About one more mile and it was time to reluctantly relinquish the controls.

The engineer and fireman brought us back into the yard and pulled us up to the water column. The fireman climbed up on the back deck of the tender and filled up the tank. After the engine was serviced there was a hardy shaking of hands and conveyance of my gratitude to the crew. Courteous compliments were received from the crew on my



performance and, of course, the obligatory invitation to give up my day job and move to the desert to be a volunteer crew member now that I was an old head. It was tempting but not quite practical. They stuck around for a few minutes to let my wife get some photos from the outside of the engine. The fireman had to go. He needed to get to the local movie theater he owns to do his evening shift. The engineer also had to go. He was marked up for a run with some greenhorn who was there to be an Engineer for 4 hours.

Now, as promised, the non-train stuff. Great Basin National Park <https://www.nps.gov/grba/index.htm> is a 77,000 acre oasis in the middle of the Great Basin area between the Sierra Nevada and Wasatch Mountain ranges that opened in 1986. It rises above the basin floor and is surprisingly green and lush as you gain some elevation. It contains bristle cone pines and a surprising amount of wildlife including Yosemite Sam's favorite critters, yellow bellied marmots. There is the requisite visitor's center, camping, hiking, picnicking, and back country areas typical to all our National Parks. However, they offer one additional activity that makes it a superior experience. Being that you are the aforementioned 5 hours from Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, and Reno you are also in one of the last truly dark sky areas of the United States.

This means that without the light pollution the stars in the night sky are so thick it is mind-boggling. The Park Rangers put on an incredible astronomy presentation. I had regaled my wife many times of my Boy Scout backpacking adventures to Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron New Mexico in the late 70s. One particular evening we climbed to the top of a

mesa after we made camp and dinner. It was a long climb up in the dusk and an even longer decent in the dark but worth the spectacular view for the countless stars and many constellations. It provided us scouts, with the naked eye, a glimpse of the Milky Way. It was truly impressive since some 35 years later I can still close my eyes and recall that view.

We purposefully timed our trip to Great Basin when there would be no moon. As dusk rolled in we assemble in the parking lot in front of the Visitor's Center on the east side of the mountains to await dusk. We each grimaced as the stragglers arrived late and cluelessly blasted us with their headlights instead of stepping down to



their parking lights for final approach. But soon enough everyone was settled in while the Rangers made small talk as the shadows slowly crept eastward out across the basin. They begin the presentation with some basic astronomy with assistance from slides they showed on the side of a cargo trailer. What stars are made of, how they form and the different types / stages they go through. Enough information to be fascinating but not so deep a train guy loses interest. By the time they have primed you with the basics it is now dark and you have

watched as the curtain of night replaced the indigo glow of dusk by sweeping across the sky.

After that we got down to the real business; our turns at the two auto tracking high power programmable telescopes. We started by looking at "nearby" celestial wonders like the rings of Saturn. Then we began stretching our gaze outwards to see the Andromeda Galaxy and the Mexican Sombrero Galaxy. We tracked the International Space Station across the low horizon and viewed several constellations. We got the oft taught and more often forgotten key to finding the North Star. There must have been 100 people at this event and everyone was just buzzing as they took their turns cycling through the two telescope queues with great courtesy. Then after the darkness had really set in we noticed two things. One, we had starlight shadows (no fooling). Two, you could see the Milky Way. It was beautiful. The Rangers stayed and offered views for a couple hours until the crowd had really dwindled.

When the event finally broke up we headed back down to our deluxe desert accommodations; a single wide mobile home with a swamp cooler (not the aforementioned B&B in Ely). Luckily the attached bedroom had real A/C. All kidding aside, the accommodations were comfortable and clean and appropriate for the desert climate. We lay in bed with the drapes on the sliding door open and enjoyed the beautiful night sky until we drifted off to sleep, no doubt dreaming of stars and the next day's steam engine adventure.

That adventure started with this morning view and then we were off to Ely and the steam engine.

MCor Car Project 2015!!!



