

# THE COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION

No. 271

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2018



New Life for an Old Diesel

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Taking the LCC Route

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Contest Winners in Mahwah

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## COVER PHOTO

A Burlington Northern hood unit meets a southbound Canadian Pacific train near Boundary, BC, on Drew James' *HO Canada, Spokane & Pacific*. Drew explains his decision to utilize DCC on this new version of the CS&P starting on page 9.

Photo by Ed Olszewski



[www.nernmra.org](http://www.nernmra.org)

## THE COUPLER

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National Model Railroad  
Association

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## FROM THE EDITOR . . . By JEFF PASTON

Now that we're just back from the NER convention in Mahwah, we held this issue so we could include the contest room results. You can see some of the great models entered, as well as those entries in the photo competition starting on page 4. And a big surprise – and a big THANK YOU to NER President John Doehring – for presenting me with the *President's Award of Appreciation* for my work on *The Coupler*. I am humbled by John's comments that he feels *The Coupler* is the finest region publication in the NMRA. I am also pleased that so many of you agree, and have told me how much you are enjoying the magazine. Thanks again to John, the NER leadership, and to all of our NER readers!

We'll have more details about the 2018 convention in Mahwah in the January issue.

This issue brings a preview of next year's NER convention being held again in Syracuse, NY. One of the layouts that will be featured is Drew James' *Canada, Spokane & Pacific*. Now, we've all heard of Digital Command Control (DCC), but I will admit I

was at a loss to understand Layout Command Control (LCC). Drew explains his reasons for having LCC on his new version of the CS&P in this issue beginning on page 9.

For those of you whose budgets won't allow purchase of one of those new highly detailed locomotives – and for those who just happen to have an old diesel still on the roster – Tom Oxnard shows us how he upgraded an old Athearn F7 into a super-detailed F3. The results look every bit as good as those expensive deluxe models at a fraction of the cost. Tom's article begins on page 12.

The NER divisions are highlighted on page 14 as Dave Insley summarizes their annual reports.

The Hudson-Berkshire Division's annual Great Train Extravaganza is profiled in this issue. It is an outstanding one day show in Albany, NY, that draws attendees from throughout the Region. We again thank the Hudson-Berkshire Division for its financial support of this issue of *The Coupler*.



## OPEN DOEHR By JOHN DOEHRING NER President

# Supporting NER Divisions

Members usually experience the NMRA from the top (information and resources provided by National) or the bottom (ideas and experts, helpers and friends, within the Division). The Region sits in between; a potentially useful conduit between the two ends, but all too often a mostly invisible mid-point of limited relevance.

An important part of the NER's mission is to provide direction, support, and help to the Region's 13 active divisions. And there are a number of areas where the Region does (or can) bolster the experience of NMRA members. We're working on several of these today:

**Value:** Members cite *The Coupler* magazine and annual convention as two of the most important benefits of the NER. Over the last several years, a number of key individuals have worked quite hard to further improve the quality, relevance, and usefulness of these resources. If you're not yet taking full advantage of them, start today. A printed, color-subscription to *The Coupler* will cost you just \$10 a year (and it's free if you wait until it's posted online). The annual convention requires a bit more investment, but I'd strongly encourage you to experience this as well. It's a weekend full of railroading and modeling fun that will knock your socks off!

Our next project for increasing member value is a complete renovation of the NER Web site. Personally, I envision a place where members come to find useful and timely train stuff – modeling, modelers, examples, experts, connections and next steps – all available within the Northeastern Region. And yes, we do need help with this project. So if you're interested, please jump in and join the team.

**Voice:** It isn't easy to stay connected to 13 divisions, and to keep everyone informed with what is going on in the Association; or to help share knowledge, resources, and lessons learned across the

organization. This year we've taken a big, big step to address this – substantively changing our governance model for the NER to add each of the sitting Division presidents (or their designee) onto the Region Board of Directors. Joining these 13 superintendents with four area directors, a vice president, and a president will indeed be a very big BOD, but we believe it will be worth it. With this change (official with this year's annual meeting in Mahwah), all of the NER divisions will now have a direct seat at the table, and a tangible connection – both to the Region team – and to each of the other divisions.

**Support:** The NMRA is largely managed by volunteers, many of whom have little specific expertise in their roles, and most who don't have unlimited time to offer. In that context, sharing best practices, learning from one another, and grabbing good ideas and initiatives proven to work is a faster path to shared success. Still, doing this requires a willingness to share and help; and connectivity, communication, and care. The NER is full of talented and skilled folks who can aid, do care for one another, and want to make things happen. It's our job as Region leaders to find and offer the right places, platforms, and tools so that members can do this.

One example here is supporting more effective recruiting into the NMRA. We've had a good start with this with a new, attractive NER booth and banners rolled out at Springfield in 2017. Most divisions are interested in becoming better – both with their recruiting activities, and their results. In 2019, we want to do more to impact this – providing leadership, resources, training, and ideas that support membership growth.

Can the NER help your division to improve grow, connect more railroaders and modelers, and provide more value and fun to members? Your ideas are welcome (and needed). So, speak up!



## NEWS & EVENTS

### New NER Structure

## Incumbents Re-Elected in Online Balloting

By TOM WORTMANN  
NER Ballot Chair

The elections of 2018 are over, and the results are great – not so much as who ran and who lost – but because the number of people who voted was the highest I've ever seen as Region ballot chair since I was appointed 12 years ago!

In many slots, we had a real election since more than one person ran for that office. This clearly shows that people not only want to vote – which is great – but a willingness to run for office. Even though someone may have lost, they showed a desire to help out at the Region level. And for that, I – and the membership – thank you.

This year for the first time, we had an electronic ballot which reached out to most of the membership. Those with no email address on file, or the email came back, were mailed a paper ballot

Here are the results:

President: **John Doebling** (I)–115;

Stanley Ames–41

Vice President: **Robert Dennis** (I)–99;

Steve Erickson–41; David Dekonski–7;

Carl Sardaro–5

Northern Director: **Larry Cannon**–45;

Peter McKenny–3

Southern Director: **Kevin Katta** (I)–48;

Ciro Compago–6

Eastern Director: **Barbara Hoblit** (I)–33;

Peter Higgins–24; Susan Osberg–7;

Mike Dolan–5

Western Director: **Edward O'Rourke** (I)–45;

Joseph Lecaroz–4

There were three ballots in which more than one director was selected. In those instances, the selection of president and vice president were counted. All other votes were discarded.



**NMRA PRESENCE.** Eastern Canada Division members Bill Turczyn, left, and Bob Henry, right, are joined by ECD President Greg Williams, NER Vice President Bob Dennis, and NMRA Canada President Steve McMullen working the NER-ECD booth at the Maritime Federation of Model Railroaders convention in Truro, NS, on June 2.

## TIMETABLE

Compiled by JACK LUTZ

### CONVENTIONS

September 19-22, 2019: NER Convention– Empire Jct. 2019, Syracuse, NY <[www.empirejunction.org](http://www.empirejunction.org)>

### SHOWS

October 6: So. New England Model RR Club Fall Show; Gardner, MA <[www.snemrr.org/train-show-open-house.html](http://www.snemrr.org/train-show-open-house.html)>

October 7: 26th Annual Model Train Show; Orange, CT <[www.facebook.com/New-Haven-Derby-Model-Railroad-Club](http://www.facebook.com/New-Haven-Derby-Model-Railroad-Club)>

October 13: Annual Truro Fall Train Show; Truro, NS <[mfmr.ca/event/annual-truro-fall-train-show/](http://mfmr.ca/event/annual-truro-fall-train-show/)>

October 13-14: Railfair 2018; Boxborough, MA <[nvrra.com/railfair-18/](http://nvrra.com/railfair-18/)>

October 20-21: 2018 Annual Train Show and Open House; Wakefield, MA <[www.nsmrc.org/show/](http://www.nsmrc.org/show/)>

October 21: Generation Station 2018, 32nd Annual Model Railroad Show; Fairfield, CT <[housatonicmrr.org/show/](http://housatonicmrr.org/show/)>

October 27-28: Fall Model Railroad Show & Open House; Hingham, MA <[www.ssmrc.org](http://www.ssmrc.org)>

October 27: 40th Annual Model Train Show; Lincoln, NH <[www.trainweb.org/avral/](http://www.trainweb.org/avral/)>

October 27-28: Big Green Train Show; Hudson, NH

October 28: Model Railroad, Train & Toy Show; Wallingford, CT <[www.classicshowslc.com/](http://www.classicshowslc.com/)>

November 1-3: Fine Scale Model Railroad Expo 2018; Albany, NY <[modelrailroadexpo.com/](http://modelrailroadexpo.com/)>

November 3: Great Northern New England Train Show; Dover, NH <[netca.org/](http://netca.org/)>

November 3-4: 44th Great New York State Model Train Fair; Syracuse, NY <[www.modeltrainfair.com](http://www.modeltrainfair.com)>

November 3: METCA & NYSME Train Show; East Rutherford, NJ <[www.metca.org/](http://www.metca.org/)>

November 3: Great Falls Model Railroad Club Fall Show; Topsham, ME <[www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org/](http://www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org/)>

