

❖ Call Board ❖

Volume 43 Issue 11

July 2004

Super Saying

The June meeting, held jointly with Division 7, was very well attended. Both divisions held the business parts of the meeting to the bare minimum, to allow more time for the program and layout visits. Allen McClelland presented a brief history of the V&O and where it is headed, and showed slides picturing construction techniques and progress on the new layout. After the meeting we visited Allen's home to see the V&O construction progress, and Wes Reece's home to see his very extensive Virginia Southern Railroad, also under construction.

July 18th we'll be meeting at the Masonic Home in Springfield. The program will be a presentation by Jim Foster and Richard Davoust, describing the layout that Division 3 is building for the Fall Train Show. We'll see the Masons' layout after the meeting, then travel to Fred and Phyllis Schneider's to see Fred's freelanced Cherry Valley and Southern.

From time to time we hear and read complaints about escalating prices of model railroad equipment, and how outrageous costs may be discouraging young people from entering the hobby. That's partly true. This hobby can appear to be very expensive to a young person just

entering the work force. However, that's been so for at least half a century. My first full-time job in 1954, machinist's helper, paid \$1.35 per hour, pretty good money for an 18-year old at that time. Most HO locomotives were advertised then for \$15 to \$35. For me, that was two to four day's take-home pay. So, I was much older before I bought my first loco.

According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average pay rate is now \$10.09 per hour, for a job like I had in 1954. Many good HO locomotive are now being advertised for \$50 to \$200. That's about one to three days' take-home pay for today's production helper. So, that's really a cost reduction, not an increase. Furthermore, the locos sold today look better and run better than those of 1954.

Most other model railroad hobby merchandise has gotten cheaper also, when you compensate for inflation. The Consumer Price Index for 2004 is almost exactly seven times that of 1954. If you want to compare prices from a different year, you can find the CPI ratio for any pair of years at <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/home.htm>

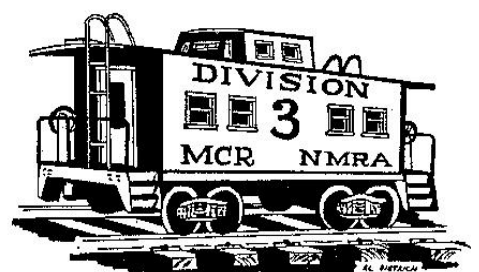
In 1954, Athearn boxcar kits sold for \$1.80 to \$3.50, or \$12.60 to \$24.50 in 2004 dollars. Now, of course, Athearn kits are

nowhere near that expensive. Ka-dee couplers sold for 50 cents a pair in 1954, or \$3.50 in 2004 dollars. Now they're less than a dollar a pair. I found too many other examples to relate here, but almost all model railroad supplies are less expensive than in years gone by, when you compare equivalent items. And in many cases, the stuff we can buy today is better than we could get years ago.

Of course, many very nice, expensive locomotives and other items are being offered now, and for those of us who must have them, the cost of the hobby is more than it used to be, even in inflation-adjusted dollars. But (and here is the best part) you can build a better layout today, with better equipment, with a smaller fraction of your take-home pay, than ever before.

These are the best of times for model railroaders.

