

# THE COUPLER

NORTHEASTERN REGION

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

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A Western Maryland GP-9 leads a fast freight on Tony Donatelli's HO scale Tygart Subdivision layout. Tony's layout will be one of many open for visitors during the *Roger Williams Express* 2011 convention. Read more about the convention on page 8.

## **We visit Mike Evans' HO D&H Rutland Branch**

Trackwork is well underway on this ambitious two-level layout

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## **All aboard for the "Roger Williams Express"**

We return to Rhode Island for our 2011 convention in October

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## THE COUPLER

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Association

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## SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR COUPLER #242 IS FEB. 1

We want to hear from you — Contact Editor Phil Monat at [phil@philmonat.com](mailto:phil@philmonat.com)



Here it is. My first letter as president of the NER, one of the best regions anywhere in the NMRA. I would first like to say thank you to everyone for allowing me this great opportunity to serve as your president. Second, I would like to thank Ken May for doing such a great job over the last eight years as the NER president. A financially fit region with better conventions and a strong newsletter are only a few of his accomplishments.

We had our first full NER Board of Directors (BOD) meeting. I would like to remind all members that they are more than welcome to attend any BOD meetings. The next meeting will be April 3 in either Tolland or Wethersfield, CT. Check our Web site for more info as the date gets closer. Speaking of our Web site, we have lost our Webmaster. We are searching for a new Webmaster with extensive experience in using the Drupal Web Interface. If you are interested, you can contact me directly through my email listed on the "brass hat" page.

I am happy to report that the Burlington convention was a great success with 207 attendees and that we came out ahead on the final bill when all was said and done. Our next convention is slated for mid October in Warrick, RI. It has been almost 25 years since we have been to this area for a convention. So expect a great time and some great layouts that we have not seen in many years, as well as several new ones that have appeared since our last visit to Rhode Island.

There have been some questions about membership information corrections and updates on the national level. It has been arranged with the National that each division will be able to report its updates and corrections directly to the national office. I have sent this information on to each division superintendent. If you need to make an update or correction, contact your division superintendent and he will pass it along to Chattanooga. We are also looking at updating our Web site so that members can log on themselves and keep our NER database up to date.

The BOD is looking into the idea of hosting an annual "Superintendents Summit" some time in the spring. At the summit we would bring all of the division superintendents together with the BOD for a casual round table discussion to share ideas, problems and praise with each other. The BOD really wants to know what we can do for the membership on the local level. On that note, the NMRA has asked all of the regional NMRA boards to send it the three items we think it needs to do most for the region. We are in the process of putting this list together via email conversations among the NER BOD members. So I have decided to follow the National's lead and I have asked all of the NER directors to contact each division and ask them the same question. What can the NER BOD do for the divisions? Please think that over during the next week or two, and contact your superintendent with your ideas. He will deliver them to the NER director for your area.

I have asked all of the directors to try and attend at least one meeting in each division they cover. We really want to build a great working relationship between the region and divisions because we all know how great the friendship is among our friends in our respective divisions. It would be great to carry that right on up to the regional level and then onto the national level. I have also asked each director to write a short article for the next *Coupler* on what is happening in his area of coverage. I think this will help promote the contact and dialogue that I am hoping we can all develop. We will be ordering special name tags for all of the BOD members to wear at conventions and division meetings. This way we are all easily recognizable and accessible to the membership. So when you see the BOD members wearing these nametags, feel free to



walk up and introduce yourself. Strike up a conversation about anything train related, NER related, or just talk about the weather. The main thing is to communicate and enjoy that unique camaraderie that we all enjoy by being members of the model railroading community.

We are seriously looking at cutting costs on the production of *The Coupler* and we are taking a good hard look at moving a majority of the newsletter *distribution* to electronic format. We are hoping members will sign up on a voluntary basis to receive *The Coupler* via an email notice that would link them to the NER web page where they can download their copy. Two major advantages would be the reduction in printing and postage costs, and another would be the fact that you could get a COLOR version of the coupler instead of the current black & white one you get in the mail. Dependent on *The Coupler* staff and the submission of articles by the NER membership, we could even possibly offer an electronic version with additional bonus pages and pictures that would not be available in the postal copy. The postal copy is limited to 16 pages and the electronic copy would be limitless in size and color. So we hope to have some progress on this to announce in the next *Coupler*.

Well, I guess I have rambled enough for this edition. In closing I would once again like to thank everyone for this opportunity to serve the NER. We have a few more ideas we want to develop for the membership, but those will have to wait for next time. So in the meantime please contact your area director if you have any ideas or need to bring something to the attention of the BOD.

George "Scooter" Yost

## EDITORIAL

# Farewell

By FRANKLIN LANG  
Associate Editor

Most farewells are written to remember a friend or relative who has past on. This farewell however, is in memory of a layout that is no more: a layout that many in the region have operated on many times - The Brookfield Division of the first class Burlington Route, built by Dick Wolter in Stamford, CT.

Dick's layout, with over 250' of mainline was featured in the January 2010 issue of MR. It was a jewel, well designed and well maintained. It took 12-14 operators to handle some of the most beautiful road engines - steam and diesel - hauling local and fast freights and a bevy of standard and streamlined passenger trains through the hills of the Midwest to towns and cities like St. Joseph, Quincy, Brookfield, Shelbina, Easton and Marysville.

Like others that have experienced the loss of a well oiled layout, there are many emotions involved in taking down something that has

been worked on and admired for so many years. I'd say Dick himself handled it well, for it was his and his wife's decision to leave Stamford and move back into New York City, a place they enjoy so much. I feel that those of us who were regular operators feel the loss even more than Dick does. It wasn't our layout, but we loved it for its size, its beautifully built structures and scenery and its flawless operation.

We bid it farewell. A few of us were able to take home some of the kits that Dick built to place on our layouts. A lucky few were able to take home large sections of the layout itself. Maybe we'll see it in some form again. We all bid Dick well and look forward to him coming to Connecticut and operating on our layouts.

Like so many other things in life, we come full circle. We build them, tear them down and some start again. Thanks Dick, from all of us in the NER who enjoyed and will remember operating on the Burlington with you. ☹

**GREEN MOUNTAIN DIVISION**

March 12 – 10 to 4: Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Association *Vermont Rails Show*. Champlain Valley Exposition, Route 15, Essex Junction, Vermont. Admission: \$5 adults, \$1 children 6-12, free under 6; \$5 per family with an active military ID. Contact Ron Piro, 802-878-1135, <ronpiro@aol.com> <www.nwvrailroad.org>.