November 10: 34th St. John Soc. of Model RRs Train Show; Quispamsis, NB <[sites.google.com/site/sjsmrrclub/home](http://sites.google.com/site/sjsmrrclub/home)>

November 11: Great Batavia Train Show; Batavia, NY <[www.gsme.org](http://www.gsme.org)>

November 11: 47th Annual Poughkeepsie Train & Hobby Show; Poughkeepsie, NY

<[www.hydeparkstation.com/hvrsshow.html](http://www.hydeparkstation.com/hvrsshow.html)>

November 17: Albany Train Show; Albany, NY <[www.albanytrainshow.com](http://www.albanytrainshow.com)>

November 17-18: Greenberg's Train & Toy Show; Wilmington, MA <[trainshow.com/wilmington11](http://trainshow.com/wilmington11)>

November 17: Vermont Rails Model Railroad Show; Barre, VT <[www.vnmrrailroad.org/Events/events.html](http://www.vnmrrailroad.org/Events/events.html)>

November 18: Toy & Model Train Expo; Lincroft, NJ <[www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/cba.htm](http://www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/cba.htm)>

November 23-25: 61st Annual Model Railroad Show; North Haledon, NJ <[www.gsmrrclub.org/](http://www.gsmrrclub.org/)>

## THE COUPLER Deadlines

NOVEMBER 16 – Jan-March issue

FEBRUARY 15 – April-June issue

MAY 17 – July-Sept issue

November 24-25: Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show; Edison, NJ <[trainshow.com/edison11/](http://trainshow.com/edison11/)>

December 1: Fredericton Model Railway Show 2018; Fredericton, NB <[frederictonmodelrr.com](http://frederictonmodelrr.com)>

December 1-2: 61st Annual Model Railroad Show; North Haledon, NJ

December 1-2: New England Model Train Expo; Sponsored by HUB Division; Marlborough, MA <[hubdiv.org/fallshow/index.htm](http://hubdiv.org/fallshow/index.htm)>

December 1: 2018 Winooski Train Show; Winooski, VT <[sites.google.com/view/winooskitrainshow/home](http://sites.google.com/view/winooskitrainshow/home)>

December 1-2: Bay State Model Railroad Museum Show; Roslindale, MA <[www.bsrmr.org](http://www.bsrmr.org)>

December 2: Great Train Extravaganza; Albany, NY <[www.gtealbany.org](http://www.gtealbany.org)>

December 8-9: RIT Tiger Tracks Train Show & Sale; Rochester, NY <[ritmrc.rit.edu/tigertracks](http://ritmrc.rit.edu/tigertracks)>

December 8-9: 61st Annual Model Railroad Show; North Haledon, NJ

December 9: Annual Hobby, Crafts and Collectibles Expo; South Glens Falls, NY <[www.upstatemodelrailroaders.com/](http://www.upstatemodelrailroaders.com/)>

December 9: Great Westchester Toy & Train Show; White Plains, NY <[www.westchestertoytrain.com/](http://www.westchestertoytrain.com/)>

December 23: Wayne Train Show; Wayne, NJ <[www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/wayne.htm](http://www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/wayne.htm)>

January 5-6: 61st Annual Model Railroad Show; North Haledon, NJ

January 20: Toy & Model Train Expo; Lincroft, NJ <[www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/cba.htm](http://www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/cba.htm)>

January 26-27: Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show; West Springfield, MA <[www.railroadhobbyshow.com/](http://www.railroadhobbyshow.com/)>

### MEETS

October 13: Crawford Notch Excursion; North Conway, NH <[www.470rrclub.org/index.php3](http://www.470rrclub.org/index.php3)>

October 13: Seacoast Division NMRA 2018 Fall Event; Stratham, NH <[seacoastnmra.org](http://seacoastnmra.org)>

October 27: Sunrise Trail Division NMRA Fall Meet; Baldwin, NY <[www.sunrisetraildiv.com](http://www.sunrisetraildiv.com)>

November 3: Fall 2018 Mass Transit & Trolley Modelers' Meet; Parsippany, NJ <[www.nycmodeltransit.org](http://www.nycmodeltransit.org)>

November 23-24: Tour de Chooch; NH & MA <[www.tourdechooch.org/wp/](http://www.tourdechooch.org/wp/)>

## NEW MEMBERS

Compiled By MARK HARLOW  
NER Office Manager

As of 8/1/18

### NEW BRUNSWICK

Brian Dingman  
Doug Melvin  
Pete Mesheau  
Ron Grant  
Roy Hobson

### NOVA SCOTIA

Kenneth Ainsworth  
Fergus Francey  
Jamie Richards

### CONNECTICUT

Kevin Davis  
David V. Varholy

### MASSACHUSETTS

Karen Bogner  
Drew Bogner  
Nolan Lajoie  
Robert Manna  
Josiah Stressman  
Alex Sullivan

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

Larry Forkum  
Larry Rine

### NEW JERSEY

Craig Kasmin  
Edward Kenny  
Thomas Miller

### NEW YORK

Greg Brockway  
William A. Duffin  
Cameron Gonyea  
George Hainas  
Douglas Innis  
Janet Mills  
Al Taylor

### VERMONT

Wayne L. Foster  
Erich Golschneider

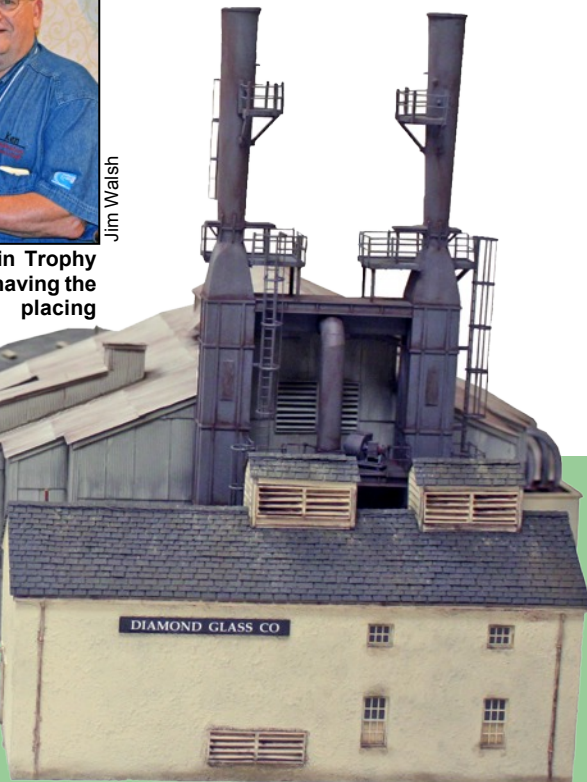




Richard Newmiller accepts the Baldwin Trophy from Model Contest Chair Ken May for having the highest score in the competition, placing first in *Scratch Built Structures* for his Diamond Glass Company.



Jim Walsh



## 2018 ERIE LIMITED NER CONVENTION

# SCRATCH BUILT MODELS GARNER



Bill Brown  
1st place



Ken Nelson  
1st Place (two models)



Malcolm Houck, 2nd Place

### By KEN MAY Model Contest Chair

There were 28 models judged at the *Erie Limited* NER convention in Mahwah, NJ. The quality of entries was quite high. Fourteen models earned Merit Awards, including one submitted only for Merit Award consideration. The contest was run using NMRA National Rules. I was assisted by Bill Barry, photo contest chair, and Bob Hamm.

Our Best In Show – the Baldwin Trophy – was awarded to Richard Newmiller for his outstanding Diamond Glass Company. This model placed first in *Scratch Built Structures*, as well as winning favorite structure in the *Popular Vote Contest*. The HUB Award for the model with the second highest score went to Malcolm Houck for his NYO&W Double Cab 2-8-0, which placed first in *Scratch Built Steam Locomotives*, and won the favorite locomotive category in the *Popular Vote Contest*. Malcolm also won second place for his scratch built NYO&W 2-10-2 Bullmoose locomotive.

In the *Scratch Built Caboose* category, Ken Nelson won a 1st place for his transfer caboose. In the *Scratch Built Display* category, Bill Brown won a 1st place for his “Mr. Rooters Doctor.” In the *Scratch Built*



Contest winners: Malcolm Houck, Mike Dolan, Rudy Slovacek, Bruce Robinson, Fred Willis, Tom Oxnard, and Jim Homoki.