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The Railpark Train Museum in the Bowling Green L&N Depot

by Richard Shumacher



During our spring break road trip, Alex and I visited the Railpark Train Museum in Bowling Green, Kentucky. The restored 1925 Louisville & Nashville depot is home to the museum, which is on the historic Louisville to Nashville mainline. When built, the depot saw over 20 passenger trains per day, and today CSX

freights frequently roar by. The freight house and part of the depot are now occupied by businesses, but about half the depot and the enclosed platform



area at the rear of the depot, are used by the museum. A large running model railroad is adjacent to the gift shop and ticket desk. Admission includes the self-guided tour of the two-story museum and the guided tour of the passenger train.

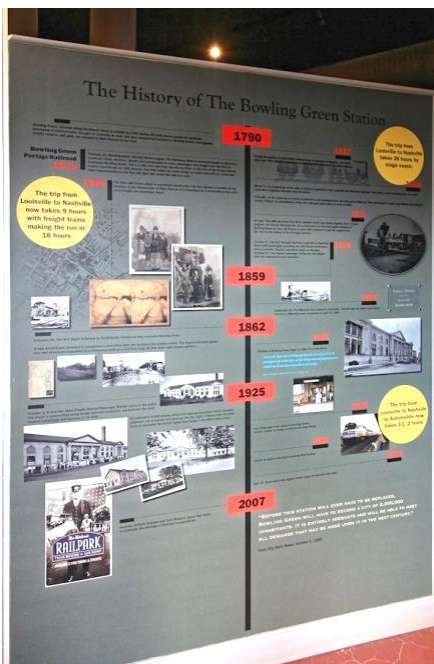


RPO (railway post office) which is filled with exhibits that illustrate the story of how the U.S. Mail moved by rail. The guide demonstrated how the hook was used to snatch mail bags from trackside cranes. The tour moved forward into a 1953 E8 engine which



On 450 feet of track behind the depot the "Friends of the L&N Depot" provide guided tours of a restored passenger train. The tour discusses the history of the L&N and the Bowling Green L&N depot, as well as the use and details of each car. The tour starts in a 1921

was restored and painted L&N in 2013. The diesel engines and generators have been removed from the engine compartment and replaced with exhibits on the history of passenger locomotives. The cab area allows visitors to sit at the controls to experience the view from the



engineer's seat.



The tour continues in the AC&F 1949 "Duncan Hines" diner and the PS 1953 "Towering Pine" Pullman sleeper (which has six roomettes and four double bedrooms). The tour ends in the 1911 Presidential Business Car which is the oldest surviving passenger car manufactured by the Louisville &



Nashville Railroad. This wooden car was rebuilt in 1942 with steel exterior sheeting and an AC&F ice-activated air conditioning system. Further down the track are a WWII Army Hospital Car (built in 1945 by AC&F in St. Charles, Missouri – the museum is collecting funds for a restoration), a 1911 "Jim Crow" coach (a central baggage area with separate passenger areas at each end), and a Chessie Class C-27 caboose.

Visitors are welcome to take photographs in the museum and

during the passenger train tour. Find out more at www.historicrailpark.com.



Division Operations Night

By Jason Janzen

Special operations were conducted Saturday night April 30, 2016 on the Kansas Division of the AT&SF. The report from the front office would indicate that all trains operated 'in the black'. The Safety Department reported no injuries to any personnel and the Maintenance Department likewise reported no incidents. This is all very commendable as all operations for the night were conducted with new hires! In honor of a job well done, their names are listed: Gary Gross, John Schindler, Hank Kraichely, Tim Stout, Alexander Schumacher, Richard Schumacher, Rob Kurtz, Jim Lynch, and Ron Schlueter. Operations



Superintendent Janzen said he considered the night a success as all personnel said they would 'chalk up' again sometime.

By Dale DeWitt

I was fortunate to be able to attend the Gateway operating session at Brain Post's Sierra Nevada & Indian River Railway on Saturday, April 30th. It appeared to have a full crew of railroaders there enjoying themselves and learning the tricks and idiosyncrasies of the layout while the weather was stormy outside. I only knew one other person there other than Brian, so it was helpful that he had name tags for all of us. It was evident that a few of the participants were familiar with the layout's operations while a number of us were newbies and needed all the help we could get from those more experienced. I found the whole crew to be having a good time and helping each other. The layout operated well except for those pesky light weight shorty cabooses that tended to become uncoupled when they passed over a track magnet. After a while we learned to keep tension on the couplers when near a magnet. Brian was the ever congenial host guiding us as needed and keeping the snacks flowing. At 10 pm operations were still in full swing when I needed to leave. Best of all I got to meet some new friends. Thanks Brian.