**METRO NORTH DIVISION**

January 15, March 18 and May 21 – 9:30 AM: Metro North Division meetings. New Canaan Historical Society, 13 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT. Clinics on January 15 are *DCC Sound* and *Building Roads*. Contact Franklin Lang, Division Superintendent, <fblang@opotonlin>.

**SEACOAST DIVISION**

January 8 – 10 to 1: Seacoast Division Winter Meeting. The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, 301 Cottage Road, South Portland, Maine. Clinics on *model railroad building* will be part of the morning program. There is always the “bring it and show it” time, too. Members are encouraged to bring something they are working on or have built to place in the model showcase. The short quarterly business meeting will follow the clinics and socializing time.

**NUTMEG DIVISION**

January 8, February 12, and March 12 – 10 AM to Noon: Nutmeg Division General Meetings. Community Room, Wethersfield Police Station, 250 Silas Dean Highway, Wethersfield, CT. Layout visits generally follow meetings, which are usually a couple of clinics on varied prototype and model railroad topics. January 26, February 23, and March 23 – 7:30 to 9:30 PM: Nutmeg Division BOD Meetings. Location TBD.

●Sale of Nutmeg Division Modular Railroad Semi Kits: Dual Track Mainline Module, \$125 each; Single Track Branch Module, \$120. Please send checks made out to “Nutmeg Division Modular” for desired modules to: Ken May, 71 Buff Cap Road, Tolland, CT 06084.

**2010 Spate Award Winner**

Nutmeg Division member Charlie Bettinger was named this year’s *Robert W. Spate Public Service Award* winner at the Burlington NER convention banquet. Charlie was nominated by his friends in the Nutmeg Division.



The Spate Award is funded from an endowment fund donated by the Great Falls Model Railroad Club (Auburn, ME) in Bob Spate’s memory. Bob was a former HUB Division member who retired to Maine. Nominations for the Spate Award may be submitted by the BOD’s of active Divisions or through the representing NER BOD member for inactive divisions. Nominations are NOT limited to NER members and member organizations. The award’s intent is to recognize those who promote the hobby to youth and others not normally exposed to model railroading.

Charlie has an exemplary record of service to the Nutmeg Division (47 years) and has held most of the Division’s positions. He has also served the NER as a BOD member, membership chairman and long hours on the Permanent Convention Committee and manning the convention registration table. However, it is his efforts above and beyond that which set him apart and made him a Spate Award candidate.

For years and through the change from HO to S scale modeling, Charlie’s layouts have been open and available for all to see and gain understanding of both model and real railroading. Among those benefiting were Boy Scouts participating in the Railroad Merit Badge program. More unusual was the Connecticut National Guard railroad unit that lacked a real training ground. They used Charlie’s layout for training prior to deployment for Operation Desert Storm and gained a conceptual understanding of tasks.

Congratulations Charlie for your long history of public service to the hobby of model railroading! ☒

**HUDSON VALLEY DIVISION**

February 12 – 10 AM: Membership meeting at the restored New York Central passenger station in Hyde Park, NY.

**HUB DIVISION**

January 8 – 6:30 PM: HUB Holiday Party. Common Market Restaurant, Quincy, MA.

January 15-17, 2011 (Sat-Mon): HUB Modular Railroad display at the Wenham Museum, Wenham, MA.

January 21 – 8 PM: HUB Railfun Meeting. Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA. *"Photography Along the Rails"* presented by Doug Scott. The program features the British Columbia Railway tour of the line during September, 1987, including a tour of Vancouver rail facilities with lots of ALCO switchers.

January 29-30 – HUB Modular Railroad display at the Amherst Railway Society’s *Big Railroad Hobby Show*, Big-E Fairgrounds, West Springfield, MA. This is our largest display of the year.

February 18 – 7:30 PM [Note earlier time]: HUB Railfun Meeting, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA. *"Railroad Safety Training"* presented by Dick Towle.

March 18 – 8 PM: HUB Railfun Meeting. Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA. *"Intermodal Origins"* presented by Mike Clements.

April 2 – The HUB-sponsored Spring TRAINing show at the Holiday Inn, Marlborough, MA. Please see the HUB Division website at <www.hubdiv.org> for additional details and updates.

**SUNRISE TRAIL DIVISION**

January 8 – ST Division Winter Meet. Westbury Library, 445 Jefferson Ave., Westbury, NY. Contact George Loy, 631-766-4300, <georgejoly@gmail.com>.

January 9 – 10 to 4: Great South Bay Model Railroad Club Inc. presents its 21st annual *Winter Train Show and Exhibition*. Freeport Recreation Center, 130 East Merrick Road, Freeport, NY. Admission: \$5 adults, children under 12 free with adult. Operating layouts in all major scales, door prizes, raffles. Contact Kevin McKay, 516-223-9357.

January 29 – All day bus trip from LI to Amherst Railway Society Train Show in West Springfield, MA. Contact Stephen

Williams, 516-346-9071,  
<Stephen.Williams@ngc.com>

## LITTLE RHODY DIVISION

- Regular meeting nights of the Little Rhody Division are now the third Wednesday of each month. The doors will open at 7 PM.
- Warren Ricittelli, Division Boy Scout Coordinator, has been appointed as NER Boy Scout Coordinator.
- Several members of the Little Rhody Division attended the NER Fall Convention in Burlington, VT. Two LRD members have been elected to NER office – Justin Maguire to CT/RI Director, and Henry Pierce as vice president.
- Achievement certificates were presented during the regular LRD meeting at the German American Club in November. Leo Hamel, Rolf Johnson, Justin Maguire, Paul Mowrey, and Henry Pierce were recipients of the *Association Volunteer* certificate.

## 2012 INTERNATIONAL On30 CONVENTION

Newport, RI, is the setting for the 2012 International On30 Convention. A dedicated group of Little Rhody Division modelers will host this seminal event from March 28 through April 1, 2012, at the Newport Harbor Inn.

The convention is co-sponsored by Carstens Publication's *On30 Annual* and Bachmann Trains. Convention Chairman Andy Small has all the contracts in place, including possible overflow space at an adjacent hotel. Carstens will support the event with a full-page color ad in this and next year's *On30 Annual* as well as with partial page ads in every other issue of *Railroad Model Craftsman* between January 2011 and the convention. Bachmann has been a major contributor to the On30 segment of the hobby and will have a significant presence at the event.