Jim Walsh

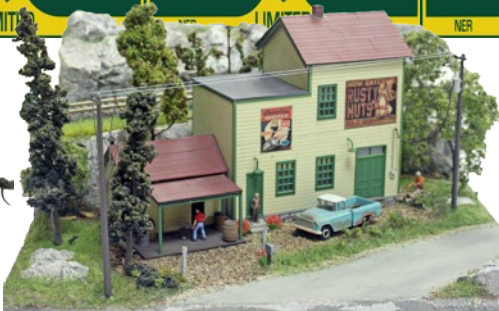




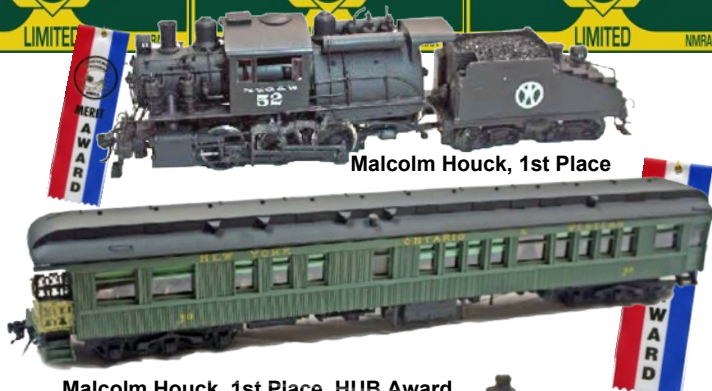
Tom Oxnard, 2nd Place



Ken Nelson, 2nd Place

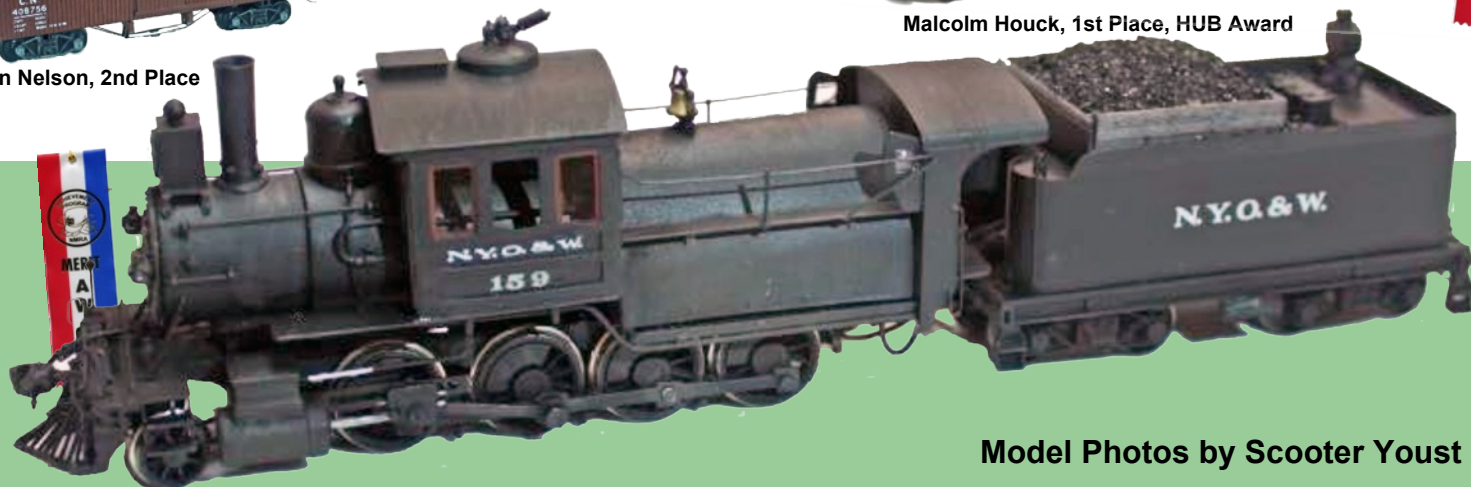


Bruce Robinson, 1st Place



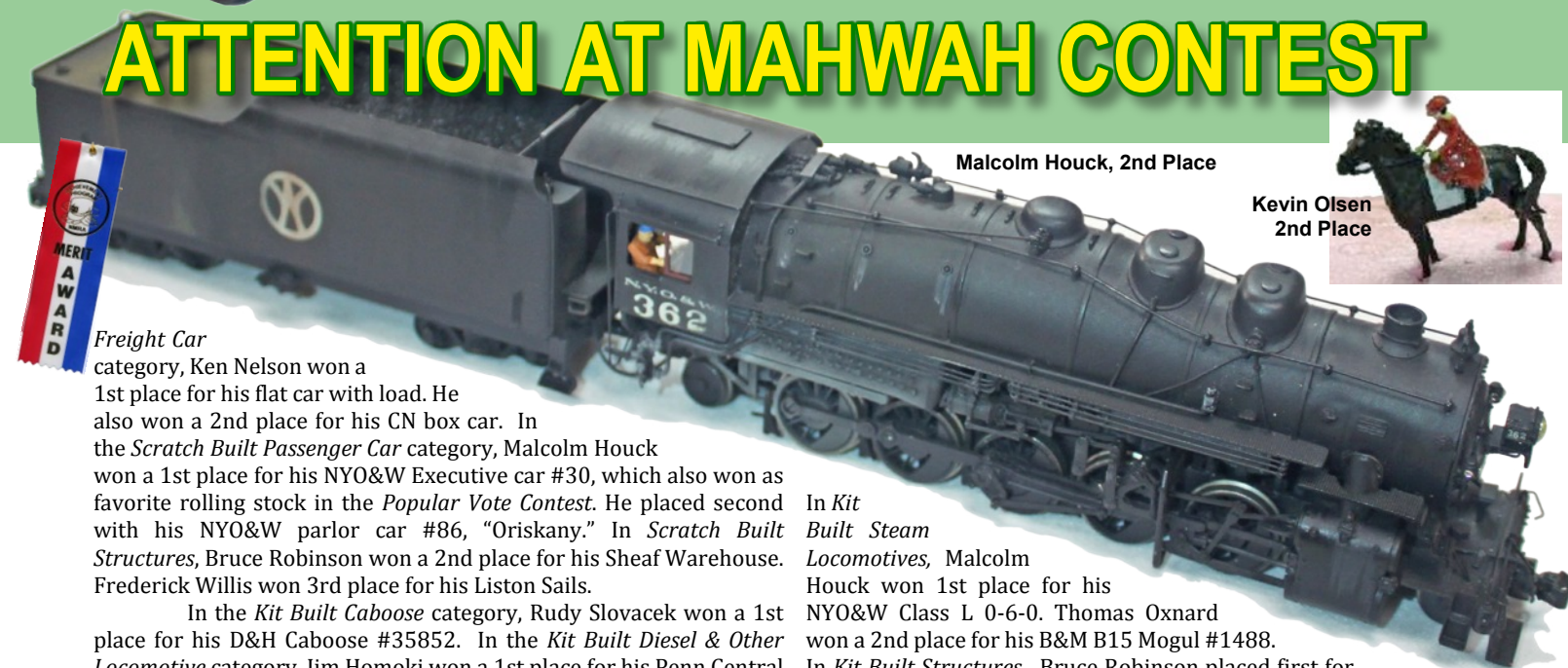
Malcolm Houck, 1st Place

Malcolm Houck, 1st Place, HUB Award



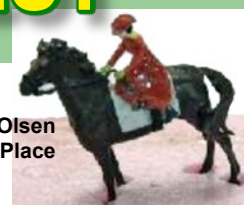
Model Photos by Scooter Youst

# ATTENTION AT MAHWAH CONTEST



Malcolm Houck, 2nd Place

Kevin Olsen  
2nd Place



## Freight Car

category, Ken Nelson won a 1st place for his flat car with load. He also won a 2nd place for his CN box car. In the *Scratch Built Passenger Car* category, Malcolm Houck won a 1st place for his NYO&W Executive car #30, which also won as favorite rolling stock in the *Popular Vote Contest*. He placed second with his NYO&W parlor car #86, "Oriskany." In *Scratch Built Structures*, Bruce Robinson won a 2nd place for his Sheaf Warehouse. Frederick Willis won 3rd place for his Liston Sails.

In the *Kit Built Caboose* category, Rudy Slovacek won a 1st place for his D&H Caboose #35852. In the *Kit Built Diesel & Other Locomotive* category, Jim Homoki won a 1st place for his Penn Central #9845 T-6 diesel. Thomas Oxnard won a 2nd place for his MEC F3 #685. In the *Kit Built Display* category, Bruce Robinson won 1st place for his "Rusty Nuts Fix-it" shop. Kevin Olsen won a 2nd place for his side saddle equestrian. In *Kit Built Freight Cars*, Bill Brown won 1st place with his ABOX boxcar #51001 and 2nd place for his CNW Box car #164034. Bill also won a 1st place for his RGS #0400 in the *Kit Built Non-Revenue Car* category.

## In Kit

### Built Steam

*Locomotives*, Malcolm

Houck won 1st place for his

NYO&W Class L 0-6-0. Thomas Oxnard

won a 2nd place for his B&M B15 Mogul #1488. In *Kit Built Structures*, Bruce Robinson placed first for his English Muffin Diner and a 2nd place for his sanding facility.

I thank the people who helped with the judging: Steve Ascolese, Bill Barry, Tom Casey, Mike Evans, Glenn Glasstetter, Bob Hamm, Mal Houck, Paul Lessard, Tom Oxnard, Wendy Stebbins, and Bob Verkuyl.

Thank you to all who participated in the contest in Mahwah. We hope to have another great contest in Syracuse, NY, next year.



