



Call Board

Volume 51 Issue 7

March 2012

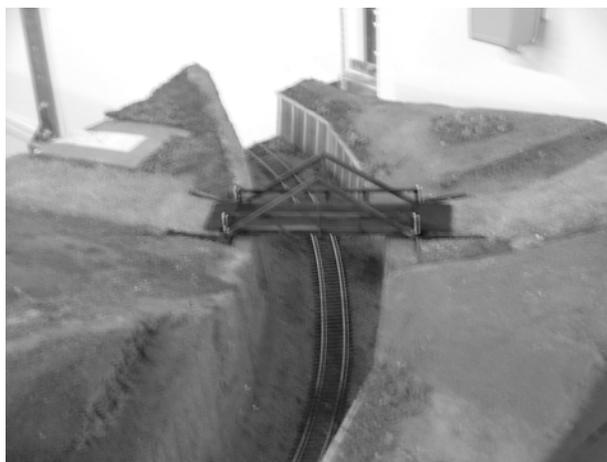
This Month's Program ...

Photography

by Dan Hanley

Want to take pictures that qualify for more than the title "Snapshot"? Come to the March meeting to hear from Dan Hanley on some Do's and Don'ts for taking quality pictures.

We will also have show and tell, contests, and the raffle. March is also the meeting for final nominations for the April election. As Bill Goodman's Gun and Knife Show advertising says:



Snapshot of bridge on Dalmatian Switching District

“Tell a buddy, bring a friend”

2012 Elections

Before we can have an election we need candidates. The 3 positions to be filled are: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Chief Clerk. The incumbents are all eligible for reelection but we would like to have more candidates. David Holl is chairman of the Nominating Committee and can be contacted at leaning-trees@hotmail.com.

2013 Convention Layout Tours

David Holl is chair of open layouts for the convention. He is looking for folks to open their layouts for the convention. He is looking for layouts in all stages of completion as convention participants are eager to learn new construction methods which are not obvious after the layout is completed. David can be contacted by e-mail at leaningtrees@hotmail.com.

Help Needed

If you or anyone you know is experienced with Power Point and has the ability to edit video to assist with developing professional quality promotional material for the 2013 Mid Central Region Convention, please call or e-mail Pat Taylor, Chairperson of the Advertising Committee. pat@pattaylorphoto.com (937) 533-0897

Division 3 Website: www.modelraildayton.com

Super's Notes for February 2012

Super's Notes for March 2012

Meeting Notes

The February meeting was our annual auction and although the quantity seemed to be smaller than in the past, there were periods of spirited bidding. I would like to know what made the Athearn NP boxcar so special, it created a bidding war and went for a princely sum. Aside from that and a few other items there were some real bargains to be had. I know I sold everything I brought and actually came out a few dollars ahead, which has not always been the case. All and all it was a good auction. If you missed it this year I urge you to come next year. If you don't need anything, bring some of your "excess material", (at least that's what Butch Orr told me to call it and not "junk") and make a few dollars.

March Program

Mike has lined up another interesting program. Everyone has a camera, but how many know how to correctly photograph their layout. Come to the March meeting and learn some tips from a pro.

Just Wondering

"Just wondering about what?" you may ask. Well, I have been wondering how we can get folks more involved in some of our division activities. I am pleased that our contest participation is up over the last year and we are seeing more folks, who have not done so before, enter models in the monthly contest. We have had contest winners from both HO and N (even one in "G" scale last year), and the quality of the entries has been quite good. Yet, we can't seem to get people to get fired up about the Achievement Program, or even the Golden Spike certificate. We had a few apply for the Golden Spike certificate when I promoted it last year, but that was only a momentary increase. We have had a couple of folks apply for AP certificates in the last couple of years, the latest last month. I will admit the paper work can be intimidating, but Bob Fink is willing and eager to help with that aspect. I know many of you who have volunteered to help with division activities over the years and yet there are only a few who have applied for the volunteer certificate. Is this something that is just not relevant to the majority? Just wondering....

Since my election to Superintendent, I have been trying to make some changes in how we operate and have created several committees to work in areas where I feel we are deficient. One of these is capturing the division's history. We still have some founding members who can provide details on our division's history, but they won't be around forever. I have just recently appointed Mark Stiver to chair the history committee, but he will need some help. There is an interesting piece on our web site by Lone Eagle Payne, one of our division's founders, documenting the first four years of the division. The year 2009 marked our 50th anniversary, but it basically went unnoticed as we have had not had an organized program to document our division's history. Is this something that is not important? Just wondering....

The division is trying something new on March 3, a Model Railroad TRAINing day that is free to the public. The idea is to show newcomers the basics of how to get started in the hobby. J. Hedge brought the idea to the board and we agreed it would be a good way to promote the hobby, which is one of the NMRA's stated purposes, yet the response from the membership has been lukewarm. J. has asked people to come out for a few hours and talk to people about the hobby and answer questions from folks who are interested in the hobby. So far there have only been a few volunteers who offered to participate. Is this just something that is not important? Just wondering....