The committee is largely staffed by members of the "Narragansett Bay Railway & Navigation Co.," the largest On30 modular group in the NER and one of the most widely known. The dealer show will be limited to dealers and suppliers of O and On30 craftsman level products. For additional information, contact Justin Maguire, 401-246-0381. ☒

## Scanning Kalmbach Library photos underway

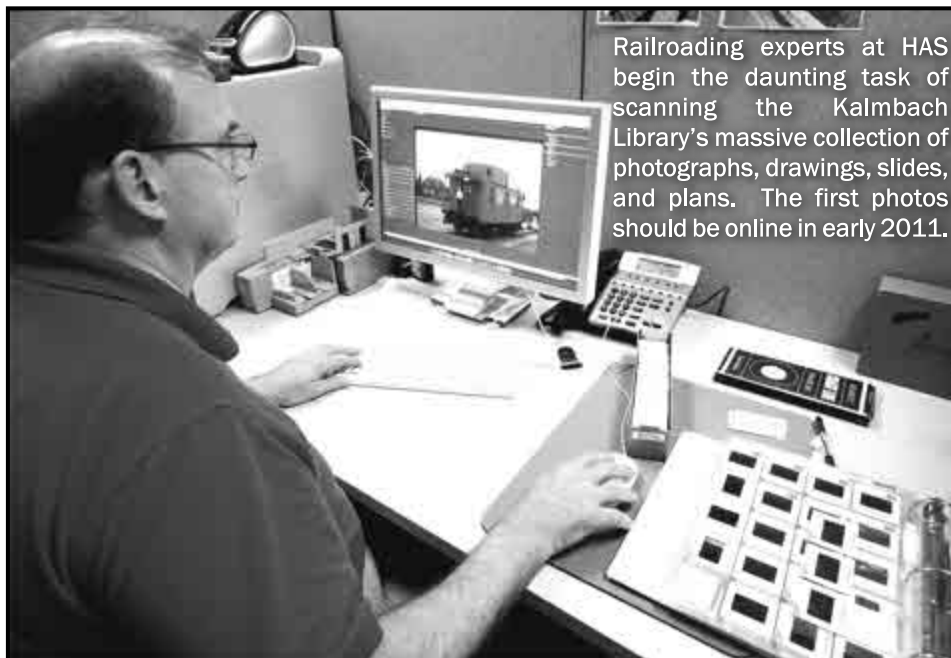
If you're a subscriber to *NMRA Magazine* (formerly *Scale Rails*) you've seen the "Timeframes" series of photographs printed on the magazine's last page. Those are all shots taken from the Kalmbach Memorial Library (KML) archives. The fact is, our NMRA Library has over 100,000 images, negatives, slides, plans and drawings, and only a handful have ever been seen by NMRA members because it would have entailed making a personal trip to Headquarters in Chattanooga, Tennessee, to flip through the files.

Soon that will all change, thanks to the NMRA's Diamond Club. The Diamond Club is a fundraiser specifically designed to support adding enhanced content to our Web site at <[www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org)>. The first item on the list of is scanning those 100,000 images and making them available for download.

The good news is that scanning of the photographs has begun! In August of 2010, Historical Archives Services (HAS), the firm the NMRA Board of Directors hired to do the scans and design the photo website, began receiving and cataloging shipments of photographs from KML. HAS estimates that the first batch of photographs will be available for viewing online sometime in the first quarter of 2011, after a short period of beta testing late this year.

Putting the entire library online will be a costly, time consuming task, since each photo's listing will also contain highly detailed, searchable metadata, which is being added by the railroad experts at HAS. This detailed metadata will make it easier and faster for users to find exactly the photograph they're looking for. Current plans are to make the low-resolution thumbnails of the photographs available to everyone via the website around the clock. Users will be able to download high-resolution files, and NMRA members will receive a substantial discount. Proceeds from the scans will help fund the remainder of the project and future Diamond Club web projects.

As promising as this sounds, it's important to remember that the Diamond Club still hasn't reached its projected goal of \$75,000. If you haven't contributed to this worthy cause, please send your donation now to The Diamond Club, NMRA, 4121 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, TN 376421, or do it online at <[www.nmra.org/diamondclub](http://www.nmra.org/diamondclub)>. –Gerry Leone MMR, NMRA Communications Director



Railroading experts at HAS begin the daunting task of scanning the Kalmbach Library's massive collection of photographs, drawings, slides, and plans. The first photos should be online in early 2011.





By FRANKLIN LANG

Mike Evans has been in the process of building an HO empire for the past six years, enjoying replicating his boyhood time spent with his grandfather who happened to be an engineer on the Delaware & Hudson Railroad. Mike, who now lives in Morrisonville, NY, says he traveled from his boyhood home in Yonkers to his grandparent's home in Plattsburgh every school vacation to ride the rails of the D&H. There were many cab rides over the years and when his favorite engineer was between shifts, they hung around the yards with other D&H employees. Not many of us were as lucky as Mike.

You can well understand why he chose to model the Rutland branch of the D&H from Whitehall, N.Y., to Rutland, VT. What originally started as a single deck layout was expanded after Mike visited a number of double deck layouts at the Philadelphia NMRA convention. He now has a 22 x 28 foot double deck layout with a helix and 80% of his track completed. He expects to complete all of the code 83 and code 70 rail over the next year.

The double deck point-to-point plan allows Mike to have a lot of single track running through the hillsides of New York and Vermont. For now, he has chosen July 1953 as his modeling era at a time when the D&H was all diesel. But, he says he may eventually backdate his timeframe to allow for some steam.

Although Mike has no schedule for completing his layout, he can look back to his days with his grandfather and know what he wants to model. He says he wants to recreate the beautiful Vermont towns of Fairhaven, Hydeville, Castleton, and, of course, Rutland. He talks of modeling local businesses typical of the 1940's and 1950's - marble quarries, creameries, coal dealers and numerous New England mills. His layout also features some trackage of

the Clarendon & Pittsford and the Rutland railroads and their interchanges with the D&H.