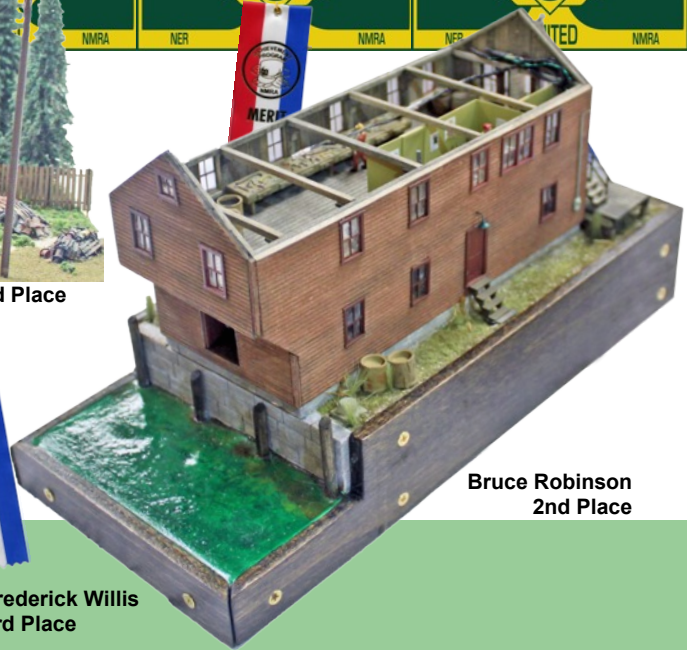




Mike Dolan, 3rd Place



Frederick Willis  
3rd Place



Bruce Robinson  
2nd Place



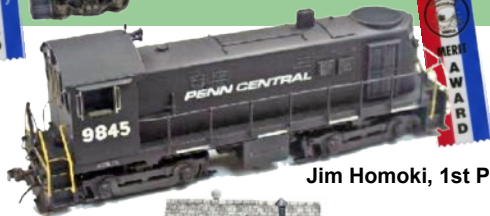
Bill Brown, 2nd Place



Bill Brown, 1st Place



Rudy Slovacek  
1st Place



Jim Homoki, 1st Place

Bruce Robinson  
2nd Place



Bill Brown  
1st Place



Bruce Robinson  
1st Place

## Year's Achievement Awards Reported

The following Achievement Program awards were announced by NER AP Chair Bill Brown at the NER convention in Mahwah.

### EASTERN CANADA

George Jarvis Scenery; Official  
Louis McIntyre Scenery

### CENTRAL NEW YORK

Charles Albee Golden Spike  
Richard Hehir Golden Spike  
Tom Kohoskie Golden Spike  
Terry Ludwig Golden Spike  
Tom Lynch Golden Spike  
Dave Martini Golden Spike  
Nick McGinnis Golden Spike  
William McVicker Golden Spike  
Ed Olszewski Golden Spike  
Robert Pletl Jr Chief Dispatcher  
Charles Romanick Golden Spike  
George Youst Author; Volunteer

### GARDEN STATE

Fred Dellaiacono Volunteer  
Chuck Diljak Civil Engineer  
Jim Homoki Scenery; Electrical  
James Walsh Volunteer

### HUB

John Barrington Golden Spike  
Ken Belovarac Golden Spike  
Robert Buick Golden Spike  
Randolf Childs Golden Spike  
Paul Dexter Golden Spike  
Mike Dolan Golden Spike  
Arthur Ellis Golden Spike  
Malcolm Houck Golden Spike; Author; Scenery  
David Insley Golden Spike  
James Kerkam Golden Spike

Robert McLaughlin Golden Spike  
Robert Noyes Golden Spike  
Andrew Reynolds Golden Spike  
Doug Scott Golden Spike  
Jay Stradal Golden Spike  
David Trimble Golden Spike  
James Van Bokkelen Golden Spike

### HUDSON BERKSHIRE

Benjamin Maggi Electrical  
Irwin Nathanson Golden Spike

### LAKE SHORES

David Coon Golden Spike  
James DeMarco Golden Spike  
Ron Stacey Golden Spike

### LITTLE RHODY

Thomas Emmett Electrical

### METRO NORTH

Boyd Misstear Golden Spike

### NUTMEG

Charles Bettinger Official  
Mark Herrick Golden Spike

### SEACOAST

Bruce Campbell Golden Spike  
James Ehlen Golden Spike  
Ernest Tage Erickson Golden Spike  
Kenneth Faulter Official  
Nelson LeMay Golden Spike  
John McHugh Electrical; Volunteer  
Peter McKenney Dispatcher  
Glenn Mitchell Dispatcher  
Rich Teer Golden Spike  
Brenna Whitney Golden Spike

### SUNRISE TRAIL

Mike Bowler Structures







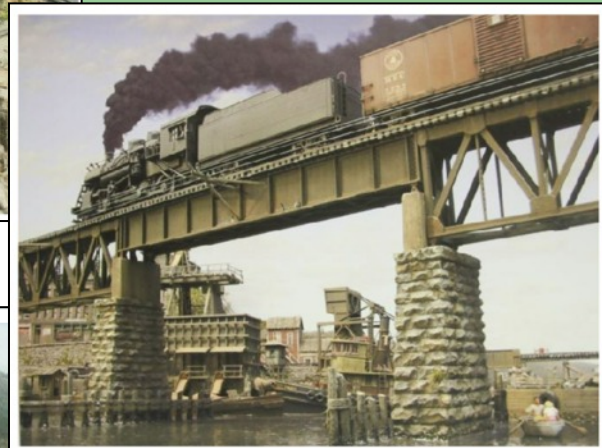
# STANDOUT PICS SWEEP PHOTO AWARDS



↑ The award for *Best in Show* went to **Malcolm Houck** for his *Model Print* of “**NYO&W Ry. Class X ‘Bullmoose’ in pusher service,**” above.  
↖ **Malcolm** also won first place, *Model-Color Print* for his “**NYO&W Class Y-2 between Scranton, PA and Maybrook, NY,**” above left.



↑ **Bill Brown’s** “**482 on the High Line**” won *Best in Show Peoples’ Choice Award* and first place, *Prototype-Color Print*.



↑ Second Place, *Model-Color Print* was won by **Rich Walz** for “**Over Mahican Bay,**” above.  
← Second Place, left, *Prototype-Color Print* “**Crossing 10th Street in Silverton**” was won by **Bill Brown**.



↖ At left from top, **Malcolm Houck**, “**NYO&W Class U-1 Double Cab Northbound,**” Third place and Favorite *Model-Color Print*.  
↖ **Rich Walz**, “**Wild White Ride,**” Third Place, *Prototype-Color Print*.  
↖ **Bill Brown**, “**Coasting out**

**of Ophir,**” Honorable Mention, *Model-Color Print*.  
↖ **Bob Duffield** “**Winding Upgrade,**” Honorable Mention, *Prototype-Color Print*.

Photo Contest winners, below, **Malcolm Houck**, **Rich Walz**, **Bob Duffield**, and **Bill Brown** with Contest Chair **Bill Barry**.  
Judges for the contest were Tom Oxnard, Kaylee Zheng, Rudy Slovacek, and Scooter Youst.



Jim Walsh





SEPT  
19  
THURSDAY

# 2019 Convention Planning Well Underway

*The NER Returns to Syracuse!*

CNY NRHS Archives

By ED O'ROURKE  
*Empire Junction Chair*

Now that our 2018 convention has wrapped up in Mahwah, New Jersey, it's time to start planning your visit to the 2019 event!

Mark your calendars for *Empire Junction 2019*, the NER's next convention in Syracuse, New York, September 19-22, and hosted by the Central New York Division. Planning has been underway for months to ensure all details are worked out well ahead of time.



Bill Brown MMR demonstrates rock carving techniques during a clinic.

The convention will be at the Liverpool (N.Y.) Holiday Inn, site of NER conventions in 2008 and 2012. Conveniently located at Thruway (I-90) Exit 37, this is a modern, full-service hotel with on-site restaurant and lounge, and indoor pool. Room rate for single or double occupancy is only \$115.00 per night.

## PROTOTYPE

*Empire Junction* takes its name from the fact that Syracuse is the crossroads of New York State. In the 1830s, the Oswego Canal met the Erie Canal in downtown Syracuse, connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie with the Hudson River. Later, the New York Central; Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western; Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg; West Shore; and the New York, Ontario & Western all passed through Central New York.

The New York Central and DL&W had extensive yard and engine servicing facilities in Syracuse. Until 1936, the Central's passenger tracks ran through the center of the city. A presentation about *Railroads in the Streets of Syracuse* is one event being planned.

Today, CSX; New York, Susquehanna and Western; and Finger Lakes Railway meet here. So do Interstates 90 and 81.

The CNY Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society operates museums at two former railroad stations — at Central Square, where the RW&O and NYO&W once crossed; and at Martisco on the former NYC Auburn Branch, now Finger Lakes Railway. Both will be open for visits. The NRHS chapter also has a historic train exhibit at the New York State Fairgrounds just west of Syracuse.

Adirondack Scenic Railway trains leave from the restored Utica Union Station, easily accessed from Thruway Exit 31. Details are at [www.adirondackrr.com/adkrr/](http://www.adirondackrr.com/adkrr/). Note that September is prime "leafeer" season, and

give opportunities to learn new skills or polish old ones.