Contests

We have three categories each month. You can enter Scratchbuilt, Kitbashed, or just plain Kit built. This allows anyone to enter anything they are proud of and at any skill level. Judging is by popular vote but if you wish to have your model judged by NMRA rules for the Achievement Program, we will make arrangements for you “on the spot”.

The coming contest schedule ...

March - Freight Cars

April - Passenger Cars

May - Diesel Locomotives

June - Steam Locomotives

July - Non-Revenue Cars

August - No Contest

September - Make it cheap (1-3-5 Dollar)

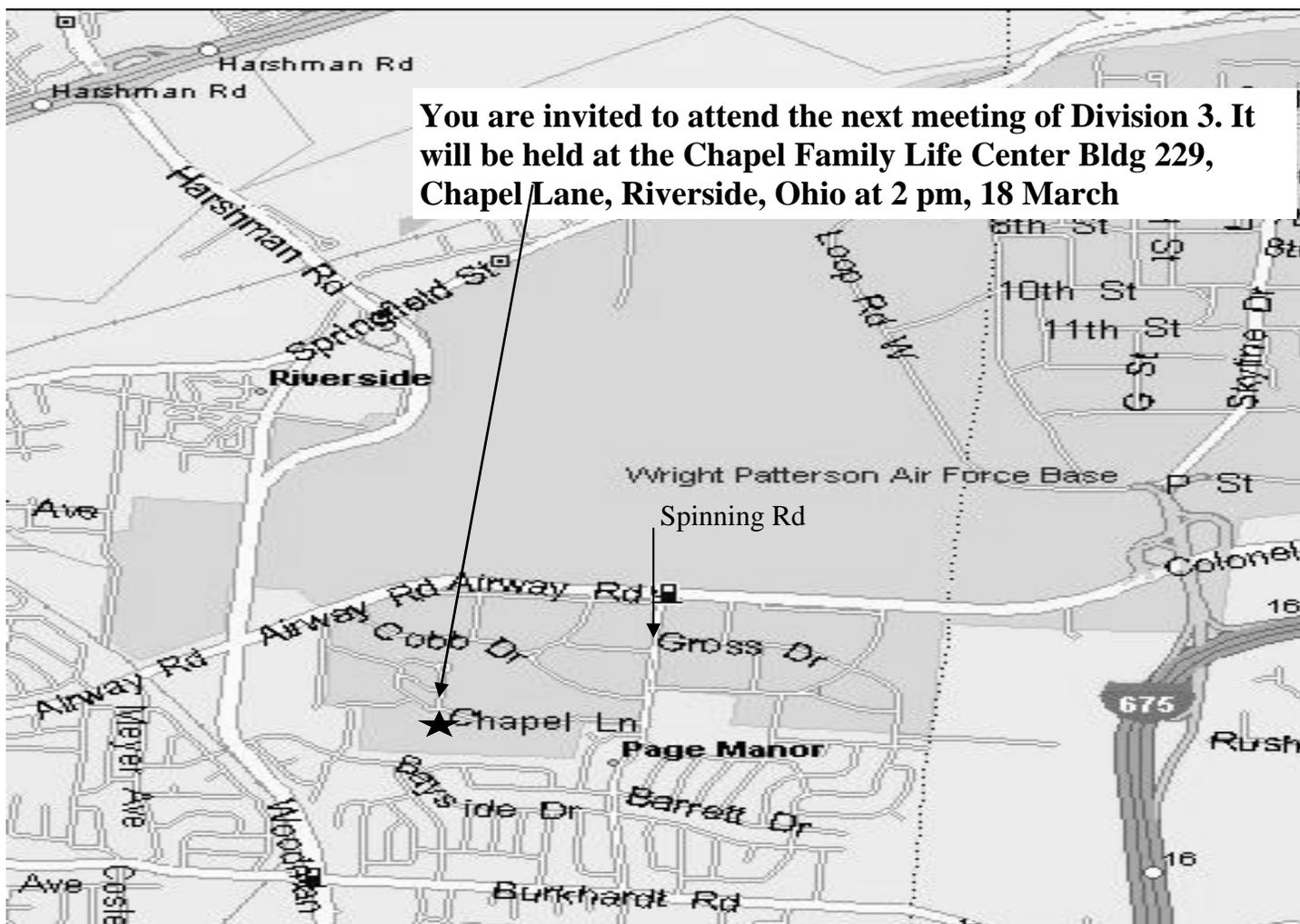
October - Caboose

November - Weathering

December - Structure

January - Open Loads

February - No Contest



News from the Winter NMRA Board of Directors meeting:

- Tom Draper, manager of the National Train Show, reported that the **number of booth sales** for the show at Grand Rails 2012 is currently at the same level it was at this time last year for the show in Sacramento.
- After a necessarily short search by the NMRA Canada Nominating Committee, Clark Kooning volunteered for an appointment as **NMRA Canada Director** when Don Hillman stepped down from the job for health reasons. We wish Don all the best, and thank Clark for his willingness to serve at the last minute.
- Financially, **the NMRA ended 2011 in very good standing** and is currently rebuilding some of its funds from which it had borrowed in the past. In addition there is currently enough money in the budget to hire an IT professional to repair, maintain, and update the NMRA website.
- The **NMRA has announced an agreement of cooperation** between itself and the Hasea.com Model Railroad Association (HRMA) of China, a community of over 100,000 railfans and model railroaders. The HRMA, a relatively young organization, is interested in learning how the NMRA is organized, and will promote NMRA standards in China. Members of both organizations will be able to enjoy the many benefits of each. A press release and story will appear shortly in *NMRA Magazine*.
- The Board is in the initial stages of studying **electronic balloting** as a way of both saving on postage and encouraging additional member participation.

More Board meeting news next month!

And some other news:

- The Grand Rails 2012 website at **www.gr2012.org now has these new features:**
- A page for the Layout Design Special Interest Group
- The Operations Special Interest Group Sign-up sheet
- PDF copies of all of the traditional Registration forms
- A complete list of all of the extra fare events and tours
- A schedule of days and times for most scheduled events
- More Sidetracks events for the non-rails
- The Silent Auction schedule
- The contest room schedule
- Have members who are interested in the Achievement Program? Yours truly was interviewed on **The Model Railway Show** about it. Trevor Marshall talked to me about my road to MMR, and the hurdles and joys of taking it. Episode 32 is available for listening or downloading now at **www.themodelrailwayshow.com** or through iTunes, and will be available through The Model Railway Show's online archives after March 1.

-Gerry Leone, MMR
NMRA Communications Director

Prototype for "Car Cards"?

I am sure many of you are familiar with the popular car card operating system. There are a number of articles in the model press describing several variations of the system. As a matter of fact, our division's company store has a version designed by Allen McClelland which we will be glad to sell you along with the instructions on how to set them up. What is interesting is that we were discussing the stock of car cards and how we can promote them at the January BOG meeting. The next morning someone asked the following question on the Great Northern (gngoat) Yahoo group. "Looking for any veteran's anecdotes about how well COMPASS did or did not work for attribution or anonymous quotation." Now, I had no idea what COMPASS was when I saw the request. A while later John, who made the request, received the following from MacCulloch, a former Great Northern employee.

"John,

"Are you talking GN or NP? I worked summers of 1967, 68, 69, and 70 as a clerk in Wenatchee. In 1967 switch lists were created by a mud hop (me)(officially a car checker) walking up and down the tracks writing car numbers down, marked up by the yardmaster, used by the switch crew, and thrown away. When it was time to run the train I walked it. My list went to the manifest clerk who "pulled the bills" from his box, lined them up in train order, rear to front, and gave the conductor my list and the waybills. The conductor, while in route, hand wrote his consist on multiple copy paper using a pencil. Consist showed car initial and number, load/empty status, contents, destination, station from and time, station to and time. One copy went to St Paul from the destination station.

"The next year the mud hop job had been replaced by "PICL clerk" who had a big box with lots of little boxes, one for each track in the terminal. Each car was represented by an 80 column IBM card showing car initial and number, load/empty status, contents, and destination. For inbound trains we got the consist info, which got converted into a deck of cards representing the train. The PICL clerk ran the train deck through a multi copy printer to make a list for the yardmaster. He marked it up for the switch crew and gave a copy to the PICL clerk. The PICL clerk moved the cards in the same way and sequence that the crew moved the cars. This resulted in each track having the cards in the same order as the cars. When time came to run the train we put the tracks together, if necessary, ran the list through the printer with the consist form of paper. Manifest clerk pulled the bills as before, but much of the conductor's writing was now done by the printer. After we had verified the consist out, we sent the deck by wire to Spokane or to Everett and Seattle so they knew what was coming well ahead of the train's arrival.

"I have a vague recollection that for the first year we got a paper tape that had to be converted to cards inbound, and cards to tape outbound.

"In my experience it worked very well and provided advance information. Saved the conductor's hours of writing each trip. Was the basis for close to real time car location information

on an inquiry basis. We verified trains both in and out to make sure the consist we got and sent was correct. Every terminal did this.

“There was certainly effort required to convert a terminal to the system, most important an accurate check of the entire yard as of conversion time and loading that data. I missed that process, so have no tales to tell about it. I know there were teams of people who did nothing but these conversions for the period it took to do it.”

Once I read Mac’s reply I was struck by the similarity to the car card systems used on most of the model railroads I operate on. As they say “there is a prototype for everything.” The biggest problem I have when operating a model railroad yard is getting the paperwork transmitted in advance of the incoming train’s arrival. I will have to speak to the layout owners to see if I can convince them to upgrade their systems to the full COMPASS prototype, complete with electronic transmission prior to the train’s arrival.



New *Flatulene* Loading Facility on the Dalmatian Switching District’s Skunk Hill