Division Minutes

by Gregor Moe

Meeting Minutes for March 21, 2016

Officers present

Jim Ables, Superintendent

Don Ayres, Assistant Superintendent

Richmard Velten, Paymaster

Gregor Moe, Clerk

Jon Marx, MCoR Director

Ron Gawedzinski, Activity Coordinator

Don Ayres, Publicity Chairman

Clinic: Dave Lowell Chicago and Illinois midland railroad. .

Business Meeting: Superintendent Jim Ables called the meeting to order. There were 32 members and one guest present.

Minutes of Previous Month's Meeting: Minutes from the February 2016 meeting were available for review prior to the meeting start. Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Rich Velten presented the February 2016 paymasters report. The opening balance was \$23,461.81. During the month we had total receipts of \$45.25 and expenses of \$691.63. Our closing balance was \$22,815.43. He explained that the big expense was a printer for the division.

Merchandise Report: Rich Velten reported we have a good supply of wheel sets on hand. Also on hand are NMRA N-gauge standards, and NMRA OO-On3 gauge standards.

RPO Report: John has set 1 April as the deadline for the spring edition submissions.

Directors Report: Jon Marx reported on the division member ship report and reported that the Western Heritage division web site has information on the region convention in Omaha.

Achievement Program (AP) Report: There was no report as Phil Bonzon was not present. Jim asked if anyone could take over till Phil get back.

Publicity Chair Report: Don Ayres reported 3 or 4 people gave their email address to get information about our group at the Boeing show. He requested volunteers to man our table at the next show in Belleville. There is a new railroad museum starting up called the Iron Horse Museum opening on 30 April 2016.

Outside Activities Report: Ron Gawedzinski on the joint tour of the Barriger National Railroad Library, University of Missouri St. Louis North Campus on Saturday, March 5, 2016. Eighteen people attended.

Old Business:

The 2020 convention is still tabled

Jim explained to the division about the new audio visual equipment.

Jim Ables stated the member ship directory

letter was approved by the directors. The opt-in letter for the division directory and for email. The letters should be sent out around 1 April 2016.

Chris Oestreich briefed on the 30 April 2016 operating session there will be three layouts open.

New Business

No new business was brought up.

Upcoming clinics: next month's clinic will be John Carty. Don Ayres stated that future clinics will be Rich Velten will present a speaker clinic, using LEDs to light buildings and more of the basics of model railroad construction.

Drawings

50/50 winner: Hank Kraichly

Gift Card winner: Jim Ables

Meeting adjourned.

Meeting Minutes for April 18, 2016

Officers present

Jim Ables, Superintendent

Don Ayres, Assistant Superintendent

Richmard Velten, Paymaster

Gregor Moe, Clerk

Jon Marx, MCoR Director

Ron Gawedzinski, Activity Coordinator

Don Ayres, Publicity Chairman

Clinic: John Carty presented the clinic on modeling from photos.

Business Meeting: Superintendent Jim Ables called the meeting to order. There were 17 members.

Minutes of Previous Month's Meeting:

Minutes from the March 2016 meeting were available for review prior to the meeting start. Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Rich Velten presented the March 2016 paymasters report. The opening balance was \$22,815.43. During the month we had total receipts of \$94.48 and expenses of \$100.24. Our closing balance was \$22,809.67. He explained that the big expense was rent and copies.

Merchandise Report: Rich Velten reported we have a good supply of wheel sets on hand. Also on hand are NMRA N-gauge standards, and NMRA OO-On3 gauge standards.

RPO Report: John has set 1 July as the deadline for the summer edition submissions. He explained that any material he gets also goes to the region for their publication.

Directors Report: Jon Marx reported on the division membership report.

Achievement Program (AP) Report: There was no report as Phil Bonzon was not present.

Publicity Chair Report: There was nothing to report as the next train show was not till July.

Outside Activities Report: Ron Gawedzinski was not present. The joint picnic was discussed as to whether to participate this year. A vote was taken to see how many were interested six voted to attend. Their votes will be added to the vote next month on the west side.