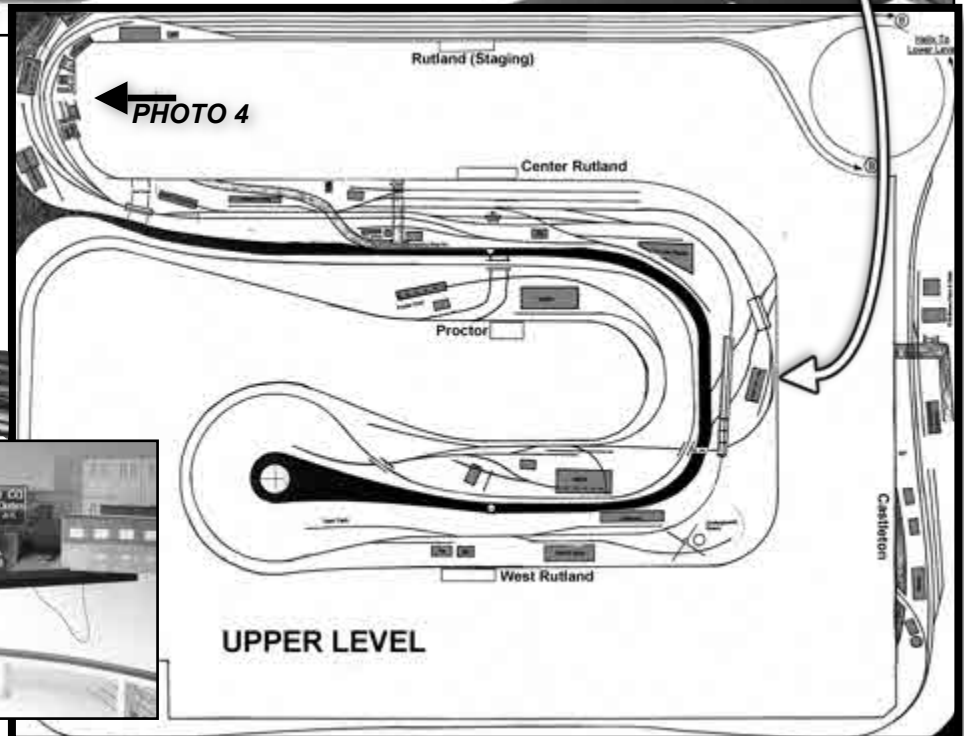
Mike says he has enjoyed building his layout these past years and is looking ahead to having some trains moving in 2011. He says at that time he will purchase DCC equipment and build the scenery and towns he fondly remembers from his days with his grandfather and the full size D&H. ☒



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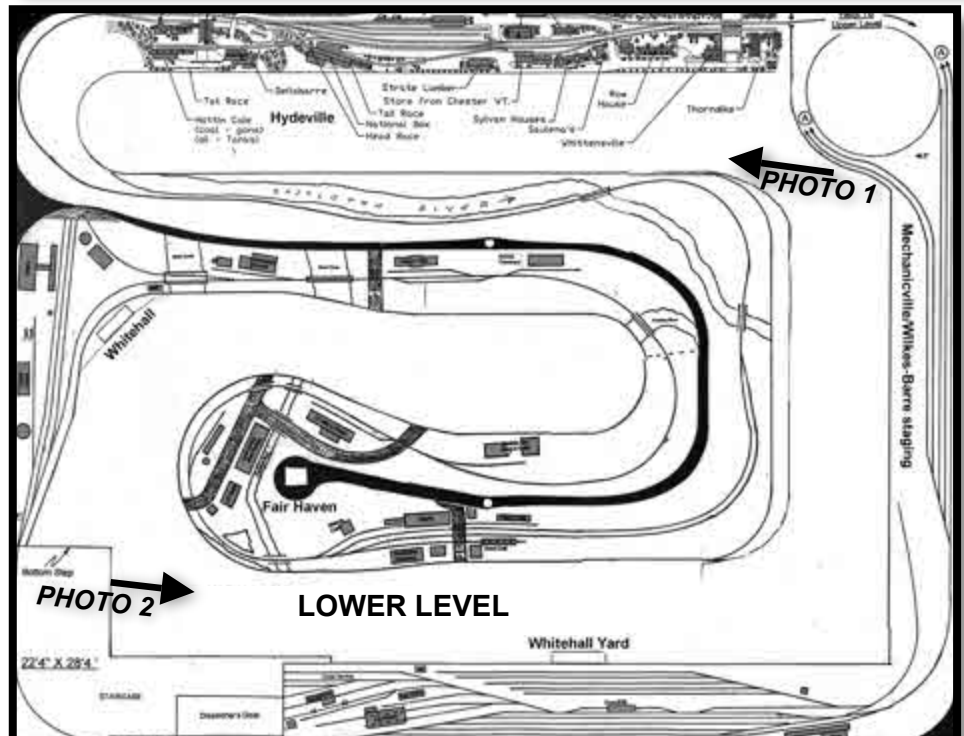


Mike gets a pretty good idea of how his Rutland, VT, scene will shape up using building mock-ups in *Photo 4*, above.

A mock-up of the arch bridge and Clement Marble set the scene for Center Rutland in *Photo 3* at top.

On the opposite page, Mike Evans poses with his Rutland Branch layout. The view is looking toward Center Rutland on the upper left level; the route along the Castleton River on the lower left; Rutland staging yard on the upper right; and Hydeville, VT, on the lower right.

The *Photo 2* view shows the branch heading through West Rutland on the upper left level; the lower left is still to be built and will become Fair Haven, VT; the upper right is open country; while the lower right is Whitehall yard. (Those tennis balls are for protection during construction!)





# All aboard for the “Roger Williams Express”

*Roger Williams founded Rhode Island... The New Haven named a Budd train after him... Now, the NER's 2011 fall convention brings his name back again!*



A P&W freight heads north out of Fresh Pond Yard on Don Irace's Providence & Worcester HO scale layout. This large multi-deck layout will be one of several open for operations during the *Roger Williams Express 2011* convention. Photo by Phil Monat

By KEN MAY  
Permanent Convention Chairman

In 2011, the NER Convention will be held October 13-16 in Warwick, Rhode Island, south of Providence. Rhode Island has an interesting rail and marine history, some of which we will explore at this convention. Providence has always had prominent impact upon rail travel along the New England coastline from Boston to New York City, and that continues today.

In Providence, you can see Amtrak's Acela Express trains race by several times a day among the scurry of trains between Boston and New York City that include the slower regional service equipment. Amtrak is not the only show in town, however, with the Providence & Worcester Railroad playing an important role in area freight service. Meanwhile, Newport is about a half hour away with its famous mansions, shops and harbor.

Our convention hotel will be The Crowne Plaza at the Crossings. Located a little over two miles from the Providence Airport, the hotel offers shuttle service to both the airport and the railroad station. It is easily accessible from I-95 and there is plenty of free parking.

The *Roger Williams Express 2011* will offer you a number of choices when you arrive on Thursday afternoon, including a variety of clinics, more than a dozen layouts to visit, operating sessions, contest entries, prototype tours and non-rail tours. We are fortunate that all activity rooms are close to each other, allowing you to move easily from event to event.

The last time the NER had a convention in Providence was in 1985. Many of the layouts in the area are new or significantly changed, so there will be lots to see. The OPSIG will be out in force with a large

selection of operating sessions to choose from. We are planning a large and varied clinic program beginning Thursday afternoon and continuing to Saturday afternoon. Prototype tours are in the early planning stages. We have blocked seventy five rooms for Thursday, Friday and Saturday at a rate of \$109 per night. The hotel offers accommodations with one king bed or two queen beds. Reserve your room early before the block is sold out!