See you Sunday, July 18th.
John

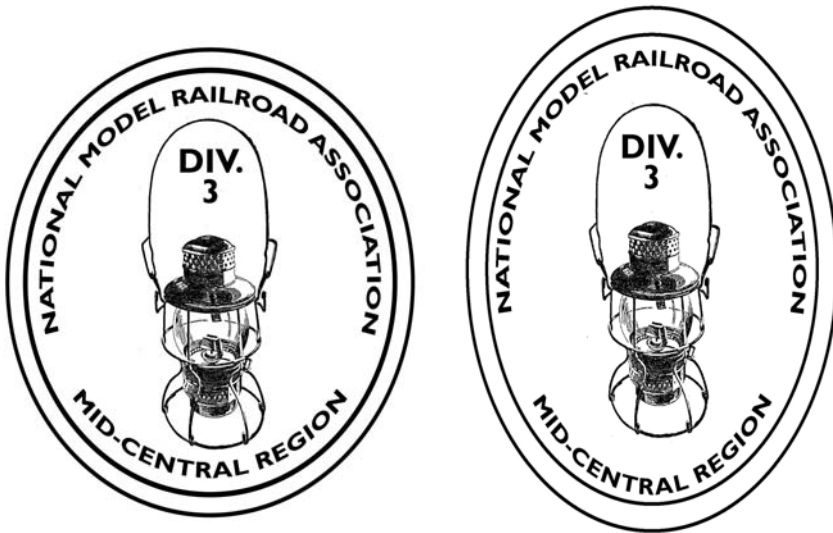


Division Shirt Logo

The logo and shirt designs were discussed at the May meeting. The Lantern logo submitted by George Ardwin was selected by popular vote. The other selections are:

- Polo shirt with pocket
- Silk screened logo
- Green shirt
- Yellow or gold logo
- Logo on front and back

The design was also discussed at the June meeting. The proposal was made to use an oval instead of a round logo. The proposed designs are shown below. We are asking for the membership to make a choice at the July meeting.



Raffle Layout Construction

Construction is getting underway on the November train show raffle layout. The layout is being constructed at the Greene County Historical Society in Xenia. The current schedule is for construction to occur on the first and third Saturday starting in June. There are building kits available for assembly. Contact Jim Foster for more information.

Rolling Stock Needed

The raffle layout needs rolling stock. We would like to have cars with metal wheels, Kadee couplers and NMRA standard weight. If you have one or two excess cars please consider donating them to the Division. Contact Jim Foster for details.

Date	Location	Contest	Program	Layout
18 July	Masonic Home Springfield, OH	Scene	Raffle Layout	Fred Schneider
No Meeting in August. Have a safe and pleasant summer				
19 September	Wright Memorial Library		Sam Swanson	
17 October	Greene County Historical Society		Directional Lighting John Smith	
21 November	Greene County Historical Society		Dioramas Bob Lawson	
19 December	Wright Memorial Library			

November Show Help Wanted

Division 3 is looking for volunteers to demonstrate their model railroad talents to the public attending the annual train show. These clinics do not need to last during the entire day. 3 or 5 times a day each lasting 5 to 10 minutes would be perfect. Track laying, building structures, kit bashing structures, decaling rolling stock, trees and scenery are some of the demonstrations that have been done in past years. If you have a different topic feel free to present it. If you can't do a demonstration both days, why not one day or part of the day. You don't have to be a public speaker. Most of the time is spent one on one. We will have table space on an elevated platform for these demonstrations. Contact Ron Dietrich (937) 548-4780

Layout Tour Signs

The Division has 8 real estate signs available. These can be turned into open house signs with a little paint and lettering. Delivery can be arranged. Contact J. Hedge (937) 878-2391

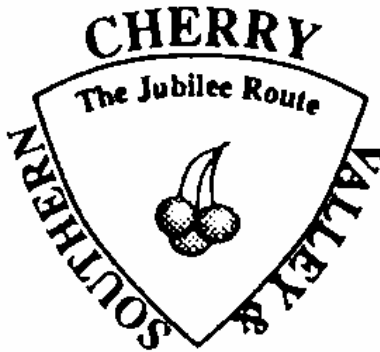
There will not be an August issue of the *Call Board*. We will resume with the September issue.

Contest

July

Scene (Any Size)

You are allowed up to 3 entries per contest. You do not have to be a member of the NMRA to participate in the popular vote contest. We will start a new contest year at the September meeting. Contest categories will be announced in the September *Call Board*.



Come Walk the Dog

The Dalmatian Switching District will be participating in the Germantown, Ohio bicentennial celebration. We will be open to the public on August 3rd from 3-9pm. We will be located in the Germantown Area Senior Center at 33 N Cherry St. Anyone who is interested in participating can contact J. Hedge (937) 878-2391 or just show up. We may also be running at other times during the week if there is any interest.

**You are invited to the July meeting on Sunday the 18th at 2pm at the
Ohio Masonic Home
Community Center
Springfield, Ohio
Visitors and Guests Always Welcome**