## LAYOUT TOURS

There is an abundance of high quality model railroads in Central New York. Several have been featured in the national model press. Everything from live steam, G scale indoor and garden layouts, O scale and O highrail, to HO, Narrow Gauge, and N scale. Locations modeled range from the Colorado Rockies, the Pacific Northwest, to the Adirondacks, the Northeast Corridor, and even Germany!

## OPERATIONS

Many NER members have taken part in the CNY Division's annual "Ops 'til You Drop" weekend and know what a great variety of



Among the layouts on tour and open for operations is Mike Shanahan's Brunswick & Tuscan featuring this realistic rendition of the Pennsy's Horseshoe Curve.

the convention will seek ways to access this nearby venue offering trips into the Adirondacks to Old Forge.

## CLINICS

Bill Brown MMR, NER AP chair, will host one of the very popular hands-on sessions conducted by Master Model Railroaders. This will be an extra fare event and registration will be limited. In addition, there will be many traditional clinics going on continuously during the convention. A primary focus will be DCC and LCC. This will

operating layouts we have in Central New York. We have something for everyone — from Colorado Narrow Gauge to today's CSX; timetable and train order; to CTC. You'll want to get your reservations in early to ensure you get a spot once sessions are posted on the convention Web site [www.empirejunction.org](http://www.empirejunction.org).

## NON-RAIL

Central New York has plenty to offer besides railroading and the planning committee is arranging for a number of interesting non-rail places to visit.

Ed Olszewski

Martin Collard



# Taking the LCC Route on a New Layout



*Why One Modeler feels he made the right decision*

By DREW JAMES

In 2015, my wife and I bought our retirement home. It was a ranch with a large unfinished basement. I had an ideal space in which to build that dream layout. From previous layouts, I had a good idea as to the concept and general design of the railroad, but no plan as to how I would control all the aspects of the railroad, such as signals, turnouts, LED indicators, occupancy detectors, and lights.

It turned out I had impeccable timing because the NMRA issued its Layout Command Control (LCC) standard just as my new railroad design began! LCC is envisioned as working in conjunction with DCC for control of the “non-train” functions rather than as a replacement to DCC. LCC seemed to be a perfect fit for what I envisioned for my new *Canada, Spokane & Pacific*.

The new CS&P design features a 225-foot single track mainline connecting a double ended staging yard representing Calgary and Spokane. The railroad is a freelanced Pacific Northwest bridge line jointly owned by the Canadian Pacific and Burlington Northern in the early '80s timeframe. There are five modeled towns on the railroad each containing a passing siding. There is a classification yard in the Town of Nelson, British Columbia, and about 20 industries to provide extensive switching opportunities. The layout is approximately 1,500 square feet in size. Operating sessions support a crew of 12 to 16 people.

Early in the design process, I started to consider control system options for the railroad. On my previous, much smaller, version of

(Continued on page 10)





# Taking the LCC Route on a New Layout



Jim Leach runs the International Ltd across the Columbia River on Drew James' Canada, Spokane & Pacific. Photo: Drew James

(Continued from page 9)

the CS&P, an NCE DCC system was used for train control. I saw no reason to switch to a different system as I was very satisfied with its performance and had a significant investment in the system. However, the old CS&P used a hardwired control approach for turnouts, signals, track detectors, lighting, etc. Everything was hardware based and hundreds of feet of wire ran between the layout, the dispatcher's panel, and controls and indicators on the fascia. The signaling logic was all implemented using commercial Atlas system components. It worked well for a modest size layout and I liked that it was easy to debug without having to tackle the job of interfacing a computer with the railroad. However, I recognized that for a railroad the size of the new CS&P, I would have to consider a different approach as it would be simply too much wire to run, maintain, and debug as well as being difficult to expand and modify in the future.

## OUTDATED COMPONENTS

Additionally, the commercial hardware components of the Atlas system which controlled the signaling logic were out of production and increasingly hard to find even through online auction sites. After all, I hoped to enjoy this new railroad for the next 20 years and I didn't want to start off with something already obsolete.

Another option I considered was to run a separate DCC bus, such as the Digitrax Loconet for layout control. Then, I would connect it with JMRI (Java Model Railroad Interface) software. JMRI is a powerful set of open-source software tools developed and maintained by a group of volunteers and is available to modelers at no cost.

JMRI interfaces a model railroad with a computer. It has a wide variety of capabilities to support dispatching – dispatcher's displays, detection, turnout control, and signaling. It also has tools for DCC decoder programming and car forwarding (such as switch list generation). It is downloadable from the Internet at no cost to modelers.

This approach was being successfully used on several layouts in my area and seemed to be "state of the practice" for larger operations focused layouts. The drawbacks of this approach were once again becoming tied to a manufacturer's proprietary implementation (although a wide variety of products from other manufacturers are available) and the DCC standard itself. That DCC standard is now close to 25 years old and the bus, while adequate for the majority of model railroad needs, has a low bandwidth which could result in delayed responses during heavy use and limit the ability to add new capabilities in the future.

## ENTER LAYOUT COMMAND CONTROL

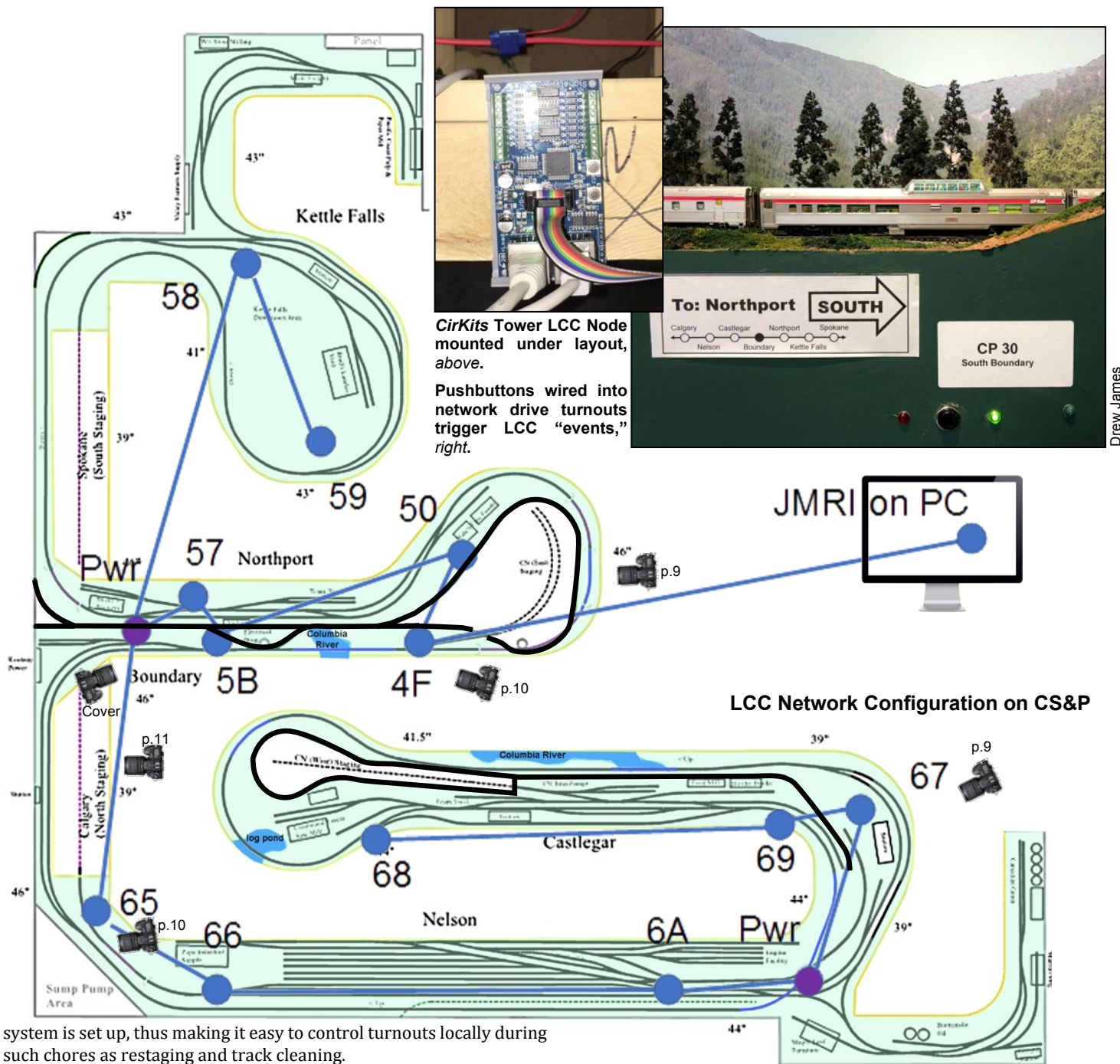
So when the NMRA came out with the new Layout Command Control (LCC) standard, I read the excellent series of articles by Brian Pickering in *NMRA Magazine*, attended an LCC clinic at the 2017 Springfield show, and spoke with knowledgeable individuals. The more I learned, the more LCC seemed to be the right answer for my needs. It is an NMRA standard rather than a proprietary approach. LCC was expressly geared to controlling everything but the trains.