For spouses and companions, there are a multitude of opportunities. There is a major shopping area less than a mile from the hotel, and Newport is only a short ride away. The many historical sites in the Providence area are ready for those with an interest in history.

Plan to attend the *Roger Williams Express 2011* in Warwick. We promise a great convention in a great area and look forward to seeing you there! ☒



# All aboard for the “Roger Williams Express”

October 13 - 16 in Warwick, Rhode Island



Here's the whole scene from our cover photo of Tony Donatelli's HO scale Tygart Subdivision. Two Western Maryland GP-9's lead westbound fast freight AJ-5 past Ryan Optical. Tony has based his layout on 1955 WM Railway operations in central West Virginia. You can see the Tygart Sub during the *Roger Williams Express 2011* convention. *Photo by Tony Donatelli.*



*In top photo at left, a P&W ethanol extra pulls west on Track 3 through Atwells Interlocking in Providence, Rhode Island, with an 80 car train in tow for Motiva Enterprises. This location is quite unique as Amtrak's Northeast Corridor travels under the Providence Place Mall, visible in the background. Attend the *Roger Williams Express 2011* convention and shop while you watch trains!*



*At left, a westbound Acela Express rounds the curve approaching Union Station in Providence.*

*Photos courtesy of Nick Palazini.*

The New Haven's *Roger Williams* train pictured with this article was built by the Budd Company in 1956 and is preserved at the Danbury Railway Museum.

## CORRECTION NOTICE

In our last issue (#240), the HUB Division was credited on a picture of the narrow gauge modules from the Narragansett Bay Railway & Navigation Company that was featured during the Tracks & Tides Convention. That was an error; this beautiful On30 layout is actually a club from Rhode Island and part of the Little Rhody Division. Our apologies to all concerned.





# The HUB is always on a roll

By TOM BARTLEY

Boston is such a center of regional activity, New Englanders affectionately refer to it as the "Hub." For much the same reason, the NER's HUB Division, which flares out from Boston to encompass 10 of the Bay State's 14 counties, richly deserves that name.

Its chockablock-full season is already well under way and, as the calendar prepares to turn the page on 2010, still more events loom in rapid-fire sequence. Listen to Division President Dick Johannes as he reflected on the pace of this same period a year ago:

"*Model Railroad Month* is November, but December and January seem to be busiest. In those two months, we had our two-day annual fall show the 'New England Model Train Expo,' the two-day display at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, the annual HUB Division Holiday Banquet, a Railfun night dedicated to tuning-up rolling stock for the Amherst Society's Train show in Springfield, and the two-day Springfield show itself. Throw in the holidays and that's an intense run of model railroading."

Dick made those remarks in his column for the *HUB Headlight*, the division's five-times-a-year newsletter. "Our editor, Rich Pitter, keeps us all on track," Dick says. "With the birth of our Web site <[www.hubdiv.org](http://www.hubdiv.org)>, we now publish the *Headlight* electronically. The e-copy is available typically two weeks prior to the



Young HUB Division member Ben Fretz, *above*, has a *great* time running trains at the Amherst Big-D show. *At lower left*, a volunteer at the HUB's fall show pitches the benefits of joining the Division. *Photos by Dan Fretz and Pete Watson*

mailing arriving and is in color, unlike the print editions." Every *Headlight* since January 2004 is online and downloadable." Dick calls the *Headlight* and Web site the division's "key communications tools."

There's a lot to communicate. Take Railfun, the free clinics conducted on the third Friday of each month. Held at the Cambridge School of Weston near Boston, the clinics vary from "hands-on" skill-improvement sessions to historical or prototype

discussions, some presented by a professional railroader.

Railfun events typically attract a different segment of the division's 430 members. "All new members are called and reminded of these events as they are truly excellent and a big part of activities," Dick says. He calls Railfun Coordinator Rudy Slovacek "a master at this."

Popular as it is, however, Railfun is just a piece of the HUB calendar. In late August each year, even before the season formally opens in September, division members traditionally gather at Peter Watson's home for the fall picnic. "It kicks off the year," says Dick.





HUB member Rudy Slovachek commands the attention of participants at a Railfun scenery clinic. Rudy coordinates the Railfun program, which offers clinics the third Friday of each month.

Special events continue in December, when the division mounts the two-day New England Model Train Expo. Second in size regionally only to the Amherst Society's annual Big E extravaganza in West Springfield, the fall show is the division's major fundraiser and includes several operational layouts in all of the popular gauges. Its Marlborough, Massachusetts, location makes it convenient to reach from either the Boston or Worcester area.

Not long after the train show and as close to New Year's Day as possible, division members attend their Holiday Banquet, featuring a traditional New England-style Yankee Swap.

And finally, following the thaw, comes the Spring Show, or as it's better known, *Spring Training*. "This show is for our members," Dick says. "The format is more like an NMRA convention. While there are layout displays and a commercial train show, the focus of this meeting is on clinics." The show puts a premium on attracting first-rate talent and highlighting a premier clinician each year. In recent years, they've included Andy Sperandio, Allen McClelland, Tony Koester, Dave Frary and Mike Tylick. "We try hard not to get repetitious," says Dick, "and bring new and fresh clinics into the fold each year." Where the Fall Show exists to be a fundraiser, Spring Training hopes simply to break even. "We try to run this show as cost-neutral," Dick says.

The division's modular railroad — the Hoosac, Upton and Boston (HUB) — averages about 12 to 15 appearances each season, including displays at the Springfield Show (Amherst Society), the holiday display at the Museum of National Heritage, the Edaville RR and at Boston Children's Hospital. "At Children's we use a special set of short legs so that kids who are confined to wheelchairs or stretchers can easily view the layout," Dick notes. Now in its 21st season, the modular group — estimates put its membership at 50 or more — has won awards at two NMRA conventions and has displayed internationally in Canada, Germany and the Netherlands. "Thanks to having

[digital-command-control pioneers] Stan and Debbie Ames as members, we were among the very first NMRA modular groups to use DCC for control," Dick says. "We frequently display with other NMRA modular groups."

Like any strong organization, the Division draws energy from its people. "We've been able to encourage and develop new leadership over the years," Dick says. "The very active board of directors has significant turnover, as have key positions in the Division, such as modular coordinator and other key roles. Fresh leaders help us develop fresh ideas."

Dick also cites the "remarkable group of people" who live within the HUB borders, a roster that happens to include George Selios of Franklin & South Manchester fame, scenery guru Dave Frary, the Ames DCC tandem and authors Mike Tylick and John Pryke. All are HUB Division members.