Old Business:

The 2020 convention is still tabled.

Jim Ables stated the membership directory and opt in letters are about ready to be sent out.

Chris Oestreich briefed on the 30 April 2016 operating session there still opening for two of the three layouts.

New Business

No new business was brought up.

Upcoming clinics: next month's clinic will be Rich Velten he will present his clinic on speakers with some new speakers and diesel sound. June clinic will be track laying and ballasting by Don Ayres and Gregor Moe. July clinic will be on LED lighting by Jerry Van Denberger

Drawings

50/50 winner: Dave Lowell

Gift Card winner: Gregor Moe

Meeting adjourned.

Meeting Minutes for May 16, 2016

Officers present

Jim Ables, Superintendent

Don Ayres, Assistant Superintendent

Richmard Velten, Paymaster

Gregor Moe, Clerk

Jon Marx, MCoR Director

Ron Gawedzinski, Activity Coordinator

Don Ayres, Publicity Chairman

Clinic: Rich Velten presented his clinic on speakers.

Business Meeting: Superintendent Jim Ables called the meeting to order. There were 21 members present.

Minutes of Previous Month's Meeting: Minutes from the April, 2016 meeting were available for review prior to the meeting start. Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Rich Velten presented the April 2016 paymasters report. The opening balance was \$22,809.67. During the month we had total receipts of \$31.37. Total expenses of \$29.00. Our closing balance was \$22,812.04.

Merchandise Report: Rich Velten reported we have a good supply of wheel sets on hand. Also on hand are NMRA N-gauge standards, and 2 NMRA OO-On3 gauge standards.

RPO Report: John has set 1 July as the deadline for the summer edition submissions.

Directors Report: Jon Marx reported that he had sent the membership report to the officers. The region would like a copy of the business card the division hands out at shows.

Achievement Program (AP) Report: There was no report as Phil Bonzon was not present.

Publicity Chair Report: Don Ayres put in an early requested volunteers for the 1 July train show.

Outside Activities Report: Ron Gawedzinski said that he is trying to line up something for July. The joint picnic with the NHRS was discussed. The picnic will be at the WF&P this year.

Old Business

The 2020 convention is still tabled

Jim reported that the opt in letters had been sent out and feedback was coming in.

Jim Ables asked the people who attended or hosted the operation sessions to give him some feedback on how everything went.

New Business

Jim Ables asked for a volunteer to bring the refreshments for the meetings on the west side. No one spoke up.

Jim read an email the division got asking for information about groups that could help with a program they were setting up for father's day.

Jim asked if the group was interested in having a time to solve member's problem with

model railroading. The first question was about Reboxx wheels.

Rich Velten mentioned that he would be looking for volunteers and clinicians for the fall.

A discussion was started about putting information on the web site about donating model railroad collecting to the division. This led to a discussion on a clinic about how to dispose of collections for our families.

Upcoming clinics: Don Ayres said next month's clinic would be on ballasting and July's clinic would be on LEDs.

Drawings

50/50 winner: Don Ayres

Gift Card winner: Dave Lyon

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gregor Moe,

Clerk, Gateway Division

Timetable of Events

Do you know of an event of interest to other Gateway Division members? Send the information to the editor so it can be listed in future *RPOs* and on the www.gatewaynmra.org website.

NMRA Divisions or St. Louis area clubs may have their event listed here by sending a description of the event, in the format shown here, to the Editor (rpo@gatewaynmra.org).

Mon., July 18, 2016

Gateway Division Meeting,
Trinity Lutheran Church, Town & Country, MO, 7 p.m.

Sat., July 23, 2016

St Louis Live Steamers, Public Run
Kircher Park, Eureka MO, 11am to 4pm, Admission is free. Additional dates: August 20th, September 10th, October 8th.