The LCC hardware consists of distributed "nodes," connected by a high bandwidth network utilizing standard Ethernet cables.



Layout devices – such as turnout controls, signals, detectors, and LED indicators – connect into the nodes. It is supported by JMRI, which I also plan to use for dispatching. The LCC concepts of "producers" (e.g. a track block detector or a button push), "consumers" (e.g. a control panel LED indicator or trackside signal), and "events" (e.g. "block 13 is occupied") appeared to be a logical way of thinking as to how the system worked. I liked not having to configure the system at the *bit* level, but rather at a more abstract "English language" level, and having the system then set the correct bits. Additionally, while a computer is required to configure and setup all but the simplest LCC systems, a computer is not needed to run the layout after the





system is set up, thus making it easy to control turnouts locally during such chores as restaging and track cleaning.

While resonating with the technical implementation, I still had concerns about selecting LCC for the layout control network. It is too early to know if LCC will become readily accepted by the modeling community and manufacturers. When I was committing to a control system approach, RR-CirKits was the only manufacturer I was able to identify marketing LCC compliant hardware. There is a chance that at some point in the future I could become stuck with a significant investment in a "white elephant" system for which there are no upgrades or replacement hardware available, and only being used on a small number of layouts. LCC being an official NMRA standard mitigates that risk to some extent, but not completely. I was also concerned about being an early adopter before the available products were fully wrung out.

#### ADVANTAGES OUTWEIGH RISKS

However, I decided that the advantages well outweighed the potential risks. In early 2018, I began implementation of an LCC system using the RR-CirKits products. I was fortunate to have help from a noted JMRI expert – Ken Cameron – available to guide me through the implementation. Ken and I started with a small network and continued to expand it by adding more nodes. We started simple by just

connecting a few block detectors, and then expanded to signals and turnouts. The idea was to get a couple of every needed device working on the network and JMRI, and then repeat and expand to more nodes and logic.

We now have all of the mainline turnouts controlled through LCC, all blocks detected and displaying on JMRI, and more than half of the signals operational. As expected, the implementation was slow at first, but sped up as we progressed through the learning curve, developing standard approaches for system configurations and techniques for debugging and testing as we went forward. We identified a few quirks and workarounds in system initialization. Although the implementation is not yet complete, we are now successfully dispatching operating sessions using JMRI and LCC.

So far, my experience has been that LCC meets its promise. There is certainly a learning curve as would be expected for any complex project, but my initial experience is positive and I believe that LCC was the correct choice for the CS&P.

The CS&P will be open for operating and touring during the 2019 NER convention in Syracuse. 🚂





# Classic Loco Gets New Life

By TOM OXNARD, MMR

Many of you have been working on the NMRA Achievement Program. Each of us has different talents and think that some AP certificates may be easier, and others harder. I have done a few, but have always thought that Motive Power would be "impossible." So I thought I would start with the easier aspects of it and superdetail a locomotive.

In 1947, Maine Central Railroad bought Phase II F3s 671 A and B units, and 672 A and B units with "chicken wire" grills from EMD. In 1948, it bought six Phase IV F3s (all A units - 681-686) and were similar in appearance to the F7. These were often referred to as F5s, and were built 3 months before the production of F7s. All were

painted green except 682 which stayed maroon. They were highly visible and heavily used on the MEC, primarily hauling freight.

I started with an *Athearn* F7 that I acquired in the 1950s. It was painted in a New Haven scheme. In the 1990s, I put the shell on a new *Athearn* chassis and motor, and installed a *Lenz* decoder in the A unit. The B unit is a dummy. I have not used this engine in

a couple of decades. When I started this project, it did not run after I blew the decoder while trying to resurrect it.

I wanted to transform this F7 into a working MEC Phase IV F3 that I could use on my Boston & Maine railroad modeling 1953. I modeled the A unit after a picture of MEC 685. The striped front pilot was an addition to many of the F3s in the late 1950s (after my time period). One goal was to do this make-over with as many scratch built parts as possible to help with future judging.

In looking at a dozen MEC F3 photographs, I realized that it is hard to visualize the roof detail. Each of the photographs that I had taken in different years showed slight variations in the roof elements. *Intermountain* makes MEC F3s and the company has pictures of these on its Web site showing good roof detail. I first removed the front roof vent from the A and B units, all of the molded on roof lift rings, and the generator vents from the back roof of the A and B units. I removed the lower front head light by filing the head light lens.

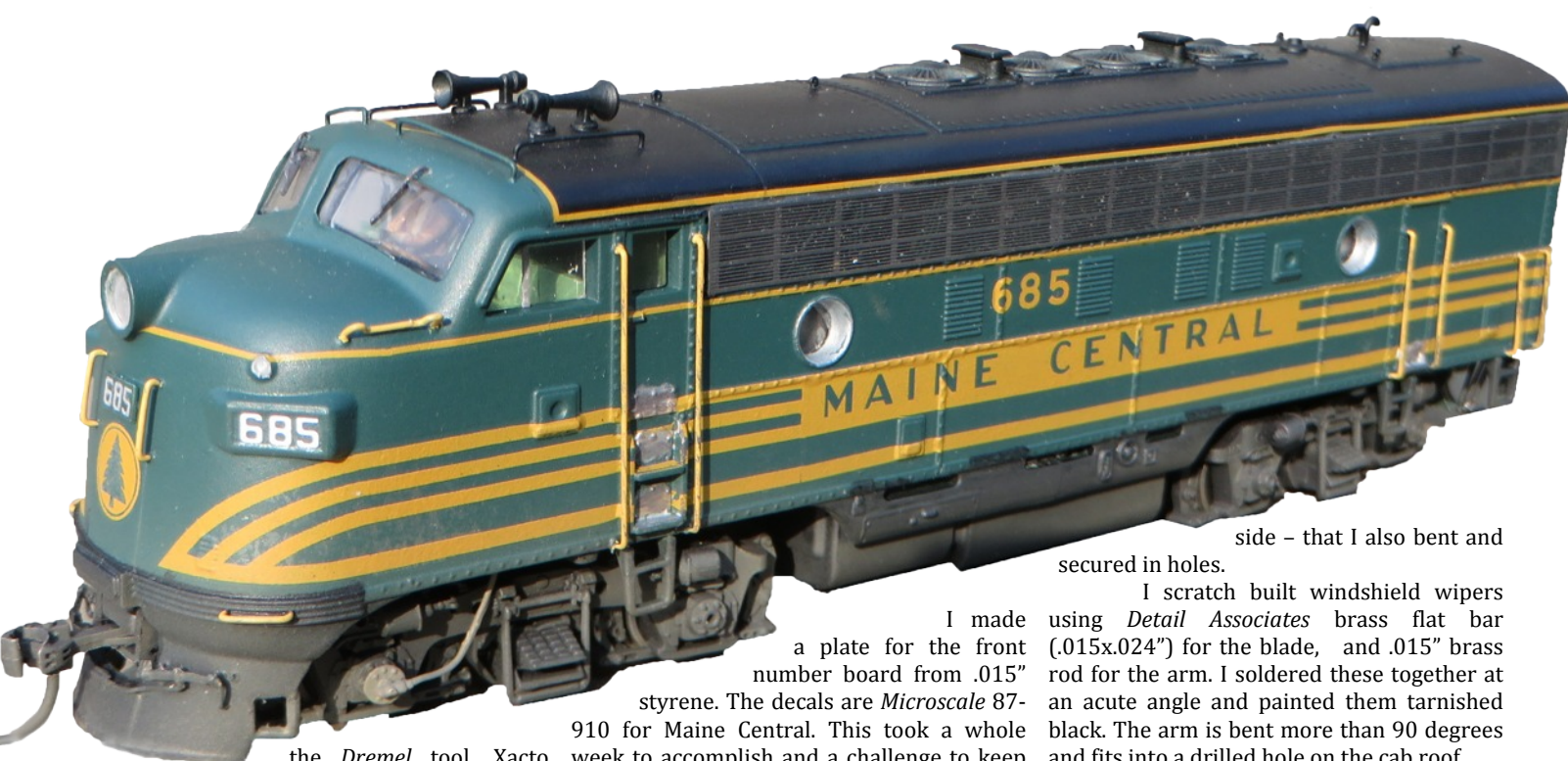
I cut off the steps and replaced them with new *Cal Scale* brass steps (#190-448) after cutting out notches on the inside of the shell with a *Dremel* tool using a high speed cylindrical cutter bit.

I filed off the molded-on horizontal side grills on the A and B units using the same *Dremel* bit. I made a drawing and stencil of the interior supports behind the grill from pictures of the F3 and pictures of *Intermountain* F3s. I cut out the spaces with



All photos: Tom Oxnard





the Dremel tool, Xacto knife, and filed.

The hand grabs on the roof and sides are all scratch built from *Detail Associates* .015" brass wire. First their positions were marked and holes drilled. Then the wire was bent to size. The grabs at the front corrugated fender are curved to fit the fender. The curved grab irons on the A cab hood also match the prototype. Spark arrestors on the roof were made by adding .015x.020" styrene supports and .020" caps.