Finally, Dick credits the division's locale for some of its success. "We're lucky to live in New England with its marvelous diverse geography and a mix of rural, mountain, seashore and urban railroading all within an easy one- or two-hour drive," he points out. "You can still see active freight and passenger railroading in New England." ☒



Above, HUB Division members share the comradery at the Division's annual summer picnic



At left, participants at a Railfun clinic with Jim Harter try their skills at casting rocks with Geodesic Foam.



# ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM ROUNDUP

By NORM FROWLEY, AP Chair

*My philosophy:*

## More involvement means more enjoyment



People have asked me what my philosophy will be as the new NER AP Chair. That's a legitimate question and I'll try to answer it in this article as best I can.

As a preliminary matter, it's my belief that the Region is intended to function as a helping hand to the divisions. Accordingly, if there are questions from division AP chairs or other NER members about the Achievement Program, I will be there to help by answering those questions. Beyond that, I firmly believe that the Region's purpose is to see that all of the divisions work together toward a common purpose – the betterment of the hobby and the increasing enjoyment of the region's NMRA membership.

And how can that be accomplished through the Achievement Program, you ask? Stay with me for a moment.

In relation to the Achievement Program, our region has conventions at which members can attend clinics, operating sessions and layout tours, rail fan, and engage in other activities, such as competing in model contests that enhance knowledge and appreciation of model railroading in many ways. This sets the stage for the type of interest which leads to participation in the AP, from which they certainly derive enjoyment. But I have come to the conclusion that the regional AP chair can perhaps be more than an advisor and cheerleader for the program. Here's where I may be biting off far more than I can chew.

It's my hunch that a larger number of members would get much more actively involved in various aspects of the

Achievement Program with some specific, organized help in just getting started. What I mean is, instruction in the basic skills necessary to obtain several of the achievement certificates. Sure, there are books and magazine articles and other publications or Web sites where one may turn in order to learn some of the skills necessary to build freight or passenger cars, or scratch build structures or motive power. And, of course, there are the clinics that address some of the questions one may have when getting started on the requirements for certain AP certificates.

For years, the AP program was essentially a "self starter" endeavor. If there were courses or clinics (or whatever you want to call them) specifically designed to introduce all of the basics – scratch building cars, for example – the mystique

members immersed in the hobby through AP activities will more than likely stay with the organization that initially got them "immersed."

So just as Chinese New Years have names (Year of the Goat, Chicken or whatever), in the NER, I'm declaring calendar year 2011 the "Year of the Car." I'm encouraging all divisional superintendents, AP chairs, and the members to develop clinics, discussion groups, written materials, or contests that focus on the construction of rolling stock – freight or passenger, scratch building or craftsman kit, or kit bashing. The idea is to tackle the areas of rolling stock construction which seem to be stumbling blocks.

For many members, prototypical underbody detail, or how to create realistic rivets are mysteries. Once our members learn how easy car construction is from start to finish, more members will see that obtaining the AP Certificate in cars is not that imposing. That's my idea. It's up to all members to step up to the plate to see what can be done as a region in this respect.

I encourage all divisions to inform me of any clinics or

courses that present all the basics to which I've alluded; the type that present the fundamentals necessary to reach the goals required to obtain achievement certificates – and this year we are talking about the Cars Certificate in particular. I will then compile those resources and share them among the divisions. The more members in the Region who are deeply involved with the hobby through participation in the Achievement Program, the more likely it is that they'll spread their enthusiasm about the hobby to others. The result will be a growing and happy NER membership. That's my philosophy. Let's see what we can do together in 2011, the "Year of the Car." ☒



of scratch building cars would slowly melt away. In my opinion, the result would be a greater interest in scratch building cars and thus more interest in obtaining the AP Certificate in cars. At least that's my belief!

I am unaware of the existence of any such courses or clinics laying out the basics necessary to get started in certain modeling areas. By the way, I don't think all the basics for any certificate can be laid out in one 45 minute session. That's why I use the words "courses" or "clinics" with an "s." I would love to see us start developing these basic courses or clinics. The more people we get involved in the Achievement Program, the higher our membership retention rate will be. In my opinion,

**Burlington 2010**

# Few models, but great quality Model Contest and Showcase results



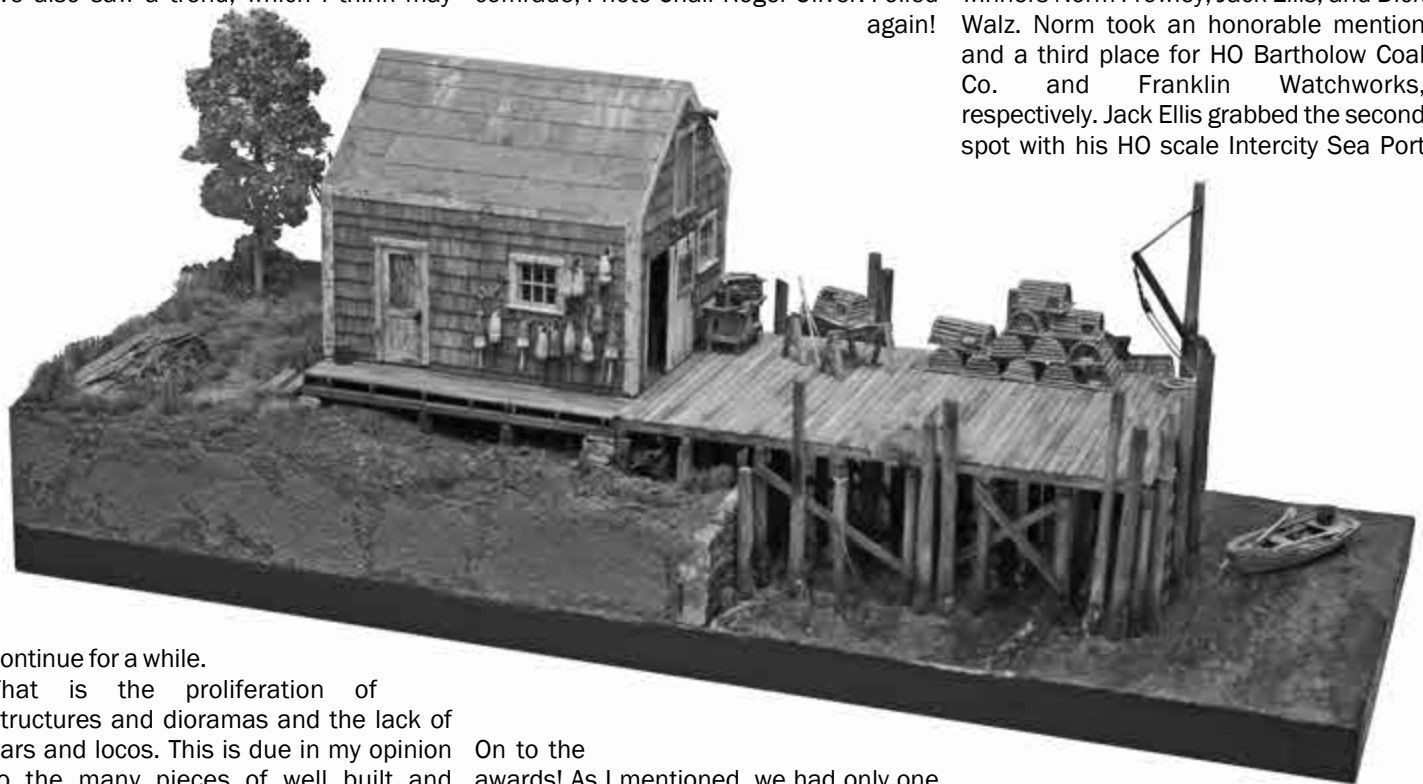
By ROBERT HAMM, MMR  
Model Contest Chair