**Sat. & Sun., July 23 & 24,
2016 Great Train Show**

10am to 4pm, Belle-Clair Fairground & Expo Center, 200 South Belt E, Belleville, IL, Admission \$9, Kids under 11 Free

The Gateway Division will have a table and volunteers are needed to man it. Contact Don Ayres to volunteer ayresd1@charter.net

Sat., August 6, 2016

Central Missouri, Railroad Association, Train Show and Swap Meet, 10am to 2:30pm,

Warrenton Elks Lodge, 1101 E Veterans Memorial Parkway, Warrenton MO, Admission: Adults \$5, ages 11-17 \$3, 10 and under free

**Fri. & Sat., August 12 & 13,
2016 St Louis Railroad
Prototyp Model Meet,**

Gateway Center, Collinsville IL, \$25.00 Friday for two day pass/\$20.00 Saturday, Co-Sponsored by the Gateway Division NMRA, Information: John Golden Golden1014@yahoo.com Lonnie Bathurst (217) 556 0314 bathurst@litchfieldil.com, 2016 St. Louis RPM Website http://icg.home.mindspring.com/rpm/stl_rpm.htm, St. Louis RPM Photos Online: <http://www.pbase.com/golden1014>

Mon., August 18, 2016

Gateway Division Meeting, VFW Hall, O'Fallon, IL, 7 p.m.

Sat., September 10, 2016

Boeing Employees' Railroad Club St Louis Railroad Swap Meet, 10am – 3pm, Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Road, Ballwin, MO,

Admission: \$3, Children under 12 Free
The Gateway Division will have a table and volunteers are needed to man it. Contact Don Ayres to volunteer ayresd1@charter.net

Mon., September 19, 2016

Gateway Division Meeting, Trinity Lutheran Church, Town & Country, MO, 7 p.m.

**Sat. & Sun., October 8 & 9,
2016, 26th Annual Greater St
Louis Metro Area Train**

Show, Sponsored by the Mississippi Valley N Scalers, Saturday 10am to 5pm; Sunday 11am to 4pm, Kirkwood Community Center, 111 S. Geyer Road, Kirkwood, MO, Admission \$7, all kids and students with ID are free!

Mon., October 17, 2016

Gateway Division Meeting, VFW Hall, O'Fallon, IL, 7 p.m.

Sat., November 5, 2016

**Gateway Division NMRA,
Fall Meet**

9am to 3 pm, Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Rd, at Woods Mill Road (Hwy 141), Ballwin, MO (West St Louis County), Admission \$7, children under 12 free

Mon., November 21, 2016

Gateway Division Meeting, Trinity Lutheran Church, Town & Country, MO, 7 p.m. Annual Holiday Party.

Mon., December 19, 2016

Gateway Division Meeting, VFW Hall, O'Fallon, IL, 7 p.m.

NMRA MCoR Region & Gateway Division

The National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) is a world-wide organization dedicated to all aspects of model railroading. In order to bring the most benefit to its members, the association is subdivided into Regions, and each Region has a number of local Divisions. National dues are \$66 per year, and all members of the NMRA are automatically members of the Region and Division in which they live. The Gateway Division is part of the Mid-Continent Region, which represents Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and parts of Iowa and Illinois.

The Mid-Continent Region publishes a quarterly bulletin, *The Caboose Kibitzer*, and holds an annual convention meeting that usually includes modeling clinics, local tours of layouts or prototype facilities, and model contests. Annual subscription to the Mid-Continent Region *Caboose Kibitzer* is included with membership at the National level and runs concurrently.

The Gateway Division is well represented on the regional and national levels of the NMRA. Its members actively promote the modeling hobby through local monthly meetings, this quarterly newsletter, an annual train meet in the fall, participation in area train shows and other events, and a comprehensive website. Annual subscription to the Gateway Division *RPO* is \$10, running from July 1 through June 30. Members who subscribe mid-year are given extended memberships. In addition to the quarterly newsletter, a member directory is published listing names, addresses, and information about individual modeling interests. New members also receive a Division membership pin.

Membership is open to anyone from the beginner to the most advanced modeler, of all ages, so that everyone can share questions and knowledge of the hobby. Visitors are welcome at the monthly Division meetings listed on our website, www.gatewaynmra.org

To join, visit our website and complete the form at <http://gatewaynmra.org/membership.htm>

Division Officers

Superintendent
Jimmy D. Ables

Assistant Superintendent
Don Ayres

Clerk (Secretary)
Gregor Moe (Bonnie)

Paymaster (Treasurer)
Richard (Rich) M. Velten (Marilyn)

Division Director
Jon W. Marx (Kathy)