Gooseneck vent pipes were scratch built from wire and placed on the back of the A and B roofs. A coupler cut bar from *Details West* (CL-316) was added to the pilot.

New lift rings from *Detail Associates* (1101) were added to the roof: 10 on the A unit and 14 on the B. MU hoses from *Details West* (MU 266) were also added.

A back up light on the A unit was scratch built from 1/8" styrene tube so I could fit an LED light.

I sprayed both shells with gray primer, and then airbrushed the shells with *Tru-color* Paint (102 MEC Pine Green). When dry, I masked the bodies and airbrushed the tops, pilot, and lower sections with *Tamiya* X-18 Semigloss Black.

I scratch built a cab interior with .040" styrene after finding pictures of a cab interior on eBay made by *Athearn* Genesis. I added a 1/8" tube for the headlight, and an engineer.

I sprayed the shells with two coats of *Testors* Glosscote. I replaced all of the wheels on the A unit with new *Athearn* locomotive wheels (part #40028). I repaired and replaced several brake cylinders and swing hangers on the trucks with *Athearn* parts (ATH 42012). I airbrushed the chassis and trucks with a dilute *Tamiya* Nato Black, and added a *Details West* speed recorder (#SR 284) to the left front truck.

I made a plate for the front number board from .015" styrene. The decals are *Microscale* 87-910 for Maine Central. This took a whole week to accomplish and a challenge to keep all of the stripes straight. It turned out that I was short 1/2" of side stripes for the B unit, so I ended up buying another pack of decals. Several coats of Dullcote were applied.

I removed the old *Lenz* decoder and cut down the large metal weight in the engine to fit a new *Soundtraxx* Econami Eco-PNP for diesel to create the EMD 567 non-turbo engine sound. I added a *TDS* Supersonic mini speaker with an enclosure, 3mm warm white LEDs to the forward and backup lights, and a *Soundtraxx* Current Keeper, all from *Tony's Train Xchange*.

The porthole window frames were painted *Polyscale* Flat Aluminum by brush, along with the tips of the MU hoses and the kick plates above the steps/ladders. I drilled small divots into the marker lights on the cab hood, painted them silver, and filled them with window glazing.

Windows from the *Walthers* Diesel Detail Kit (933-822) were added to the cab and portholes. I added vertical frames to the cab side windows made from .01x.020" styrene and painted them silver.

I bought *Intermountain* horizontal grills (F7A P44086 and F7B P44586) and airbrushed these *Tamiya* Nato Black, and then glued them on with AC glue. There are metal tabs – five on each

side – that I also bent and secured in holes.

I scratch built windshield wipers using *Detail Associates* brass flat bar (.015x.024") for the blade, and .015" brass rod for the arm. I soldered these together at an acute angle and painted them tarnished black. The arm is bent more than 90 degrees and fits into a drilled hole on the cab roof.

A total of 134 parts were added to the engine, not counting the decoder, speaker, and lights. Sixty eight of those were scratch parts, so I felt good about achieving that goal.

This was my first attempt at superdetailing a diesel locomotive, and my second decoder installation. The purchase of a new *Intermountain* MEC F3 might have been easier – and even cheaper – but this was a rewarding project that required some research and ingenuity. And, I was able to use and improve an engine that was given to me when I first started in the hobby.





# Scratch Building a Structure

By JEFF HANKE

**S**o you may be building a home layout, as I am, or may be in the planning stages of your basement empire. Either way, surely the thought has crossed your mind, "how am I ever going to fill this railroad with all of the required buildings?"

Much like automobiles are the quickest way for a non-model railroader to date the era of your layout, signature structures are the quickest way to understand your layout's geographic location. Signature structures are those buildings, bridges, tunnels or other man-made features that are unique to your modeled area. If someone sees a signature structure, they know where in the world you are modeling. The only problem is that most signature structures are not offered commercially in the marketplace.



If you are lucky, as I have been, you have been able to find a few signature structures that are models based on prototype buildings for your layout. I have found such kits through small craftsman manufacturers for my passenger stations at Point of Rocks, Brunswick, and Harpers Ferry.

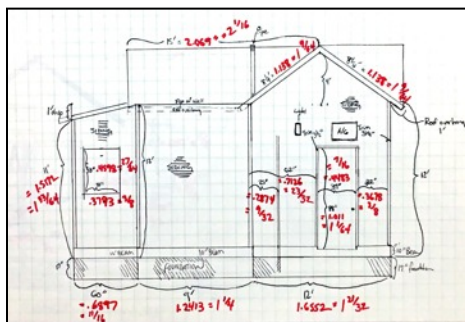
However, no one's luck holds forever, and eventually you are left with two options: kit bash or scratch build. I recently kit bashed the B&O Freight Station at Martinsburg, WV. The station was closed in my era, so it is not a very important building on my layout. Kit bashing two *Life-Like* kits quickly got me a close rendition, but it is not perfect.

Unfortunately, the East End structures are quite unique in appearance, so I tend to scratch build most of my structures, rather than kit bash. When faced with scratch building, many modelers are intimidated. After doing a few, it is actually easier for me than kit bashing. Scratchbuilding is like making a painting with which you start with a blank canvas. Kitbashing is like making a painting by cutting up several other paintings.

## STEP BY STEP

**Step one** to scratch building is to develop a plan in your scale. Structure plans can be found in several places, including historical societies, online auction sites, and railroad chat groups.

If the structure still exists, one of the best ways to make a plan is to measure the



**My hand drawn plan on graph paper, made from measuring the Martinsburg, WV (NA) tower. I converted measurements into HO scale.**

building yourself. You will be amazed at how quickly you can get the measurements needed to make a model of any building. If the building is on railroad property, ask permission before measuring.

Take photos straight on with all sides of the building. Measure a window or door, measure a brick or the spacing of the siding, measure one or two other key features. From just those few measurements and the photos you can extrapolate all of the heights and widths of the building by counting bricks or boards of siding. I use



**The model, at left, is ready for paint. After painting and weathering, it was "planted" with ice machine and vehicles completing the scene.**



Jeff Hanke

graph paper to make my more complex structures, but simple ones can be done on plain paper. I draw the plan in its entirety – first in actual inches – then go back at the end and convert to my scale (HO=1:87).

Years ago, I was in Martinsburg, WV, and measured the now closed NA tower. It is a little building and it took only five minutes or so to measure. I used the technique described above to make a plan and then started building.

**Step two** is to purchase doors and windows that match your prototype. I use *Grandt Line*, *Details Associates*, and *Pikestuff*.

These vendors let you know the prototype size of their products, so it's just a matter of scanning their websites for the right part number to order. For B&O siding, I used *Evergreen* novelty siding for this structure, but have since moved to *Northeastern Scale Lumber* scribed siding for ease of weathering.


**Step three** is to cut all of the sides to your plan and cut door and window openings. I scribe the styrene sides of buildings with a new *X-acto* #11 blade and snap it at this line. I cut the wood sheets all the way through with several light passes. Do not try cutting through on one cut, the blade will wander, creating crooked lines. Use a metal ruler as a straight edge.

To cut window and door openings, I start the hole a little small and file the opening to the correct size. When fitting windows and doors, they should go in place easily. If you have to force the window into the hole, it is too small. File the opening a little more. I use gel type CA for all joints. It is forgiving, has a good working time and stays where you put it. I don't use liquid CA, as I usually end up gluing my fingers together and making a mess. Wood glue is good too, but it takes forever to dry, so I rarely use it.

**Step four** is to paint your structure and weather it to your liking. I use only acrylic paints, since they clean up with water. I usually do all of the painting and weathering first, including sealing with *Testors Dullcoat*.

Then I go back and add the clear styrene for the windows last. This produces a structure with a bullet-proof finish and clear shiny windows. If you get the *Dullcoat* on the clear styrene, the windows will become foggy.

Of course, as I have said in other articles, I have a terrible habit of kit bashing or scratch building something and it comes out later as a kit. Five years after I finished NA tower, Carolina Craftsman Kits came out with this building as a kit! Just my luck!

I look forward to sharing more on the new East End going forward, but until then... Keep on workin'. 



# NER Divisions Present Annual Reports

By DAVE INSLEY

Local Divisions are at the heart of the NER and the NMRA. This is where most of us spend a majority of our time with fellow, local modelers. The Northeastern Region is divided into 14 divisions – one that is currently inactive – and each year the divisions submit an annual report. The following is a summary of those submissions.

Have you ever attended a meeting in another division? This is a great way to get more value from your NMRA membership and experience something new at the same time. Divisions offer a variety of activities from layout visits to clinics, not to mention a chance to expand your model railroad network! As the NER's convention chair, I have taken advantage of this benefit of my membership and attended meetings in several divisions. Okay, my ulterior motive was to cajole them into running an NER convention, but I still got to enjoy some great experiences. Why not expand your NMRA opportunities and visit some of the NER's divisions beyond your area?