**Model Contest** – As always, we had a great contest with a number of superb entries and a goodly number of first time entrants. This is good because it says more and more good folks are taking that first step to share their handiwork. The overall number of entrants – 15 – was down significantly from Syracuse's 23 entries, but up a bit from Parsippany with only 11. We also saw a trend, which I think may

simply bring some models – finished or in progress – to share and inspire the rest of us. There is virtually no paperwork and generally a lot of “ooows and aaaahs” by those that come in to admire the models. This time we had a nice turnout with some 18 items by nine entrants. All were models save one lone, but beautiful water color painting by model railroader and artist Diane Steele. Alas, the painting was quietly spirited away for display in the photo contest room next door by my comrade, Photo Chair Roger Oliver. Foiled again!

took a first place with his HO scale Spenser Paper Box Co.

Dioramas had the most entries. In the Craftsman class we gave awards to two ladies – both new timers. Joanne Pierce took a second place with her HO scale “Lunch in the Country” scene and Susan Osberg had first place for her HO scale warehouse entry. Way to go! In the Master class, we had a real battle of the giants with barnburners entered by frequent winners Norm Frowley, Jack Ellis, and Dick Walz. Norm took an honorable mention and a third place for HO Bartholow Coal Co. and Franklin Watchworks, respectively. Jack Ellis grabbed the second spot with his HO scale Intercity Sea Port



continue for a while.

That is the proliferation of structures and dioramas and the lack of cars and locos. This is due in my opinion to the many pieces of well built and detailed motive power and rolling stock available complete and ready to go on the market today. My suggestion to modelers is don't give up on scratch building or kit bashing in these categories. It's a lot of fun and counts towards the Achievement Program. Just re-focus on those pieces that are not available on the market, such as the oddball car or locomotive or maintenance of way pieces, which are seldom available commercially.

**Model Showcase** – This continues to be an important part of the Celebration events because it allows modelers to

On to the awards! As I mentioned, we had only one piece of rolling stock, but it was a nice one. Chris Lyon, a first time entrant, entered an On30 dynamite car, taking first place in the Craftsman class.

Structures were well represented. In the Craftsman class, Mike Bowler took a third with his HO scale Mike's Tool Shop; Chris Lyon placed second with his structure, Duluth's; and Hank Boisselle received first place and a merit award with his HO scale scratch built lobster shack. Nice going all! In the Master class, Norm Frowley, our new AP chair and frequent contest entrant,

scene, and Dick Walz had the first place award with his HO scale factory complex. Keep'em coming guys!

Three special awards were given out. The Sunrise Trail Division Award for the highest point-scoring model by a new modeler went to Hank Boisselle for his HO scale lobster shack with a total score of 100 points. The HUB Award for the second highest overall point score went to Jack Ellis for the Intercity Sea Port scene, scoring 102 points. Dick Walz took top honors: the Baldwin Trophy for Best-in-Show, for his factory complex scene.



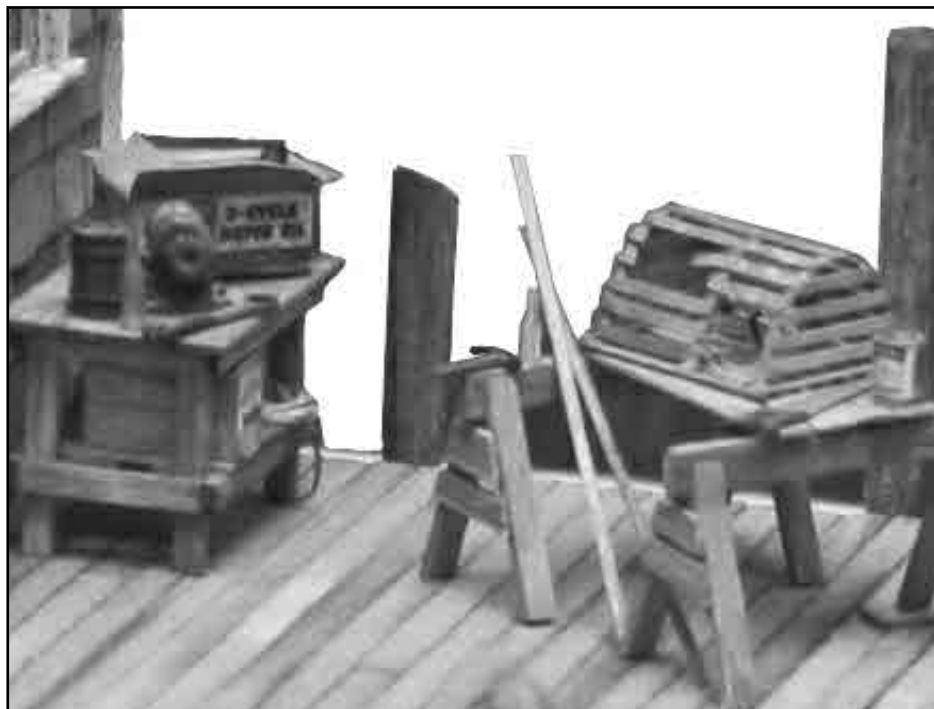
As of 11/15/2010	Stuart Brorson	John Penpraese	NEW YORK	Scott Van Epps	Loren Tindall
CONNECTICUT	Scott Jewell	Bruce Reynolds	Andre Baessler		Tim Wilmot
John Bassano	Donald Lindquist		Wouter DeWeerd	RHODE ISLAND	
Joseph Cohen	Thomas Maule	NEW JERSEY	Matt Dupuy	Gary Berard	QUEBEC
George DeYoung	Ray Ostroski	Stanley Butcher	Robert Gordon		Gaetan Demers
Doug Foscale	Patrick Payne	James Fawcett	William Hodkinson		Marc Fournier
Thomas Morgan	John Stump	Jim Grill	Nancy Killen	VERMONT	Richard Marchi
Mark Panzera	Todd Woolf	Howard Lash	Herbert Marsilio	Richard Bonneau	Brian Nicholson
		Anthony Rys	Barbara Principale	Greg Brown	Paul Roy
MASSACHUSETTS	MAINE	Gerald Slotkin	Chris Rossbach	Chris Dermody	
Dick Benton	Stratton Berry	Mike Yackovetsky	Carl Rotolo	Sherwood Farnsworth	
	Michael Chase	George Zerlanko	Richard Salmon	Pete Teubert	