## CENTRAL NEW YORK [cnynmra.org](http://cnynmra.org)

The Central New York Division services 87 members in 12 counties in and around the Utica and Syracuse areas. Meetings are held every six weeks at a member's home where the Division can see progress on the host's layout. There is an annual dinner meeting held right after the first of the year. The Division also hosts a mid-summer picnic. Its newsletter, *The Red Markers*, is issued electronically in advance of meetings. CNY is hosting the 2019 NER convention, *Empire Junction*.



## EASTERN CANADA [easterncanadadivision.wordpress.com/](http://easterncanadadivision.wordpress.com/)

The Eastern Canada Division was reactivated in January. Formerly called the Maritime Division, its new name more closely represents its constituent base. Meetings of the Division were focused establishing a leadership team and communicating with local NMRA members. There are currently 20 members in the Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland/Labrador.



## GARDEN STATE [www.nergsd.com](http://www.nergsd.com)

The Garden State Division is comprised of 11 counties in northern New Jersey and Richmond County, New York. There are 224 members and meetings are held four times a year at various locations. *The Whistle Post* is the quarterly newsletter is posted on the division Website. The Division utilizes *Constant Contact* to announce publication of the newsletter, and publicize division events. Six members received certificates this year: 2 Golden Spikes, 2 Association Volunteers, 1 Electrical Engineer, 1 Civil Engineer, 1 Chief Dispatcher, and 1 Author. The GSD hosted the 2018 NER convention, *The Erie Limited*.



## GREEN MOUNTAIN [greenmountainnmra.com](http://greenmountainnmra.com)

The Green Mountain Division has six life members and 30 regular members located in 13 counties of Vermont. Meetings are generally held on Sunday afternoons about five times per year in a community rooms provided by the Essex Junction

library or police station. Meetings include a presentation on some aspect of railroading or model railroading. There is also an opportunity to show off current modeling projects and socialize with one another. There are occasional meetings at member's homes, where a model railroad is available for viewing or operating. The Division does not produce a newsletter but keeps members informed via email, meetings, or the Website.



## HUB [www.hubdiv.org](http://www.hubdiv.org)

The HUB Division has 361 members in eastern Massachusetts. The annual meeting is at the conclusion of the *Spring TRAINing* event. The BOD meets six times per year. *RailFun Night* is an educational event open to the public and held nine times a year with an average of 40 members attending. The Division publishes a bi-monthly newsletter, the *Headlight*. The Division sponsors the *New England Model Train Expo* each December in Marlborough.



## HUDSONVALLEY [www.facebook.com/HVrailroad/](http://www.facebook.com/HVrailroad/)

The Division consists of six counties in the Hudson Valley region of New York and has about 60 members. The Division held four meetings this past year which included building a small module, a program on building craftsman kits, a tour of northern New Jersey layouts, and the display of the portable layout at the Poughkeepsie train show. The Division newsletter, the *Hudson Valley Headlight*, is in the process of being revived. The HVD was a co-host of the 2018 NER convention, *The Erie Limited*.



## HUDSON-BERKSHIRE [www.hudson-berkshire.org](http://www.hudson-berkshire.org)

The Hudson-Berkshire Division has 167 members in the Capitol District Region of New York State and includes 14 counties in New York, Berkshire County Massachusetts, and Bennington County, Vermont. The Division meets monthly from January through June, and September through November. Division meetings are either clinics at a local community center or hosted at Division members' homes. The Division runs the annual *Great Train Extravaganza*. Some of the proceeds from the show are used to donate new train sets to the *Toys for Tots* program. The *Form 19* newsletter is published monthly.



## LAKESHORES

The Lakeshores Division covers 11 counties in western New York. The Division has around 100 members and hosts two meets a year consisting of clinics, contests, and a short business meeting. This is followed by visits to members' layouts. The Division also hosted operations at member layouts in July and August. Lakeshores has a booth at the *RIT Tiger Tracks Train Show* each December and at the fall and spring Batavia Train shows. Members are currently working on T-track modules to display at local train shows. The *Lakeshores Limited* is the quarterly newsletter. The Division is looking for a Webmaster to establish a new Website.



## LITTLE RHODY [www.littlerhodydiv.org](http://www.littlerhodydiv.org)

The Little Rhody Division includes Rhode Island and Bristol County, Massachusetts. The Division has 81 active members but tracks a larger list of

friends in its email list. The Division meets on the first Saturday of each month from September through May with an annual dinner in June. Special summer events such as cookouts and trips are also scheduled. Events consist of traditional clinics, as well as round table discussions on topics of interest to the members. Over the past year, the Division has moved toward more hands-on clinics and activities. The Division hosted *Rails to the Gilded Age*, the 2017 NER convention. The *Rhode Rail* newsletter is distributed electronically bi-monthly. The Division also hosted a train show the past three years.



## METRO-NORTH [metronorthnmra.org](http://metronorthnmra.org)

The Metro North Division is located in Westchester County, New York, and Fairfield County, Connecticut. There are currently 81 active members and around 240 people on the email list. There are five meetings a year from September through May. The December/January meeting features a keynote clinician of regional or national status so as to attract as many members and guests as possible. The other four meetings are usually clinics in smaller consistent locations. A newsletter is sent out before each meeting.



## NUTMEG [nutmegdivision.com](http://nutmegdivision.com)

The Nutmeg division has around 200 members from Connecticut and portions of Massachusetts. Its quarterly newsletter, *The Flyer*, is issued mainly electronically. Meetings generally attract around 30 members and consist of a White Elephant table, a clinic or two, and area open houses. The meetings are generally held at the Wethersfield Police Station. Last year, meetings were also held in Amherst, MA, and Ledyard, CT. The division is currently revamping its Website to allow for a calendar of events along with easier access to the newsletter.



## SEACOAST [www.seacoastnmra.org](http://www.seacoastnmra.org)

The Seacoast Division has about 180 members in New Hampshire and Maine. *The Swirth Tower* is published quarterly on the Division Website. Quarterly meetings are held in different locations in July, October, January, and April featuring three hours of clinics, show and tell, and other modeling education opportunities. The Division also hosts *Model Railroad Fun Nights* in Derry, NH, generally once a month from September through May consisting of a clinic or presentation by one of the members. Last year, Division members earned two AP certificates and two Golden Spike awards. The Division also participated at 10 railroad shows throughout the year.



## SUNRISE TRAIL [sunrisetraildiv.com/](http://sunrisetraildiv.com/)

The Sunrise Trail Division covers New York City boroughs of Manhattan, Bronx, Queens, and Brooklyn; and Long Island and has 141 members. There are three meetings each year, a spring and fall meet that attracts between 40 and 50 members, and a smaller winter meet that includes the election of officers. Its Board meets every four to six weeks during the year. *The Cannonball* is produced four times a year and distributed via the Division Website.



# Full Day of Entertainment at the GTE



Photos by Bert Pfflegl

**By IRWIN D. NATHANSON**  
**VP Hudson Berkshire Division**  
**GTE Publicity Chairman**

**T**he largest model train event in the New York State Capitol Region, the Great Train Extravaganza™ (GTE), has been a popular pre-Christmas annual event for the past 30 years. Starting with GTE 2018, the NER's Hudson Berkshire Division (HBD) has taken over ownership and management of the show.

Although a one-day event, GTE has attracted as many as 5,000 visitors – more than many shows attract in two days! Perhaps some of this success is because other family-friendly events take place in the same general location on the same day as the GTE – events such as the *Taste of New York Fair*, *Craft Fair*, and annual lighting of the New York State Christmas Tree.

This should not imply that the show is just for kids. This show is also for serious modelers. Sure, there is a huge Legos® layout, but this is in addition to some nice, prototypical operating layouts in most gauges. And although some vendors sell model train sets for newcomers, others offer everything from spare parts for old Lionel trains to HO and N scale craftsman kits.

Last year, the show sold out with more than 300 tables of model trains, train sets, parts and accessories, scenery items, books, videos, DVDs, prints, railroad memorabilia, and related items for sale. Actual counts for GTE 2017 included 270 vendor tables, 50 educational display tables and eight layouts. This included a table promoting the NMRA and some White Elephant tables where HBD members could sell their surplus items.

In addition, there are educational displays and door prizes. Refreshments are also available.

Under the new leadership of James L. Lauser, a team of four starts working on the

HBD sends out letters to vendors and exhibitors starting in July and I start submitting our advertisements at the same time, starting with monthly magazines which require a lot of lead time.

"This year, we expect to sell out yet again," Lauser said. "As usual, the state convention center 'Egg' will be jam-packed with model railroaders and families as they admire the layouts and shop for various merchandise. And this year, we may have even more space available to us," he added.

Referring to the other events going on the same day, Lauser says he is pleased. "We plan intentionally for that. Having complimentary events helps to create an exciting atmosphere, and attracts newcomers to the show and – hopefully – to the hobby."

Overall, GTE is a whole day adventure with several awesome events culminating with the tree lighting and caroling at 5 PM, and then some killer fireworks immediately following.



event each July – six months in advance. On the day of the show, about 50 HBD volunteers run the show.

lighting and caroling at 5 PM, and then some killer fireworks immediately following.





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# 2018

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