(Continued from page 13)

Seriously, Dick aren't you getting tired of hauling around that heavy award? Super effort folks. Keep up the good work!

Finally many thanks to a great team of judges, including Mike Evans, Paul Lessard, Brian Whiton, Andy Clermont, Steve Perry, Rich Walz, Don Straub, Jack Ellis, Tom Wortmann, Ed Fraedrich, Norm Frowley, Rich Breton, Bill Brown, Chris Carfaro, Roger Oliver, and Keith Shoneman. Special thanks to Norm Frowley and Paul Allard for helping me with the model registration and to Scooter Youst for the photo presentation of the models shown at the banquet. And finally, a big thank you to Ken May for printing the certificates. A great team effort by all involved! ☒



Hank Boisselle earned the highest score for a new modeler with his HO scale lobster shack. The full scene is on page 13, but we've blown it up here so you can see details like the tools and that "cardboard" box of motor oil.

Photo by Scooter Youst

Category	Class	Award	Name	Scale/ Gauge	Points	Entry Description
NRev Car	Craftsman	First	Chris Lyon	On30	51	Dynamite Car
Structure	Craftsman	Third	Mike Bowler	HO	63	Mike's Tool Shop
Structure	Craftsman	Second	Chris Lyon	HO	73	Duluth's
Structure	Craftsman	First	Hank Boisselle	HO	100	Lobster Shack
Structure	Master	First	Norman Frowley	HO	91	Spenser Paper Box Co.
Diorama	Craftsman	Second	Joanne Pierce	HO	50	Lunch in the Country
Diorama	Craftsman	First	Susan Osberg	HO	51	Warehouse
Diorama	Master	Hon. Men.	Norman Frowley	HO	91	Bartholow Coal Co.
Diorama	Master	Third	Norman Frowley	HO	94	Franklin Watchworks
Diorama	Master	Second	Jack Ellis	HO	102	Intercity Sea Port
Diorama	Master	First	Richard Walz	HO	107	Factory Complex
Special Award			Name	Scale/ Gauge	Points	Entry Description
STD (1st high score new modeler)			Hank Boisselle	HO	100	Lobster Shack
HUB Award (2nd high score)			Jack Ellis	HO	102	Intercity Sea Port
Baldwin Award BofS (1st high score)			Richard Walz	HO	107	Factory Complex



New NER President George 'Scooter' Youst checks his manifest while operating on George Bissell's O-scale Georgetown, Fordham & Burlington RR. *Photo by Bob Collett*



Tom Wortman, *left*, and Scott Dunlap prepare to switch the yard on George Bissell's other layout, the HO-scale Adirondack Rail. *Photo by Bob Collett*

## A "spike in revenue!"

# NER Burlington operators move loads of model traffic in successful sessions

By AL ONETO

The recently completed NER Convention in Burlington, VT, was full of wonderful activities — clinics, prototype tours, layout visits, and operating sessions. As NER-OPSIG Coordinator, I will focus this report on the latter.

One of the first sessions was Roger Robar's on Thursday afternoon.

"It was very interesting to have my five operators come from five states — New Jersey, Maryland, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire," said Roger. "They all shared the same enthusiasm for operating a layout with prototype realism. I was greatly relieved to learn that four of the operators use the same NCE DCC control as I, so there was no learning curve for them. I had my friend Dick Irish help me with the crew whenever they had questions to be answered. We were able to run 14 trains in the three hour time frame. All of my operators enjoyed their time on the B&M White Mountains Division."

Paul Allard reported, "The crew at the NVR ran the railroad in fine fashion. They moved lots of freight across the railroad. The NVR appreciated the spike in revenue which occurred on Thursday."

Also a Thursday night host, Bob Durkin reported, "We at the PMC Model Railroad also had a great session with 10 great guys and six local volunteers." That session was still running well after the theoretical 10 PM cut off. A few left early, but many stayed running the railroad until after midnight.

Jim Ferguson's session on Friday afternoon also ran overtime. He said, "Like the others who have replied, we had a very interesting op session here on Friday. The six operators from the convention were having such a good time that we did not

wrap up the session until about 5 PM" (about an hour later than originally advertised).

We traveled by ferry across Lake Champlain to get to our other Friday afternoon session. Fortunately, the weather was fair and the views were wonderful. According to our host George Bissell, "The guys at my op session were very patient, knowledgeable, cooperative and pleasant. It was the first time I have hosted such a large group. They made the hard work I put into the session very rewarding."

There were 47 registrants who requested an operating slot. Following NER Board policy, assignments were made on a first-come first-served basis according to convention registration number for all who register and request an assignment prior to the announced cutoff date (August 12 for this convention).

As it turned out, most people wanted to operate on Thursday, so those sessions filled first. Once those crews were complete, people were offered Friday sessions. But 13 registrants declined the offer, and thus did not participate in operation. This was primarily due to their preferring to participate in trips or clinics on Friday afternoon.

When all were assigned to a session or dropped because they declined a Friday session, we ended up with a few crew openings on Friday. These were offered as second operating opportunities to anyone who had already been assigned to a Thursday session. Only five people took advantage of this opportunity and thus participated in two operating sessions.

We would very much like to thank all of our operation hosts for their wonderful hospitality and the enjoyable operating sessions they created for us. These hosts were Roger Robar, Kip Grant, Bob Durkin, Paul Allard, George Bissell and Jim Ferguson. ☒

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A pair of GP40-2W's kitbashed from a pair of Athearn "blue box" GP-40-2's by Dick Johannes blast through the diamonds on Dick's Newton Junction module on the HUB Division's modular layout. The modular layout is just one of many activities of the HUB Division, this month's *Division Spotlight* beginning on page 10.

*Photo by Dick Johannes*